



LOCH ACHONACHIE ANGLING CLUB NEWSLETTER 38 : OCTOBER 2021

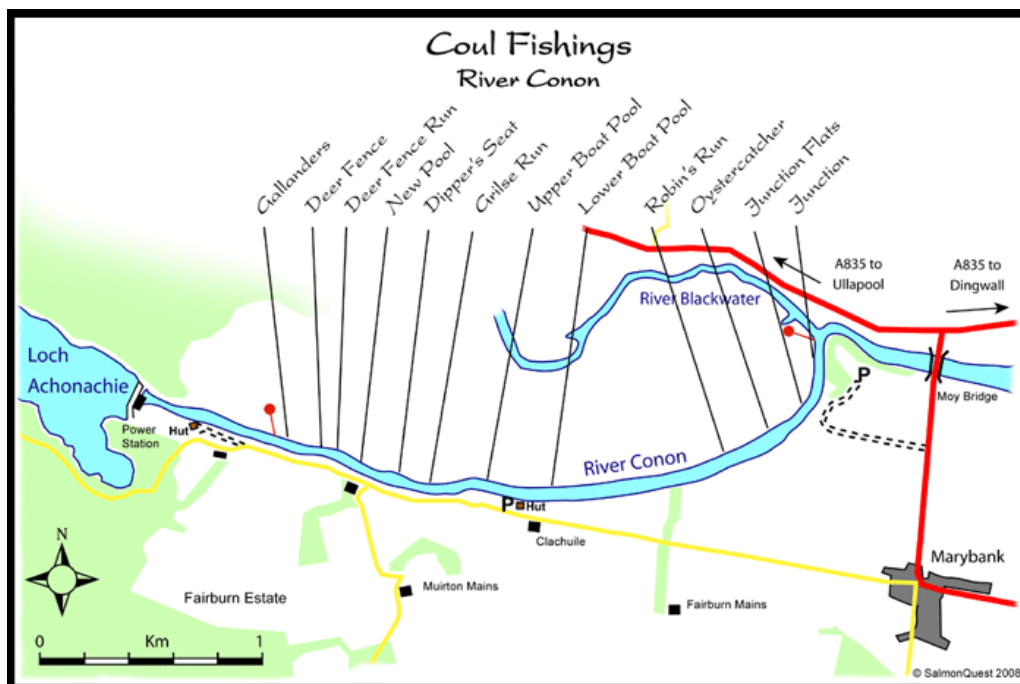
SEASON OVER 2021

Hi folks and here's hoping you've had a decent season of fishing and lots of chances to meet up again with fishing friends in beautiful Strathconon. Although the rain didn't come when we would have wanted it for the rivers, several patient even "persistent" anglers enjoyed some fine catches in the rivers and lochs throughout the season. We were able to open up again to visitors and though footfall and income were still much lower than pre-pandemic levels we have seen a significant increase in membership with new members joining right up until the last weeks of the season. Our exchange tickets saw some good use on the Wick, the Spey, the Lower Conon, the Ness, Lairg AC (Shin and Craggie) and on the Assynt Lochs, as our members headed further afield to explore some new waters.

The excellent value for money of a **LAAC** membership remains one of the very best deals for fishing for trout, salmon and sea trout anywhere in Scotland. This newsletter includes some of the highlights of **2021** including **CLUB COMPETITIONS**; an excellent day's **SALMON FISHING TUITION FOR JUNIORS** on the Coul Beats of the Conon; some cracking **TROUT CATCHES**; and plans for **SEASON 2022**.

JUNIORS SALMON FISHING : COUL BEATS

An exciting opportunity to learn all about salmon fishing came up this summer for some of our junior members across the area's six angling clubs. Fishing outstanding beats on the Coul section of the Lower Conon, the photos below tell a story of success, enjoyment and learning.





LAAC junior member Morag Ross writes, "I've enjoyed the fishing experience and found it very useful. I learned how to use Spey casting and about salmon fishing in general. Our ghillie taught me so much and all very useful, so I thought it was fun and would be interested to do it again. Although the weather was very hot it was not the weather conditions for fishing, my Granda (Kenny Ross – thanks for the photos Kenny!) who came with me was very helpful when the ghillie wasn't there and a man even pulled up on his motorbike and was helping me from the other side of the river. Even though I caught no fish it wasn't really about that - it was about the experience. I thought it was good crack and the ghillie was nice."





Bailey Campbell writes of his experience of the day

“Hello my name is Bailey and I love fishing. A few days ago, I got the chance to fish on the Conon river and I happily accepted. The day was beautiful and the Ghillie was very nice but sadly, I never caught anything but that wouldn’t stop me from going again. Without a doubt, I would recommend to sign up to the Achonachie angling club, its great!”

Many thanks for the recommendation Bailey – we’re so glad you enjoyed the experience so much. Thanks to your Mum, Angela Stewart for the great photos too!

More than happy to give the final words on this fine project to Head Ghillie, John Macaskill who set it up for juniors from all the clubs in the area. John wrote “Good morning Stephen, thank you for your email. Our junior introduction to salmon fishing on Coul has been a tremendous success. We have had children from six local angling clubs. Dingwall and District, Loch Achonachie, Evanton, Alness, Beaully and Inverness. All children were an absolute delight to have on the river and were a credit to themselves their families and their angling clubs. From a variety of ages of ten years to eighteen they all showed great interest and through the day increased their knowledge on the life cycle of the Salmon, river safety, river craft and conservation issues. Not to mention the high standard of casting which they all showed and improved on through their day. A high point was a first fish for Robert Johnstone who was nominated by the Alness angling club but even more importantly it was tremendous just to see youngsters out enjoying the countryside and salmon fishing. It was an absolute pleasure to meet Morag and Bailey and I am sure they will both go on to be highly successful and valued members of Loch Achonachie angling club. Thank you again for all your assistance with our initiatives this year Stephen. I think it has been a great example of private beats and angling clubs working together and hopefully it might show the way forward for others also! Best wishes, John Macaskill”



100 CLUB 2021

The 100 Club winners for last month were as follows:-

SEPTEMBER : 1st No. 89 Barbara Davis : **2nd** No. 85 Mark Shand : **3rd** No. 1 Martin Groat

If you are new to the club, please consider taking up a ticket for the **100 Club** – a supportive monthly draw which adds funds for specific developments such as junior angling. The first prize each month is £30 with two other prizes of £10 each. Each number costs £12 for the year (£1 per month) with the proceeds supporting the Club's programme of fishing for junior members. We can process your entry by BACs if that suits you. Contact by email to achonachieangling@gmail.com

The 100 Club provides essential funding for the club's activities and is currently dedicated to promoting youth angling opportunities in 2021-22. It can make a fine birthday or special occasion gift for someone and we can send those out for you too. And, although it's not yet Hallowe'en, Christmas is just around the corner – give a wee gift that gives back to the club?

END OF SEASON COMPETITION : LOCH MEIG

Although we were unable again this season to run our outings to other clubs and lochs, we did manage to hold reduced versions of our two major competitions on Loch Meig. The final event taking place on the last Saturday of the trout season, 2 October. Loch Meig was in typical mystic mode for the seven teams who fished the 6.5 hour competition and those who managed to bring trout to the fly early in the day certainly had the best bags and even a few skilled & experienced competitors failed to tempt any keepers to the net. A cool and constantly shifting wind made things difficult and the loch level had changed dramatically over the course of the week from a distinctly low level to really rather high. Robert & Kenny Ross enjoyed their day along with everyone else and Robert said it was his best ever day on the Meig! Chris & David Ross had a good day too coming 3rd – it was certainly a "Ross" shire event with no fewer than 5 "Ross" anglers on the loch as Lewis Ross & Neil MacRitchie sought to repeat their success in the Meig Open in June. Good to have John MacNeill fishing a competition with us for the first time and by the sounds of it we'll see him in future competitions too. At the weigh in one team swept the boards as clear winners in all three categories of Best Boat (8 trout for 9lbs 12oz), Heaviest Bag, and Biggest Fish (2lbs 8oz), as Neal Drummond & Stephen Dowds pairing (pictured below) picked up all the trophies despite their outboard breaking down at a critical point in the afternoon. Thanks to all who took part and all helping to get the boats ready for the day.



CRACKING CATCHES : SEASON 2021



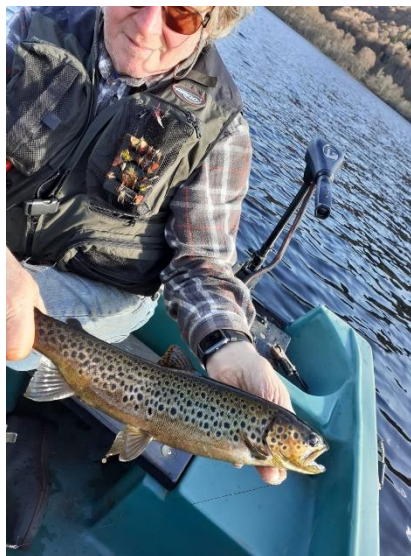
Visitor to the club in July, David Coleman from Bridge of Weir has been fishing with club member Jim Fisher since primary school days. He caught and returned this beauty from Loch Meig on 9 July and while with us in the Highlands also fished Loch Watten.

Taking advantage of our club's **exchange ticket scheme** and doing some summer night time fishing on the Abernethy AC stretches on the Spey brought this fine sea trout to the net.



LAAC members up in Caithness fishing the annual Watten Competition run by Beaully AC had this lovely fish in a very chilly May outing.

A fine wild fish from Loch Garve for Kenny Ross on an early season outing.



CRACKING CATCHES : SEASON 2021



A fine tail on this Meig brownie in the last week of September

Summer salmon from the Upper Conon on a tiny Blue Charm early August



Nature on the gunwhale caught on camera by club member Myna Dowds



If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found it useful please let us know and remember **your contributions in stories and photographs are always very welcome.** Our Club website <https://highlandfishing.net/>, Facebook page and Instagram site are all available to stay up to date with LAAC activities and news. Email me at achonachie.angling@gmail.com

END OF SEASON WORK PARTIES : A CALL TO ARMS



We'll be needing some willing hands very shortly to get the boats lifted and power washed and into winter storage, so please don't be shy at offering to do a wee bit volunteering for your club. If you've enjoyed using our boats then please lend a hand to make sure they are readied for next season. Club Vice-Chairman **Ian MacPhail** will be managing the process so please contact Ian directly if you can help – just a few hours is all – email ian-macphail@hotmail.com

It will make a difference for sure!

PS Remember to make your catch return asap

Stephen Dowds
LAAC Chairman
12 OCTOBER 2021