



River Ythan and Tributaries Redd Count Summary 2019/2020

Spawning surveys began on the last week of October. In stark contrast to last season's low water levels the months of November and December have seen numerous rises over all sites which reduced the opportunities for accurate surveys to be undertaken. Even as water levels fell many sites still ran coloured which made identifying redds difficult. The odd Salmon and Sea Trout were seen in the first week of surveys but thereafter very few live fish were observed over the months due to the conditions encountered. Over the months only a couple of dead kelts were found on the river banks.

An increase in spawning activity was found on a few sites notably the Little Water burn where redds were seen on both the new and the original site, the Bronie Burn saw a slight increase in salmon redds possibly due to the constant higher flows going over the weir crest and the Fordoun Burn at Rothienorman also saw salmon redds present. Sea trout redds were down considerably on many sites compared to last year. Visual conditions improved going into the new year with older cut redds still just visible on most sites. Although no fresh late spawning was found on the ten sites a very large newly cut redd was seen at the confluence of the Fordoun burn on the 16th January. Surveys concluded on the 17th of January 2020.

Bronie Burn

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 28/10/19 - No redds seen.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (heavily coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and heavily coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 46 – 18/11/19 Surveyed, one fresh Trout Redd seen.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (heavily coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 48 – 02/11/19 Survey carried out but no new redds seen.

WK 49 – 13/12/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 50 – 17/12/19 Surveyed, first 2 Salmon redds seen.

WK 51 and WK 52 no surveys carried out.

WK 1 – 03/01/20 Surveyed, 3 Salmon redds visible one newish Salmon redd found.

WK 2 – 09/01/20 Surveyed, same 3 Salmon redds still visible. No new spawning found.

WK 3 – Last visit to site 17/01/20 No survey carried out due to shoot through Scottiesley Wood.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 3 Trout 1

Summary

Water levels going over Bronie weir remained at a good height throughout November and December, easing fish passage upstream. A slight increase in Salmon redds from last year, redds again found in the Scottiesley Wood area. A couple of large sections of bank erosion were found on the upper section of burn across from Littlemill Cottage. No adult fish or dead kelts were seen.

Ebrie Burn

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 28/10/19 No redds seen but 2 Sea Trout spotted.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Surveyed, 2 fresh Salmon redds and 1 fresh Sea Trout redd seen. 1 live Salmon and 1 live Sea Trout seen.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 46 – 18/11/19 Surveyed, increase in Salmon redds to 4.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity found.

WK 48 – 02/12/19 Surveyed, 1 new Salmon redd seen.

WK 49 – 10/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity found.

WK 50 – 18/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity found.

WK 51 to WK 1 - No surveys carried out.

WK 2 – 08/01/20 Surveyed, no new spawning activity found.

Last survey on WK 3 - 17/01/20 No new spawning activity found.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 5, Sea Trout 3,

Summary

The Ebrie suffered less from high water levels and followed the same pattern of spawning as last year, although the number of Sea Trout redds were down Salmon remained the same. Live fish were seen in the early weeks but disappeared after quickly spawning. No late spawning occurred. Ranunculus wasn't as dense on spawning areas as last year.

Keithfield Burn

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 28/10/19 – Surveyed but burn rising and running grey. No redds or adult fish seen.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (very coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 One new Trout redd found just upstream from confluence of Raxton Burn.

WK 46 – No survey carried out.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Surveyed but no new spawning activity found.

WK 48 – 02/12/19 Surveyed but no new spawning activity found.

WK 49 – 10/12/19 retried on 13/12/19 unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 50 – 17/12/19 Surveyed but no new spawning activity found.

WK 51 to WK 1 No surveys carried out.

WK 2 – 09/01/20 Surveyed no new spawning activity found.

Last survey on WK 3 - 17/01/20 Surveyed but burn coloured, no redds seen.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 0 Trout 1

Summary

A drop in the number of Trout redds seen from 4 last year. No adult fish seen in burn or dead kelts found on bankside. Spawning gravel just upstream from Haddo ponds has shifted, remaining area now poor. A few trees lying over the burn but not causing full blockage.

Methlick – Ythan

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 29/10/19 Walked but poor instream visibility. No redds found.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high) no survey carried out.

WK 46 – 18/11/19 Survey carried out 3 fresh cut Salmon redds found.

WK 47 – 29/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 48 – 02/12/19 Surveyed, but water conditions remain poor no new redds seen.

WK 49 – 13/12/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 50 – 17/12/19 Surveyed, but conditions remain poor no new redds seen.

WK 51 & WK52 No surveys carried out.

WK 1 – 03/01/20 Surveyed much better river conditions 4 older Salmon redds visible. No new spawning activity.

WK 2 – 09/01/20 Surveyed, 5 older Salmon redds now visible. Nothing fresh

Last survey on WK 3 - 15/01/20 No new redds seen.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 5 Sea Trout 0

Summary

A decrease in spawning activity from last season when 8 Salmon and 7 Sea Trout redds were found. High coloured water conditions prevented accurate counts taking place over several visits. No adult Salmon or Sea Trout were seen in river and no kelts were found on bankside.

Little Water Burn

WK 43 – 01/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Surveyed but poor water conditions no redds or fish seen.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Surveyed no redds or fish seen. Lots of Ranunculus being washed downstream.

WK 46 – 19/11/19 Surveyed no redds or fish seen.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Surveyed, first Salmon redd found.

WK 48 – 2/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity.

WK 49 – 10/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity.

WK 50 – 17/12/19 Surveyed, 2 new Salmon redds found with one adult Salmon seen beside redd.

WK 51 to WK 1 No surveys carried out.

WK 2 – 08/01/20 Surveyed only old redds found.

Last survey on WK 3 - 16/01/20 No new redds seen, a pair of Goosanders were seen feeding in burn.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 3 Sea Trout 0

Summary

An increase in redds seen this year as nothing was found last year. As on the new site increased water levels during the months may have played a big part. Once the dense sections of ranunculus broke away from the riverbed fish were able to utilize the suitable gravel beneath.

Little Water Burn 2 (New Site)

WK 43 – 01/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Surveyed, but poor conditions no redds or fish seen.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Surveyed, no redds or fish seen. Burn rising slight colour.

WK 46 – 18/11/19 Surveyed, no redds or fish seen.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Surveyed, no redds or fish seen.

WK 48 – 02/12/19 First 2 Salmon redds seen.

WK 49 – 10/12/19 One new Salmon redd seen. Pair of Goosanders seen in pond.

WK 50 – 17/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity seen.

WK 51 to WK 1 No surveys carried out.

WK 2 – 08/12/20 Surveyed, no new redds found. Old redds still visible.

Last survey on WK 3 - 16/01/20 No new redds seen, one Salmon kelt found on bankside.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 3 Sea Trout 0

Summary

This was our first year for surveying this section, some suitable areas for fish to spawn on were found and utilized especially beside the confluence with the Black Burn. The higher water levels possibly played a part in fish reaching this section of the burn compared to the low level of last year.

Fyvie – Ythan

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 01/11/19 – Walked but river rising and was colouring up quickly. No redds or fish seen.

WK 44 - 08/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 46 – 19/11/19 Surveyed, but water conditions remain poor for seeing bed of river. No redds or fish seen.

WK 47 – 29/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 48 – 02/12/19 Surveyed, but water conditions remain poor for seeing bed of river. No redds or fish seen

WK 49 – 13/12/19 Unsuitable water conditions (coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 50 – 17/12/19 Surveyed, but water conditions remain poor for seeing bed of river. No redds or fish seen

WK 51 & 52 No surveys carried out.

WK 1 – 03/01/20 Surveyed, old Salmon redds now visible 6 counted. Nothing fresh seen.

WK 2 – 09/01/20 Surveyed, 6 Salmon redds counted, nothing fresh seen.

Last survey on WK 3 – 15/01/20 No new redds seen.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 6 Sea Trout 0

Summary

Poor water conditions over the months prevented many weekly surveys being carried out. When levels eventually dropped and cleared Salmon redds were apparent on suitable gravel areas. A slight drop from last years 9 but poorer sightings for Sea Trout 0 compared to 11 found last year.

Fordoun Burn - Fyvie

First survey carried out on WK 43 - 28/10/19 – Surveyed but burn rising and coloured.

WK 44 - 8/11/19 First Sea Trout redd seen and 1 live Sea Trout seen above Rootie Lin.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 46 – 18/11/19 Surveyed, first 2 Salmon redds seen.

WK 47 – 29/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 48 – 06/12/19 Surveyed, 2 Salmon redds and 1 Trout redd seen, burn still running coloured.

WK 49 – 13/12/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 50 – 18/12/19 Surveyed, one new Salmon redd visible along with 1 Salmon kelt found on bankside.

WK 51 to WK1 – No surveys carried out.

WK 2 – 09/10/20 Surveyed, 2 old Salmon redds visible.

Last survey on WK 3 - 16/01/20 One large fresh Salmon redd seen at burn confluence (not in surveying section).

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 2 Sea Trout 1

Summary

Water levels remained on the high side throughout November and December allowing easier access over the weirs at Fyvie and through Rootie Lin pass. Redds found around the same area of spawning gravel as last year. No adult Salmon were seen in the burn this year.

A small decrease in redds seen compared to last year.

Fordoun Burn – Rothienorman

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 28/10/19 – Walked but burn rising and coloured.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Unable to survey due to low light and time shortage.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Unsuitable water conditions (high and coloured) no survey carried out.

WK 46 – 18/11/19 Poor visibility in burn to give proper count but clean patches of gravel noticeable.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Survey carried out burn still running high but no redds seen.

WK 48 – 06/12/ 19 Survey carried out no redds visible. Burn rising.

WK 49 – 10/12/19 Clean patches of gravel found now burn is clearing possible fish activity.

WK 50 – 18/12/19 4 prominent Salmon redds found now burn had cleared to see properly.

WK 51 to WK 1 No surveys carried out.

WK 2 - 09/01/20 No new spawning found just old redds still visible.

Last survey on WK 3 - 17/01/20 No further spawning activity found.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 4, Sea Trout 0

Summary

Water levels remained high throughout November and December allowing Salmon upstream to utilise the suitable gravel areas. An increase in Salmon redds this year, no Salmon redds having been recorded in 2018. No Trout redds seen this year. No adult fish were seen in burn or dead kelts found on bankside.

Chapel of Seggat – Ythan

First survey carried out on WK 43 on 28/10/19 – Surveyed but water rising and colouring up. One fish seen around 4-5lbs no redds found.

WK 44 – 08/11/19 Surveyed, first Sea Trout redd seen with 1 Sea Trout sitting on redd.

WK 45 – 15/11/19 Surveyed, first 2 Salmon redds starting to be cut.

WK 46 – 19/11/19 Surveyed, river high but clearing, no fresh redds visible.

WK 47 – 25/11/19 Increase in both Salmon x3 and Sea Trout x3 redds seen.

WK 48 – 06/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity seen.

WK 49 – 10/12/19 Surveyed, no new spawning activity seen.

WK 50 – 18/12/19. Surveyed, older redds becoming silted up now. No new redds seen.

WK 51- 52 - No surveys carried out.

WK 1 – 03/01/20 Survey carried out but just old redds found.

WK 2 – 09/01/20 No new spawning activity seen.

Last survey on WK 3 - 16/01/20 One Salmon kelt found on bankside.

Total individual redds counted

Salmon 3 Sea Trout 3

Summary

Redd count slightly down on last year's 5 Salmon, 5 Sea Trout. River was high on several visits but was running clear enough to see gravel. Redds counted found in same spawning areas as previous year. Section of riverbank is badly eroded away and needs possible repair. One Cormorant seen a couple of times on water.