



Ayrshire Rivers Trust

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT

for years ending 31st Jan 2014 and 31st Jan 2015.

Mission Statement:

“To preserve a valuable part of our natural heritage for the enjoyment of current and future generations, through the conservation, enhancement and development of our freshwater habitats and the fisheries they support”

Board of Trustees:

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Alex Anderson (Retired 30/04/2014)

Robin Wilson

Peter Galloway (Retired from role as Vice Chairman 27/08/14)

Trust Manager and Head Biologist – Stuart Brabbs – stuartbrabbs@ayrshireriverstrust.org

Biologist and Project Manager – Gillian MacIntyre – gillian@ayrshireriverstrust.org

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Cover Photo: Dalcairney Falls, on the Linn Burn near Dalmellington. (Copyright of ART).



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**BEST WISHES TO THE
AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST**



CHAIRMANS INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Twelfth Annual report of Ayrshire Rivers Trust. Like the previous report it covers a two year period from 1 February 2013 until 31 January 2015.

This is my first Annual report as Chairman of the Trust and it would be remiss of me from the outset not to mention the outstanding work of my predecessor, Peter Kennedy, who was not only responsible for establishing the Trust in 2000 but continues to provide me with invaluable support and guidance in his role as Vice Chairman and Trustee. Peter's contribution to fishing and country sports in general, across Scotland has been considerable and I know that he is well respected for this by his peers across the country. I only hope that I can follow in his footsteps and make a similar contribution.



On the subject of support I am extremely grateful for the support that the Trust receives from the four District Salmon Fishery Boards, our many members, volunteers who provide assistance on a regular basis and everyone who contributes in some way to the continuing success of the Trust. Without this support, be it financial or otherwise, the Trust simply could not survive and continue to provide high quality fishery management advice or undertake the multi-faceted work that we do across the whole of Ayrshire.

Our greatest resource is, of course, our staff and I am grateful for the advice and guidance that I receive from Stuart Brabbs, Trust Manager, Gordon Macdermid, Trust Administrator/project officer, Gillian McIntyre, Biologist/project manager, who is currently on Maternity Leave, as well as our Seasonal staff. The professional and local knowledge of the team is second to none and it is a pleasure to work with them for the benefit of the environment and fishing in Ayrshire. The staff work tirelessly to deliver high quality services and respond to the needs of the angling community across the County. This cannot be an easy task and I know that they work many long days to ensure that the Trust is held in high regard. During the period of this report projects came to an end and staff moved on to new posts. Helen Downie moved to the Scottish Government and Meryl Norris to a new post in Wales. Both of them are doing well and I am sure that they are missing the Trust.

There have also been a number of changes in Trustees over the past two years, Peter Galloway retired in August 2014 and Alex Anderson retired in April 2014. My personal thanks go to both of them for their contributions over the years. Jim Mair from Darvel was appointed as a Trustee in October 2014 and Jim brings considerable knowledge of the River Irvine and his wealth of experience as a bailiff. I am grateful for the support of all of the Trustees and for their input to the work of the Trust.

Like the majority of charitable organisations, we have faced many challenges over the past two years, not least financial due to funding streams coming to an end and the effects of the downturn in the economy. Thankfully we have now turned the corner and are now on a firm financial foundation with a sustainable budget and great staff and Trustees. However, as I write this report the future of the Trust and the DSFB's is the subject of a Scottish Government consultation on the Reform of Wild Fisheries. The Trust has fully engaged in this process and has responded to this consultation. The outcome will no doubt become clearer later in the year and we are well prepared for any challenges that may come our way.

In conclusion I hope that you enjoy reading this report and that it will give you a brief insight into our work.

William Stafford, 2015



MANAGERS REPORT

Despite a very difficult financial climate over the past 2-3 years, the Trust has managed to keep its head above water and this is largely down to Trustees and staff who have worked tirelessly to secure the necessary funds to avoid cash flow difficulties. For the third successive year we have met our financial targets and have made a small operating surplus. Our thanks to all concerned and we are grateful for the support that we receive from our members, the Boards and our partner organisations.



With the Carrick Invasive Species Project and the CIRB project ending in 2014, we look back with a sense of pride at our achievements. Looking forward presents the harsh reality that there are few funders who are willing to support non-native species control despite recognition of their devastating impacts on biodiversity and habitats. We are therefore seeking the support of riparian owners, volunteers, angling clubs and anyone with an interest in the environment to continue the good work.

The staff are the backbone of the Trust and as ever there have been changes. Meryl Norris left for Wales to continue her work on invasive species and Helen Downie took up a post with Marine Scotland Science at Montrose as a biologist. Gillian, our project manager and biologist announced that she was expecting her first baby and went on maternity leave during February 2015. Gordon Macdermid continues as our administrator and project officer but will take over Gillian's duties in her absence. I remain as the Trust's manager and look forward to the coming challenges.

Government targets for renewable energy are driving wind farm and hydro developments which we continue to comment on and monitor. Similarly we monitor the environmental impact of the opencast coal mining industry in East Ayrshire despite substantial collapse of this industry recently. One notable development that has been years in the planning finally got underway in May of 2014, as the refurbishment of Catrine Dam commenced. The consultation process has been ongoing since 2007 and although fraught with problems, it has been good to see some progress. We expected improved fish passage as a result of works to the ladder, but by the end of the summer it was clear that situation was not as anticipated. Hopefully further improvements will be completed in 2015, giving the fish a clear run to their spawning grounds.

Catch returns for 2013 and 2014 were poor on the whole with weather conditions largely unfavorable for angling and water levels unattractive to waiting salmon. Catch returns on all rivers for both years were well below the 10 year average. Monitoring juvenile stocks allows us to assess spawning success and results in 2013 were generally very encouraging but reduced in 2014 but on the whole remained above the 10 year average on all but one river. There is no doubt they could be better. The marine survival of salmon is increasingly concerning yet an area where we have no control. We must continue to improve fresh water habitats and stocks wherever we can but without improvements in marine survival, the future looks bleak.

The Wild Fisheries Review was launched in 2014 with Andrew Thin seeking comments and contributions from anglers, Trusts and Boards. By its conclusion, 53 recommendations were made to Scottish Government. How angling will be managed in the future appears to be uncertain leading to great unrest amongst all involved.

The Trust will persevere to deliver benefits wherever we can and whilst there may great debate across Scotland of how fisheries should best be managed, on a local level we know what we need to do and will get on with the job in hand.

Stuart Brabbs, 2015



CATRINE DAM

After years in the consultation and planning stages, work to Catrine Dam finally commenced in 2014 with all concerned hopeful of a good result from the planned improvements. The contractors moved on to site in May, quickly setting about installing piling above the dam and bypass pipes to allow them to manage flows and dry the site.

One of the first tasks was to make improvements to Anderson's Pool. ART's biologist and the previous designer employed by Catrine Community Trust had agreed on the requirements for Anderson's and this component was delivered early in the works programme to everyone's satisfaction. The river was diverted through the voes and over pumped enabling the pool to be drained and the concreting work to take place. ART staff were present on several occasions to rescue numerous fish from the pools whilst work was under way. Some very large salmon were rescued much to the surprise of onlookers along with hundreds of juvenile trout, salmon, eels and lampreys. All the fish were released upstream of the works in safe areas.



Catrine fish ladder entrance in high water – fish continue to have difficulty finding the entrance.

Fortunately the spring and summer were some of the driest on record and the contractors rarely missed a day due to the weather. By the end of September, the dam encasement was completed well ahead of schedule. However by this time it was obvious that the fish pass was less than satisfactory. In all but low flows the pass was inaccessible to fish, as a result of the works to the dam apron. The smooth mortar finish causes the flow to accelerate and run towards the entrance to the fish pass, creating an area of high turbulence, obscuring the lower chamber to migrating fish. ART and the River Ayr District Salmon Fishery Board have highlighted their concerns over this issue to both SEPA and Catrine Community Trust and we await improvements which we are assured will come early in 2015. In the meantime, salmon and trout managed to continue their journey as spate conditions dropped. The fish pass itself has received several alterations and we believe it should operate satisfactorily but await installation of a Vaki counter that will confirm this.



Andersons weir in full spate conditions.



PUNDEAVON RESERVOIR SURVEYS

ART were engaged by Scottish Water to survey the fish population within Pundeavon Reservoir near Kilbirnie. The reservoirs dam wall is in need of considerable repairs. Consequently, Scottish Water made the decision to decommission the redundant facility. The fish survey was requested as a biosecurity measure to identify the fish species present, in advance of releasing water into the River Garnock. This proactive approach to biosecurity is welcomed by ART.

We had to use a boat, to allow us to set nets, survey non-native plants and invertebrates using an underwater camera. Launching into a steep sided reservoir was a mission in its own right but we were soon afloat and set about several days of intensive surveying between dawn and dusk.



Gillian and Gordon pull a net at the end of the first day.



The only stocked trout caught during the surveys.

The most reliable survey method available for deep water is unfortunately gill netting and we reluctantly had to accept that some fish would be killed. Various net sizes were deployed at a range of depths to ensure that representative samples were collected. Our concerns that we may catch large numbers (as the loch has been stocked over successive years) soon faded as we only managed to capture a few small wild brownies and a single stocked brownie of approximately 14". No rainbow trout or other introduced species featured in the catch. This was good news for Scottish Water but concerning to the angling club. Minnow traps were deployed in the reservoirs margins this produced minnows and stone loach but fortunately no crayfish.



Getting prepared to set a net at Pundaevon Reservoir.

The survey results indicated that although there were wild and stocked trout present in the reservoir, they were in low densities and should cause little concern if released into the River Garnock as the levels are reduced prior to removal of the dam wall. This project was an interesting diversification for the Trust, we are continually expanding our remit and although it is challenging to deliver all the work that is expected of us, the staff love a challenge. This project was essential to protect the River Garnock from non-native introductions.



CONTROLLING INVASIVE PRIORITY NON-NATIVE SPECIES AND RESTORING NATIVE BIODIVERSITY (CIRB)



The CIRB project was a four year, cross border project with 75% funding coming from the EU Interreg IVA programme, match funding in Ayrshire was provided by East Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, North Ayrshire Council and SEPA. The £2.3 million project was led by Queens University Belfast with partners including Ayrshire Rivers Trust (ART), Galloway Fisheries Trust (GFT), Argyll Fisheries Trust (AFT), Tweed Forum, River and Fisheries Trust of Scotland (RAFTS), Inland Fisheries Ireland and Ulster University. In Ayrshire the main aim of the project was to control three invasive non-native plant species (INNPS), Giant hogweed (GH), Japanese knotweed (JK) and Himalayan balsam (HB). ART have been using a combination of staff, trained volunteers and contractors following a strategic control programme, this work was overseen by the project officer. As well as controlling INNPS the CIRB project trained over 50 volunteers to national standards (NPTC PA6AW) in the safe use of pesticides and 4 in the use and maintenance of brushcutter/strimmers (LANTRA) with some of these volunteers going on to gain employment within the industry. Awareness raising events across Ayrshire including the island of Arran, helped recruit volunteers who have contributed well in excess of 300 hours towards

the control programme.

Surveys of the 6 main river catchments and selected coastal burns were carried out prior to the project with further monitoring taking place in 2012 and 2013. These have shown great reductions in the presence of INNPS in all catchments bringing many benefits.

To give an idea of the scale of the project, the information in the table shows the number of man days spent controlling INNPS on each river catchment and the costs involved over the four years of the project (one man day is eight hours).

Area	Man Days	Cost
Ayr, Lugar, Coyle, Fail & Bogend Burn	349	£65,668
Irvine, Annick, Kilmarnock Water & Clerkland Burn	291	£58,728
Garnock	62	£12,174
Girvan, Dryrock Burn	43	£8010
Doon, Chapleton Burn	18	£3,280
Stinchar	14	£2,940
Coastal burns – Pow, Hogston & Rumbling Burn	53	£11,690
TOTAL:	816 or 6,528 hours of labour	£162,490

Although the CIRB project came to an end in December 2014, ART are seeking funding to allow contractors and trained volunteers to continue with the control strategy.



CARRICK INVASIVE SPECIES PROJECT (CISP)

The Carrick region and its two main river catchments the Girvan and Stinchar were grouped together to form the Carrick invasive species project (CISP). These river catchments are currently impacted by the presence of Himalayan balsam (HB), Japanese knotweed (JK) and American mink (AM). The project ran from the 1st April 2012 until the 31st March 2014.

Project aims

The CISP was designed to raise awareness of the issues associated with INNS and to provide people from the local area with the skills required to undertake the sustainable control of these species in the long term.

- Raise awareness of INNS issues amongst local communities and landowners.
- Provide education on INNS.
- Create community involvement.
- Train volunteers.
- JK, HB and AM best practice control.
- Promote biosecurity best practice.



Himalayan balsam bashing

Funding

The project funding was developed to include the employment of a project officer, training for volunteers, equipment, vehicle costs, awareness material and management costs.

Local funding sources identified for the project area were: Scottish and Southern Energy's Carrick Futures community benefit fund and Scottish Power's Hadyard Hill community benefit fund, The Lendal Environmental Trust, Girvan and Stinchar District Salmon Fishery Boards and Ayrshire LEADER 2007-2014 programme.

Volunteers trained during CISP

- 33 obtained their NPTC PA6AW certificates.
- 17 attended LANTRA brushcutter training and obtained their certificates.

Volunteer effort and treated areas

JK treated on the Stinchar catchment	
River Stinchar main stem	15,883 m ²
Duisk	18,616 m ²
Cross Water	1,740 m ²
Water of Greig	16m ²
Craileoch Burn	2,019 m ²
TOTAL:	38,274m²
JK treated on the Girvan Catchment	
River Girvan main stem	4,596m ²
Mill Burn	72m ²
Quarrelhill Burn	1,139m ²
TOTAL:	5,807m²
A total of 91 volunteer hours were spent controlling Japanese knotweed in the Girvan catchment.	



Spraying a stand of Japanese knotweed

Total volunteer time spent on Himalayan balsam and mink control in the Girvan and Stinchar catchments.

- 225 volunteer hours spent on mink monitoring and control
- 193 volunteer hours spent controlling Himalayan balsam



GREY SQUIRREL CONTROL PROJECT



Grey squirrel traps



Feeding stations – fully loaded with nuts

The Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group (ARSG) received funding for a two year Grey squirrel control programme. The purpose of this project is to attempt to stop the spread of Grey Squirrels into the Stinchar and Girvan valleys where the native Red Squirrels are still to be found. In other areas the Grey Squirrels have driven out the Reds. They asked ART to employ and manage a project officer, as the ARSG did not have the capacity to do so. The project started in July 2013, with the Grey Squirrel Project Officer, Joram Smit starting mid-September 2013. Since then 46 regular trapping stations have been established in the Stinchar valley and 22 within the Girvan valley. 8 active volunteers undertake regular trapping at additional sites. These locations are worked on a cyclical basis.

Table 1: Details of feeding stations, traps and captures during Oct 2013 and June 2014

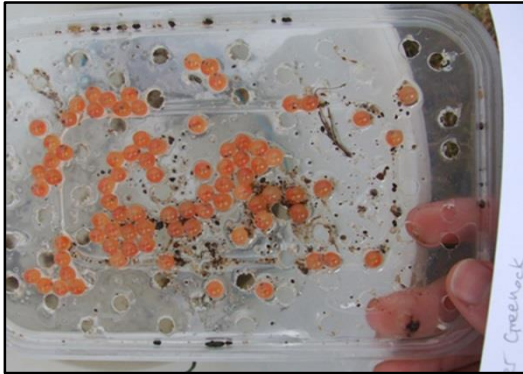
Location	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total
Girvan Valley										
Feed stations/Traps	17/51	35/105	37/111	15/45		11/33	18/54	10/30	19/57	
Grey Captures	8	66	118	1		90	73	34	19	409
Red Captures						1				1
Stinchar Valley										
Feed stations/Traps					10/30	10/30	9/27	14/42	37/111	
Grey Captures					38	15	20	18	21	112
Red Captures					4	3				7

38 volunteers are actively supporting the Grey Squirrel Project Officer across the project area. Around half of the volunteers have received instruction and guidance in relation to legal and humane requirements in operating live feeding traps, dispatching captured grey squirrels and the method for taking blood samples for squirrel pox virus testing. Along with volunteers, SRUC students have been trained in live trap setting and have trialed the use of camera traps at feeding stations.



RIVER DOON AND RIVER AYR EGG SURVIVAL TRIAL

The purpose of this trial was to determine whether salmon egg survival were compromised in key locations in the Doon and Ayr catchments. Electrofishing results had indicated poor juvenile salmon stocks in areas of the upper River Ayr catchment, particularly those associated with mining activity, and concerns have been raised on the upper Doon that few adult salmon were returning to traditional spawning grounds to complete their lifecycle.

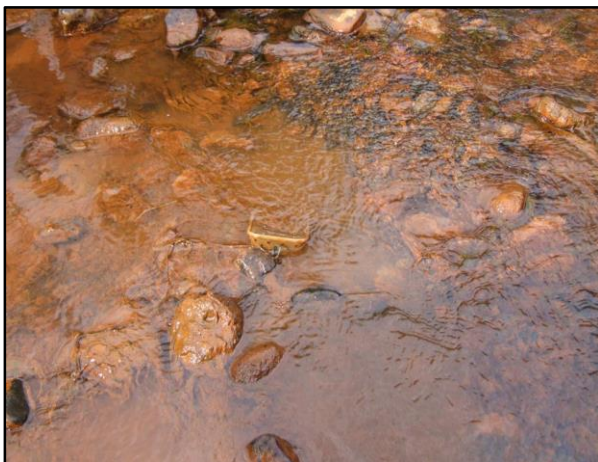


Healthy eggs following 3 months incubation in the Greenock Water

Egg boxes were planted out in the rivers across both catchments for a period of 3 months. Within each box were 100 salmon eggs.

After factoring in losses that would be expected through handling, results from across the sampling sites provided interesting reading. The study concluded that enrichment from agriculture and mining activity contributes to reduced egg survival; this was highlighted by the zero survival rate on the enriched Stottencleugh Burn, in the upper Ayr catchment.

The eggs that were placed in the Mossdale Burn in the upper Doon catchment fared rather better and produced a 100% success rate.



Removing an egg box from the Stottencleugh Burn in the upper Ayr catchment, where not surprisingly egg survival was nil.



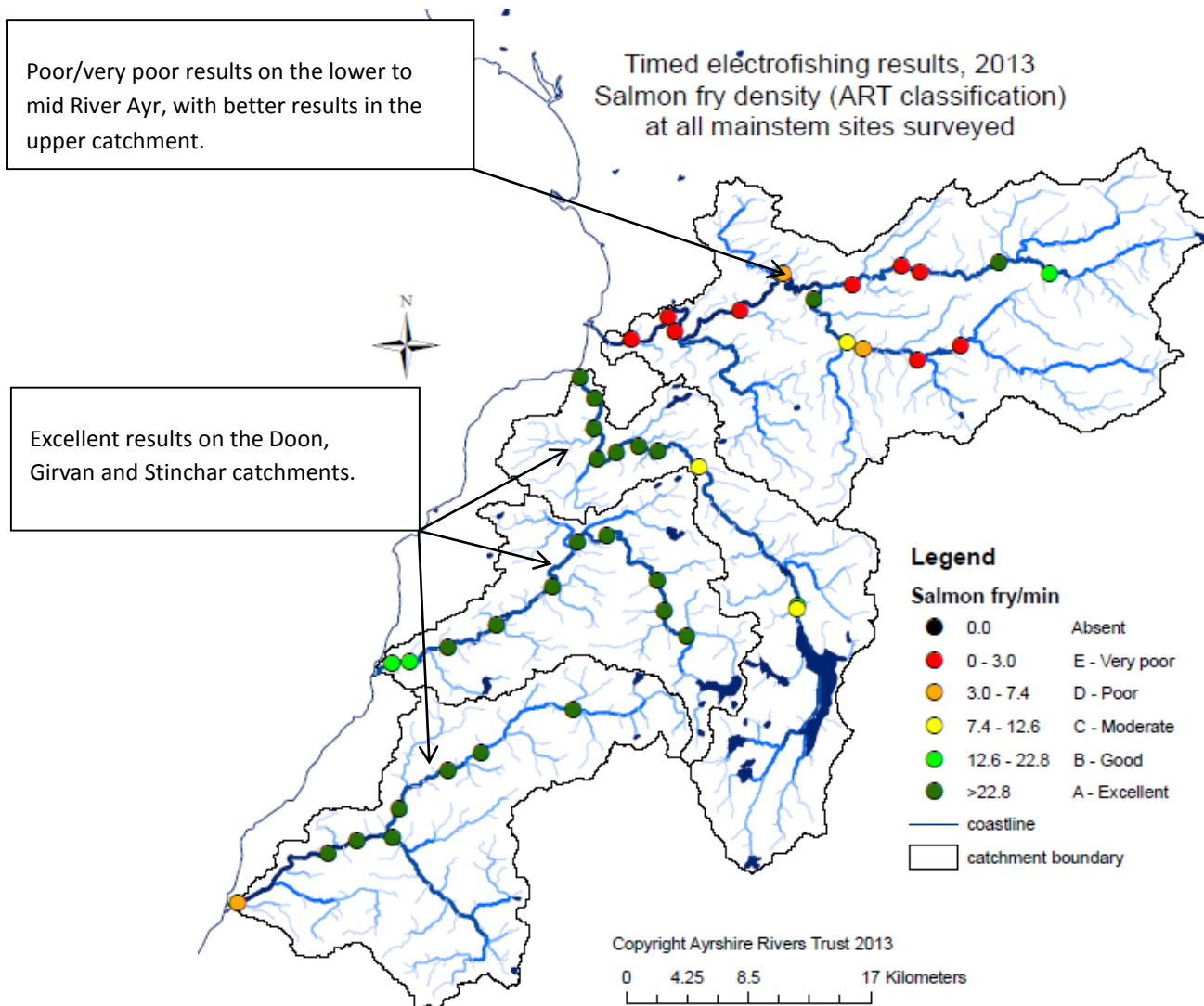
The Mossdale Burn in the upper Doon catchment produced the best survival rates of all sampling locations. The survival rate here was 100% (after correction for handling losses).



ELECTROFISHING RESULTS 2013 - 2014

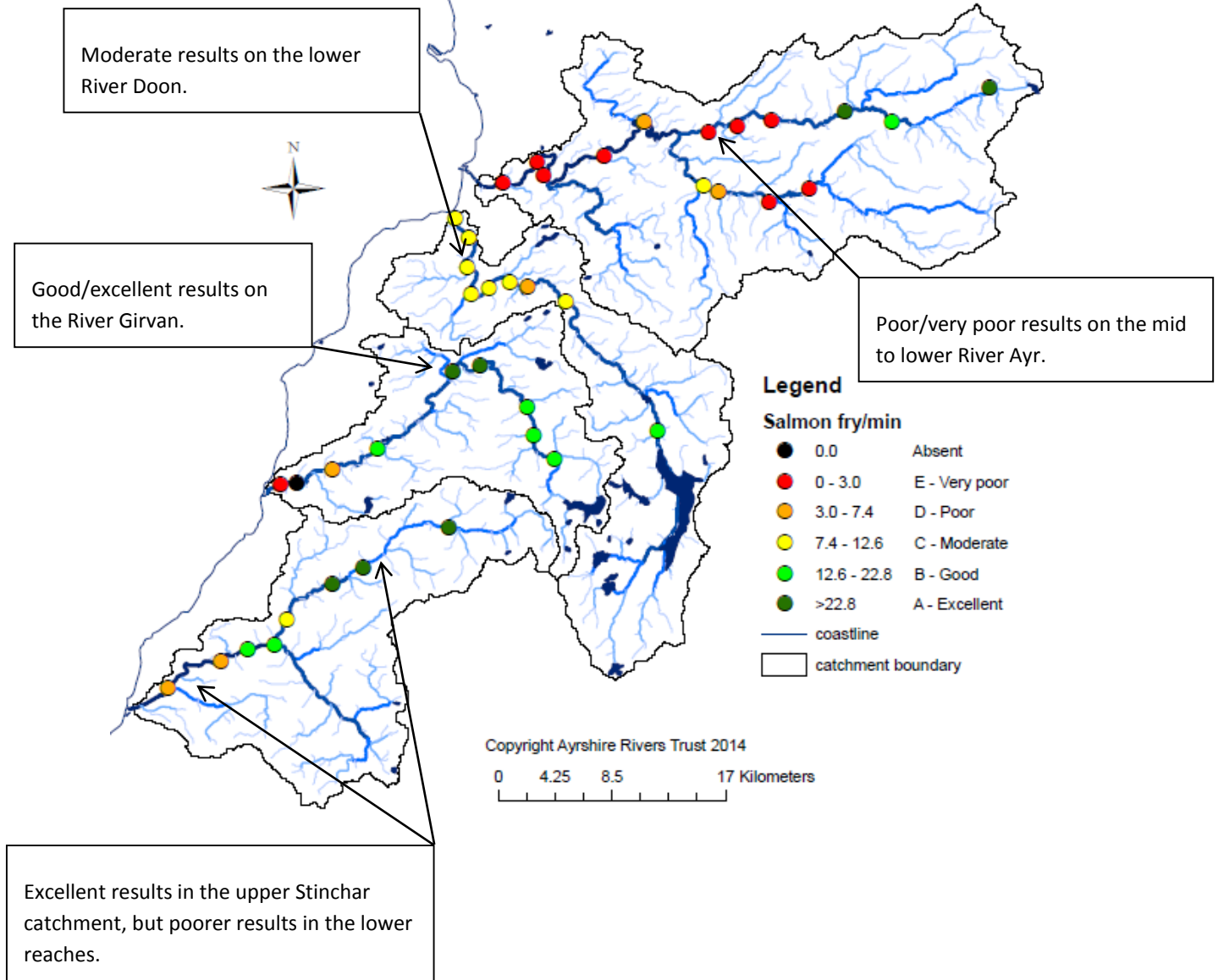
Our electrofishing seasons over 2013 and 2014 were busier than ever. During the summer of 2013 we managed to get through the ever expanding workload despite the weather however, the summer of 2014 was dry and the team made good progress.

The 2 large maps below show our mainstem fry density surveying in 2013 and 2014. Measuring the fry density is carried out by surveying suitable habitat for 5 minutes, across sites from the bottom of the river to the top. On the following pages are the results from the tributary survey sites, these results are expressed as fish densities per 100m² with noteworthy findings annotated.

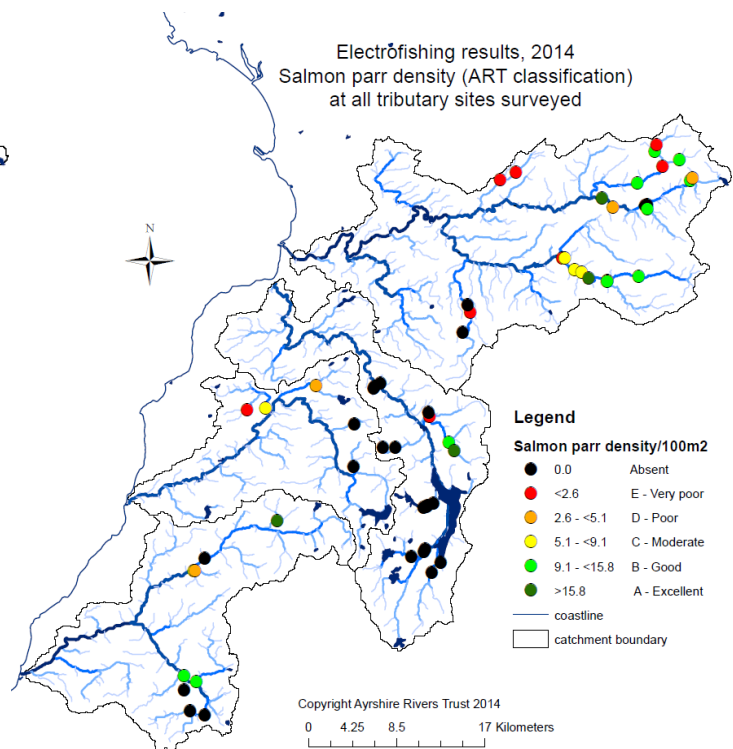
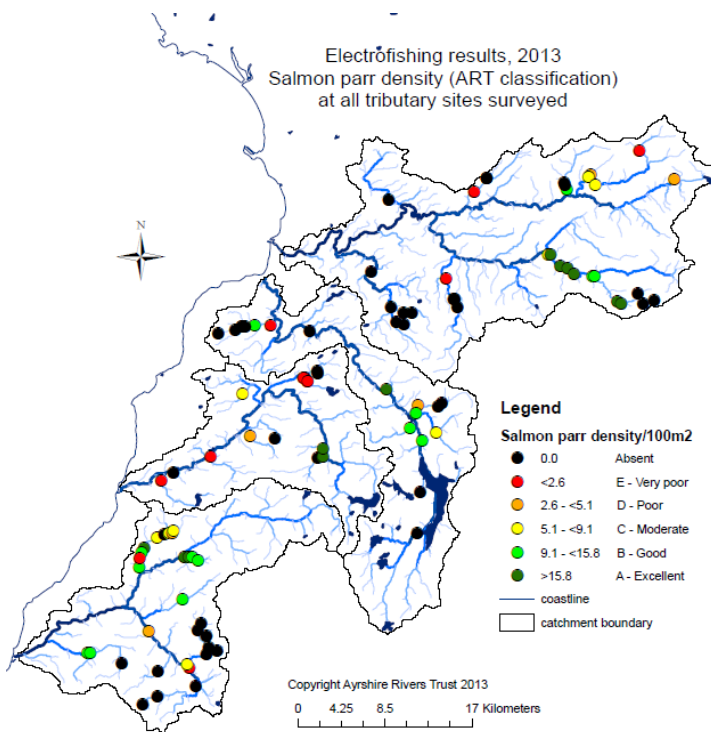
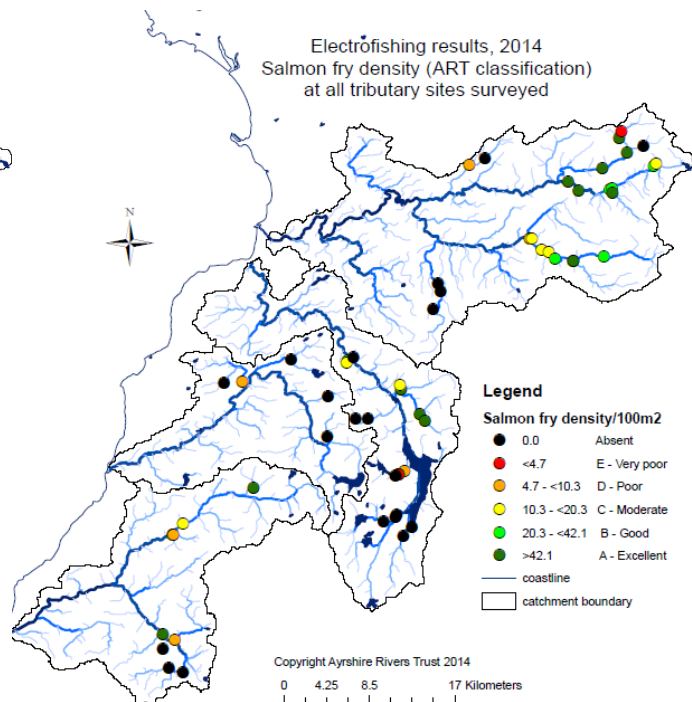
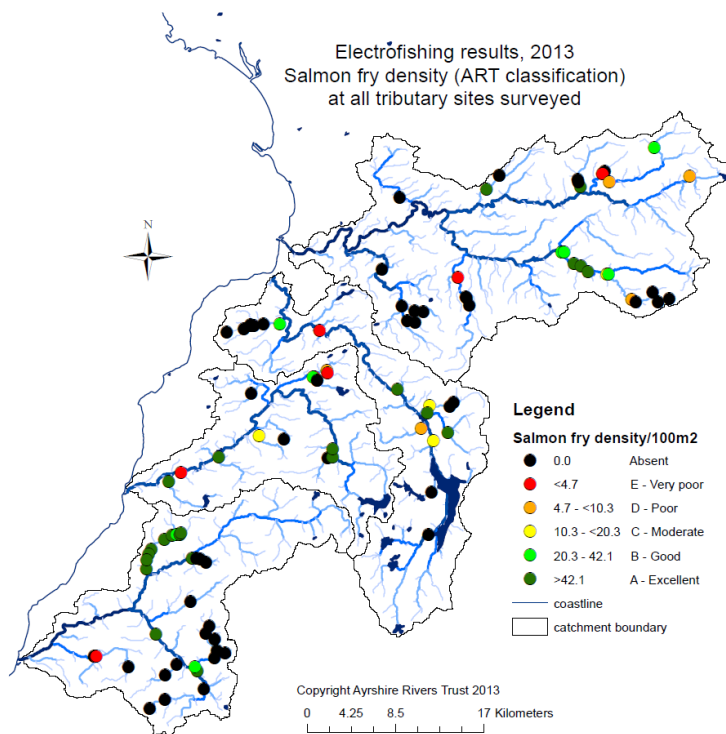




Timed electrofishing results, 2014
Salmon fry density (ART classification)
at all mainstem sites surveyed

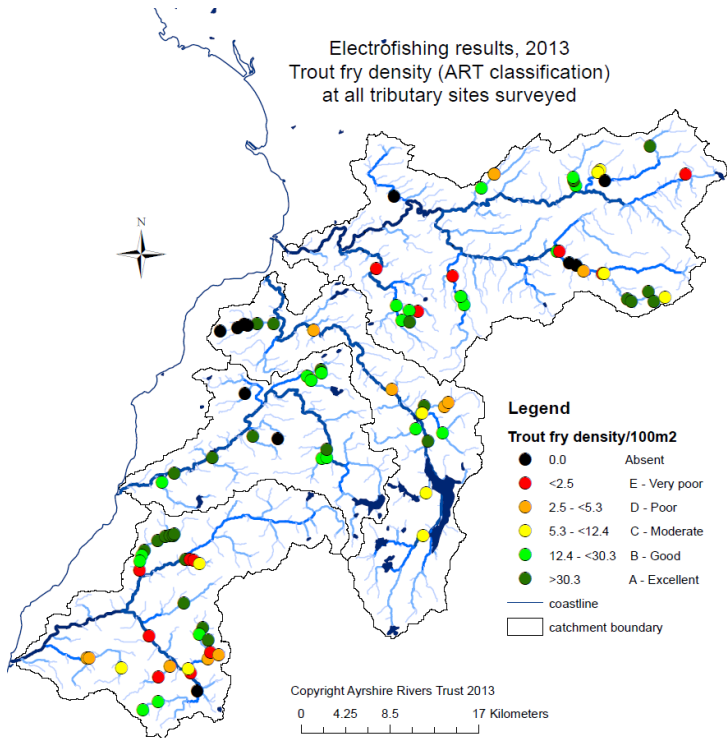


The 8 smaller maps below show comparisons between years 2013 – 2014 (on tributary sites), for salmon fry, salmon parr, trout fry and trout parr.

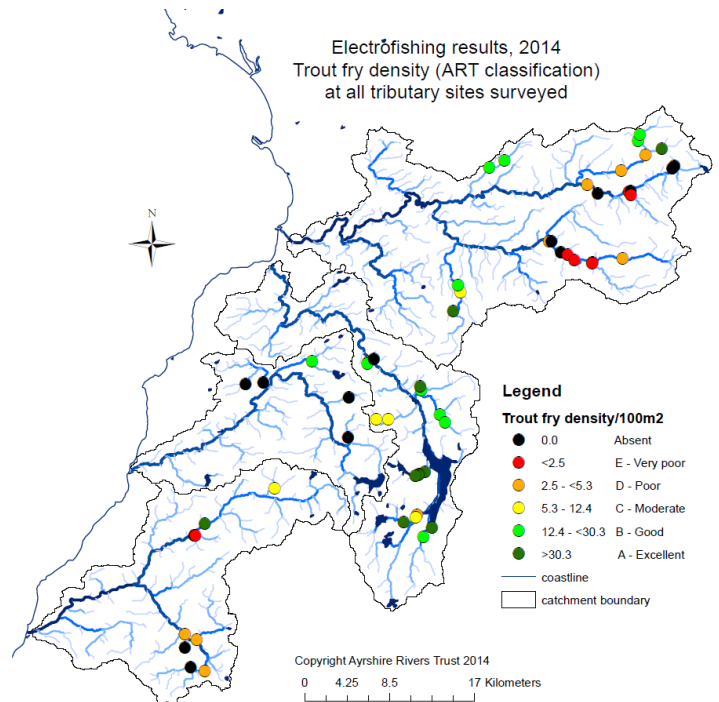




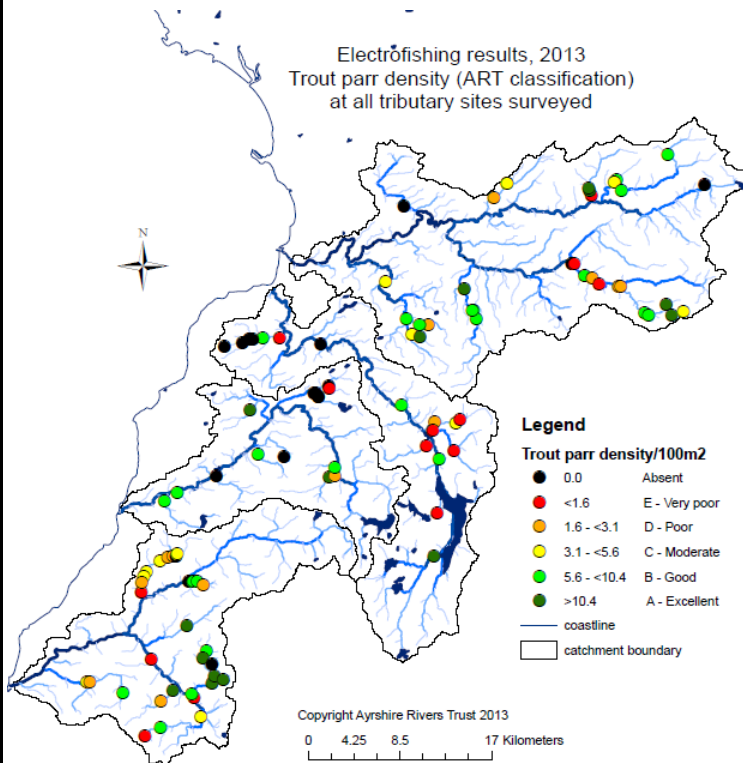
Electrofishing results, 2013
Trout fry density (ART classification)
at all tributary sites surveyed



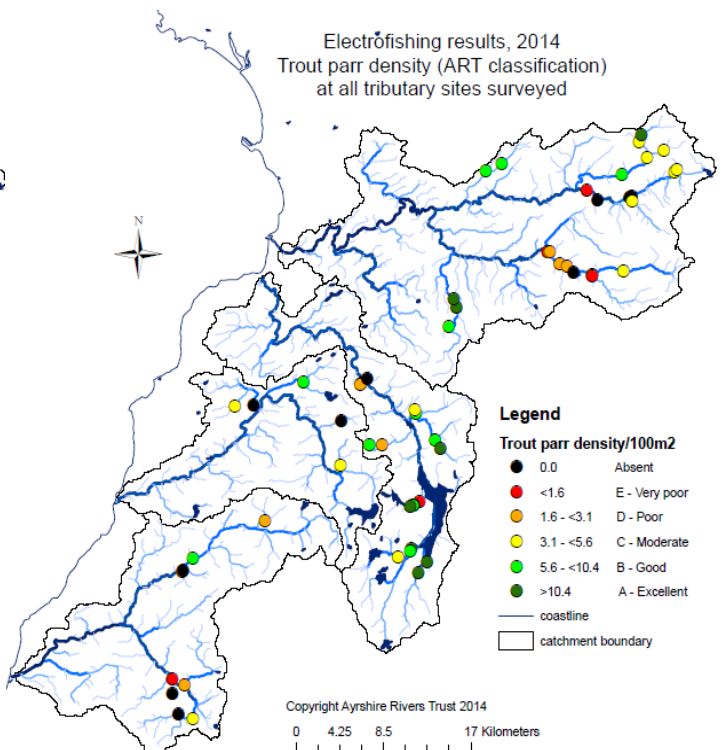
Electrofishing results, 2014
Trout fry density (ART classification)
at all tributary sites surveyed



Electrofishing results, 2013
Trout parr density (ART classification)
at all tributary sites surveyed



Electrofishing results, 2014
Trout parr density (ART classification)
at all tributary sites surveyed





The maps above show that 2013 was good for fry development. This may have been due to the mild winter in spring (2013) that would have supported juvenile development. Despite the Rivers Doon, Girvan and Stinchar showing excellent results, the River Ayr was markedly poorer. This is an on going trend that may be linked to the historic mining activity at the top of the catchment.

The Ayr over the previous 12 years showed the poorest production (except in 2004). The Stinchar and Girvan have been the best producing rivers. Although each of the rivers have different characteristics, 2013 was a good production year on all rivers surveyed. This may be linked to environmental factors or adult salmon survival and return rates from sea. In 2014 there was a noticeable decline in the numbers produced from each river. In 2014 the River Irvine was surveyed and produced a mean of 9.6 fry per minute, almost exactly the same as the Doon.



Juvenile salmon



3 year classes of salmon from one site

OUR NEW OFFICES



We were on the move again at the start of 2014, due to restructuring within SRUC. We have now secured a five year lease on excellent self-contained premises at: **1 Gibbs Yard, SRUC, Auchincruive, Ayr KA6 5HW**

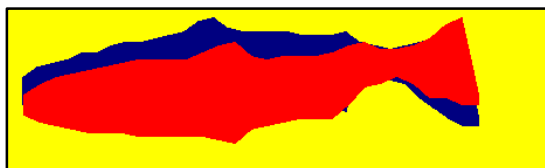
Please feel free to drop in and see us anytime you're passing, everyone's welcome!



LOCH DOON FISH COUNTER

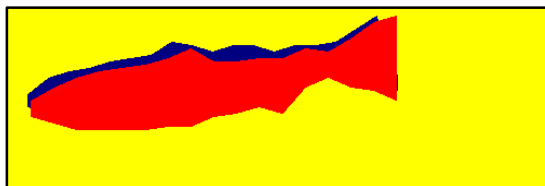
Ayrshire Rivers Trust along with Scottish Power monitor the fish populations and species entering and exiting the Loch Doon dam, through the installed VAKI fish counter. The VAKI fish counter records silhouette images of fish or any objects passing through twin arrays of infra-red diodes mounted on a frame in an inscale. The infra-red sensors generate two silhouettes of any objects passing through the frame, which makes it easier to reject counts generated by debris or turbulence.

Below are two examples of salmon images travelling upstream through the VAKI counter. Many of the images generated are less clear but can be either accepted or rejected as fish based on an assessment of each image, including features such as image shape, swimming direction and speed. The larger the fish the more defined the features are.



02/08/2013 11:01

67cm 0.92m/s SALMON UP



15/09/2014 10:50 60cm

1.52m/s SALMON UP

Figure 1: Examples of images from the VAKI fish counter at Loch Doon Dam

As there is no camera fitted to the Loch Doon VAKI counter the only way to differentiate between species is by size. The settings used by ART for the Doon VAKI were selected to correspond to the sizes of salmonid fish likely to be present in that part of the catchment. The settings used at Loch Doon are shown in the table below.

Table 1: VAKI fish size settings

Fish length (cm)	Predominant species
0-29	Brown trout
30-49	Large brown or sea trout
50 +	Salmon

A summary of the results collected from the VAKI fish counter (2013 & 2014) are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: VAKI counter results for 2013 and 2014

Predominant species	Results for 2013			Results for 2014		
	Up	Down	Total Upstream	Up	Down	Total Upstream
Brown trout	87	20	67	26	9	17
Brown or sea trout	75	15	50	6	10	-4
Salmon	9	6	3	4	2	2
Total	171	41	130	36	20	15



The graph shows that in 2013 a total of 162 brown trout and brown/sea trout (we cannot tell from the VAKI counter imagery) moved upstream into Loch Doon. Whereas during 2014 this number decreased to only 32 (see figure 1). A total of 9 salmon swam upstream into Loch Doon during 2013, but once again this number was reduced in 2014 to only 4.

It is possible that when there is a blockage in the VAKI counter fish passing upstream or downstream are missed as the readings are so erratic that no fish image can be defined. It is thought that smolts have difficulty locating the

fish pass entrance. This is reflected in the number of brown trout descending through the pass.

These would be in the same size classification of smolts. ART have secured funding through Scottish Power for further investigation into smolting salmonids and will commence this work spring 2015. Watch our blog for further developments.

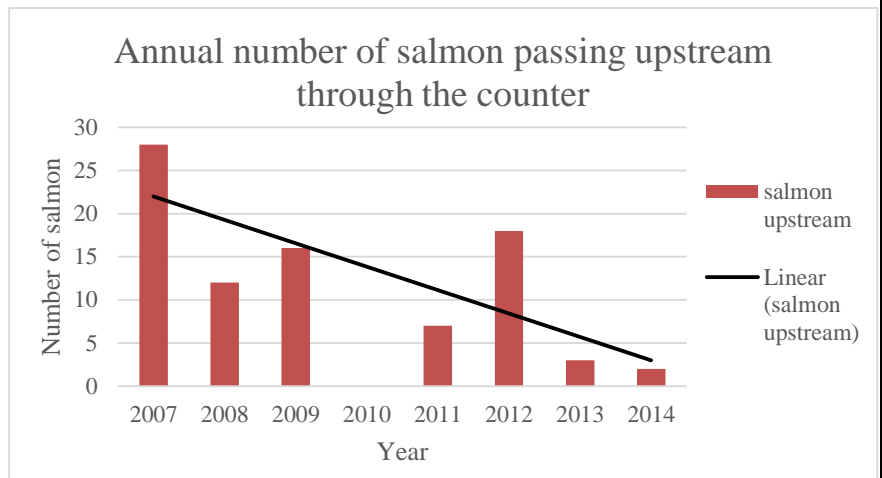


Figure 1: Graph detailing annual upstream movements of salmon 2007 - 2014.



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KILMARNOCK WATER FISH RESCUE

Scottish Water requested ART's assistance for a fish rescue in 2012 as they are improving a storm water system along the river. However due to constant high water late in the year, their work to improve the storm water system was suspended until the spring of 2013. ART provided support by carrying out a fish rescue. This followed a rescue that was carried out in 2012. Consequently we didn't expect nearly as many fish when we commenced a two day rescue in March.

Trout had done very well over the previous year and made up the bulk of the catch. In 2012 there had been a good head of trout and with reduced competition those that had been left behind or that had migrated into the site had thrived.

An estimated 200 salmon parr and a number of eels were removed on day 1. A number of salmon were beginning to smolt. One of the largest trout was 39cm long and around 2lbs in weight; this was a fantastic fish for the river. On closer inspection, this fish had damage to its dorsal fin; so scales were taken to determine whether it was of wild or stocked origin. Stocked fish often have scale and fin damage; however on inspection of the scales these fish was proven to be wild.

Several trout of good size were caught during the rescue, as well as a range of smaller fish. The largest salmon parr measured 165mm and had started to smolt.

An interesting feature of the catch was a stocked fish with a deformed, almost immobile lower jaw. Scale sampling revealed that this fish was 5 years old and had spawned in 2011 and 2012. Other interesting finds included a brook trout and a gudgeon – neither of which ought to have been present. We estimated that 1000 salmon and trout and 50 eels were rescued over the two days.



Large wild trout.



Brook trout



A stocked fish with a deformed jaw, notice the difference in form between it and the wild fish above



VOLUNTEERS

ART rely on volunteers to deliver many of our projects and some of our core work. Volunteers range from school work experience pupils and mature students to volunteers trained through funded projects. The CIRB and Carrick invasive projects allowed us to train over 80 volunteers in the safe use of pesticides and over 20 in the use of brush-cutters. These qualifications have helped some of the volunteers to go on to gain employment.

The CIRB and Carrick invasive projects could not have been delivered were it not for the work carried out by the volunteers that we trained and between 2013 and 2014. Over 600 hours were racked up by volunteers controlling invasive non-native species including Giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and American mink.



Hogweed spraying



Electrofishing



2 of our volunteers ready for the off

Some volunteers also help out with some of the other work that we do throughout the year. In 2014 we had a volunteer helping in the office and with field work while working towards her Duke of Edinburgh Award.

We are hugely grateful to all the volunteers who give us their time each year to help out at the Trust. Without them some of the work we do simply wouldn't be possible. There are too many to start naming individuals but all the staff and trustees would like to extend our thanks to all involved.

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EDUCATION

As part of the Carrick Invasive Species Project (CISP), Meryl Norris developed the “Living with rivers” lesson to deliver to local primary schools in the Carrick region including:

- 8 school visits for P1-4 and P5-7 pupils (105 pupils in total).
- Pupils learnt about how humans interact with rivers with an emphasis on invasive species.
- During field visits pupils also learnt how to use bugs (invertebrates) to test the health of their local river.

Meryl assisted Girvan Academy with ‘Angling and the Aquatic Environment’ SQA course which involved 5 visits delivering talks and hands on field work to the 4 pupils participating in the course.



“Living with rivers” lesson



“Angling and the Aquatic Environment” Class

AYRSHIRE’S MINK RAFT



FEATURES

- Lightweight; less than **1.8 kg even when wet!**
- Durable
- Easy to assemble (5 mins)
- Easy to monitor
- Otter guards
- Quick delivery on all orders
- Used by Scottish Mink Initiative



Ayrshire Rivers Trust

ART's own mink raft is cheaper and easier to use than other leading brands. Made from dense polystyrene, the raft is incredibly **lightweight, durable** and **virtually indestructible**. If however it is broken, it breaks into large pieces that are easily recovered from the environment. It is ideally suited for transporting to remote areas. What more could you possibly want from a mink raft?

Retail price from £39 (Discounts for bulk orders)

See contact details on page 2 for more information



EVENTS

Fisherman's Supper

In 2013 we held our annual Fisherman's Supper in the Horizon Hotel in Ayr. Over 90 guests were in attendance and enjoyed an evening which included speakers Niven Rennie and Bill Drury. Niven had the place in stitches with his jokes and gags while Bill treated us to tales of his exploits as a ghillie on the River Spey and in Russia. Presentations were made to outgoing Trustees Tom Lothian (also our compere for the event), Jim Stevens and outgoing Chairman Peter Kennedy. Our raffle and auction of sporting lots concluded the evening raising £2009.

For 2014 we decided to change things slightly and after having the quiz night at the excellent Abbotsford Hotel in Ayr, we decided the Fisherman's Supper should be held there as well. After a presentation to outgoing Trustee Alex Anderson we were treated to an excellent meal and hospitality. Jim Morrison was our speaker for the event and Tom Lothian our compere for the fourth year running. Again we had our raffle and sporting auction with some excellent prizes and lots up for grabs all helping to raise a fantastic £2000 on the night.

Quiz night

Our annual quiz nights are always good fun and 2013 and 2014 were no exception. Held in April the quiz attracts a good number of teams who engage in a battle of wits during a very relaxed and enjoyable evening. The quiz night was held at Ayr Rugby Club in 2013 followed by the Abbotsford Hotel in 2014. This annual event raises a few hundred pounds and is continues to be well attended, so be on the lookout for this in 2015.



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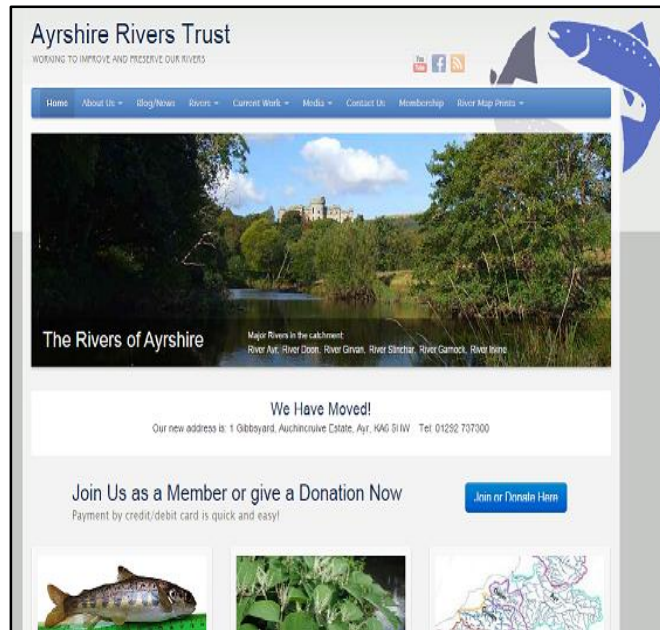




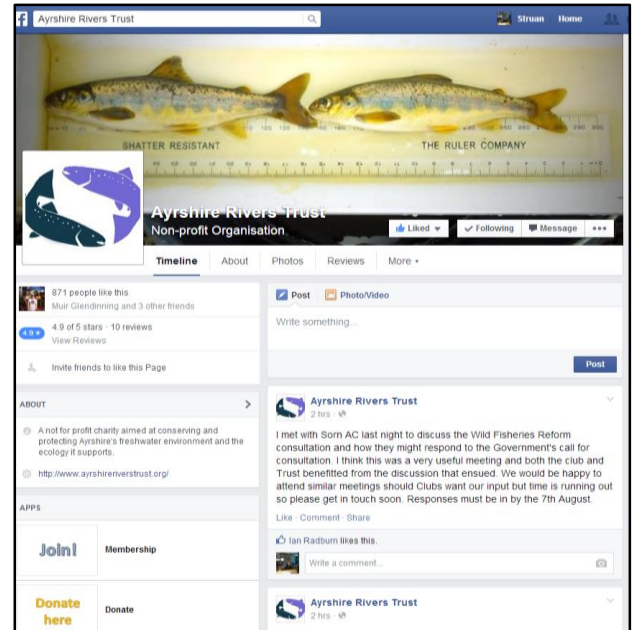
WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The Trust understands the importance of keeping our members and the public up to date with all the work we carry out across Ayrshire. Our website contains everything you need to know about the Trust and our blog is kept up to date with the work that we are carrying out throughout the year.

Our Facebook page is updated on an almost daily basis about all the latest happenings across Ayrshire. Facebook allows anyone to share information, comment on posts and get in touch with the Trust easily. Just search for “Ayrshire Rivers Trust” and don’t forget to like our page – we’re getting close to



www.ayrshireriverstrust.org



www.facebook.com/AyrshireRiversTrust

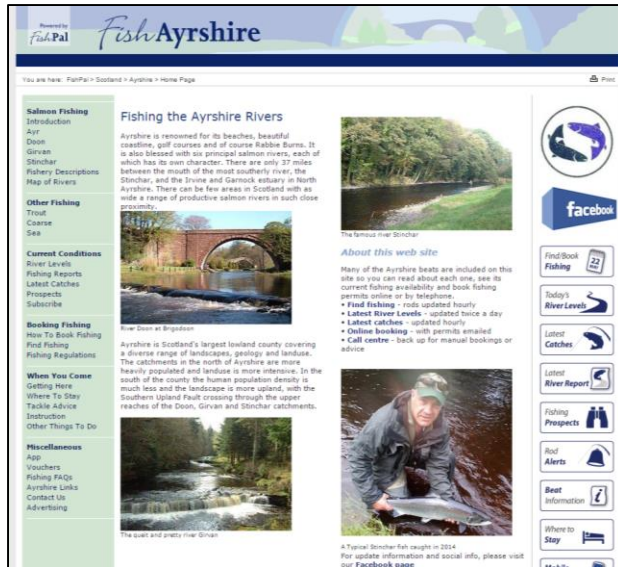
The website also allows you to access our online shop, where all the Fisherman’s Maps are available for purchase. Details of catch returns dating back to the 1950s are on our website for each of the main rivers. There are live feed river cameras on the Ayr, Doon, Girvan and Stinchar that can also be accessed through our website, so you never have to take a gamble with water levels again!



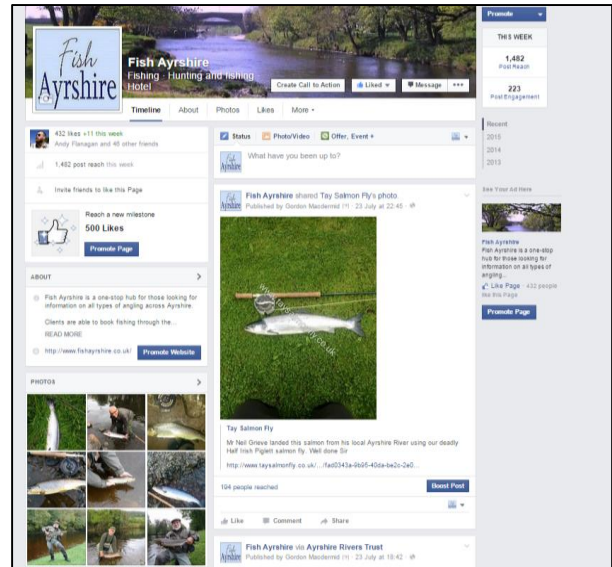
FISH AYRSHIRE WEBSITE

The FishAyrshire franchise is managed by ART and available through Fishpal. The website provides up to date information regarding recent catches, current river levels and permit availability. An online booking system is also in place on some beats.

For a small fee each year, beats and clubs can advertise their fishings on the website. This provides them with an inexpensive webpage through which they can sell permits and promote their fishing. FishAyrshire also has a Facebook page where anglers can share their experiences of fishing in Ayrshire.



www.fishayrshire.co.uk



www.facebook.com/fishayrshire1

MEMBERSHIP

The support of the public is key to the success of ART and contributions of any kind are always very welcome. Membership of the Trust is a way for you to contribute to the expansion of our research and improvement programmes. Membership also shows commitment to the Trust and to the work that the staff carry out. With the Wild Fisheries Reform looming, it is now more than ever, critical that we demonstrate that we have the support of the public.

Membership fees are as follows: Junior (under 18) £5.00/Ordinary £15.00/Corporate £60.00/Life £220.00

Becoming a member entitles you to a 10% discount at Gamesport of Ayr and the Ultimate Angler in Girvan. As well as these discounts you will receive the following free of charge:

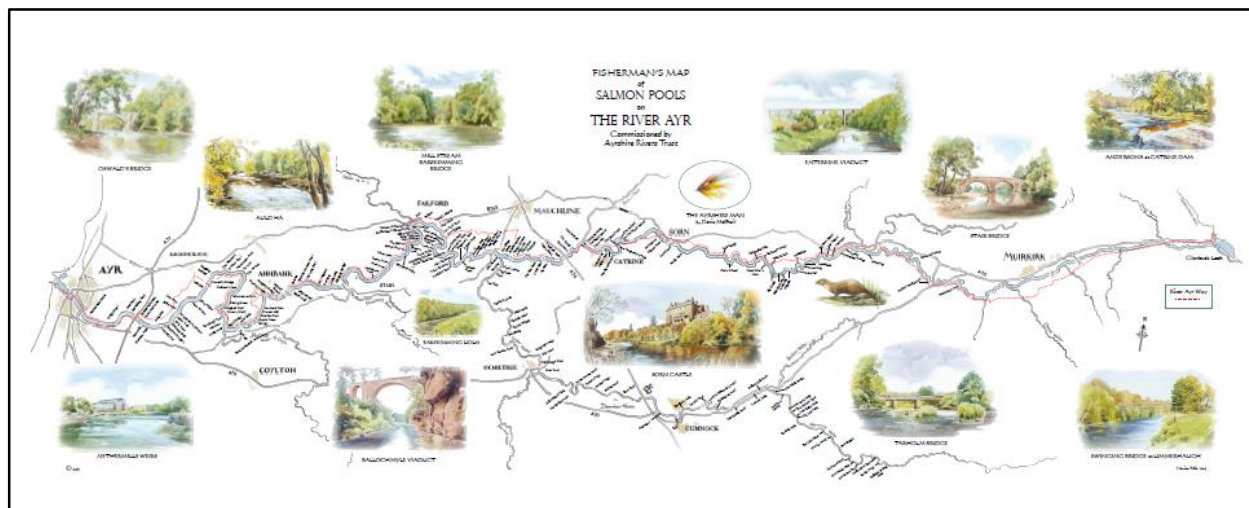
- Free copies of our newsletter
- A free copy of our annual report
- Information on fisheries on request from our biologist
- Easy access to social events hosted by the Trust

Membership can be bought through the Trust's website or drop in at our offices and see us.



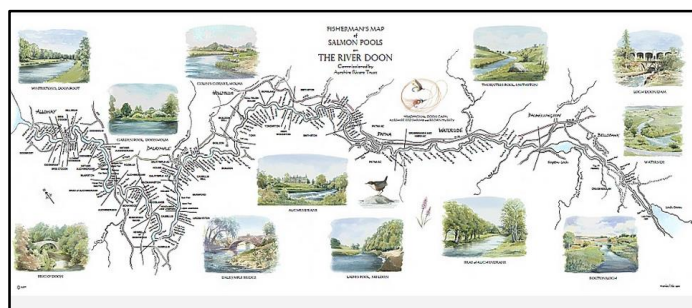
RIVER MAPS FOR SALE

We are pleased to announce the completion of the Fisherman's Map of the River Ayr. This is the third in the series of Ayrshire maps following the River Doon and River Stinchar maps, both of which are still available. Each map details the river and major tributaries from its headwaters to sea, along the way major pools are named and exquisite water colour paintings of landmarks from around the catchment make this a fantastic way to brighten your office wall or indeed your home.

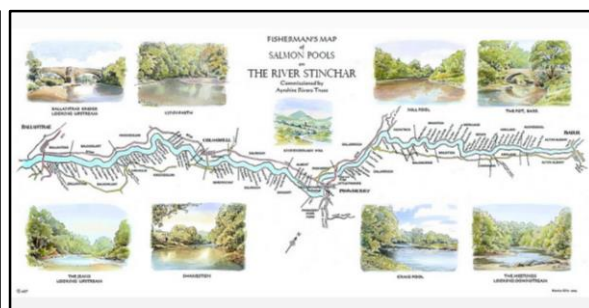


The River Ayr map costs only £31.50 plus £3.65 p&p. The dimensions are 78x33cms.

The River Doon map costs only £23.00 and its dimensions are 67x30cms. The Stinchar River map only costs £20.00 and has dimensions of 45x22cms. All make fantastic gifts for fisherman and indeed walkers. Maps are available to buy at www.ayrshireriverstrust.org/river-map/ through PayPal. Or if you would rather pay by cheque please send us a cheque made payable to 'Ayrshire Rivers Trust' our address is on page 17.



The Fisherman's Map of the River Doon - £23.00



The Fisherman's Map of the River Stinchar - £20.00

Discounts are available when all 3 maps are purchased together: please phone the office for details on 01292 737300.



ACCOUNTS

AYRSHIRE RIVERS TRUST INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2015

	Year to 31 January 2015		Year to 31 January 2014	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Fund raising (net of direct expenses)				
Events and fairs	265		247	
Fisherman's supper	1965		2049	
Raffle	1137		1390	
Merchandising	1693		5916	
Annual report advertising	-		1475	
Gift Aid tax reclaim	400		917	
Fishpal contributions	<u>1835</u>		<u>2160</u>	
		7295		14154
Membership				
Ordinary	1830		1695	
Corporate	1140		1140	
Life	<u>-</u>		<u>220</u>	
		2970		3055
Other income				
Donations	2110		2846	
River Board subscriptions (Doon, Girvan, Ayr & Stinchar)	21795		21345	
Grants received	70773		62994	
CIRB	98374		100498	
Consultancy fees	60379		54263	
Sundry income	1107		1234	
Interest received	<u>766</u>		<u>873</u>	
		<u>255304</u>		<u>244053</u>
		265569		261262
Expenses				
Employment costs	86033		55972	
Grant expenses	107963		159046	
Printing, stationery and postage	1334		4066	
Professional fees	2026		1868	
Training fees	910		1475	
Telephone	869		535	
Motor expenses	6989		7099	
Subscriptions	7196		7726	
Insurance	4763		5296	
Office rent	6016		3786	
General expenses	548		103	
Depreciation	3842		4750	
Biologists' equipment	<u>1909</u>		<u>3753</u>	
		(230398)		(255475)
Net income/expenses		35171		5787
Add/Less: movement in restricted funds		(21322)		4860
Other gains and losses on investments		<u>1832</u>		<u>5209</u>
Net surplus - unrestricted funds		<u>15681</u>		<u>15856</u>



This information is extracted from the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet included in the financial statements. The statutory financial statements have been independently examined and the examiners' report was unqualified. Statutory financial statements can be obtained by writing to the charity at 1 Gibbs Yard, Auchincruive, Ayr, KA6 5HW.

In an effort to reduce costs and our carbon footprint, please let us know if you would like us to email the Annual Report to you in the future. You can either write to us or send an email to info@ayrshirerivertrust.org with your details.

For today's answers to invasive weed problems talk to Terra Firma



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- Roundup Pro Biactive 450
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Ayrshire Rivers Trust, keep up the good work &

"C'mon the fish!"

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Thanks to...



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



**Lendal Environmental
Trust**



**Ayr, Doon, Girvan and Stinchar District Salmon Fishery Boards,
River Irvine Angling Improvement Association**

And to all our private donors, members and friends for their support, including:

Barnshean Fishing Club
Barr Angling Club
Colmonell Angling Club
Cumnock & District Angling Association
Daily Angling Club
Dalry & Garnock Angling Club
Darvel Angling Club
Dreghorn Angling Club
Galston Angling Club
Sorn Angling Club
Knockdolian Estate
Doonfoot Fishings

Hurlford & Crookedholm Angling Club
Irvine & District Angling Club
Kilbirnie Angling Club
Kilmarnock Angling Club
Kilmaurs Angling Club
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Ladykirk Angling Club
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The Smithston Fishings Club
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