

## River Ythan SLA Report August 2025

### 1. Introduction

The Don DFSB have been contracted to carry out fisheries protection, predator surveys, spawning surveys and habitat restoration activities across the river Ythan catchment throughout 2025/26 by the Ythan DSFB under a Service Level Agreement. Each activity is allocated a set number of man-days/patrols to accommodate the requirements of the annually agreed SLA. Activities are defined following consultation with the Ythan DSFB.

Any incidents relating to pollution and policing will be recorded and shared with the Clerk. Information from predator surveys will be collated and shared with the Clerk directly following the survey period. Information on spawning surveys will be collated and reported in a summary report following the end of the spawning period. Any seals reported above Logie Buchan Bridge will be reported to the Clerk as soon as possible.

All activities will be covered by the Don DSFB health and safety polices, as stated in the service level agreement.

### 2. Reporting

A log of all patrols and activities will be sent to the Clerk monthly.

### SLA Activities/ Table 1. August, SLA Activity/Policing Patrol allocation of shifts

Date	Patrol Area	Time of Patrol	Notes/Incidents
6/8/25	Methlick to Newburgh Estuary.	2pm to 6pm 2 staff = 1 day	All quite on all beats today.
8/8/25	Methlick to Newburgh Estuary.	2pm to 6pm 2 staff = 1 day	Few anglers on Newburgh estuary today, still numbers of sea trout showing as the tide falling back.
14/8/25	Methlick to Newburgh Estuary.	6pm to 10pm 2 staff = 1 day	Thunder and lighting storm over the lower river catchment today, a lot of fish jumping at the estuary. 2 anglers at Newburgh.
22/8/25	Methlick to Newburgh Estuary	2pm to 6pm 2 staff = 1 day	Increase of anglers out on Newburgh estuary this afternoon, mainly Finnock in good numbers being landed.
28/8/25	Methlick to Newburgh Estuary.	1pm to 5pm 2 staff = 1day	Sea trout numbers starting to fall away at Newburgh estuary, Machar pool starting to build up with fish numbers now.

29/8/25	Methlick to Newburgh Estuary.	1.30pm to 5.30pm 2 staff = 1day	Only small number of anglers out this afternoon. All were checked.
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It has been a trying time for anglers due to another month of low river levels. Angling activity has been concentrated in the tidal reaches of the river. Sea trout and Finnock have continued to give good sport, on the tidal reaches at Newburgh. All anglers were checked through out the month and all had permits. On the last week of August, sea trout numbers were starting to build up at the Machar pool. I am expecting in September, that fish will start to build up at Ellon, while waiting for river levels to increase to allow them to move further upstream.

**Table 2. August SLA Activity- Ranunculus Weed cutting site cleared-Burn of Fortree**

Survey Point	Grid Ref
Location 1	JN 393377 839751

**Table 3. July SLA Activity- Ranunculus Weed cutting-Ebrie Burn/Fourdon Burn**

Date	Activity-Weed cutting	Time
26/8/25	Weed clearing	9am to 5pm 1 Staff =1 day
27/8/25	Weed clearing	9am to 5pm 1 Staff = 1 day

Fig 1. Before weed clearing



Fig 2. After weed clearing



The two pictures above are from Ranunculus weed clearing on the Burn of Fortree, that I mentored in the July monthly report. The stream is now flowing at a good pace, which will not

only help drop the high-water temperature, but will also increase oxygen levels within the stream. Sediment transport will now be able to pass freely through the stream and not settle on the fine gravel substrate.

On the Fourdoun burn one further section was cleared of Ranunculus weed, where the spawning gravel was heavily matted with the roots of this plant. This has now been cleared before the forth coming spawning season.

**Table 4. August SLA Activity- Ranunculus Weed cutting site cleared-Fordoun burn**

Survey Point	Grid Ref
Location 1	JN 73185 35990

**Table 5. July SLA Activity- Ranunculus Weed Cutting-Fordoun burn**

Date	Activity-Weed cutting	Time
6/8/25	Weed clearing	10am to 2pm 1 Staff = 0.5 day
8/8/25	Weed clearing	9am to 1pm =0.5 day

### **Pollution**

No reports of pollution for the month.

### **Seals**

No reports of seals marauding in river this month.

### **Forth coming activities for September.**

Gravel washing at Chapel of Seggat section, will take place once the SEPA engineering licence comes through.

Autumn Piscivorous Bird Surveys will commence for the next three months, September/October/ November.

Jim Kerr  
Senior Fisheries Officer  
Acting on behalf of the Ythan DSFB