

# Attracting New Anglers



INLAND FISHERIES SERVICE  
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## Angler News – November 2005



The Free Fishing Day was once again extremely successful even though one venue, Penguin was flooded and had to be cancelled.

Free Fishing Day is a joint project between angling clubs throughout the State and the Inland Fisheries Service.

Angling clubs such as, Clarence, Launceston, Glenorchy, Penguin, Longford, George Town, Wynyard as well Oatlands High School have been long time supporters and facilitators of Free Fishing Day.

Free Fishing Day gives would be anglers a chance to try their luck for one day per year without the expense of purchasing an angling licence.



*Enjoying the sun and waiting for a bite at Curries River Dam during Free Fishing Day.*

It was very pleasing to see quite a few family groups enjoying this healthy outdoor pursuit

Throughout the State approximately 2 000 anglers took advantage of the day with the weather conditions close to perfect.

Clubs and Inland Fisheries staff assisted anglers with tuition, information and assistance wherever possible. Some clubs also had a BBQ which proved popular.

Earlier in November the IFS attended the Deloraine Craft Fair where a fishout pond was popular with young up and coming anglers.



*Matthew Drake with a rainbow caught from the fishout pond at the Deloraine Craft Fair.*



*Nick Bull with a rainbow caught at Waverley Dam during Free Fishing Day.*

**Boat Prize drawn 12 December and announced in the next Angler News**

### Waters Stocked Since October 2005

Lake	Average Size (grams)	Species	Numbers
Meadowbank	200	rainbow trout	5 818
Four Springs	350	brown trout	860
Bronte	250	brook trout	1 000
Rostrevor	0.16	brown trout	5 000
Dulverton	200	rainbow trout	230
Waverley	350	rainbow trout	300
Craigbourne	2 500	rainbow trout	260

During the past three months the IFS has been very busy restocking the State's fisheries. In total, nearly 130 000 rainbow trout were transferred into 23 waters around the State. This equates to somewhere in the vicinity of 25 tonnes of fish moved in the period August to October.

The fish averaged around 200 grams and were purchased from Tassal - Russell Falls farm (at Karanga).

Anglers are now happily catching some of these fish.

The Inland Fisheries Service encourages the distribution of Angler News and the information contained therein. When distributing this material the IFS requests that the source be acknowledged as being Angler News.

## Algae In NZ Rivers Could Threaten Australian Streams

There is growing concern in New Zealand about the spread of the invasive northern hemisphere algae *Didymosphenia geminata*, commonly known as 'didymo'. The organism could be accidentally introduced into Australian waterways via un-sterilised fishing gear, wet clothing, etc.

There is a fair amount of conflicting information about didymo. The following summary has been put together with information from the NZ government's Biosecurity New Zealand website.

Didymo is a freshwater algae native to the northern forest and alpine areas of Europe, Asia and North America. It is widely spread in lakes, but also in rivers. In NZ it appears to thrive in clear, shallow and steadily flowing water where it attaches itself to the river bed by stalks and it forms long tails of fibrous material.

According to NZ reports it spreads and covers the bed of a stream, smothering aquatic invertebrates and plant life and displacing the habitat of fish. However in its native habitats in the northern hemisphere it is apparently not considered such a scourge, (and hence very little research has ever been done about controlling it.)

Didymo can spread from a single drop of water. Once spread throughout the waterway didymo occasionally forms huge blooms. According to the northern hemisphere experience, the presence of didymo does not automatically lead to nuisance blooms. Indeed blooms seem the exception rather than the rule.

Didymo looks slimy but feels like wet cotton wool, and when washed up on the banks looks very much like wet toilet paper.

Despite the widespread concern about the algae, there is limited and unreliable evidence of negative impacts on fish and invertebrates.

Angling and other human activities are not the only ways it can be spread. It can be spread, for example, by water birds and animals.

Currently there is no known way to eradicate didymo once it is established. Biosecurity New Zealand is currently concentrating on containing outbreaks and assessing the impacts and range of the algae, and so far they are resisting calls for more aggressive action, in case the cure turns out to be worse than the disease.

Most expert comments seem to conclude that there is no short or medium term possibility of eradication. There are no known methods that enable biologists to eradicate rivers of an organism of this type, on this scale.

There is apparently no known explanation for why an algae that is widespread in lakes in the northern hemisphere is suddenly showing signs of thriving in southern hemisphere rivers.

The very small amount of research into didymo does not yet indicate that fisheries are badly affected by it. Dr Gerry Closs of Otago University, in an overview of the problem distributed on the internet in early October, comments:

*"The limited information available indicates that didymo does pose a degree of risk for our rivers, particularly where water clarity is high and nutrients low. Equally, the limited available evidence suggests that didymo only occasionally forms significant blooms, and that they are generally limited in area and tend to disappear after varying periods of time. Whilst a total takeover of New Zealand rivers by didymo can never be excluded, there is no evidence to suggest that such a scenario is even vaguely likely."*

Didymo was first noticed in October 2004 in the Lower Waiau and Mararoa Rivers in Southland. It had already spread for many kilometers and it is likely that it had been present for some years prior to discovery. It has now been confirmed to be in the Hawea, Upper Clutha, Von, Oreti, Upper Waiau and Buller Rivers of the South Island. Biosecurity New Zealand is currently undertaking a major search of waterways to see where else it is present.

Contrary to some reports there is no evidence that didymo is present in Australia, apart from a very dubious reference to it by a collector in the 1880s. Indeed the Biosecurity New Zealand website lists other countries in which didymo is found and does not mention Australia).

With the significance of the angler tourist trade between Australia and New Zealand, this news is of grave concern for our freshwater fishery. Anglers traveling to New Zealand need to ensure that their fishing gear, that is waders, boots, net, reels, flies and wet clothing are adequately cleaned when returning to Australia.

Biosecurity New Zealand has already introduced strict controls on movement of items, animals etc out of affected areas. These controls include recommendations on cleaning gear.

We are not aware of any action by AQUIS on this issue.

Further information is available from Biosecurity New Zealand's website at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests-diseases/plants/didymo/>.



*In early growth stages didymo forms small bubbly colonies and a thick brown layer on rocks. Although it appears slimy, it feels like wet cotton wool.*

**Photo from NZ Department of Conservation website**

**This information was provided by Dr. Peter Davies of Freshwater Systems.**

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## Carp Update Spring 2005

The carp management program is at a critical stage as it attempts to stop any of the maturing female carp from spawning during this spring/summer period. Female carp recruited from the last major spawning, in the year 2000, are due to start becoming sexually mature this season. The team is on a daily watch in an attempt to ensure that none of these fish sneak under our guard and successfully spawn.

The efforts undertaken over the cooler months to block the prime spawning sites with barriers and traps are now proving their worth by limiting opportunities for spawning. However, carp are known to be opportunistic and when ready to spawn will go all out to find the best site from the limited areas left. This is when the large male carp that have been implanted with radio transmitters become critical and lead the team to any spawning event.

The barriers and traps have proven to be very successful in capturing carp and limiting access to preferred spawning sites. They support the other techniques used to target the species.

**Lake Crescent:** Early in October a number of male transmitter fish were targeted at the mouth of Agnews Creek. This effort resulted in the first female carp being captured in this lake since November 2003. This may prove to be a very important capture and supports our belief that there are still a small number of females in this lake. Since then there has been a considerable amount of movement and capture of the transmitter fish with no further females to date.

**Lake Sorell:** Over a ten day period in late October/early November the carp kept coming in waves onto the front of Kermodes Marsh being stimulated by the rising level and warm temperatures. During this period, despite being battered by continued capture, the transmitter males continued to lead us to these aggregations. We certainly got to know each of these fish on a personal basis,



Checking the traps that have been placed either side of the barrier net which splits Lake Sorell.

with some of them being caught on six occasions in ten days. A total of 92 carp were caught and removed from the lake during this period among which were 26 females that were potentially only hours away from spawning.

The barrier nets that has been used to split the lake through the Blowfly and Isthmus have proved successful in separating the fish but the traps on these nets have not been as successful as we would have liked. At times transmitter carp have been lined up on either side of the net but would not enter the traps. It is intended to try other trap types over the summer.

All in all it has been a very busy time and we now await the next warm spell to get another shot at them.

## IFS Inspectors Receive 35 Years Service Award

On November 9 Stephen Hepworth was recognised as having served 35 years of service with the State government. Steve started out in the Forestry Commission before going to the Parks and Wildlife Service and eventually to the Inland Fisheries Service.

Also receiving the 35 years Service Award but absent from the presentation was Noel Maroney. Noel has been with the IFS for all of the 35 years.

You may have met these guys on their regular patrols of our inland waters.



Minister for Primary Industries Stephen Kons presents Steve Hepworth with his award.