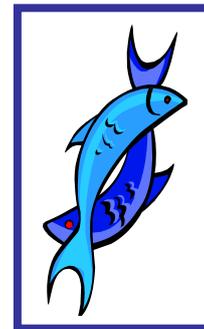


The River Taw Fisheries Association Newsletter



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Summer 2014

Chairman's Report



Can we have some normal weather, please? Since the 2012/3 winter we have had extreme spates and floods, extreme drought and extreme spates and floods again. The effect of all this "weather" on our salmon and sea trout stocks must be detrimental, but how detrimental will be hard to judge until we see comparative juvenile surveys from the EA and Westcountry Rivers Trust. Short term rod catch numbers do not give a balanced picture since they are so slewed by annual conditions.

Given last year's three month drought we should not be surprised at the low 2013 rod catch numbers: salmon 59 (53 returned) and sea trout 208 (148 returned). In relative terms these numbers are not out of line with other southwest rivers in general and the Torridge in particular. Our release percentage for salmon is encouragingly high, 90%, but for sea trout is disappointingly low, 71%. This compares with the Torridge figure of 89%. We should all think twice before administering the last rites to a sea trout.

These rod catch numbers demonstrate a further problem or imbalance which needs to be addressed. Last season Taw and Torridge fishermen together took 8 salmon and 78 sea trout. The three salmon nets on the Taw-Torridge estuary took 53 salmon and 88 sea trout. Over time, under the new Net Limitation Order, the nets will reduce to one, but a strong argument can be made for the introduction of a quota system. In due course we believe all such salmon netting should be phased out.

As mentioned in last year's Newsletter, the estuary is the site of a further threat to our stocks of migratory fish stocks, this time from the activities of commercial bass and mullet fishermen using drift nets which take salmon and sea trout as a by-catch. Legally these fish must be returned, but in most cases they will be dead or damaged and unable to survive. Estuary byelaws are up for review by the newly established Devon &

Severn Inland Fisheries and Conservation Authority. We are working closely with the Torridge Association for a ban on all such netting activities and at the same time trying to enlist the support of the recreational sea-angling community, particularly the bass fishermen, via the Angling Trust. Our estuary has two bass nursery areas and the area is prime bass territory.

➔ Another long-term problem in the estuary, which is now becoming more pressing, is the Northam Landfill. This is situated on the left bank of the estuary neck beside the golf course and contains many thousands of tons of household waste. Gradual erosion has now been speeded up by the combination of river spates and tidal surges. Parts of the landfill are being exposed. We have established links with Royal North Devon Golf Club, a concerned party, and again are working with the Torridge Association to see what can be done to force the authorities, Torridge District Council and Devon County Council, to take responsibility and avert what could become an ecological disaster for the estuary.

These three estuary problems if not confronted and solved are likely to undermine much of the hard work being done on the river at great expense to improve access, habitat and water quality.

➔ This brings me to the good news. Our Access over Weirs Project is in sight of the finishing line, thanks to the WRT, EA, RTFA partnership which continues to be effective. 7 weirs have been dealt with; 5 remain to be tackled. Weather permitting, work should be completed this year on Rashleigh (nappe plate) and Eggesford (easement), North Tawton (partial removal) and Fileigh and North Molton (Larinier fishpasses). Under the broader Taw River Improvement Project, which has 14 partners and concentrates on the Upper Taw, good habitat improvement work continues. On the fisheries side this involves coppicing, coarse woody

debris introduction to shore up banks, debris dam removal and gravel restoration. On the land management side it involves fencing, woodland management, wetland improvement and advice to farmers. Walkover surveys and juvenile surveys also form a part.

Other good news is that thanks to good work by David Chapman of WRT £18,500 was raised from the Country Sports Project to enhance beats on the Taw which make fishing available to the public. Also we are hopeful of accessing funds from North Devon Fisheries Local Action Group for gravel restoration work and trash dam removal high up on the Mole/Bray system. Our Treasurer has worked hard on these two initiatives. Thanks go to him as well.



A new pressure group has been formed, the Exmoor Rivers and Streams Group. We are members alongside the Lyn, Exe and Barle.

The aim is to demonstrate to the Exmoor National Park Authority the importance of rivers to the Park so that they can receive the protection they deserve. Earlier this year National Park staff were shown Head Weir Falls and the Larinier fishpass at Clapworthy to demonstrate RTFA's commitment to river improvement.

To return to my original plea - Can we have some normal weather, please? Early signs this season are encouraging. Good water has provided a number of fine spring salmon in the 9-12lb range (at least 40 by the end of May) as well as some early sea trout, one a huge fish of 16lbs. Given continuing good conditions let's look forward to a successful fishing season on our beautiful river.

Alex Gibson, Chairman



If you want to know.....

About the state of the river and for fishing reports
visit the

River Taw Fisheries Association Web Site on
www.rivertawfisheries.co.uk
and click on River Reports.

Hon. Treasurer's Report

The Association raised £200 more by way of subscriptions last year. There were one off costs relating to presentations to mark Bob Collett's retirement, Humphrey Wood's departure and Dylan Bright leaving WRT to take up a new role at South West Water. The net effect was to increase the River Taw Trust year-end transfer to £779 i.e. £100 up.

There was a net membership rise of 2, this despite 6 new members being recruited. Retirements from fishing, moving, etc. take their toll and we need to work hard to keep up our numbers. This is a matter for us all not just the Committee. If you know anyone who fishes and is not a member please get them to join. **Encourage those who fish your waters to join.**

The very significant sum of £18,500 in and out of the accounts deserves a special mention. David Chapman of the Westcountry Rivers Trust managed to raise funds from the Country Sports Project to enhance fishing where access is normally available to the public on the Taw system. Improvement to access, ladders, repairs to huts and similar work was undertaken by Blackdown Environmental, a specialist Devon based firm. The benefit to the RTFA is improved public access which ticks the boxes re grants, funds invested in our River system at nil net cost to us, and a Devon firm getting work. A win-win situation and thank you, David, for making this all happen.

The Trust: At the year-end we were able to transfer £779 to the Trust from the Association account where it will be ring fenced to help enhance the system. The auction proceeds amounted to £2,676 and overall we increased funds by £3,660. Thank you to all who contributed lots and to Chris Taylor and George Marsh for marshalling and running the auction.

We end the year with £14,500 in the Trust accounts. This year funds are earmarked as match funding for a grant from FLAG (the North Devon Fisheries Local Action Group) to enhance the gravels and remove trash dams in the North Devon area.

Finally – SUBSCRIPTIONS for 2014 are now DUE

They remain at:

Full Members (Riparian Owners)	£35
Associate Members	£15

- If you have not paid, think about a **Bankers Order** to save reminders in future. I shall be pleased to provide the instruction pro forma.

Otherwise send your subscription to: Mac McCarthy, Red Lion Cottage, The Square, North Molton, North Devon EX36 3HR

Mac McCarthy. Hon. Treasurer

Westcountry Rivers Trust (WRT)

It is now six months since I joined WRT. During this period I have been very reassured and impressed by the capability, commitment and professionalism of our people. This is matched by the people we deal with, particularly those of you within the River Associations who are so supportive of the work we do. I particularly appreciated the warm welcome and hospitality I was privileged to receive at your AGM, for which I'd like to thank Alex Gibson and the rest of your Committee.

Of course, the really impressive part of Westcountry Rivers Trust is the on-the-ground delivery of river improvement works that are making such a difference to the Taw catchment. Adrian Dowding's commitment to the Taw Access over Weirs Project has enabled him to overcome some really difficult challenges, but the end is in sight to achieve the main aim of project, with the main stem of the Taw allowing free migration of salmon, sea trout and other migratory species.



The Taw River Improvement Project (TRIP) Catchment Restoration Fund (CRF) project was the largest of our 5 successful bids which started in 2012, with an

overall budget of £1.86 million. The overall objective of the project is to tackle failures in water quality in order to meet the standards required by the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). The Taw catchment covers a large area and a variety of habitats from moorland to coastal dunes. So, uniquely amongst our CRF projects, a partnership approach was employed to bring together a breadth of knowledge and experience. We are working with a number of local groups including the RTFA.

The reasons for failure on the Taw are overwhelmingly high levels of phosphate and low populations of fish; the TRIP partnership is working to mitigate and remedy this through a range of intervention measures or changes in land management:

- WRT provides farm advice supported by a small capital grant scheme to protect watercourses, plus fisheries work to remove barriers and/or install fish passes to ease migration alongside riparian habitat protection and enhancement. We are also leading an academic research group to undertake detailed water quality analysis which aims to clarify detail behind failures and apportion key sources.
- North Devon Biosphere is carrying out surveys to identify current and potential habitat for the endangered freshwater pearl mussel as well as protect flood plain grazing marsh.

- Devon Wildlife Trust provides advice on wildlife habitat management, particularly Culm grasslands, co-ordinated alongside their Working Wetlands project.
- Farming and Wildlife SW offer detailed farm advice in the form of nutrient plans, soil protection and agronomy which assist farm management and protect water quality.
- Silvanus Trust offer specialist advice for the planting and management of woodlands, for environmental and economic opportunities as well as the protection of water quality.

Our combined approach has meant that we have been able to work with as many landowners as possible. As we are now entering the third and final year of the project, we are able to see the breadth of coverage that this has allowed us to achieve. We have successfully removed a number of barriers to fish migration. Other weirs are in the planning and design stage and fish habitat improvements and being made. Using advisers working on the ground, we have been building relationships with farmers and landowners - in the region of 300 contacts so far. Even for a relatively large catchment such as the Taw, this represents a very good uptake.

The small grant fund has been popular to the point of oversubscription and is now fully allocated. Between the various interventions delivered by the partners this represents an investment in the region of £170,000 (net of farmers own contributions). Furthermore, the Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) Capital grant scheme for 2014 was delivered in the Taw target areas by TRIP advisers securing further financial investment for the protection of water quality in the Upper Taw.

We look forward to seeing all of these actions coming to completion in the near future as step changes towards our objective to improve water quality. Hazel Kendall and Laurence Couldrick have done a great job in keeping our partners on track and ensuring that they are delivering water quality improvements that help us meet our objectives under the WFD.

We also have to look forwards and consider future projects. Laurence is working with the North Devon AONB, North Devon Biosphere, Devon Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency on developing the catchment based approach. We believe that the funding authorities will increasingly be looking towards the Catchment Based Approach when targeting future WFD funding, so we will ensure that the RTFA is well represented and I look forward to continuing to work with you into the future.

Jonathan Bailey C Eng, Chief Executive

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Also from WRT:

The Westcountry Angling Passport: what, how and why!

The Angling Passport scheme, originally Angling2000, was conceived by WRT over 10 years ago when it was realised that there was a great deal of river fishing not being used. The original concepts were – to provide anglers with a wide choice of well-priced wild fishing and to provide riparian owners with an income/ incentive to value and protect these rivers. These concepts still bear true. However, as a whole, it contributes much more.

Angling Participation is essential today if the sport is to thrive in the future. To this end angling needs to be available as inclusively as possible. Availability has to be regulated and managed of course but, in general terms, fishing needs to be readily available. **Riparian Owner Engagement** is key if we are to make owners aware and provide them with incentives to improve the condition of our rivers. **Raising Awareness** of the problems for our watercourses, both to the public and to our decision makers is equally as important if we are to improve them in the long-term. **Benefits to businesses**, such as accommodation providers and associated industries, are considerable bearing in mind that over 2000 rod days were participated through the Passport last season. **Health Benefits** provided by angling, both physical and mental, are also now being acknowledged by recent research.

There are now seven Passport schemes nationally, further information on these and our Westcountry Passport can be found at www.westcountryangling.com, or by phoning WRT on 01579 372140. I know first-hand that the opportunity to fish on our unique and wonderful rivers is hugely appreciated by both local and visiting anglers. I shall be delighted to take calls from riparian owners interested in providing fishing days to our scheme.

D. Chapman, Angling Development Officer
Westcountry Rivers Trust

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Environment Agency (EA)

Following the internal reorganisation update in the RTFA Summer 2013 Newsletter there have been further changes to the fisheries staff responsible for North Devon.

Bob Collett the Taw fisheries officer took early retirement at the end of July 2013. Unfortunately due to budget restraints within the Agency his post was not filled. This now leaves only two Fisheries Officers: Jeremy Boyd and myself, Paul Carter, to cover the North Devon catchment area, which includes the Taw/Torridge Estuary and the rivers

Torridge, Lew, Waldon, Okement and the Taw, Bray, Mole and Lyn.

Although it is disappointing that we are reduced to two fisheries officers I am afraid it is a sign of the times nationally. For geographic and effective working arrangements it was decided to split the river Taw down its length, Jeremy took responsibility for the right hand bank and all tributaries that join on that side and I have the left bank. For riparian owners who have double bank fishing on the Taw this may cause confusion with regard to who to contact but I am sure that will be a minor issue. The Taw runs its whole length parallel to the Torridge, so within 10 minutes I can cross from one to the other. You all know Jeremy Boyd who, in recent years while Bob was working on the Taw, has been responsible for the rivers Mole/Bray and Lyn.



By way of an introduction for those members who do not know me, I have been a Fisheries Officer on the Torridge and Taw/Torridge estuary since 1987. Although I have worked on the Taw for all that time it has mainly been at night with enforcement duties. As a salmon angler it has been a great pleasure to be working on the banks of the Taw as well as my beloved Torridge. At present I am also the Co-ordinator for Devon Fisheries Enforcement Officers.

Clearly with fewer officers our enforcement role is even more complex. With reduced enforcement officer numbers across the whole of Devon we now work much more as a joint team across the area when there is a requirement to provide more officers for specific patrols. As with all modern enforcement agencies there is a push to use “targeted intelligence led enforcement”.

This is where you all have a major role to play. Clearly our time spent on each area is reduced so we will not be able to gather as much information as we would have once. We need you all to be active “eyes and ears” for the rivers. This is **not** a requirement for you to get involved in dealing with illegal fishing activity. Leave that to us and the other enforcement agencies, but please if you

see or hear of illegal activities telephone the Agency’s 24 hour hotline on **0800 80 70 60** immediately. With such small officer numbers we cannot always guarantee to attend but if not the incident can be logged. This will assist us in planning our patrols.



Jeremy and I are also happy for you to use our mobile numbers to report any issues:

Jeremy Boyd 07768 278561
Paul Carter 07768 007363

Paul Carter, Environment Agency

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SOUTH WEST RIVERS ASSOCIATION (SWRA)

The voice of the rivers

This is a summary of the key matters of direct interest to the Taw. Much of SWRA's work is in support of the 20 individual member river associations, especially fighting developments potentially damaging to their interests. Increasingly initiatives and best practice on each river are being transferred to other rivers.

AGM

The AGM was held on 26 April. Roger Furniss gave an overview of the 10 years since Humphrey Wood had invited him to become Secretary during which time SWRA had become more important in working to protect the interests of individual river associations and their fishing. Contrary to previous expectations he has not retired.

The keynote speaker was George Stephenson, recently appointed Chairman of Angling Trust, who described the ways in which the Trust supports game angling.

Hydropower



The Secretary led the fisheries representatives on the Environment Agency's National Working Group. They achieved significant improvements in the flow protection conditions in the revised Good Practice Guideline following a long-winded and bureaucratic process. He also worked to achieve the best protection for fisheries in a number of new applications in the South West.

Canoeing

SWRA, with much appreciated input from the Dart, Lyn and Tavy, provided the bulk of the evidence of illegal canoeing in a dossier produced by Angling Trust/Fish Legal entitled 'Conflict on the Riverbank' which has gone to Ministers ahead of a meeting to put pressure on Canoe England to withdraw misleading public statements about access.

Water framework directive

SWRA made a major response to the public consultation on priorities for the next River Basin Plan 2015-2021, and coordinated responses from many individual associations. The Secretary is actively involved in advising the EA on delivery of the current and future plans and supports a number of rivers on their own voluntary support activities, always by invitation.

Licensed netting

We wish to see the end of all licensed netting in support of our ambition to see abundant stocks supporting good angling. The Marine Act 2009 relaxed the legislation which used to be overprotective of net fishing and provides an opportunity to reduce netting through lower Net

Limitation Orders which guarantee the number of licences issued and, possibly, shorter seasons and catch quotas. SWRA is supporting several associations in this area as well as lobbying the EA and Defra to take the opportunity afforded by the Marine Act to reduce netting in favour of the socio-economic benefits of better rod fishing.

Byelaw reviews



The Marine Act saw the replacement of the old Sea Fisheries Committees, dominated by commercial fishing interests, by Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA's) with a wider remit including conservation. There are two in our area – Cornwall & Devon and Severn. All IFCA's have been told by Defra to review all byelaws in their area, but progress is stalled. In some areas there are byelaws specifically aimed at protecting salmon and sea trout on migration. These we will lobby to keep although there is pressure from some sea fishing interests to get rid of them. In other areas we know that netting for sea fish is taking salmon and sea trout as a by-catch. Here we will be pressing for new byelaws. We expect to work closely with recreational sea anglers to campaign for the end of all netting in estuaries, with the possible exception of sand eel netting for bait.

We also anticipate a review of all fishery byelaws on rivers by the EA as part of the Government's drive to reduce regulation. One of the objectives will be to replace regulation with voluntary codes – a step towards our desire for more direct control over the fisheries we enjoy and manage. It will be very important that each river develops a very clear view on what it wants out of the review.

Representation

SWRA has a biannual formal liaison meeting with the EA and generally good personal working relations with its staff at all levels. Using this connection with the EA is now more important than ever since the abolition of all statutory advisory bodies. It is equally important that individual river associations are also seen as responsible bodies whose views matter.

One successful development is the creation of the Exmoor Rivers and Streams Group established to influence Exmoor National Park Policy which has tended to pay insufficient regard to rivers, including the Mole and Bray. Through this group RTFA hosted a visit by senior ENP staff to see the improvements to fish passage at Colleton and Clapworthy.

Roger Furniss, Secretary

Email:

furniss740@btinternet.com



Salmon & Trout Association (S&TA)

Supporting South West Rivers Association

I am very pleased to report that the Devon Branch of S&TA has continued its support to all the rivers here in the south west via SWRA. The Water Framework Directive, the EA byelaws review and the problems caused by canoeists are highest on the agenda. It was pleasing to note that there is a huge reduction in hydro applications, no doubt because developers have not realised the profits they anticipated!

Fishing Instruction for youngsters



The Devon Branch of S&TA is most grateful for the financial support the Taw and Torridge Associations give us. Without this support we would struggle to carry out this very worthwhile teaching.

As ever the legislative burden for carrying out this training gets more arduous and this year our Tuition Officer has had to have formal training to run the courses. All those involved have, for some time, required CRB checks. Whilst this level of control is regrettable it is essential as we continue to run these courses for youngsters aged nine to sixteen.

Last year the courses were held at the Exe Valley Fishery, Exeford, by kind invitation of Nick Hart, as they will be again this year. 16 youngsters attended the first training day in June, a great success, with most taking their supper home! Alas the October half-term day had to be cancelled at the last minute due to dangerous gales that weekend. The re-run 2 weeks later saw numbers reduced to 8, but again they caught fish.

First class instruction in casting, fly life, safety and landing that first trout was given by Bryan Martin, John Davidson and Ian Sorenson, without whose enthusiasm and skill these tuition days could not take place.

 This year our Branch has organised children's days on Sunday 8th June and 28th September again at the Exe Valley fishery. Anyone with young children/grandchildren, who might be interested, should let our organiser Fred Leach know. There is a nominal fee of £10 with the balance made up from the Branch.



Contact details are:
fredleach@bampton.eclipse.co.uk
01398 331019

Steve Phelps
Devon Branch Chairman

The River Taw

What does it mean to you?



The Taw means a lot to me for many reasons. It was the place where I first caught a Devon wild brown trout many years ago. It is the place where I now earn my living showing people how to fish the river and why I love it so much.

When people book a day's fishing we always say the trout are small and not easy to catch but if you can catch them here it will stand you in good stead for just about anywhere else.

I have shown hundreds of people my river. Some leave and find their own little piece of heaven elsewhere but many come back time and time again, captivated by the beauty of the area and, of course, the fishing.

The Taw is where I have made friends, fished with friends and also fished with some of my fishing heroes. Some are new to the river and soon see why I love it so much; others have fished it many times before.

When I am not working, trout are my preferred species and seeing them rise to my dry fly is about as good as life can get for me. I spend a lot of my time on the upper sections of the river in tree lined stretches which often make me feel as if I am fishing in a tunnel, a world far away from where I have left my car.

I also love casting a double handed rod for salmon on the lower sections of the river too, hoping for the line to tighten as my fly swings across a pool.

There is nothing like a warm summer's evening as the last of the sun drains from the sky and you hear the first crash of a sea trout as it takes to the air. The finest night I ever experienced did not involve an epic fight with a huge sea trout. I was fishing with my wife and she noticed a meteor flash across the sky, then another, then another. We lay back on the grass in our waders watching the Perseid meteor shower with the Taw gently burbling in the background. We now call this pool Meteor Pool. The pool is known under a different name but to us it is Meteor pool.

When the season is over I spend a lot of my time by salmon passes waiting for the moment when the leaper decides it is right to continue upstream. Nothing can prepare you for this sight - something I will never tire of.

Fly fishing has taken me around the world and no matter where I am I will always comment on the fish I have caught or a section of river I am standing in and compare it to the Taw. "That trout looks like a Taw

trout” or “This section is a bigger version of a bit of the Taw I know”.

When I get home again I might be fishing the stretch I was reminded of and as I slip a trout back into the water I smile as it is good to be back again.



Pete Tyjas

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TWO RIVERS.....AGAIN

Those of you with good memories will remember that I wrote an article for the 2012 Newsletter about the Taw and the Danube. This article is about the Taw and another famous river, the Rio Grande.

We all know that rivers have many functions and uses in addition to the most important one of all, providing us with a place to fish. As natural barriers rivers divide and delineate, running between properties and splitting towns and cities, counties and countries. It is all very natural.....until they change course. What happens then?

This question was made more pertinent to me when I read about the Rio Grande, the boundary between Mexico and the US since 1848, and the Horcon Tract . In 1906 an American irrigation company in Texas, concerned about loops in the river that might leave its new pumping station high and dry, cut a new channel on the northern side. A chunk of the US was cut off, but treaties stated that artificially created river diversions did not change the international boundary. The company was fined. The Mexican revolution came and went. Gradually the US lost interest in their piece of land. People living in the Horcon Tract went to Mexican schools and paid Mexican taxes. It was not until 1970 that a new boundary treaty was signed which gave the Horcon Tract to Mexico and granted American citizenship to anyone who could prove that they had been born there.



Move forward 100 years. Since 2006 the US has been constructing a fence 18 feet high to deter illegal immigrants; it is now 350 miles long and getting longer. It is built on the US side of the Rio Grande and is called the border fence, but in many

places it is nowhere near the border. Some landowners have access to their land on the south side of the fence; others do not. Some even have homes on the wrong side of the fence. To some extent the fence has become the new border, if not de jure, then certainly de facto.

I do not know what fishing if any there is in the Rio Grande. Not much of a salmon run you may be sure.

But what about those American fishermen who can't get to their fishing? Do they watch through the wire as Mexicans fish their favourite pools from the near bank? There may be the ironic situation where American fishermen gaze wistfully through the wire at their now inaccessible fishing while Mexican would-be immigrants gaze wistfully at the "promised land" from the other side. If you are an American fisherman who is lucky enough to live near one of the security gates in the fence do you have to take your passport with you every time you go fishing, even though you stay on American soil?



What does this have to do with the Taw? Not much in truth unless one looks at things in a fanciful way. Are there any parallels with the Taw? If the Tarka line had been built without level-crossings an interesting situation could have developed. This was brought home to me a few weeks ago when I went down to my fishing to discover that the railway people had padlocked the gates for safety reasons because the phone was out of order. You can climb over a level-crossing gate, but even a desperate fisherman can't climb over an 18 foot border fence.

Also think about ox-bows. When an oxbow lake is formed through natural causes the river goes straight on rather than round the loop. As I understand it, if the river is the boundary between two properties, the piece of land between the oxbow lake and the new river channel changes hands. However someone digging a channel to create the same effect and grab some additional land would have the EA coming down on him like a ton of bricks and would have to restore things the way they were. Any serious in-river work always needs EA permission. The Taw Valley is not the Wild West of the early 20th century.

When I looked at fishing in the Rio Grande I was disappointed to read that the lower reaches dry up in the summer and the estuary entrance is often completely blocked by a sandbank. We certainly have severe droughts and the Bideford Bar, but that seems to be chicken-feed in comparison. Things are always bigger and badder in the States. There is trout fishing in the upper reaches of the Rio Grande in Colorado, similar perhaps to the trout fishing we have high up on our system. I got quite excited, but also puzzled, when I read that the Rio Grande has a big run of sea trout thinking this was another connection with the Taw. Disappointment soon set in. I was reading about the Rio Grande in Argentina.

Rivers are always interesting and comparative "riverology" is an amusing subject, but yet again I think we can count ourselves lucky that the Taw runs through such a green and pleasant land.

Alex Gibson

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RTFA AGM and Dinner

Friday 20th March 2015
Highbullen Hotel



James Williams

Very sadly, last autumn one of the most notable members of the RTFA passed away. Nobody who knew James could fail to be enthused and impressed by his love of our rivers and everything associated with them.

James published two books based on his considerable knowledge and brought to life by his enthusiasm for the otter. Perhaps we, whilst remembering him, can consider the relevance in 'Tarka the Otter' of the words of Henry Williamson: "His joyful water-life and death in the Country of the Two Rivers".



And some local reflections:

"James will be sadly missed on the Braggmarsh Water and more broadly in RTFA circles. He loved the Taw as a naturalist and as a fisherman. It was always a pleasure and an education to talk to him about the river, its wildlife and especially his much loved otters."

Alex Gibson, RTFA Chairman.

"James was a true countryman and conservationist who had a unique ability to inspire others with his enthusiasm for field sports. His knowledge of otters was unsurpassed and whether casting a fly on the Taw or shooting with his exemplary spaniels, his warm personality and dry wit will be much missed by his many friends."

Richard Lloyd, Family Friend



River Taw Fisheries Association Committee

Chairman	Alex Gibson
Secretary	George Marsh
Treasurer	Mac McCarthy
Lower Taw	Martin Maxse Mark Maitland-Jones Anthony Pope
Upper Taw	Simon Phillips John Smith
River Mole	Peter Tyjas Andy Gray John Macro Chris Taylor
Associate Members' Representative	Richard Nickell*
IT Adviser	Bryan Martin*
Newsletter Editor	Judith Kauntze*
Salmon & Trout Association	Steve Phelps*

* Non-voting Members



River Taw Byelaws

Seasons

Salmon	1 March to 30 September
Sea Trout & Brown Trout	15 March to 30 September

Methods

Fly fishing permitted all season
Spinning permitted until 31 March
No other method or bait fishing permitted

Limits

Salmon	No salmon to be retained before 16 June No salmon greater than 70cms in length to be retained after 31 July
Salmon bag limits	2 fish in any 24 hour period 3 fish in any 7 day period 10 fish in a season
No rod caught salmon to be sold or offered for sale	
Sea Trout bag limits	5 fish in any 24 hour period 15 fish in any 7 day period 40 fish in a season Size limit 25cms
No rod caught sea trout to be sold or offered for sale	
Brown Trout	Size limit 20cms

Please remember our Voluntary Code
and return **ALL Sea Trout** under 1lb and over 4lb
and fish well within the bag limits



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