



Kapiti Fly Fishing Club

July 2021 Newsletter

This month's cover photo: This photo taken by Greg du Bern on a day trip to the Manawatu River with Kras on Sunday the 13th of June. It was a rainbow cock fish 5.5lb and returned to the river as it was in breeding colours and a good size fish for spawning.

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Club activities

Date	Event	Coordinator
Monday 26 July	KFFC Club night guest speakers Matt Kavermann and Ross Gigg from Feather Merchants	
Tuesday 27 July	Ladies Fly Casting Class – Harautai Park Otaki	Leigh
Saturday 31 July	The Manawatu River	Kras
Monday August 16	Fly Tying workshop venue WBC	Gordon
August Dates TBC	Turangi area	Malcolm
Monday 23 August	KFFC Club night Fishing the Manawatu River – guest speakers	Malcolm

*You are invited to the next KFFC Club Night on Monday 26 July
 Guest speakers will be – Matt Kavermann Fish & Game
 Where are all the trout on the Kapiti Coast and where to fish?
 Followed by Ross Gigg from Feather Merchants
 Meeting starts at 7:30pm looking forward to seeing you there.*

Presidents report

Both Greg du Bern and I met with Peter Dale the Commodore of the Waikanae Boating Club (WBC) to discuss the KFFC members becoming Affiliated members of the WBC, this has been approved by both clubs Management Committees.

The agreement we have with WBC is that **only a Financial member of the KFFC and their partner** will be able to access the excellent Restaurant and Bar facilities, you will not be able to include any guest.

To make a booking, please ring 027 844 9207 and provide your membership number. By becoming an affiliated member of WBC will not provide you with full membership of the WBC.



We are now in the process of printing off new plastic membership cards for all financial members. Each membership card will be allocated membership number, these will be available at this month's club meeting. If you have a Family membership, then both partners will be provided with a membership card with the same membership number.

Andrew Kate has sent out a reminder to all members just in case you have forgotten to pay this year's subscription, once your subscription is paid you will receive your new membership card.

I would like to thank Nick and Cathie Weldon, Greg du Bern, and Wayne Butson for the excellent work in progressing this on behalf of our members.

This month Club Night you will have the opportunity of hearing from two excellent speakers, our first speaker will be Matt Kavermann Senior Fish and Game Officer who will provide you with an insight into where all trout are hiding in our local rivers.

Following Matt will be Ross Gigg from Feather Merchant.

Ross has worked for Feather Merchant for the last 20years as a Sales Representative, selling rods flies and fly-tying materials. Ross has been fly-tying for the last 45years and running Fly-tying classes at night schools in the Wellington Region as well as giving demonstrations at several clubs.

In his time at Feather Merchants, he has had the opportunity to try out many new fly-tying products and have found new product and tools for fly-tying that will be shown to club and club members. It's great to have Ross back as a guest speaker, he is a very highly skilled professional fly tyer.

Look forward to seeing you on Monday evening, warm regards Malcolm

Fly Casting Tuition by Gordon Baker

Club member Gordon Baker is available for one-on-one casting tuition. Gordon is a casting instructor with Flyfishers International (USA). He is available to help beginners get off to a good start and to assist more experienced members improve their distance casting skills. Although not yet an approved two-handed casting instructor Gordon is a keen learner willing to share new skills.

Email Gordon kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com or phone 0274946487 to arrange a suitable time for a lesson. There is no charge.

Mid-Week Fishing trips by Hugh

For those members who are lucky enough to be able to fish mid-week during the forthcoming season please confirm your desire to be included in the mid-week fishers email list to:

hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com

The emails are often sent out only giving very short notice to take advantage of the prevailing conditions and members availability, as an example the afternoon of day before the proposed trip.

KFFC Covid-19 Strategy by Malcolm Francis

At our last Management Committee meeting it was agreed that in the event that New Zealand Covid Response level moves from Level 1, all KFFC club activities will be suspended until the Covid-19 Alert Level returns to 1 or less.

This will affect:

- **club monthly meetings,**
- **any organised club trips,**
- **Monthly fly-tying workshops,**
- **any other club activity that involves a group of members.**

This action is to support and protect the health and wellbeing of club members and their whanau.

Fly Pattern of the Month – Grey Ghost by Gordon Baker

Grey Ghost



An extremely useful pattern in rivers and lakes for smelt chasing Rainbows and Browns and estuarine areas for sea run trout after whitebait and small bait fish. It is also a good harling and jiggling fly.

Hook	TMC 5262 size 4-10
Thread	White Danville or similar
Tail	Orange hackle fibres
Rib	Silver wire or oval tinsel
Body	Flat silver or holographic tinsel
Wing	Grey hackle
Collar	Grey hackle
Eyes	Prismatic small

Please note that the next flytying meeting will be at the Waikanae Boating Club at 7.30pm **Monday 16th August**. Please bring your club membership card. If you haven't received yours yet you may do so at either the club or fly tying meeting.

Feather Merchants (NZ) sponsor our fly-tying group. Go to their website www.flyshop.co.nz to see their wide range of top-quality tying materials, tools and flyfishing accessories.



July Fly-tying evening “The Glow Bug” by Nick Weldon

Another great turnout at the Waikanae Boat Club this month for a festival of Glow bug tying!

Here is the group, again under the tutelage of Gordon ...



Going round the table from the near left we have Kras, Steve, Michael, Andrew, Rex, Malcolm, Greg, and Cathie. Gordon was at the head of the table!

The variety of Glow bugs for different circumstances and fishing methods was an eye-opener for some of us. Good stuff, Gordon.



Don't underestimate this 'fly' as it has served all of us so well over the years.

Next month – Whitebait imitations.

Support for new members of Kapiti Fly Fishing Club by Ross Goodman.

Hi, my name is Ross Goodman, I have been a member of the KFFC for a couple of years and this year we have set up a new role in the administration of the KFFC.

My role is to assist and provide guidance to new members of the club. If there are questions you have on any matter relating to your enjoyment of freshwater fishing send me an email, I will hopefully be able to assist you or steer you to someone who can.

My email address is: rgoodman@globe.net.nz Look forward to hearing from you, *Cheers Ross Goodman*

Kapiti Women are on the Fly by Leigh Johnson

The inaugural **Ladies Casting Class** is happening on **Tuesday 27th July, 10.30 am at Harautai Park, Otaki.**

Hi. I'm Leigh Johnson. I recently joined the committee where my focus is to assist our female members and to make fly fishing a hobby of choice for more women. (You can learn more about me from the member profile in the June newsletter.)

The club committee is keen to find ways to offer more support, knowledge and experiences to women and family members.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in attending the casting class, or finding out more about the club, please contact me at leigh@leighjohnsonnz.com or 027 44 88 282 - or any of the committee members.

River playground being tested – NZ Herald



The Whio – Blue Duck

A group of farmers within the idyllic Pohangina Valley near Palmerston North want to know more about the threats facing its waterways – maybe benefitting another group working in the area to save one of the world's rarest birds.



The Pohangina Catchment Care Group - headed by local farmer Matt Carroll, who milks up to 1000 cows alongside running a sheep and beef operation - is conducting monthly water quality tests at key sites in the district.

Formed less than a year ago, Carroll says its aim is "gaining knowledge about what we have and identifying its vulnerabilities."

The Pohangina River runs through the valley and is a popular destination for trout fishing, walkers, swimmers, and campers. It's headwaters in the nearby Ruahine Ranges are also home to small numbers of the whio or blue duck, a rare species classified as endangered and found only in parts of New Zealand.

Carroll says while the catchment's environment is relatively healthy and "it's cool to see species like the blue duck, we want to gain more knowledge about the state of the ecosystem, its vulnerabilities and how we can maintain and improve things.

"We want to be a source of encouragement for farm environment planning within the valley as well as maximising biodiversity and minimising pest numbers," he says. "The end goal is to get alongside other groups working in these spaces."

One of the groups is the Ruahine Whio Protectors which, Carroll says, is doing amazing work to maintain the whio populations (the district is estimated to have just 30 breeding pairs). Pests such as stoats are the biggest threat to the birds, but they are also vulnerable to rats, cats, possums, and the impact of farming.

According to the Department of Conservation (DOC), the bird was once widespread throughout the country, but its populations are now patchy and isolated.

DOC says the bird numbers are only between 2000 and 3000 (around 640 pairs in the North Island and just under 700 in the South Island): "Their population is declining; they have a low reproductive success and there are more males than females."



Pohangina Valley East

Carroll says small numbers of blue duck have been seen in the headwaters of the Pohangina, while native fish species, good macroinvertebrate numbers and eels are also present in the area. He believes that is testament to the relative health of the river.

Since its establishment last August, the group has begun monthly water testing at 11 catchment sites - some in the river itself with others along its many tributaries. Carroll says it will take up to three years of data before a true picture of the district's ecological health will emerge.

The testing is self-funded by Pohangina Valley locals, but Carroll is hopeful it will eventually attract government funding.

The group has also had input from Massey University freshwater ecology professor Dr Russell Death, who lives in the area. At a recent community workshop, he handed out stream health checklists for landowners to help them assess the health of rivers and streams and which can be used to identify management practices to help improve ecosystem health.



Pohangina River

Carroll is the assistant manager for Westview Farming, an equity partnership set up by his parents Shane Carroll and Nicola Shadbolt. The partnership has been farming there since 1987 and today run 4300 ewes, beef cattle and deer as well as a 1000-strong dairy herd.

Carroll says sustainable farming practices have always been a priority for his parents, while he worked for several years as a farm consultant with an emphasis on farm environment planning and sustainable land use.

Because the Pohangina River borders the western edge of the farm (it runs up to the lower reaches of the Ruahine Ranges on its eastern side) and a major tributary, the Matanganui Stream flows through the property, Carroll has always been aware of maintaining the health of these waterways.

A 20-metre riparian strip has been created along the Pohangina River, every year up to 200 poplar and willow trees are planted to control erosion on parts of the farm while a key management practice has been to ensure there is no excessive use of nitrogen fertiliser ("we have always been below accepted industry levels").

Cattle have been excluded from environmentally sensitive areas of the block while Carroll says they are looking at an extensive wetlands development in the near future.

The Pohangina River is itself a tributary of the Manawatu River which it joins at Ashhurst about 15km north-east of Palmerston North from its source in the Ruahine Ranges.

Walking by Domenick Swentosky

It started with a walk. When the short gravel-to-dirt trail melted into weeds and underbrush, I followed the narrowing path into the woods. And when that too ended beside the small river, I cut to the right and forged my own trail beside the water's edge.

Abundant cold rains and a cloudy spring season had postponed much of the life to be found in mid-May, and I noted the delay everywhere. I walked through budding ferns, with expectant tops waiting to unfold at the next peak of sunlight through the shadows. And where there was green, it was new — fresh-faced, clear, and vibrant, standing out in contrast against the dark wet bark and a forest floor of decaying maple leaves.

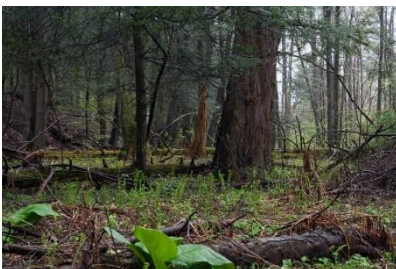
And after walking for miles over those wet leaves drenched with weeks of rain, I finally remembered the fly rod in my hand.



It wasn't hard to find a piece of perfect water. The river flowed at the peak of what it could hold and still be called fishable. And yet the colour remained murky — not quite dirty — and well suited to hiding the casts and the moving silhouette of a fisherman.

The pockets and undercuts were full of eager fish, no doubt undisturbed by the usual springtime crowd of anglers. The fair weather fishermen had mostly remained home in these long months, waiting for the rain to pause. All the while these trout had fed with abandon, seizing their opportunity for an easy feed and full bellies.

The fishing was fast enough that I moved upstream quickly. Instead of holding to a spot where trout rose for my fly, I followed a desire to explore and learn where else they may rise. And I walked.



The rain started again, just as I broke through a dense canopy of towering hemlocks. Then I skirted the edge of a long narrow clearing and watched sheets of rain slice through a low shelf of fog ten feet above the grassy earth.

It rained, and I kept walking.

It felt solemn. But I found fulfilment in the sombre tone. The rain rolled down my hat and seeped under the thick collar of my vest, until eventually, also waterlogged, the collar gave up its job as gatekeeper, and cool streams of water ran down the skin of my back.

I kept walking because the river pulled me along with its endless mystery — what exactly *is* around the next bend? Under a heavy rain and around the fallen timber of a wide floodplain, I made a steady pace, with no destination in mind but upstream.

Then finally, hours later and at the end of something I'll never understand, I knew I was done. Satisfied, I walked out under clearing skies, with a strong spring sun making its space over the western horizon.

Mid-week club trip to Rangitikei River by Peter Riggall



Five of us set off at 7.30am in two cars anticipating a good day's fishing. Aussie (driving his new car - a real gem) took me and the second car had Hugh, Peter, and Ruth. Expectations were high! We stopped for a welcome coffee break at the Church Cafe in Sanson. Sadly, the cheese scones were not quite ready!

Noel met us at the river having already crossed the Desert Road to be the early bird. On arrival we found the weather to be cloudy and cold but as it cleared, we had a beautiful sunny day.

The river was running fast and a bit cloudy (or turbid for the pundits) Hugh braved the crossing not quite up to his neck in it! By lunchtime only one fish landed! - poor show! But well done to Peter (not me)! Maurice, our friendly farmer host, came to check us out and with some fishing tales and encouragement the afternoon was far more productive.

Final score Aussie 1 - Noel 1 - Hugh 2 - Peter 2 - and Ruth and I drew a blank. Hats off to Hugh for organising the trip and for coaching Ruth! Not only that but he put on his "trainers" to jog back from the cars for a lost wading stick! PS from Hugh ..."

I forgot to mention the fish I kept (meal size) had pinhead size mayfly in its gut similar to what I found under a few rocks. Trying to imitate that size of fly is likely to be unsuccessful in my view hence the wet line brought our limited success albeit that I did not observe any bullies/other small fish.

Are you helping other anglers? You should be by Spencer Durrant



For \$240.00, I could get two nights at Flaming Gorge Resort, two dinners topped with the best blackberry cobbler I've found, and an entire weekend mostly to myself on Utah's portion of the Green River. This was a few years ago, back when I was more broke than I am now, but with far fewer responsibilities and more time to devote to fishing. And this deal was only available when the resort started offering offseason pricing. I couldn't afford to be around when the fishing — and the weather — was at its peak.

The Green is unquestionably Utah's best fishery, even in the throes of winter. It's a demanding river, one that rewards astute, persistent anglers. Growing up on the small streams of the Wasatch Front Range, I always heard my dad, and his fishing buddies talk about the Green in reverential tones. It was a place to learn, to hone your skills as a fly fisherman, according to the group of men who taught me how to fly fish.

That's why, on a Sunday morning in late December, I stood waist-deep in the Green River. The famous red rock walls were covered in fresh, light Rocky Mountain powder. Pinyon and juniper clung to the canyon walls; their metallic green colour more prominent than at any other time of year. My fingers were numb, my toes were getting there, and my face was windburned, but I'd caught just enough fish that morning to make the discomfort tolerable.

The first flurries of another snowstorm began to fall in lazy swirls, but I barely noticed since as my attention was commanded by a large rainbow trout 20 yards upstream. The fish swam back and forth behind a big boulder, actively feeding on something — a something I apparently didn't have in my fly box.

I'd caught plenty of fish already that morning, and more the day before, including one rainbow that was 22 inches long and fat enough around that I couldn't grip it with two hands. The fish in front of me, though, wasn't cooperating. For two days I'd swung pegged beads, consistently picking off fish that sat far behind and away from the giant brown trout redds that dominated the river bottom.

But this rainbow wouldn't so much as look at my mottled mango eight-millimetre trout bead and Gamakatsu octopus circle hook. After half an hour of the worst cold shoulder a trout's ever given me, I grudgingly switched to a cadre of small nymphs.

This time, the rainbow at least glanced at my flies. I was retying for the hundredth time, cursing my numb fingers and tiny tippet, when I heard someone ask me how the fishing was.

My neck snapped up in surprise. My car was the only one in the parking lot that morning, and the lazy snow of earlier was now an honest blizzard. Who else was either destitute or trout-crazed enough that they'd come visit in such terrible weather.

The voice belonged to a man, about my height, and nearly two decades my senior. To my surprise, he didn't carry a fly rod. He wasn't even wearing waders. All he had was a camera strapped around his neck.

"The fishing's been good," I said. "But I can't seem to get this big fish to cooperate."

The man nodded. "I know, I've been watching for a bit. I grabbed a few pictures if you don't mind."

"Not at all," I replied.

"What are you throwing at that fish?" The man asked.

I held up my rig of two small nymphs – midges, I think they were – and the man shook his head. "Do you have anything bigger?"

I looked at him quizzically. We were within shouting distance of the Flaming Gorge Dam. The Green, at that point, is a tailwater full of the pickiest trout you'll find this side of Colorado. Tailwater trout demand small flies, light tippet, and inhuman patience to catch. That's what I'd been taught, at least.

I let the man go through my fly box, and he pulled out a size 12 pheasant tail. "Are you sure?" I asked him.

He nodded.

I tied it on, still not sure what the guy was up to. But two casts later, I'd hooked the rainbow that had ignored me all morning. After nearly taking a swim in the frigid water, I scooped it into my net and gave the photographer a fish-slime-covered, but enthusiastic, high-five.

A few photos later and the fish was back in the river. I turned to thank the photographer again, and he shrugged it off. "I used to guide here," he said. "I couldn't help myself, really. Sorry if I imposed."

We exchanged contact information, so I could get a few of the photos, and he walked away into the blizzard.

Months later, in much warmer weather, I was hundreds of miles to the west, in Oregon with my buddy Mike Kingsbury. It was one of those brilliant fall days, warmer than it ought to be, but tinged with a crispness to the air that belied oncoming cold.

The river was crowded, and Mike and I were ostentatiously the only guys catching fish. As far as we could tell, we were the only guys using our particular setup, too.

One of the other anglers, younger, closer to my age than Mike's 40-something, was visibly frustrated. He scowled in our direction each time Mike, or I hooked into a fish. For our part, we weren't trying to show off, but we're both loud guys and the fishing — for us at least — was fast.

I'm not sure why, but something about the expression on the younger angler's face made me think back to that December, a year before, when the man appeared out of the blizzard to help me. That man turned out to be Ryan Kelly, an outstanding photographer and filmmaker, and one of my closest friends.

In the year since I'd met Ryan, he taught me more about fly fishing in exchange for my help with his regular photoshoots on the Green. It was a sweet deal for us both, though I always feel that I get more than I gave, even if Ryan doesn't see it that way.

After another scowl from the younger angler, I set my rod aside and walked over to him.

"You need a hand?" I asked.

He looked taken aback. "What the hell are you catching all those fish on?"

I grinned. "Here, let me show you."

A few minutes later, with a new rig and some extra flies, he cradled a 20-inch brown in the net. The scowl was replaced with a smile bound to crack his face, and as I went back to my spot on the river to keep fishing, he thrust out his hand. "Thank you so much," he said. "I really didn't want to get skunked today."

"Don't worry about it," I said. "I'm happy to help. Holler if you need anything else."

Later, around the fire that night, I thought back to the angler I'd helped out, and to Ryan's similar help the year before. If it weren't for Ryan's willingness to lend a hand, I probably wouldn't have caught that big rainbow. And who knows if the kid I helped in Oregon would've caught that brown?

It's more than just helping each other catch fish, I thought, staring at a campfire while Mike grilled hot dogs for dinner. It's reminding us to help where we can.

I'm not sure why, but something about the expression on the younger angler's face made me think back to that December, a year before, when the man appeared out of the blizzard to help me. That man turned out to be Ryan Kelly, an outstanding photographer and filmmaker, and one of my closest friends.

I don't know what happened to that angler in Oregon, but I know that without the help Ryan showed me — and countless others like him — I wouldn't have likely kept at fly fishing with this level of commitment. Long days of getting skunked, doubting yourself, and watching others catch fish is enough to make the casual angler quit the sport.

Lending a hand only takes a few minutes, and it might just be the hand that keeps the next generation of young anglers on the river.

Editor's note: If you are new to fly fishing or fishing our local rivers, I and other members of the club would be more than happy to provide you with support and join you on the water or at your fly-tying vice you only have to ask.

The shooting by Chris Hunt

From around the tree, a rangy arm protruded, and in the man's, hand was what looked like a small cannon.



My little brother and I slipped our 17-foot aluminium canoe into the flat water of the Sabine just as the sun poked over the beech trees and hit the river. The quiet of the East Texas dawn was primal, and a heavy mist floated above the surface as we dipped our paddles into the river and pushed our way into the subtle current.

It was August 1984, and Texas was going through a drought that many thought might never end. Local preachers were envisioning the End of Days, and municipalities all over the region were enacting unheard of water rationing measures as reservoirs quickly evaporated under the unforgiving summer sun. Boat ramps ended a hundred feet short of the water on these oft-visited impoundments, and folks were up in arms about the wrath of nature and the lack of rain in an area where it's tough to go a week without a summer thunderstorm or two.

The Sabine, which flows north to south and eventually marks the boundary between Texas and Louisiana, normally runs thick. It's a muddy, rusty Southern River that keeps its secrets most of the time. But this water-starved river was so low, and the flow so slow that any sediment left in what had become a trickle of a river quickly dropped to the bottom. For the first time ever, Brice and I got to actually see the bottom of the Sabine, and in more than a few places, we could have easily walked across the river without getting our knees wet.

Just that spring, we had camped among the trees and struggled to find high ground to pitch our tents. Even with all the irrigation and flood control along the river, with steady rain and a determined course to the Gulf of Mexico, the Sabine could get out of control.

But not on this day. On this day, Brice and I walked the canoe downstream as much as we rowed it, and by the time our mother met us at the makeshift take-out at dark, we'd about had it with the low water.

But the fishing ... good grief. For two kids literally dumped off on the side of a busy freeway with their canoe and left for a day to paddle about 10 miles downstream armed with cheap spinning gear, a host of Beetle Spin and Rapala lures, a box filled with crickets and a tub of foul-smelling catfish bait, we were golden.

The sand bass were schooled and concentrated in the deeper pools thanks to the low water. The crappies hung out around the shoals and any submerged wood. A well-cast lure allowed to sink for a three-count would pull a crappie out of cover on just about every single cast. We wore our arms out catching them.

For years after that day, we spent on the Sabine, Brice and I would recollect the events of it, first recalling the fishing and how it was the first time either of us had ever actually sight-cast to big catfish and toothy gar, or how we went through a dozen soft-plastic white-and-red Beetle Spin lure bodies before lunch and caught more crappie and sand bass than either of us had ever seen before.

Then we would talk about the shooting.

We weren't "gun kids." We both had trusty old Crosman 760 Powermasters that fired BBs and .177 calibre lead pellets, and, after a good 10 pumps or so, could knock a dove off a power line. But we didn't own any real firearms at the time, which was likely unusual for most Texas kids.

Our parents weren't "outdoorsy," choosing instead to enjoy sultry East Texas evenings around the pool on the back patio, cocktails in hand. And don't think we were well-to-do—owning a pool in East Texas is as much about self-defence as it is about having fun. I remember, about two years into our eight-year stint in Longview when the pool heater died. My Dad never replaced it — we never needed it to begin with. If we weren't at home around the pool, we were at the lake—the oil drilling company my father worked for owned some land and a small marina on Lake Tyler, about 30 miles west of Longview, and if he wasn't pulling us around the lake on water skis with our modest VIP outboard, we were chasing bream and the occasional bass around the pilings and docks with lightweight spinning gear.

My friends had guns, and they'd often come to school on Monday mornings talking about deer hunting or squirrel hunting or just shooting. It was my first real exposure to what would now be described as "gun culture," although 35 years ago, the "culture" didn't come at you barrel-first. Sure, rifle racks in pickups were common, but the foam-at-the-mouth attitude and the "Fuck Biden" flags were non-existent. Things were more genteel, less fearful, and hateful than they are now.

In time, we got used to seeing guns down at the river. We even fired the occasional gun, plinking at pop cans with friends, and such. But our parents were adamant. We wouldn't be gun kids. Our pellet guns marked our ceiling.

After lunch that day — we ate sandwiches on a sand bar and took turns swinging into a deep pool in the river using wrist-thick vines that hung from the riverside beeches and oaks — we decided we needed to put the paddles in the water. We were well behind schedule thanks to the low water and the slow flow, so we needed to put some river behind us. Brice took his usual spot in the front of the craft, and I guided us from the stern, instructing Brice on which side paddle. We did all right

for a couple of kids out Huck-Finching it for a day, and by mid-afternoon, we figured we were back on track to meet our mother at the appointed time.

That's when we heard the shouting from the bluff above the river.

"Hey!" the deep voice rang out over the water. Brice and I both looked toward where we thought the voice was coming from, but neither of us could see anything.

"Hey!" the voice screamed again. "You kids! Hey!"

Brice pointed atop the modest bluff — maybe 30 feet above the river's low surface. A man stood waving at us. Instinctively we both waved back.

"Were you two just in my shed? Was that you?" the man yelled down at us from above. "Were you just messing around on my property?"

Brice and I looked at each other questioningly. We hadn't left the river, let alone found time to loot a shed. I nodded at Brice, and I yelled back at the guy on the bluff.

"No sir!" I said. "We're just fishing!"

One thing I learned quickly in East Texas: every adult was addressed as "sir" or "ma'am." Period. End of story. Even if a grownup said, "That's OK, son. Call me John," the first reply was always, "Yes sir."

"Did you see anybody come down here?" the man said from above. He was growing a bit more agitated. Frustrated, might be a better description. "Somebody was just in my shed, and they ran off this way!"

Brice looked back at me again, growing a bit more nervous at how this encounter was unfolding. I yelled back at the man on the bluff, only not as loud — by this time we'd floated a good 50 yards downstream, and we were quite a bit closer.

"No, sir," I said. "We've been on the river all day, and we haven't seen anybody."

Then, for reasons even he couldn't explain, Brice reached behind him and grabbed the black, plastic stock of his little pellet rifle, which was resting on the dry bag, just in front of the little cooler we had with us. I knew he wasn't planning to shoot anything, so I was a bit confused, and quietly mouthed to him, "What are you doing?"

The man atop the bluff — he was an older guy wearing a pair of old jeans and button-up shirt undone to his belly — saw Brice reach for the little gun, too, and he instinctively ducked behind a tree and screamed at us.

"What the hell!?" he shouted.

Brice, realizing that from a couple hundred feet away, that the little pellet rifle could easily be mistaken for a "real" gun, immediately dropped the weapon.

"Sorry!" he shouted. "I just noticed it was getting a little wet."

But it was too late.

From around the tree, a rangy arm protruded, and in the man's, hand was what looked to us like a small cannon. A shot rang out and an honest-to-God bullet splashed into the water about five feet from the boat. Then another. And another.

I remember putting the oar into the water so quickly and pulling so hard that Brice fell off the front seat of the canoe and back into the boat. More shots rang out. A couple more rounds hit the water. I also remember shouting a string of profanities at my brother as he quickly recovered and jumped back into the bow of the boat. The foul language would have earned me some serious ire had either of my parents witnessed the barrage.

We rounded the bend in the river pretty quickly, hearts pumping and adrenaline coursing. We kept paddling, hoping to put more river between us and the guy with the pistol. After what seemed an eternity, we eased up on the paddles, the reports of the big pistol long since gone. I looked to the front of the canoe to my brother, who was panting heavily, eyes wide open.

And that's when I saw the blood.

I'd never seen anyone get shot by a gun before, and, honestly, the wound in Brice's side, below his shoulder, was pretty unimpressive. I remember thinking to myself as I quickly paddled the boat to shore, "Huh. I thought there'd be more blood."

But his white t-shirt definitely had a hole in it, and there was definitely some blood coming out. I remember, as I furiously paddled the canoe to the far side of the river, Brice looking at me with a quizzical expression on his face, as if to ask, "What the hell are you doing?"

"You're hit!" I exclaimed, pointing at his side. He looked down and saw the hole and the modest amount of blood. He then looked back at me, and I visibly watched as the blood drained from his face.

"Oh, shit," I remember him saying. "Oh, shit. I'm gonna die."

I got the canoe into the shallows and hopped out, dragging it with Brice in it to the bank. He was slumped over a little bit, and his breathing was as rapid as it had been since we paddled our way away from the shooter.

Let's be clear. I had no emergency medical training—I had passed the lifeguard test at the local pool, so there was that—so I was honestly channelling whatever I'd heard and seen from TV, the movies and such as I grabbed Brice under the arms and dragged him up on the sand.

I lifted up his shirt to find the hole, and there it was, leaking a droplet of blood.

"I thought it would be bigger," I remember saying out loud.

"Look for the exit wound!" my brother exclaimed. "Look for the exit wound!"

Brice would go on to major in drama in college, so that gives you a bit of insight into what was really happening here. Instead of going on a furious hunt for the exit wound, I grabbed the canteen out of the boat and poured water over the "wound." With the little bit of blood gone, I rubbed my finger over the source. I felt a little bulge just below the skin and pressed down on one side of it. Out of the tiny little puncture hole, a lone BB popped out. I caught it in my hand.

Apparently, Brice's little Powermaster was locked and loaded — a mistake that any airgun enthusiast can recognize. You load, pump and shoot. Otherwise, the air chamber begins to slowly leak and, when you do decide to fire, the pellet or BB loses much of its velocity. When he tipped over backwards into the canoe after I furiously pulled us into the current to escape the crazed shooter, he managed to fall atop the gun and fire it, point-blank, into the side of his rib cage.

I remember wishing I had a little metal debris pan at my disposal so I could dramatically drop the BB into it, just for dramatic effect.

"Here's your bullet," I said, handing the offending, yet tiny, globe of brass to him. "You'll probably die soon. Been good to know ya."

We both laughed nervously, relieved to know that this was the only casualty incurred that day. We paddled quietly the rest of afternoon, admiring sunning gar and pointing at 20-pound blue cats as they scurried into the depths of the clear river as we glided over them.

We got to the take-out just after dark, and about an hour late. Our mother was furious.

"I can't believe you did that to me!" she said as Brice, and I secured the canoe to the top of her old Buick Skylark. "What if something had happened to you? What if you had been shot or something? I'd never know what happened! This is the last time you float this river alone!"

When my mother reads this, it'll be the first time she's ever heard this story. Brice and I spoke often about it between ourselves, but we've never told a soul for fear of being banned from the river ... hell... banned from the outdoors altogether. And, despite the accidental discharge, neither of us was willing to be parted from our pellet guns. Brice, who died from ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) three years ago, took the story to his grave.

And me? I think the statute of limitations has long since passed when it comes to a parental rebuke. But, with kids of my own now out and about in the real world, I'm only just now learning of some of their more egregious misdeeds.

So, to my mother, I offer this sincere effort at admission.

Sorry, Mom.



Over the line: Rivers being whittled away by Charlie Mitchell



Intensive farming encroaching on the Waiau River

The fringes of some Canterbury rivers have been absorbed into expanding farms, resulting in the loss of thousands of hectares of public land to private development.

The issue – known as "agricultural encroachment" – has happened incrementally over several decades and is adding to the many pressures facing the region's internationally significant braided rivers and the rare ecosystems they host.

Environment Canterbury (ECan) research found that nearly 12,000 hectares of Canterbury's river margins had been taken over by intensive farming between 1990 and 2012.



Intensive farming moving closer to the upper reaches of the Waimakariri River in the high country

About 60 per cent of that land was developed through private land sales, but nearly one-quarter was public reserve land effectively privatised and developed. Authorities in charge of public land all acknowledged that land had been taken and developed without permission.

None of them were able to quantify how much, and in some cases, the encroacher was allowed to keep the land after meeting certain conditions.

The result had been a "massive transformation of riverbed margins" in Canterbury's lowlands, a problem now starting to spread into the high country, said Forest & Bird's Canterbury conservation manager Jen Miller.

Forest & Bird has become increasingly concerned over what appears to be an increasing land grab of our public land in the high country for private economic use," she said

"Further, it is exacerbated by the failure of agencies such as DOC and LINZ, charged with managing this land, to act when they become aware of the illegal development occurring.



Development near the floodplain of the Rakaia River



A development on the Selwyn Riverbed. A local dairy farmer was served an abatement notice

Late last year, structures started appearing in the Selwyn Riverbed.

Among them was a makeshift road about two kilometres long, a long stop bank, land cleared for pasture, and pivot irrigators placed into the ground.



Development on the edge of the Selwyn River. The dots are cows

After a local complained to ECan – the development was clearly visible from the road – it was traced to nearby dairy farmer Mike Dewhirst, who had allegedly expanded his farm into the riverbed, which is dry for much of the year.

After a complaint, ECan ordered Dewhirst to stop with an abatement notice. It said the work was not authorised and an investigation was ongoing.

Dewhirst did not return a request for comment.

It shone a light on a process which has happened for decades.

While not a braided river, ECan's data showed the Selwyn had lost 400 hectares of margin land since 1990.

Collectively, the Rakaia, the Rangitata and the Waiau rivers lost around 7000 hectares, or the equivalent of 40 Hagley Parks, to development.

Encroachment into Rakaia River floodplain.

It has happened with the full knowledge of authorities, who in some case have allowed encroachers to keep using the land they took.



The Waimakariri River after snowfall.

Taming the Beast

Braided rivers are internationally rare, typically found in remote places such as rural Alaska and the Himalayas. The majority of New Zealand's 300 braided rivers are in Canterbury, where they have become iconic, spectacular blue ribbons sweeping across the stony plains.

What makes Canterbury's braided rivers unique are their populations of endemic species, some of which exist nowhere else.

Developing the northern margin of the Waitaki River.

Among them are the kaki (black stilt), wrybill, black-billed gull, and the banded dotterel, which are all threatened. Although the margins often look scruffy, dominated by exotic plants such as gorse and broom, they are home to ecosystems of their own; Rare lizard, bug and plant species can be found on the floodplains.

Encroachment tames braided rivers, which have a notorious tendency to change course: The Waimakariri River, for example, once flowed into Lake Ellesmere, but now drains to sea near Kaipoi. By hemming them in, the rivers start to lose their natural character, which has an impact on biodiversity.

"To maintain this diversity of habitats, the river must be allowed room to move back and forth over its braid-plain, destroying and creating habitat as it goes," ECan's report said.

"When braid-plain extent is constrained or otherwise modified by agricultural encroachment or engineering works, natural character is reduced, with associated reduction of habitat diversity, habitat quality and biodiversity."

Decades of encroachment has slowed by necessity. In the lowlands, there were barely any river margins left to develop.

"To some extent, this slow-down probably reflects that there is now little undeveloped river margin land left over much of the region's low plains, but some development is still continuing," ECan's report said.

It was starting to happen in the high country, where the water was still pure, and the last refuges of native species lived.

Recent photos from the upper reaches of the Waimakariri River, not far from Arthur's Pass, appear to show a farm developing right up to the river's margins.

"Most of the river margins on the lowlands that can be developed have been," Jen Miller said. "The most urgent issue is the development that is occurring in the upper catchments of our braided rivers, which still have good quality and intact biodiversity."

Protecting the braided rivers had been a major focus for ECan, programme manager Don Chittock said. "Braided rivers are dynamic systems that are constantly changing; the bed widens and constricts; flows change regularly, and channels change course.

"Anything that affects these natural processes will have an influence on its natural character. Our challenge is to not allow degradation of this character." ECan had taken enforcement action, including prosecutions, against people for illegally taking public land, he said.

The protection of braided rivers had its own chapter in the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS), and new rules introduced last year gave further protections, Chittock said.

"We need to be particularly aware of how land use change may impact stretches of our braided rivers in the high country, where we see a higher degree of natural character."

Ashburton farmer Chris Allen, who is Federated Farmers' environment spokesman, said it was in both farmers' and the community's interest to protect river margins from encroachment. "Most farmers that I'm aware of respect that and they know that they need a marginal strip," he said.

"The last thing they want is a braided river to come out and destroy your land."

His own farm had modern plantings separating it from the braided Ashburton River, he said.

There were cases where volatile rivers changed course and moved closer to farms, which was why natural margins were important.

"When [farmers] see the previous owners haven't developed up to the edge of the river, there's usually a reason they haven't done that - it's because they value the protection that riparian strip gives, and the rest of the community values that.

"It's in our interest to look after those because it keeps the river in a certain confines but lets it do what braided rivers do. So, when it gets out, we can sort of manage the damage it does to our property.

"It makes adjoining landowners quite nervous when they see certain river plantings challenged."

Formalising the occupancy

The authorities who manage public land acknowledge cases where land had been taken without permission. In some instances, those who privatised public land were retroactively given approval after they'd done it.

Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), which manages several million hectares of Crown land, said it was aware of situations where landowners had taken its land without permission.

In some cases, the encroacher would be allowed to "formalise their occupancy," typically by being granted a licence to occupy for up to five years, with conditions attached.

"The [licence] would typically contain restrictions on use of the land, setbacks from the water courses and fencing requirements," said Acting Group Manager of Crown Property Trevor Knowles. "If we become aware of an unauthorised occupancy, we don't allow it to continue."

All land had an associated report that identified possible uses, including lease opportunities to neighbours, he said.

The Department of Conservation (DOC), which manages nearly nine million hectares of public land, also said it was aware of its land being taken.

"DOC takes the illegal grazing or modification of public conservation land very seriously," said Eastern South Island Operations Director Andy Roberts. "Usually, the department works with the party in question to restore a modified site or come to another workable solution."

That may include setting up a lease for the activity, or even eventual ownership by the encroacher, "provided the appropriate processes have been followed," he said.

Pressures

It comes at a time of ongoing pressures on braided rivers, particularly the rare species that live in them. Community groups have been tasked with contributing to their protection, supported by authorities.

The scale of the issues – including encroachment, introduced predators, high demand for water extraction, and human disturbance – is a lot to bear for groups that are largely volunteer driven.

BRaid, a community group dedicated to the protection of braided river ecosystems, helps coordinate river care groups across the region.

Because the groups are largely volunteer driven, they often don't work as needed, BRaid chairman Nick Ledgard said.

"In many cases, those groups don't coalesce into anything more than just keen individuals," he said. "There was one starting to tick over quite nicely in the Waiau, driven by a very capable lady, but she moved on and the thing no longer exists.

"Just having people going I'll give you a hand when I've got time ... there's no long-term continuity to that."

While improvements had been made in areas with strong river care groups, such as on the Ashley River, other braided systems were declining. "On the Ashley River, we're in a position where we've been able to gather data for about 15 years, and therefore we can start looking at trends. What we're seeing there is an improvement.

"We suspect, or in some cases we know, it's a declining trend [on other rivers] but we don't have that continuity of long-term data to put figures alongside it."

Editor's note: This article was published back in 2017 and when watching the news of the recent floods in the Canterbury area and seeing the damage of the flooding of rivers like the Ashburton and its impact not just once (in May) but after the farmer reclaimed the damaged paddocks and fixed his fencing. In the heavy rains last week, the Ashburton River has flooded the same area again repeating the damage, it does leave you wondering if this was originally 'Public Land?'



Massive trout caught near Twizel officially breaks world record by Rachel Comer

A massive brown trout caught from the Mackenzie hydro canals, near Twizel, in 2020 has officially been recognised as a record breaker.



The trout on the scales at The Point Butcher in Pleasant Point

The 20.10 kg (44 lb 1 oz) fish, landed by Seumas Petrie, of Tūrangi, was hauled from the Ōhau canal on October 27, and donated to the Razza Bar and Bistro in Twizel to be taxidermied and hung up on a wall at the establishment alongside other big catches – a 38.9-pound trout and a 38.2-pound trout.



The trout has now been recognised by the International Game Fish Association, breaking the previous record catch, a 19.1 kg (42lb 1oz) fish, caught by Otwin Kandolf, in the same canals in 2013.

At the time of the record-breaking catch, the fisherman wished to remain anonymous, and only known as “Seamus from Tūrangi”. However, to be recognised as an official record holder, the person’s full name must be used.

According to the International Game Fish Association website the record is now held by Seumas Petrie.

Stuff has unsuccessfully attempted to contact Petrie.

Razza Bar and Bistro employee Sean Colenso said there was a spot in the bar for the fish, once it had been taxidermied, which he expected to be finished in about October.” It’s great news it’s been officially recognised,” Colenso said.

At the time of the catch, he told *Stuff* it was the biggest fish he had ever seen.

All-Tackle World Records

Line Class	Weight	Location	Catch Date	Angler
All-Tackle	20.10 kg (44 lb 5 oz)	Ohau Canal, Twizel, New Zealand	27-Oct-2020	Seumas Petrie

Line Class World Records (Conventional Tackle)

Line Class	Weight	Location	Catch Date	Angler
M-06 kg (12 lb)	19.10 kg (42 lb 1 oz)	Ohau Canal, New Zealand	08-Mar-2013	Otwin Kandolf
W-01 kg (2 lb)	1.20 kg (2 lb 10 oz)	Whakamaru Dam, New Zealand	04-Nov-2014	Sue Tindale
W-02 kg (4 lb)	1.41 kg (3 lb 1 oz)	Lake Argyle, New Zealand	31-Oct-2014	Sue Tindale



Sean Colenso shows off the massive trout at the Razza Bar and Bistro

” We’re looking forward to getting it back, there’s been a spot put aside for it.”

The fisherman, who was staying in a campervan, told Colenso he had caught the trout at the Ōhau canal, getting up early as he had been having trouble sleeping and deciding to get out to the water early.

“He did not stipulate whether it was Ōhau [canal] A, B or C – he did not want to give too much away.”



The brown trout, will join these two other big catches on the wall of the Razza Bar and Bistro in Twizel

Central South Island Fish and Game field officer Rhys Adams said the recognition was exciting news. ” It’s good to see the size of the fish getting bigger,” Adams said.” We know they’re in there [the canals].”

He said he was always waiting for the “next big fish” and a 50-pounder was the “magical number.”

Adams said he knew of Petrie, a fishing guide, and was pleased for him.

Tip – Don't Rig Up at the Truck by Domenick Swentosky

“What fly are you starting with?”

“I don't know yet.”

“How much weight are you using?”

“Not sure.”

“How long of a tippet are you tying on?”

“I haven't decided.”

At the start of the trip, after lacing my boots and grabbing the fly rod, I'm gone. I don't rig up at the truck. Instead, I walk to the river before making these decisions. Rather than guessing what I might need for my fly or tippet length, I wait until I see the water in front of me.

Some of my friends (maybe most) do it the other way. They thread the line and leader, make some tippet adjustments, add a fly or two or even throw on an indicator, perhaps making a decision to nymph before they ever come close to the river's edge. But I don't understand this logic. (That doesn't mean it's wrong. It's just not my way.)

Why guess about what the trout will be eating? Why decide how much weight you will need? Why even choose nymphs over dries or streamers until you see the water? Unless you back the truck down to the river's edge and drop the tailgate right there, you don't really know what the water will look like. And you don't have enough intimate detail about where you'll make the first cast.

All the Things

I enjoy being a versatile angler, ready with any method at every moment. And however, I'm fishing, I'm always willing to adjust. So it's a rare day when I decide to throw big streamers ahead of time or plan to fish dry flies only. But on those odd days, then sure, some of the choices are easy ones, and I might not need to see the river first.

However, day to day, I want to look at the water and gauge its depth, speed, and clarity. I scan the river for bug life and fish activity. I watch for birds eating spinners at the tree line — anything that might provide a hint about the best tactic and approach for my time on the water. Only then do I choose a method, a fly, a weight (if necessary) and a tippet.

One more thought here about rigging up at the truck ...

Why spend any more time away from the river than necessary? Odds are, you took some time to get here. You've daydreamed and made plans about this fishing trip for quite a while. So go to the river. Even if you're sure that you'll fish a pair of wet flies, take a walk and find your starting spot first. Scan the water as you rig up those wets. Read it while you tie the leader knots. And your first casts will be full of hope, educated by a deeper and longer look at the currents ahead.

Fish hard, friends.

DOC's 'legislative blocks' slammed by Hugh Stringleman



Giant kokopu at three years of age and ready for spawning

The release of giant kokopu breeding fish in restored waterways in northern districts is being frustrated by the Department of Conservation (DOC) on advice from its own freshwater ecologist.

Deer farmer Shelley Trotter, near Warkworth, wants to release 1000 three-year-old fish to restock a stretch of Duck Creek in her farm, a tributary of the Mahurangi River. Juvenile kokopu are one of the species which contribute to endemic whitebait and are classified by the department as “at risk, declining.”

Giant kokopu are bred in captivity by the Mangakura fish hatchery in the Kaipara district only 20km cross-country from Solway deer farm, which has won awards for environmental achievements, including waterway restoration. The licenced fish farm owner Jerry Rees-Webbe says he is frustrated by the delays in processing and the reasons given by DOC for declining release permission.

The Ministry for Primary Industries, which must also approve a transfer and release of captive fish, and Fish & Game have supported the planned release.

Similar releases of fish from captivity were made two years ago in the Nukumea Stream in the Auckland district of Orewa and giant kokopu have also been released in the Tawharanui Regional Park, both approved by the department.

Rees-Webbe says the department should be harnessing the concerns of New Zealanders over native flora and fauna and encouraging landowners who are making ecological efforts. “Farmers are restoring waterways at considerable cost and effort, and we are trying to restock these with native endangered fish,” Rees-Webbe said.

“DOC appears to put legislative blocks in our way, which seem to be nonsense and outdated.”

He says it seemed the Duck Creek planned release seemed to be welcomed by the department until advice was sought from its in-house freshwater ecologist Marine Richardson.

In an email to the applicants, Lynette Trewavas of the permissions group in Waikato, says an application to release indigenous fish was not as straightforward as it looks initially. Richardson had advised that release of captive animals carried the potential for introducing diseases, pathogens and parasites not present in the wild.

Conversely, the immune systems of aquaculture fish might not be adapted to pathogens in the natural environment. She says the release of 1000 giant kokopu in one creek could destabilise the food web in that location.

Without an estimate of the fish population in the location, there was no indication if the freshwater system was suitable for that large number. Native fish were largely diadromous – using marine waters in their life cycle – and could naturally repopulate the Mahurangi/Duck Creek system.

Rees-Webbe says DOC now required an Environmental Impact Assessment, which could be very costly on top of the \$2300 fee the department charged, plus the requirement to advertise the planned release in local media.

“Introduced captive fish are being released all the time by Fish & Game and our indigenous kokopu have been kept in pristine disease-free conditions and have already been conditioned for life in the wild,” he said.

He says the fish need acclimatisation before spawning in late winter and release should ideally occur before mid-April.

In a recent freshwater fish study done for the Auckland Council, it was stated that the Nukumea and Tawharanui waterways were the only two in the mainland region containing giant kokopu, and that was because of restocking.

Trotter has written to the Minister for Conservation Kiri Allan asking her to intervene.

Stay Happy and Healthy: Go Fishing by Fly Programme

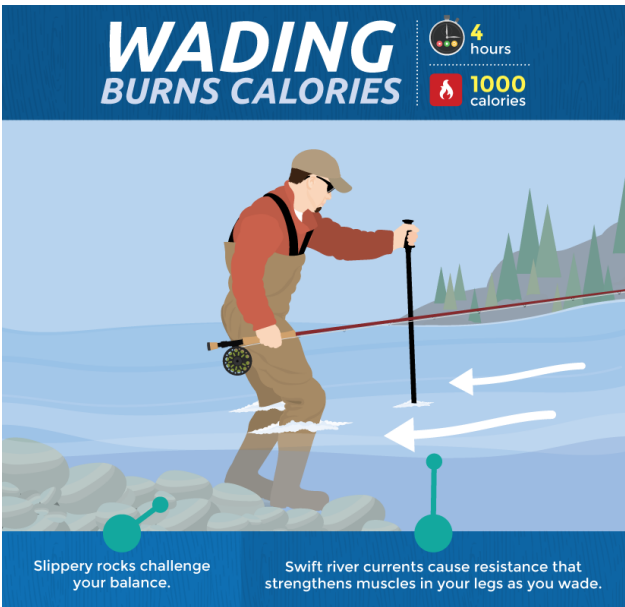
Fishing is a rewarding sport that can be exciting and relaxing at the same time. It is also a wonderful and often overlooked way for anyone to burn calories while having fun in the outdoors. Many people assume fishing just means sitting around in a boat or on the bank waiting for a bobber to go under, but it can be so much more than that. In reality, there are many types of fishing that challenge you both physically and mentally.

From stalking rising trout while wading in a mountain stream to kayaking on the open ocean while trolling for yellow fin tuna, there is a type of fishing that will keep your mind and body engaged no matter your interest or experience level. If you are looking for a way to de-stress, stay fit, and enjoy being outside, fishing might just be for you.

Physical Benefits

One of the not-so-evident benefits of fishing is that it is a great way to get some exercise. Of course, you aren't going to burn many calories sitting on the shore and drinking beer, but an active day spent wading in a stream or hiking to a remote lake is a fantastic way to get a workout without

going to a gym or a yoga class. Consider that a person of average body mass and fitness level will burn about 250 calories in an hour of walking on a treadmill.¹



Actively fishing can involve a number of activities, such as wading against the current in a stream, hiking, **repeatedly casting and reeling**, and even climbing or boulder hopping in certain kinds of terrain. It is estimated that even light wade fishing burns over twice as many calories over a one-hour period.

Spending time in the gym is great for short, high-intensity workouts, but it can be a hard habit to build for people who aren't used to lifting weights.

Being active doesn't have to be a chore. During a morning or afternoon of fishing, you could burn from 500-1,500 calories without even realizing it.



Fishing is not just a great way to burn calories; it also calls upon small muscle groups we don't normally use and helps us build fine motor skills.

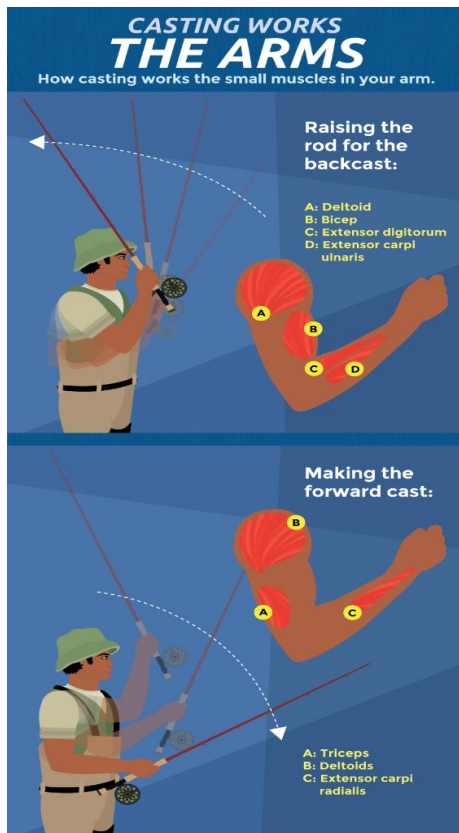
Navigating rough terrain and slippery rocks while resisting the current in a river challenges your balance, building strength in the little-used muscles and tendons in your feet, ankles, calves, and shins.

Hiking up steep slopes or riverbanks builds strength in the large muscles of your legs, such as the quadriceps and hamstrings.

These activities also provide a solid cardiovascular workout, especially at high altitudes where you can find some of the best trout fishing. The best fishermen learn to develop casting accuracy through practice. This helps build hand-eye coordination and strengthens the small muscles in your hands, wrists, forearms, biceps, triceps, and shoulders.

Fishing is such a great, low-impact activity that it is widely used as a rehabilitation therapy by psychologists, counsellors, and physical therapists.

Even the U.S. Veterans Health Administration has adopted the use of fly fishing and fly tying as a recreational therapy for injured military veterans because these calming, repetitive, low-impact activities help them regain strength and the use of their muscles.



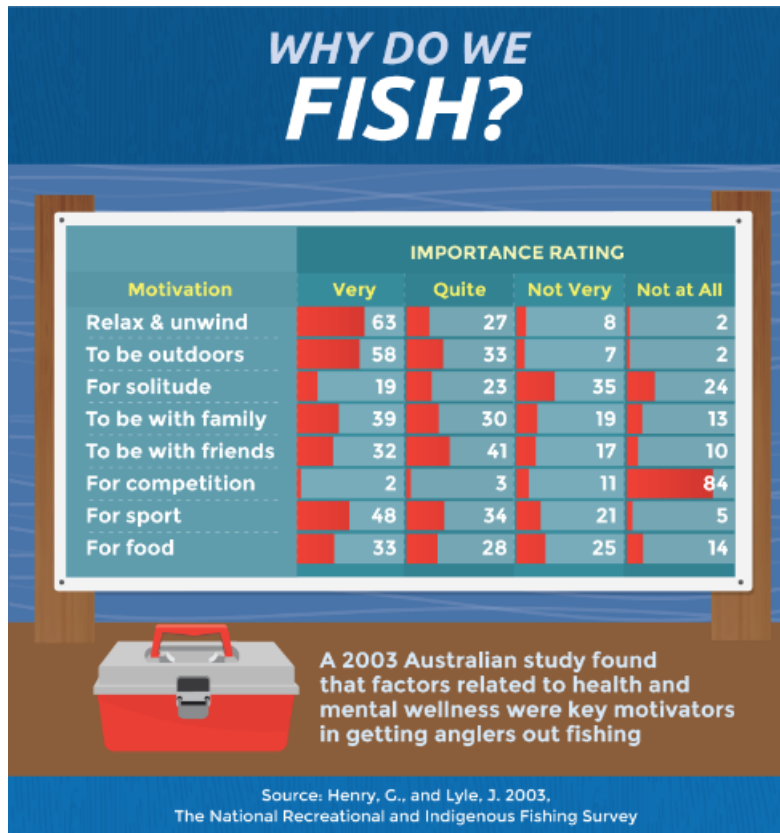
Even the U.S. Veterans Health Administration has adopted the use of fly fishing and fly tying as a recreational therapy for injured military veterans because these calming, repetitive, low-impact activities help them regain strength and the use of their muscles.

Although it may not feel like it while you are out on the water, spending a few hours at the river or lake can be a great workout. Going fishing is not only a fabulous way to stay active and healthy but it is also a perfect activity to help calm your mind, relax, and let go of the stress in your life.

Mental Benefits

Fishing is by nature a reflective and meditative activity that forces you to slow down and enjoy your surroundings. People fish for many reasons. Some fish just for food and some for sport, while others just want an excuse to be outside or get together with friends. No matter what gets them out there, any fisherman can attest to the supreme sense of relaxation and calmness that spending a morning or evening doing their favourite activity provides.

This very quality has made fishing a popular therapeutic exercise used by counsellors and therapists who work with veterans, people with chronic illnesses, and others who have experienced trauma in their lives.



Whether you are trying to cast to a far-away pocket on the opposite side of the stream or observing an insect hatch to determine what the fish are biting on, fishing challenges your mind and demands your undivided attention.

Therapeutic experts claim that, because fishing requires focus, it helps take a person’s mind off internal conflict. Locating fish, developing a strategy, choosing the correct fly or lure, and properly presenting that lure to the fish all require critical thinking and creativity, which allow a healthy escape from stress, depression, and anxiety.

This has been proven in clinical studies in which cortisol (a hormone linked to stress) levels were measured in a group of Iraq war veterans before and after a weekend of fishing. Those who had been on the fishing trip experienced lower levels of cortisol for as many as three weeks afterward. Researchers noted that their patients slept better, expressed lower levels of depression and anxiety, experienced fewer symptoms of somatic stress, and were far less likely to experience the feelings of guilt, hostility, fear, or sadness normally associated with PTSD and traumatic experiences.

Fly fishing expeditions are also a key element of the program “Casting for Recovery,” which serves to organize fly fishing trips for survivors of breast cancer, both as a therapeutic measure and as a form of physiotherapy. This volunteer-based service provides free fly-fishing retreats as a means to make support groups for breast cancer survivors more accessible.

One of the greatest things about fishing is that anyone can participate. It doesn’t matter how fit you are, whether you are old or young, woman or man. There are no restrictions or limitations. It is one of the world’s most popular recreational activities for good reason. It has helped countless

people with chronic illness, post-traumatic stress, and debilitating injuries to recover and live full, healthy lives. It allows us to explore our natural world and stay active well into old age.



Fishing is a calming, enjoyable activity that has the power to transform your outlook on life. Try grabbing a rod and heading for the river. You may just reel in a better way to live.

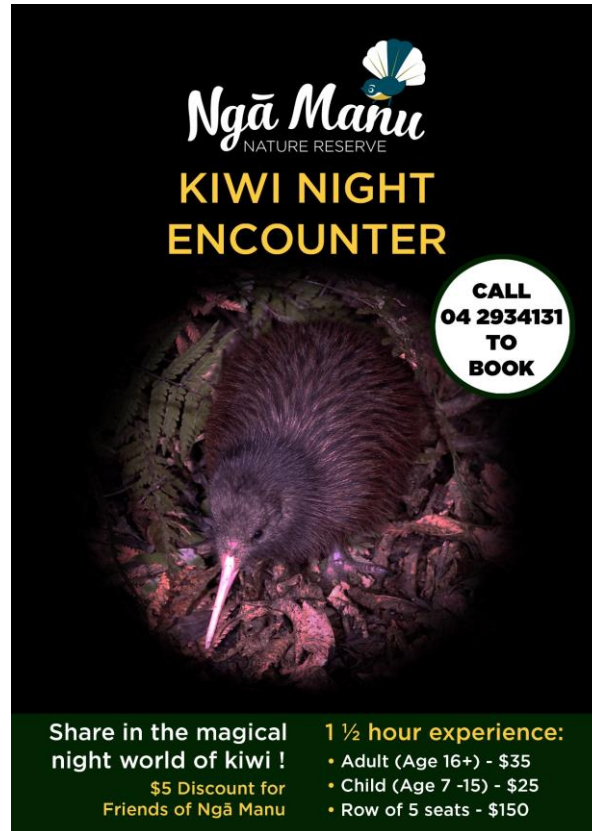
Angler Code of Conduct – Tongariro River

Most of us at some stage have experienced the odd angler on the Tongariro river who will jump in ahead of an angler fishing who is moving upstream, one of the only downsides of fishing this great river.

Well, Department of Conservation have released a video clip providing anglers with the basic angler etiquette, check it out before you head up on your next trip.

In winter popular pools can sometimes get crowded, which occasionally creates tension. This can be avoided by following a simple code of conduct, often referred to as fishing etiquette. Not part of the Taupō fishery regulations but a common-sense guide allowing everyone to enjoy their fishing.

[video clip](#)



If you have never seen a Kiwi in its natural environment (near natural) then I would recommend the Kiwi Night Encounter at Nga Manu, you will need to book as it is limited to 10 people each night.

Newsletter content with built-in links to other documents by Editor

Readers of our newsletter may not realise that when you see a name or wording underlined in an article, as an example [a Harvey leader](#) this is a link to another article where you can find more information. All you need to do is hold down your CTRL key and click on the words and the link will open.

*Newsletter copy to be received by
Second Monday of each month; your
contribution is welcome just send it to:
malcolm1@xtra.co.nz*

Purpose:

To promote the art and sport of Fly Fishing.

To respect the ownership of land adjoining waterways.

To promote the protection of fish and wildlife habitat.

To promote friendship and goodwill between members.

To promote and encourage the exchange of information between members.

Club meetings

You are invited to attend our club meetings that are held on the **Fourth Monday** of each month.

The venue is the **Turf Pavilion Sport Grounds**, Scaife Street, Paraparaumu,

Our **meetings start at 7:30pm** with fellowship followed by speakers of activities.

Club Committee meetings are held on the first Monday of each month and the meetings are held at various member's homes and start at 7:30pm.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please remember that the club has two Five Weight 8'6" fly rods that members are welcome to use, just contact Malcolm Francis

Contacts

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