

INLAND FISHERIES COMMISSION

TASMANIA

NEWSLETTER

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Retirement of Mr. M. M. Johnstone

Mr. Max Johnstone attended his last Commission meeting on the 13th and 14th February, 1975. Mr. Johnstone has had a long interest in fisheries and was formerly a member of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Commission, the predecessor of the present Inland Fisheries Commission.

Mr. Johnstone attended the first meeting of the Inland Fisheries Commission on 7th February, 1959, and during his long term of office has seen many changes. He has been particularly active in securing the transfer of the jurisdiction of tidal parts of rivers to the Inland Fisheries Commission.

Mr. Johnstone worked hard for the conservation of the whitebait fishery and for the rehabilitation of Great Lake as a rainbow trout water.

He brought a wealth of angling experience to the Commission's deliberations and his sound business judgement has been of great assistance to members.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Johnstone for his valued contributions to the inland fisheries of the State and wished him well in his retirement.

Messrs. Bridges and Wallace supported the Chairman's remarks.

Mr. Ian French of Railton is the new Associate Commissioner representing North-western Tasmania on the Commission. Mr. French's appointment is effective from the 15th February, 1975. Mr. French has been an active member of the North-western Fisheries Association executive for many years.

Carp eradication programme

The Carp Eradication Bill received Royal Assent in December, 1974, and the programme was put in course early in the New Year. The programme was completed in January, 1975, and a repeat dosing of three dams gave negative kills.

The European carp, a common carp Cyprinus carpio, was found to occur only in farm dams in the Stowport and Yolla areas. Reports in other areas proved on investigation to be wild goldfish or tench. In the carp eradication programme over 10,000 carp were killed.

The Inland Fisheries Commission inspectors did a very thorough and competent job in the programme.

The Commission would like to thank members of the public for their co-operation in supplying details of places where carp were thought to be. The Commission would also like to thank the owners of dams for their co-operation in the eradication campaign.

Fish mortality in the Blythe River

The fish kill in the Blythe River which occurred in January 1975 was in no way connected with the carp eradication programme. Tests arranged by the Commission showed that the pH of the water in the vicinity of the kill was 12.5. Fish cannot tolerate such alkaline conditions.

It was estimated by inspectors that about 10,000 fish, most of which were mullet and Australian salmon, were killed. One brown trout was found dead.

Dam at Beaconsfield

The Beaconsfield angling branch of the Northern Tasmanian Fisheries Association has constructed a dam at Brandy Creek for use as a trout fishery. The Commission donated \$200 towards the cost of constructing the dam.

Salvage

When the Hydro-Electric Commission closed the outlet from Little Pine Lagoon to maintain a higher level of water in that storage during the summer months, fish salvage operations were undertaken in the Monpeelyata Canal. Field officers salvaged 172 brown trout fry and yearlings and set them free in Little Pine Lagoon. Undoubtedly, the higher summer water level was responsible for good fishing in Little Pine Lagoon in the summer.

Danger at Lake Ashford

The Mines Department has advised that a dangerous situation exists at Lake Ashford on the West Coast. Following a recent slip, a tidal wave occurred in the enclosed water of Lake Ashford and it is likely that further slips could occur.

Anglers are also requested to avoid using Lake Bellenger and Lake Ashford as there is a possibility of further land movements occurring, until advice has been received from the Mines Department that the danger no longer exists.

Old Boyer Road

The old Boyer road, from Bridgewater to Boyer, has provided an access to the eastern shore of the Derwent River for trout fishermen and picnickers.

The Bridgewater Council is concerned that some persons have been removing top soil from the area and others have been using the area as a rubbish dump.

Anglers are urged to co-operate with the authorities in helping to detect the dumping of litter on this area as the Council agreed to leave the old Boyer road open as a recreation area provided the Council was not involved in costly maintenance and litter clearance in the area.

Funds sought for eel research

The Commission recently submitted a proposal to the Fishing Industry Research Committee for financial assistance for a three-year comprehensive investigation into eels in Tasmania.

The Commission feels that in the absence of biological knowledge on eels in Tasmania, it would be prudent to conduct such an investigation before unlimited exploitation of eels in Tasmania is encouraged.

The Commission is aware of the tragic consequences of unwise over-exploitation of vulnerable stocks of fishes.

Trout at Lake Pedder

A party of New Norfolk anglers took five large brown trout in the Scott's Peak area at Lake Pedder in February. The fish ranged from 3.5 to 6.75 kg (8 to 15 lbs). The fish were caught on flatfish.

Trout angling in the Western Lakes

In the post-Christmas angling season fish up to $2\frac{1}{2}$ kg (5 lb 15 oz) were taken from Carters Lagoon and similar sized fish were taken from Ada Lagoon.

One angler took his bag limit from Howe's Lagoon Bay and another landed eight fish from this water.

The Commission was pleased to receive a number of tagged brown trout from Lake Botsford which fished very well in late January and February. An interesting catch from this water was one rainbow trout weighing 3.2 kg (7 lb).

Lagoon of Islands fishery

A visitor to the Lagoon of Islands in November, 1974, has written from Queensland of his experiences at Lagoon of Islands.

He claimed that the Lagoon of Islands offered possibly the best dry fly fishing he had ever experienced, with excellent conditioned fish to about 6 lb in weight.

His total catch of three consecutive afternoons of twenty-two fish, with twelve taken on the last day which weighed 44 lbs, is evidence of remarkable fishing.

He noted that seventy-five per cent of his catch consisted of rainbow trout and that the majority of the females still carried spawn.

It will be recalled that, owing to the dry conditions, there was little flow in the tributary flowing across the Interlaken-Steppes road and the rainbow trout had a very poor spawning year in this tributary.

Five trout poachers fined \$1,255

At the Bothwell Court of Petty Sessions on the night of the 9th December, 1974, Anthony Walter Bailey of Hamilton appeared and pleaded guilty to wilfully disturbing spawning fish at Lagoon of Islands, taking twenty-four rainbow trout by means other than a rod and line, taking twenty-four rainbow trout from a closed water, and using a light for the purpose of taking fish.

In prosecuting Mr. M. Duncan stated that Bailey was a second time offender as he was convicted previously of taking fish out of season on 25th June, 1972.

On the first charge he was fined \$50.00, on the second charge \$100.00, on the third charge \$50.00 and on the fourth charge \$50.00. A special penalty of \$10.00 for each fish was imposed and costs of \$2.35 were imposed.

Geoffrey Wayne Heawood of Hamilton appeared and pleaded guilty to wilfully disturbing spawning fish in Blackburn Rivulet at Lagoon of Islands, taking twenty-four rainbow trout at Blackburn Rivulet, Lagoon of Islands, by means other than rod and line, taking fish from a closed water and using a light for the purpose of taking fish.

On the first charge he was fined \$75.00, on the second \$160.00, on the third \$50.00 and on the fourth \$50.00. Costs amounting to \$2.35 were imposed and a special penalty of \$10.00 per fish for each of the twenty-four trout taken.

Senior Inspector Duncan informed the Court that Heawood was a second time offender and was convicted previously of taking trout out of season on 25th June, 1972.

Fisheries Inspector B. Isaac gave evidence on behalf of the Inland Fisheries Commission.

Terrence Wayne Wadley of 46 Bonella St., Ravenswood, did not appear and his case was heard ex parte. He was charged with giving a false name and place of abode, illegally disturbing spawning fish at Lagoon of Islands, using a light to take fish, taking four rainbow trout by means other than rod and line, taking rainbow trout from a water flowing into Lagoon of Islands and of a second offence of refusing to state name and place of abode.

Wadley was found guilty on all charges. On the first he was fined \$150.00, on the second \$50.00, on the third \$50.00, on the fourth \$50.00, on the fifth \$50.00 and on the sixth \$200.00. A special penalty of \$5.00 for each of the four fish was imposed and costs of \$2.35 were imposed.

Fisheries Officer V. Spencer gave evidence and Senior Inspector M. Duncan prosecuted.

Gale John Harris of Upper Natone appeared and pleaded guilty to three charges.

The first of wilfully disturbing spawning fish at Blackburn Rivulet, Lagoon of Islands, taking fish by means other than rod and line at Lagoon of Islands, and taking fish from a water flowing into Lagoon of Islands.

On the first charge he was fined \$30.00, on the second \$30.00 and on the third \$30.00. A special penalty of \$5.00 for each of the eight fish taken was imposed and court costs of \$2.35 were imposed.

Fisheries Officer B. Isaac gave evidence and Senior Inspector M. Duncan prosecuted.

Messrs. J. Bignell and L. White were on the Bench.

Three charges against Oswald Tammpuu of 8 Wattle Place, Burnie, were heard ex parte. He was charged with having an assembled rod and reel in his possession during a closed season at No. 2 Canal Penstock Lagoon, attempting to take fish during the closed season and using bait or lure other than artificial fly or worm in No. 2 Canal Penstock Lagoon.

Evidence was given by Fisheries Officer B. Vanderfeen and fines of \$30.00 were imposed on each charge, together with \$3.25 costs.

Messrs. Downie and Bignell and White, Justices of the Peace, were on the Bench.

At a Children's Court held at Bothwell on the night of 9th December, 1974, a youth was charged with disturbing spawning fish at Lagoon of Islands, taking fish by means other than rod and line at Lagoon of Islands and taking fish from a water flowing into Lagoon of Islands.

The youth was placed on a bond of \$50.00 to be of good behaviour for two years.

\$700 fine for carp in dams

The Melbourne "Herald" of 6th November, 1974, reported that a man was fined \$700 in the City Court, Melbourne, for keeping European carp in dams on his farm.

Mr. G. S. Hoare, SM, said, "I'm not a fisherman but I'm aware of the media's and the public's concern towards European carp being a noxious fish, and breeding in streams.

David Opat, 52, property manager of Willow Lake, Gladysdale, via Yarra Junction, Victoria, pleaded guilty to a charge of having kept certain noxious fish, European carp, on his property, contrary to the provisions of the Victorian Fisheries and Wildlife Department.

Douglas Cordell, a Victorian Fisheries and Wildlife officer, told Mr. Hoare, that European carp were classified as noxious fish by his Department.

"They spoil the breeding and feeding grounds of all other fish in streams and lakes by the manner in which they feed", he said.

Cordell said that "on December 4, 1973, I went with another department officer to the Willow Lake property in Gladysdale.

We inspected nine dams on the property and found evidence of carp in each one.

"I saw 12 carp in the property lake.

"Carp can transfer to other areas. because all dams and lakes in this valley eventually empty into Slattery Creek."

Cordell went on: "In January this year, we went back to Opat's property and poisoned all of the dams and the lake.

"Some of the carp weighed 9 lb.

It took six men two days to do the operation."

(D. D. Lynch),
Commissioner

28th February, 1975