

End Of Season Report 2014

The 2014 season turned out to be the warmest for some years from beginning to end with catches responding to the conditions as one would expect.

In April the trout lochs remained lightly fished with 36 trout recorded for the month, best fish from Grogarry and West Ollay of 4lbs and 2lbs 4ozs.

Historically May is one of our prime months but in recent years early May has been colder delaying anglers in arriving till the second half of May. This year conditions have been much warmer giving us catches of 653 for the month with a range of good fish coming from most lochs with the best from West Ollay of just over 5lbs.

June being our busiest month with anglers and with weather continuing to stay settled, catches for the month were 914 with best fish coming from Bal-Finlay in Benbecula of 5lbs and close behind on this weight were fish from Grogarry and Bornish.

July was a very warm month which on a number of days was too hot to fish. Anglers fished when they could which was in the mornings and evening, nevertheless anglers enjoyed the glorious weather and made the best of the fishing. Due to the conditions catches were low, 69 for the month with the best from West Bee of 4lbs.

August for the first two weeks was a better and cooler month with much needed wind and rain although lochs were lightly fished catches were 310 for the month. Best fish were on the 4lbs mark from West Ollay and Bornish.

September being the last month of the season lochs remained lightly fished and conditions still stayed fairly settled with water temperatures remaining steady. Catches were 213 for the month with nice fish from the lochs that were fished, and best fish was 4lbs from the Mill loch and close behind a fish of 3lbs 4ozs from Grogarry.

The seasons total for brown trout was 2,117 which is an increase of 52% on 2013 and the average weight from across the lochs of fish over 10ozs was, 14ozs. Number of fish caught over the 1lb 8ozs mark was 9% (190) which is a similar % on past seasons. Top loch with numbers caught was Bornish with 339 with an average weight 1lb, best fish was 4lb 9ozs. Best fish overall was from West Ollay of just over 5lbs which won the fish of the month for May caught by Ghillie Colin Mackenzie and congratulations to him on his catch.

The sea trout this season compared to 2013 was much improved with finnock and small sea trout in good numbers being spotted in early June which proved to be a good sign for the rest of the season.

Conditions in July were very warm and sunny but despite this sea trout were still being seen though catching proved a little tricky due to the warm and sunny conditions and inevitably catches stayed low for July. As we moved into August conditions had cooled a little and with much needed wind and rain catching improved from this point and remained steady till the end of October.

Total sea trout for the 2014 season 573 which is 36% increase on 2013

Catch numbers from the three main systems were –

Bharp System – 92 Sea Trout in total, Average Weight 25ozs, Best fish 72ozs. Returned 88%.
Finnock total 97 all returned.

Kildonan System – 78 Sea Trout in total, Average weight 27ozs, Best fish 160ozs. Returned 87%.
Finnock total 58 all returned.

Howmore System – 382 Sea Trout in total, Average weight 29ozs, Best fish 144ozs. Returned 87%.
Finnock total 311 all returned.

Other Sea Trout from Strome, Benbecula sea pools, and East Bee totalling 21, Best was 44ozs.

Overall summary 2014 Sea Trout 573, average weight was 28ozs and best fish was 160ozs from Lower Kildonan. Numbers of fish over 2lbs 21% (125). Top loch with numbers caught was Fada with 162 at an average weight of 29ozs, best was 120ozs. Congratulations to Dan O Donavan a regular anglers to South Uist who landed a lovely cock Sea Trout of 7lbs from loch Fada which won fish of the month for October.

Salmon and Grilse numbers were slightly up on 2013. Total for 2014 was 56 an increase of 20% with an average weight of 80ozs, Best fish was 120ozs from Loch Fada.

The main catch numbers were from Bharp 11, Roag 16, Fada 19 and Lower Kildonan on 6. Recently catch numbers throughout Scotland have been at low levels and certainly the case here on South Uist where numbers seen on the lochs are not as they used to be.

Many fisheries today have a catch and release policy due to the lack of numbers returning from sea for whatever reason sadly for here South Uist may need to adopt the same policy on catch and release on the Salmon till stocks show some signs of recovery.

Our return rate on Salmon this season was 42% and clearly not an acceptable figure with catch numbers widely as they are across the country, as a result the fishery will look to improve the satiation in 2015 to preserve stocks for the future.

The 2014 season turned out to be excellent one overall compared to the last few years we look forward to the same in 2015 for anglers to come and enjoy once again.

Tight Lines for 2015.