



*Remembering our Past President Craig Gutry  
30 November 1963 – 16 October 2020*



# **Kapiti Fly Fishing Club**

October 2020 Newsletter

**This month's front cover:** This is a photo of our Past President Craig Gutry out on the Otaki River practicing his fly-fishing techniques prior to joining the New Zealand Fly Fishing Team to complete in the 2018 Commonwealth Fly Fishing contest in Northern Ireland.

**In this month's newsletter:**

- Page 2** Remembering our good friend Craig Gutry
- Page 4** Presidents Report
- Page 5** Fly Casting Tuition – Gordon Baker
- Page 6** Fly Pattern of the Month by Gordon Baker
- Page 7** KFFC Christmas dinner – Wednesday 18 November by Nick Weldon
- Page 8** Rangitikei Exploration – by Hugh Driver
- Page 12** One Plan, a splitting headache by Jono Galuszka
- Page 13** The Secret by Domenick Swentosky
- Page 15** How to fix the Manawatu River by Veronika Meduna
- Page 22** An ode to the Adams, the perfect dry fly by Chris Hunt
- Page 24** Salmon wars; Salmon farms, wild trout, and the future Communities by Chris Becket
- Page 24** Local content by the Editor
- Page 25** Blue trout rare find for local angler by Tb News Watch

**Club activities**

Date	Event	Coordinator
<b>Monday 26 October</b>	<b>Club Night –</b>	<b>Michael</b>
<b>Monday 9 November</b>	<b>Fly-Tying Workshop – Kapiti Community Centre</b>	<b>Gordon</b>
<b>Wednesday 18 November</b>	<b>Clubs Christmas Dinner</b>	<b>Nick</b>
<b>19 to 22 November</b>	<b>Blue Duck Cottage – Manganui-o-tea river</b>	<b>Pete</b>
<b>Sunday 29 November</b>	<b>Day trip Hutt River</b>	<b>Malcolm</b>

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*You are invited to the next KFFC Club Night on Monday 26 October- Setting up leaders for different conditions and the secrets of fishing the Waikanae River*

*Meeting starts at 7:30pm looking forward to seeing you there*

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## ***Remember a good friend Craig Gutry***

It is was a very sad day when I heard the news that young Craig Gutry – President of KFFC between 2015 to 2017 had lost his battle with bowl cancer on the 16 October 2020, my thoughts go to Craig's beautiful wife Jennie and Craigs family.

From the very first time I met Craig you knew that he was very passionate about all things fly-fishing and wanted to learn as much as he could about our beloved sport and participated with many of the clubs trips. Not long after Craig joined our club, he discovered the art of fly-tying and spent endless hours behind his vice and created stunning fly's. His passion for tying flies led to Craig representing our club in the Wellington Interclub Fly-Tying competition, as a member of our team it was a pleasure to have Craig as a team member.

Craig interest in fly-fishing and his competitive nature gained from his involvement in hockey saw him take up competitive fly-fishing, within a very short few years Craig was selected to represent New Zealand at the 2018 Commonwealth Fly Fishing Championships in Northern Ireland.



**Craig at the vice with members KFFC team**

The following message has been posted on Craig's Facebook page on behalf of the KFFC

*"Heartfelt condolences to Jennie and Craig's family, from myself and on behalf of the Kapiti Fly Fishing Club. Craig was a wonderful guy and a well-liked member and will be sadly missed by our club.*

*Having served on the committee and as president for 2 years, his organizational skills were very well respected.*

*Craig was passionate about his fly fishing and tying, representing both the club and his country. KFFC were proud to have been able to support his efforts with sponsorship for his NZ Silver Flies team endeavour's in the UK.*

*Jennie, it was heart-warming to see you and Craig fulfil his bucket list over the last couple of years. He couldn't have chosen a better person to have done it with.*

*Go well Craig, and tight lines mate".*

*Cheers Pete*

The following are a few photos of Craig and various club members who have all enjoyed time on the water with Craig.



My thanks to Peter who has been supporting Craig and to all those members that have followed Craig on his final journey. Your smile and personal warm with be missed by us all, tight lines my friend.

The following link is a short video from the 2018 Commonwealth Fly Fishing Championships in Northern Ireland, as the teams walk in you will see Craig alongside New Zealand flag.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yExES80xQjk>

## *Presidents report*

Well, the year is rocketing along , and the fishing season is well underway so I hope you have all had a chance to hit our local Wellington Fish & Game region waterways and bring some nice fish to the net. I have only had one short fish on the Oahu and whilst the fish weren't participating it sure was good for my soul

I know that a fair few of us have had trips to the Turangi area in the last month and the club trip on the weekend of 3-4 October was a mixture of tough days mixed with some exceptional fishing especially with new members Mike Johnston and Steve Beddow having some amazing success with lots of big Bows and Browns to the net. Leon caught some great Bows and hell, even I got a nice 3lb Brown which attacked my damsel streamer. Great fun watching a bow wave following my streamer and then inhaling it like a kingfish chasing a Popper!

All of us on the trip caught fish and Pete Collins took youth members, Zac, and Noah, up on the Sunday for a couple of days and they caught more fish than I catch in a number of seasons. We are experiencing a little surge in youth membership which is fantastic and with Noah and Zac leading the pack us old fellows in the club are being shown how it's done.

Kras lead a hugely successful trip to the Manawatu on 26th September with a number of fish to the net. Nick Weldons caught a monster which I understand put up a great fight.

I know that plenty of members have been out there doing it so please try to share your experiences with us all and rattle out a short note to Malcolm with photos if possible so he can include them in the newsletter.

Talking of club trips please note that whilst we email all members for some of the major trips and events this is not always the case so please, take a look at the Newsletter and put the dates in your dairies so you don't forget.

The monthly fly-tying sessions have commenced, and I know a couple of members forgot the dates. We are so lucky to have our amazing tutors, Malcolm, and Gordon available so if you are interested then please give Gordon or Malcolm a call and they can answer any of your questions.

Don't forget to book with Nick for our Christmas Dinner to be held at the Waikanae Boating club on Wednesday 18th of November. We are having this a bit earlier than usual to make it easier for those with busy social schedules closer to Christmas

As you can see, a lot has been happening thanks to our very active committee. It has just come to me that before we know if the year will be over and the countdown to the AGM will be on so if you are keen to get more involved let me or any of the committee know. I will have to vacate the Presidents role as well so don't be scared and if you want to be involved you will be welcome.

That's it from me, see you at Club night on Monday 26th where Gordon will lead a session on the tricky subject of the best way to setup leaders and Malcolm will give us some tips on how to fish the Waikanae, which is our club river.

Kia Kaha

Michael

## ***Fly Casting Tuition***

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 [kiwifyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:kiwifyfisher@gmail.com) or phone 0274946487 to arrange a suitable time for a lesson. There is no charge.

## ***New Monthly Fly-tying Group from October***

The club is restarting the fly-tying group at the Kapiti Community Centre at 7.30 pm on Monday 9 November. We have pencilled in a booking for the second Monday night from February to November next year.

Each month will feature a pattern or tying style relating to that time of the season. The fly of the month will be published in the newsletter prior to each meeting. There is no cost as The Flyshop (formally Feather Merchants) has agreed to sponsor materials and the club is covering venue hire. There will be spare vise's and tools for members looking to get started.

## ***For sale, a Sage VPS 690 two piece 9' 00" 6 weight Fly Rod***

This rod is in new condition and only been used once, comes with reel and line, if you are interested in buying this rod, please contact Malcolm Francis on 027 384 6596



## *Fly Pattern of the Month*



**Humpy**

The Humpy is one of the most popular and successful dry flies. It does not imitate any particular insect and is taken for a wide range of aquatic and terrestrial naturals. Fairly easy to tie once the handling of the hump/wing material is mastered. This is an essential spring and summer pattern.

A favourite backcountry attractor dry fly might be the venerable humpy. Tied in yellow, red, or blue, the Humpy is a high-floating dry fly that imitates a host of bugs, from larger mayflies to caddis, but doesn't exactly resemble anything in particular. It just looks buggy.

And backcountry trout in austere environments absolutely love them.

Hook	TMC 9300
Tail	Moose mane or Elk hair
Hump/Wing	Deer or Elk hair
Body	Blue, Yellow, Orange, Red, Green, thread or floss
Hackle	Brown

**Flyshop NZ** sponsor our fly-tying group with materials and tools. They have a wide variety of quality flyfishing and fly-tying products that can be purchased online from <https://www.flyshop.co.nz/>

**Meeting 7.30pm the second Monday of every month except December and January  
at the "Rata" Room Kapiti Community Centre.**

**The best way to access the room is from the car park at the south western corner of the building.**

## ***KFFC Christmas dinner – Wednesday 18 November by Nick Weldon***

Dear Members,

Your committee invites you, your partner, and children (if they wish to come) to our Annual Club Night Dinner for an evening of great food, drinks, fishy tales, and tall stories!  
Junior members are most welcome.

This year our club dinner will be held at the Waikanae Boating Club - 97 Tutere Street, Waikanae Beach, Kapiti 5032. There is plenty of parking both in the club car park and the Waimea public car park next door.

To make the dinner a success, we need at least 36 dining and hopefully many more. As a member of WBC, I can vouch for chef Al Collings and the delicious food that he lays on.

The club will be exclusively ours that evening, allowing children to run about a bit or do some colouring (provided) and one or two of us to wax lyrical from time to time!

The club's bar will be available to us offering drinks at club, rather than pub, prices.

The dinner will consist of three courses at a **cost of \$45 per person**. Sorry, no child rates. Included in this price will be the first drink from the bar on presentation of a raffle ticket issued on arrival. Excellent value! Payment for each diner will be required on the night directly to the Galley Restaurant (no credit payments taken).

The first and main courses will be buffet style, allowing everyone to eat at roughly the same time.

**Details of the menu are as follows:**

### **Starter**

- **Grazing platters- cured meats, cheeses, pickles, pate, olives, croutes, rice crackers(gf), etc.**

**Main: you will be offered a mixture of each of the meats, rather than choosing just one**

- **Eye fillet of beef with red wine jus**
- **BBQ braised pork belly**
- **Champagne ham**
- **Freshly baked dinner rolls**
- **Cranberry rice salad**
- **Roast veg medley**
- **Seasonal greens**

### **Dessert**

**Your choice on the night of either:**

- **sticky date pudding with Brandy Anglaise, butterscotch sauce and ice cream**
- **lemon + white chocolate cheesecake with berry compote and cream**

Exceptionally, AI is prepared to offer a very limited number (max 5) smoked salmon side plates for those that do not eat meat. Please let me know if this is something that you or a family member require.

Please email me to book your spot and let me know how many will be in your party. I will call for final numbers closer to the time. We hope that you will be able to make it, as it is sure to be a fun evening!

Tight lines

Nick Weldon

KFFC Committee member.

[nandcweldon@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nandcweldon@xtra.co.nz)

027 4481818

## ***Rangitikei Exploration – by Hugh Driver***



**Ross in his favoured pool**

Ross kindly offered to show me the areas he fishes on the Rangitikei river. The river had received a large flush during the last week of September (491cumecs at Mangaweka according to the Horizons website) and was still 50-80mm above the more common flow mark and clearing. Most of the riverbed had been stripped clean of algae and insect life so perhaps the conditions would likely prove difficult.

Day 1 - We approached the river early in the morning and made our way to a pool favoured by Ross. I watched Ross approach the pool and after a while I went downstream to fish the tail water. I noticed a rainbow taking mayflies from the relatively quiet water surface and decided to change my nymph rig to put on a size 14 dry fly – I even left my indicator on as I figured that I would be back nymphing if I failed to hook up. Well off to a great start a 4-pound jack took my fly on the third cast and it was still early (I rarely catch fish before half past nine). The fish was in excellent condition, duly netted and returned.

Ross had foul hooked a fish but apart from that had not seen action at that point. The sun spread across the pool and after we both fished through it several times with many changes of flies, we moved on despite being able to see probably 4 fish in the depths, one of which was a monster. By this time, the wind was becoming strong and gusty making casting difficult – wait for the gust to subside before a short break enough to get in another cast if lucky.

Battling the wind, we fished all the likely (and some not so likely spots) until Ross hooked up on a brown, again of about 4 pound in an area of the river that had not been stripped by the flush. Moving on and linking up we crossed the river to fish more promising water. I had not seen or frightened a fish since that first pool and that proved to be the case for the remainder of the day. Ross reckoned he had seen two or three - we returned late in the day to fish the first pool again before returning to our accommodation.

Day 2 – Returning to another part of the river early in the morning and made our way to a pool favoured by Ross – where he always catches fish! After our fruitless attempts to catch these elusive fish we made our way in search of fish in other parts of the river. Ross was fishing to water on the true left and I was fishing under a willow on the true right. I hooked into a brown which was intent on getting into the willow roots and branches but I applied as much pressure as I dared really early on to steer her away – I just managed to pull her clear and the current assisted at this point to take her down clear of the snags. A tough fight ensued I looked across to Ross to find he had also hooked up so there we were both on. Eventually I got my fish into the net and it weighed in at 6.5pounds and again a great condition fish as the photo illustrates.



Ross had subdued his slightly smaller fish, and both were released. Moving on with the wind getting up again – I fished some really good-looking stretches of water but to no avail. Ross continued upstream, I continued to fish but lost sight of Ross and I continued nymphing until the wind caused me to change to an intermediate wet line I fished back downstream covering just about all the water but not a touch - he nor I caught another fish that day and I had not seen or frightened a fish since my 6.5pound brown.

We returned to our accommodation and I drove home while Ross was to continue his exploits.

Many thanks to Ross for showing me around and I'm well satisfied with the capture of my 6.5pound brown and while I was not skilled enough to catch more fish, I learnt a lot. Ross recons he will double his guide fee i.e.  $2 \times 0 = 0$ .

## ***Floods and Their Impact on Trout Fishing and Trout Food by Allan Burgess***



**The Waimakariri river in flood – no fishing today!**

Nature's creation of rivers was originally developed by excessive rain falling on the land creating its own channels and flooding much of the deltas. Some floods are slow and steady while other ones have immense energy through the amount of rain that falls. Although the river systems were originally created by this method, Man in this wisdom has changed many of the areas, not only within the flood channel but outside it, by developing land to utilise for our own food resource. Floods can be contained to a degree but sometimes the river breaks free.



**Wakatipu Anglers Club and Otago Fish and Game Council huts on Diamond Creek, in flood**

Flooding has a substantial negative impact on the river channel and the aquatic organisms which live there. In many cases, the armouring of the river is broken down by the high-water levels but always some little area will remain where the aquatic organisms can shelter so as to carry out nature's work in the coming seasons.

Trout are also affected by this heavy flooding. First of all the heavy silt which is carried by the floods, although travelling fast through the system, can still have an adverse effect on the gill surface, which is the breathing mechanism of the fish. Many of the food items are buried and worst of all the place in the river that the trout knew as their home is washed away or destroyed.

### **Floods in The Upper Clutha catchment**

In January 1994, the huge flood that hit the Upper Clutha Catchment substantially damaged several rivers and fears were held about how these waterways would cope or be affected in the 1994/95 season.

When the flood waters had cleared they were completely new river systems, some with incredible amounts of damage, such as the Wilkin. But others stood up to it quite well, depending on the type of channel pool or braiding which occurred within the river's systems. There were some good examples of how the aquatic creatures and the trout that remained quickly bounced back and became adaptable to the new conditions and their ability to capitalise whenever good conditions prevailed, such as they did through the previous season. Over this last summer, we suffered no major floods, and the resulting stability allowed the invertebrate population and the fish to thrive.

Certainly, there are some anomalies in the system such as rivers like the Dingleburn and the head of Lake Dunstan which are still badly affected by floods from the huge amount of water that passed through them. Of course, many fish ended up in the lake systems and this provided a better angling resource around some of the river mouths.

### **Floods in Lake Hawea**

Some effect has been noted in places such as [Lake Hawea](#) where the lake was dirty and discoloured for several months which had an effect on the light reaching the food resource such as the weeds and algae, and therefore denying the aquatic insects and small bullies the normal array of food organisms they depend on.

Taking all this into account it has still been an amazing season for the anglers. Sure, in some places fish weren't where you used to find them, so that extra bit of scouting around had to take place, but that's not too bad. It allows you to see some new areas. Most anglers reported good catches with fish in excellent condition, except for the two waters previously mentioned, the Dingle and [Lake Dunstan](#) in the head of the Clutha Arm. But even in these places, there were still some good fish available. Those fish that got onto the new food resource and found places to live in the new river channel soon adapted to the conditions. These fisheries will recover with time.

Although water levels dropped consistently during the season, we were lucky in some waters where irrigation water returning to those rivers from the storage dams has kept them at a reasonable level. The [Manuherikia River](#) is one of these. It has fished consistently well throughout the season. Although many of the fish weren't large there were still plenty there to catch with all methods of angling. In the Lower Clutha system, the best salmon run for many years was recorded over this season. Certainly, we haven't got all the answers why this occurred but by the number of redds built during April and May all look well for a good season again in three years' time. *Fish and Game staff concerned at the state of Manuherikia River.*

In all, most anglers seemed pleased with their fishing, being able to travel to many waters and catch some good trout which is always a pleasure during such a stable summer.

## *One Plan, a splitting headache by Jono Galuszka*

History never repeats, according to Split Enz.

Farmers, scientists, council staff and others who gather in Palmerston North on Monday, however, will be singing from a different song sheet. They will be holed up in a conference room in the Distinction Hotel for the best part of two weeks to debate proposed changes to the One Plan.

Those two words - One Plan - raise various emotions in people. They might cause headaches for council workers, anxiety to rise in the farming community, anger to swell in environmentalists and put dollar signs in the eyes of lawyers.

The One Plan is Horizons Regional Council's rulebook for managing natural resources across its area, from Whanganui to Tararua and Ruapehu to Horowhenua. It took 10 years of consultation and cost nearly \$10 million before it was signed off in 2014. By and large, it works. But one section, dealing with nitrogen, has been a thorn in the plan's side since its inception.

Nitrogen is bad for waterways, encouraging the growth of algae, which harms other aquatic life by blocking light and using oxygen when it decomposes. There are many sources of nitrogen in waterways, ranging from vegetable farm runoff to treated wastewater from towns and cities.

The One Plan has a section known as table 14.2, which has limits on how much nitrogen can leach from land used for farming. Most farms were expected to be able to hit the limits, but Horizons also had the ability to grant discretionary consents to those failing to meet the limits. Those consents were the subject of legal challenges, which ended with the Environment Court ruling in 2017 Horizons was applying them incorrectly.

That left the council between a rock and a hard place. On one hand, it had clear direction from the courts on how to apply the One Plan. On the other, it left officials suspecting as many as 90 per cent of farms would be unable to get consents.

Further analysis found 178 farms - mainly dairy in Tararua and horticulture in Horowhenua - would have no way to get required consents. But more complications were thrown into the mix when software Horizons uses to estimate nitrogen leaching, called Overseer, was updated. That update left the numbers in table 14.2 out of date.

Documents filed for the hearing showed enforcing the status quo would suck \$200m out of the region's economy.

The proposed changes would still suck \$28m from the economy a year.

But, if submissions on the changes are anything to go by, no-one appears to be fully happy with the proposed change.

Horticulturists in Horowhenua, which provide 30 per cent of the country's fresh leafy greens, say they need their own rules because vegetable production is far different from dairy farming. Federated Farmers says always changing table 14.2 will only be a temporary fix and will only cause farmers to stress even more.

The Environmental Defence Society says the changes are a move by Horizons to get around the Environment Court's ruling and will lead to more polluted waterways.

Various iwi oppose any change and want the plan implemented how it is, because waterways are already severely degraded, and action needs to be taken to prevent further damage.

The Palmerston North City Council says the changes could muck up potential plans to discharge treated wastewater to land, despite Horizons wanting wastewater there instead of in rivers and streams.

The mood is less "town versus country" and more "everyone versus One Plan."

Given the strained history of the One Plan so far and the almost inevitable appeal against the decision made after the hearing, the only likely winner in this fight will be lawyers' bank accounts.

### ***The Secret by Domenick Swentosky***

I poked through the dense brush, shed my pack, and dropped it in the clearing. In a yellow patch of sunlight, I knelt to catch my breath and watch the wind detach leaves from their parent branches, pushing them into a wild collage across the morning sky. The mix of maple and sycamore foliage travelled downwind to find a place of rest for the coming winter.



This place is rough. And it's the kind of spot that doesn't get much traffic from anyone — home to the squirrels and birds. Finding a deer trail is the best method for navigating through the thick stuff, and I did that. But when I crested the hillside and started my descent, the path closed in with newly fallen trees, so I was forced to make my way through a maze of dead branches and briers which had quickly sprouted to take advantage of a new sun when the tree had fallen. I moved forward slowly, but the branches grabbed my coat to hold me back, as if protecting the river below.

There are two kinds of secret places, I suppose: one's that are truly tucked away somewhere unknown, and ones that lies right underneath a fisherman's nose. This place harbours a little of both.

The remote and unknown places — well, there aren't many of those left. Maybe it's just population growth. Maybe it's the rise of a sport that prides itself on discovery. And maybe it's just that fishermen are a friendly lot that drink too much and like to brag about a good catch now and then.

Nothing that's written down in magazines and placed on a list for "destination fishing" can fairly be called a secret. And yet within these rivers, a deeper realm exists than the traveling angler will ever find. A good river requires your friendship before it reveals its best. You get to know it first. So even Blue-Ribbon water has its guarded locations.

There are secret spots that lie open, in plain view, often walked through or passed for the next deep gut or undercut bank. They're the best-kept secrets of a popular river and worth protecting (in my mind) just as much as the off-the-grid freestone that holds a nice population of wild trout, and no one else seems to know about it.

The wind died, and the leaves settled, enough that I heard the call of the river below — the murmuring rush of rapids at a distance.

My spot.

I climbed over another fallen maple and found the deer trail again. It led down a steep and mossy ravine that dripped water from rocks protruding from the ground. These trickles are the lifeblood for any river. For the trout. For myself.

The skinny path wound like a staircase between impassable barriers of rocks and crashed timber, until finally I arrived at the water's edge. Into the river, I was followed by the drip and trickle of the lifeblood.

I fished.

I don't know what this spot was like a century ago, but I can make some guesses. In Pennsylvania, you never seem to get away from signs of the industrial revolution. Even the deepest forests have old tram roads. And all my favourite streams have been pushed and cajoled to follow a path dictated by roads or railroads at some point. This place is no different. The forest is a mix of new growth and old iron or stone relics slipping slowly behind leaves and encroaching plants.

I've lived long enough to tell you stories about the way things used to be. And I can say that in the last two decades, my favourite river is moving onto the radar. So, it's no real secret, and maybe it never was. That's the thing about secrets — there's an endless procession through time of people discovering the same thing and calling it their own. In my spot I've yet to see another fisherman, but I've seen signs that a few others make the trek and pay the visit. I wonder what those guys are like.

I've thought of bringing others here on occasion, but I don't. It's one of the few places I've never shared with anyone. And I won't.

## *How to fix the Manawatu River by Veronika Meduna*



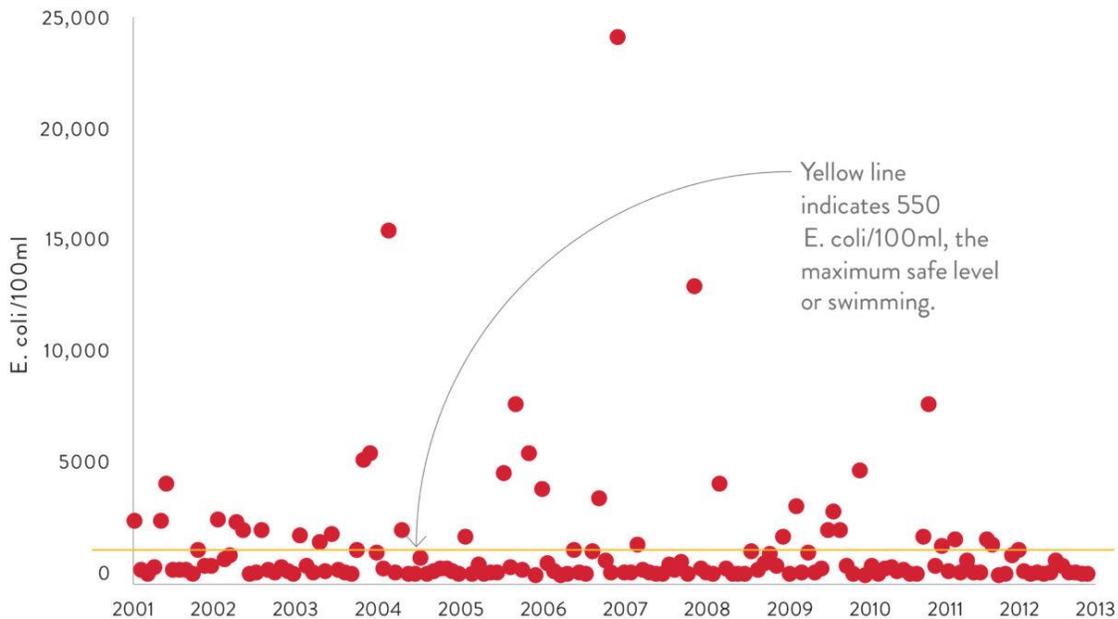
A unique New Zealand landscape is at risk of losing what sets it apart. Here's what needs to happen.

**IT WOULD BE** easy to drive along State Highway 1 and cross the lower Manawatū River without noticing it. On the stretch between Levin and Foxton, it's the Tararua Range that catches the eye, not the unchanging pastoral landscape of the lowlands.

Yet, only a few kilometres away, the river's mouth holds one of New Zealand's most important estuaries. Along with the Firth of Thames and Farewell Spit, the Manawatū estuary is one of six listed on the Ramsar Convention's list of wetlands of international significance. Each spring, Godwits, Red Knots, and Golden Plovers descend on its sand banks and salt marshes to join threatened Wrybills and Banded Dotterels, and the region's biggest breeding population of Fernbirds.

In the mountains, the Manawatū demonstrates its geology-defying force. Its headwaters are near Norsewood, east of the Tararua Range, but instead of taking the easy route east to the Pacific, the river cuts a deep gorge through the divide, separating the Ruahines from the Tararuas, and meandering westward through the plains to the Tasman.

That's because the Manawatū is older than the mountains around it—and this is where its name still rings true. According to legend, Māori explorer Haunui was so taken by the power and beauty of this river that his breath (manawa) stood still (tū).



### E. Coli at Whirokino Boat Ramp

Situated at the mouth of the Manawatū, the Whirokino boat ramp suffers the sum of the sins of the waterway upstream. E. coli values regularly surpass the maximum for safe swimming but show a little improvement since 2007.

Ministry of the Environment

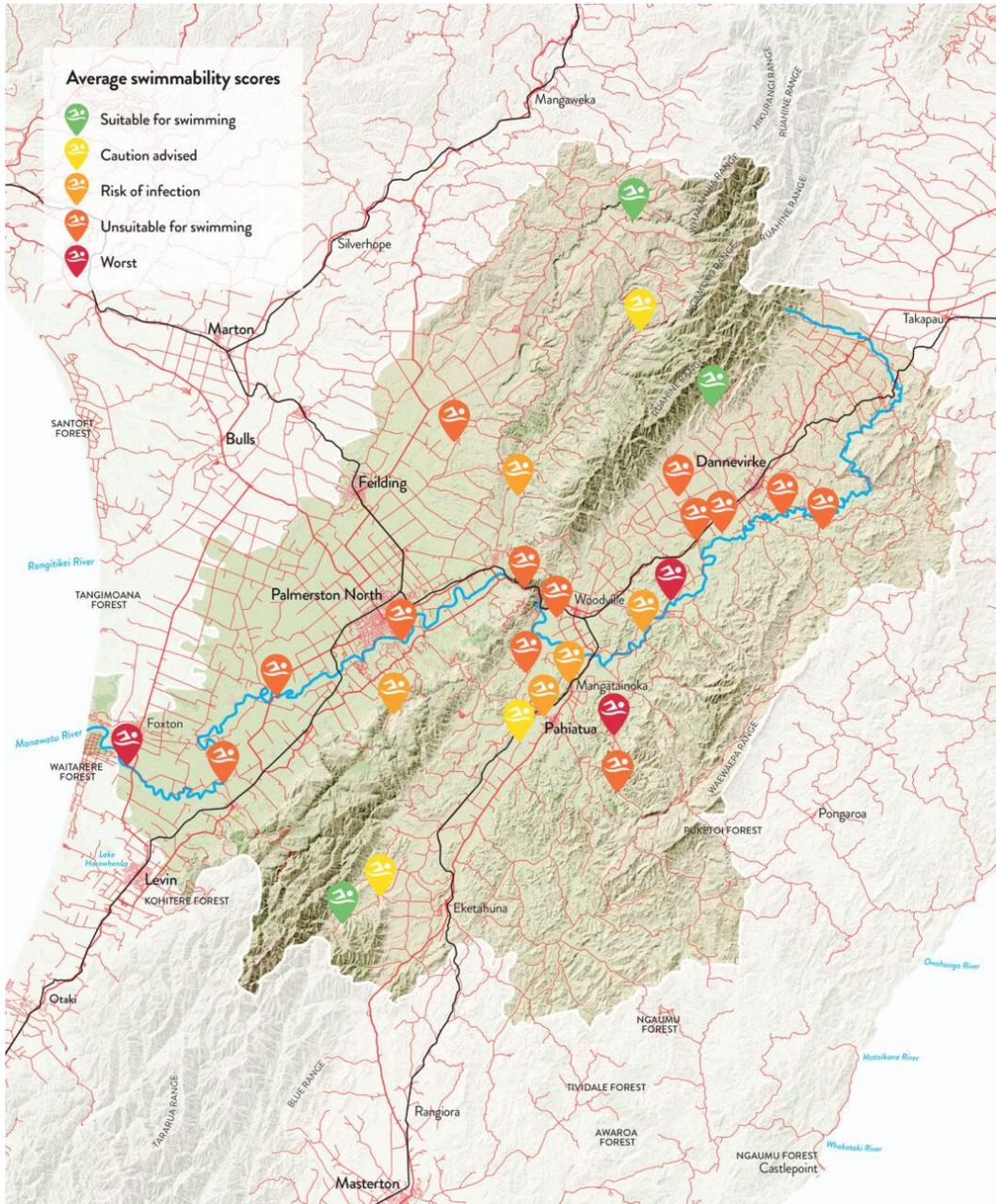
Today, it takes some imagination to picture the original landscapes along the flow of the Manawatū. Tawa and black beech forests cloaked the greywacke hills, kahikatea and pukatea grew on the floodplains and tōtara on more free-draining soils. Only extensive wetlands interrupted the forests.

The first Māori settlers were coastal people, relying on plentiful food from the seashore, lakes, lagoons, and coastal forests. A second wave of Māori occupation took people further inland, but mostly along the natural run of the river. The footprint of Māori settlers was lighter here than elsewhere in New Zealand, writes Catherine Knight in her environmental history of the Manawatū, *Ravaged Beauty*. But soon after European settlement, the “river ran discoloured from sewage and industrial waste.”

The first sawmill sprang up near Foxton in 1840, processing timber to build a tram and railway to Palmerston North. Bush farmers, who had bought forested lots to convert to pasture, earned their first income from felling the most valuable trees, then went on to burn the rest. Even back then, there were voices critical of the speed of forest clearance—not because they wanted to protect native forests but because they saw the burns as a waste of a resource.

As a result, the pace of erosion accelerated. Heavy rainfalls washed topsoil off the denuded hills, choking the river with sediment, and increasing the flood risk in a region with high rainfall. After devastating floods in 1941 and 1953, the Moutoa sluice gates and floodway were completed in 1962, New Zealand’s first major flood-protection scheme.

But floodway’s only control floodwaters; they don’t address risk factors like sedimentation. When a major storm in 2004 breached stop-banks, more than 100 farms were damaged, 1000 people became temporarily homeless, and thousands of sheep drowned. Knight describes the Moutoa scheme as a “reminder of an era when confidence in engineering and scientific fixes to environmental issues was at its height.”



Horizons regional council, grading of soe sites based on nof criteria

The story of how the Manawatū turned from a breathtakingly beautiful river to one of the most polluted waterways in the country galvanised people to march in the streets of Palmerston North in 2006 in protest against the waste flowing into the river and the local authorities' failure to prevent it.

In 2009, the Manawatū became infamous when headlines described it as the “worst in the west”—one of the most polluted rivers in a study that measured dissolved oxygen in almost 300 waterways across North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. The study's main scientist soon qualified the claims (the number of rivers sampled was too small to draw such dramatic conclusions) but nevertheless described the river as “very unhealthy.”

The attention prompted two initiatives that offer some hope for the Manawatū. In 2010, Horizons Regional Council introduced more rigorous policy, called the One Plan, and not long after, several groups across industry, iwi, local authorities and non-profit organisations formed the Manawatū River Leaders' Forum, with ambitious goals of improving the health of the awa.

The story of the Manawatū encapsulates tensions between commercial enterprise, farming and environmental protection that play out across New Zealand, making the debate about freshwater quality so divisive.

### **What we know**

**Waste is flowing into the Manawatū.** Starting with the first sewage outfall built in Palmerston North in the 1890s, towns, abattoirs, dairy factories, and flax mills discharged waste directly into the river for the first half of the 20th century. Knight describes this as the phase of “gross pollution”, involving solid, clearly visible waste. It became most acute during the 1950s. “In particular, freezing works discharged wool, fat, blood and entrails into the water, sometimes resulting in mats of bacteria known as sewage fungus,” writes Knight.

The Waters Pollution Act was introduced in 1953 and the first prosecutions for breaching it were carried out during the 1960s. Instead of sewage being discharged straight into the river, settling ponds were introduced to treat it—but at the same time, agriculture was becoming more intensive.

The second phase of pollution came from specific points of discharge—pipes from factories and sewage-treatment plants. The waste was no longer visible, but it began to change the chemistry of the river, decreasing oxygen levels and triggering mass fish die-offs during the 1970s, particularly downstream of the dairy factory at Longburn.

This, like many environmental crises, eventually led to positive change, including secondary treatment of sewage and a gradual shift towards discharging dairy-factory waste onto the land rather than into the water. But waste continues to flow into the river: there are currently 25 resource consents for major points of wastewater discharge along the Manawatū, and many more minor sources along its tributaries.

**Excess nitrogen and phosphorus pollute the river.** Since the introduction of the Resource Management Act in 1991, point discharges of wastewater require permission—resource consent. Enforcement of this rule has been far from perfect, but nevertheless, it has reduced direct, traceable pollution. The biggest challenge now is diffuse pollution. Nitrogen seeps into groundwater, or the river, as nitrate or ammonia from surrounding farms, while phosphorus enters the water in soil washed off exposed hill country. This is much harder to monitor and control, and

it feeds the growth of periphyton—slime and algae which can grow to such an extent that they choke waterways.

“From the river’s point of view, it went from sewage fungus to periphyton, which is causing all the problems,” says freshwater ecologist Mike Joy, who has lived near the banks of the Oroua River, one of the Manawatū’s major tributaries, and has carried out research throughout the catchment.

On land, nitrogen and phosphorus are added as fertilisers, boosting the growth of plants—and they have the same effect in water, leading to an overgrowth of aquatic vegetation and algal blooms, which in turn deplete oxygen and the ecological health of the river.

**The water isn’t safe for swimming or drinking** in parts of the catchment. This is because rain washes manure into the river, or smaller sewage plants that lack ultraviolet sterilisation treatment or storage capacity overflow during extreme rainfall. Environmental online data platform Land, Air, Water Aotearoa (LAWA) shows that only some beach areas are clean enough for swimming.

Most recreational spots along the Manawatū and its tributaries are unsuitable for swimming

**Sedimentation is still an issue.** Successive governments continued to subsidise the clearance of forest from the hill country, which is prone to erosion, until the 1980s. A report released in 2013 by the then Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Jan Wright, estimated that nearly four million tonnes of soil are lost off the land and carried as sediment down the Manawatū in an average year.

During the early period of European settlement, the Manawatū, unlike other regions, didn’t have any advocates for the protection of native forests, and it lost more of its forests than other areas of the country.

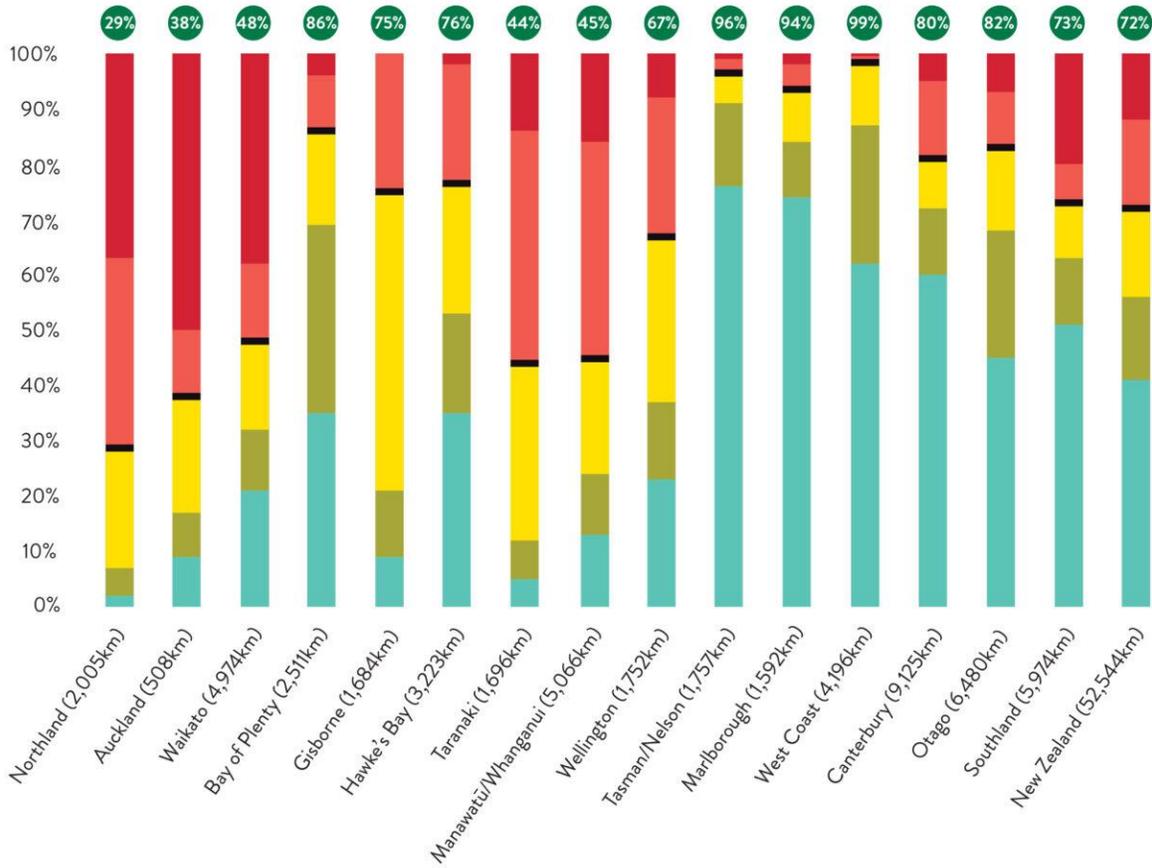
This sedimentation—along with excess nitrogen and phosphorus—destroys habitat for native fish. In 2006, Mike Joy provided evidence during consent hearings for an extension of Fonterra’s discharge from its dairy factory at Longburn. He says, from a scientific perspective, it was difficult “to show an impact of their plant because the river was already so degraded by the time it got to Longburn that everything was off the bottom of the scale”.

Of the native migratory fish found in the river, the worst affected, a whitebait species called kōaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*), had lost about 80 per cent of its habitat because its preferred rocky riverbeds had been blanketed in silt.

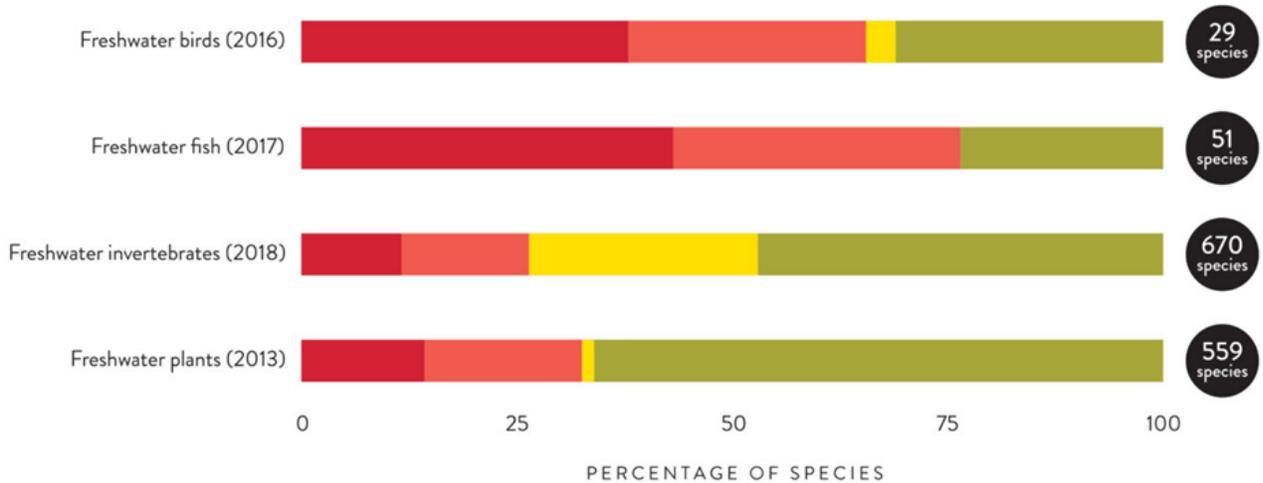
**Floods pose a risk as the most frequent natural hazard.** The swampy lowlands of the Manawatū used to absorb floods in the past. The area where Palmerston North is sited once had five horseshoe lagoons, only remembered in the names of suburbs today. Drainage of wetlands and the added sediment flows limit the land’s capacity to soak up floodwater.

The first tensions over water being taken from the river system flared up during the peak of the flax milling days early in the 20th century and continue in some parts of the catchment. Across the Manawatū catchment, abstraction of water for agriculture increased by 446 per cent between 1997 and 2009.

## Swimmable of New Zealand Rivers and Lakes



## Conservation Status of Indigenous Freshwater Species



## How we fix it

1. **Return nutrients** to the land rather than allowing them to flow into the river. Some dairy farms in the catchment have already fenced off streams on their properties, and many now distribute their animals' effluent onto land to recycle the nutrients. This has reduced runoff into waterways—but runoff remains a critical problem. This could be solved by more planting along stream banks (which soaks up nutrients), and restoration of wetlands (which catch and treat diffuse water pollution).
2. **Fix the sewage infrastructure.** Many smaller wastewater plants have limited treatment capability and no storage. During periods of high rainfall, wastewater flows straight into the river. The regional council's One Plan holds promise. It sets out restrictions on the way land can be used and aims to curb the discharge of nutrients into waterways. An updated national policy statement for freshwater management, which was due to come into force in September 2020, has new requirements for local authorities to improve the quality and safety of rivers and to stop further degradation of waterways and wetlands. But the responsibility for enforcing the rules remains with the local authorities, as does the setting of specific regulations, and this hasn't been easy in the past. The One Plan drew hundreds of submissions during its consultation period, prompting years of litigation.
3. **Retire marginal hill country.** Replanting trees on erosion-prone hill country or allowing this land to regenerate will help keep the soil in the hills and out of the river. Together with less-intensive farming—limits on the number of animals and the use of fertiliser—this would improve the Manawatū's ecological health. More than half of the region's land is classified as hill country. At the moment, Horizons Regional Council's Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI) encourages farmers to replant steep hill country to control erosion, with a goal of improving productivity of the land and reducing sedimentation of the river—but this is voluntary. Climate change is likely to bring more intense rain to the region, which will make existing problems worse.

**THE MANAWATŪ IS** one of New Zealand's most important regions for farming—sheep, beef and dairy—as well as a hub of agricultural research. Indeed, agriculture has supported the region's economy from the earliest days of settlement, and it has reshaped the landscape. But recent times have brought a deeper acknowledgement and appreciation of what has been lost.



Two or three generations of people have lived close to the river during its gradual decline. They experienced what ecologists describe as a shifting baseline—when change takes place so slowly that people come to see their current experience of their environment as normal. But now, judging by the number of community projects under way to restore the Manawātū and its tributaries and wetlands, people have realised this state isn't normal—and their vision is strong for returning the river to its former might and beauty.

### *An ode to the Adams, the perfect dry fly by Chris Hunt*



**Has any dry fly pattern caught more trout than the Adams?**

Did you know that the Adams should probably be called the 'Halladay'?"

It's nothing much to look at. Gray. Drab. A little fuzzy.

Anybody can tie it, which means it turns up in various stages of grey, and in various stages of quality. There's solace for even the ham-handed tier, however. Even in its finest condition, the Adams is a bit underwhelming.

But not to trout. To trout, it's a magical meal that doesn't match exactly anything on the water, but it sure appears to be close enough to a lot of food sources that it gets plenty of looks. It's a classic attractor. A fly for all seasons.

Oddly enough, it was tied to match a hatch, but, according to fly fishing historian Paul Schullery, it was never actually used on the water it was created to fish. The first Adams was tied by Michigan's Leonard Halladay, who created the fly based on a description by Charles Adams in the 1930s. Adams saw the "natural" on a pond in Halladay's yard. The natural? Nobody knows, but it was likely a mayfly — perhaps a March Brown or just a big grey drake.

After tying the fly for the angler who “discovered” it, Halladay handed it over to Adams, who took the fly to the nearby Boardman River (not the pond), where he determined the fly to be a “knockout.” Halladay promptly named the fly the “Adams” in honour of the first man to put it through its paces. And, to this day, the Adams and the Boardman River are often mentioned in the same breath. Unfortunately, its creator, Leonard Halladay, is hardly ever mentioned at all.

The Adams occupies a prominent spot in my dry fly box. Unlike the Elk Hair Caddis or the Blue-winged Olive, the Adams is always in the box. It's not seasonal. It's not situational, if the Adams did have a season, it would, of course, be summer. It's a necessity. In smaller sizes, it'll pass as a midge or a baetis. Bigger, and it'll work during a caddis hatch. It's a great generic mayfly match, for, when it gets wet, the grey dubbing used to craft the pattern doesn't really stay grey, but turns a dark, buggy shade of wrought iron.

To the fish, it's likely the silhouette that matters, and I've used the Adams to reasonably imitate big Green Drakes on the Oldman River of Alberta and to ably match a March Brown hatch on Montana's Rock Creek one spring as the rest of the dry-fly anglers that day eagerly awaited the seasonal arrival of the sqwala stonefly. On Idaho's South Fork of the Snake, tied in size 20, the Adams fools trout keyed in on Blue-winged Olives — but I hate fishing an Adams so small.

On smaller water, where wild trout are more opportunistic than cautious, an oversized, bushy Adams — like a size 12 or even a size 10 — should be the first choice of any blue-lining angler. It's easy for both angler and fish to see in varied light and fast water. It floats well and has a buggy look to it, both from above, and, presumably, below. It might well be the perfect dry fly. I certainly think so.

I've often thought, in moments of whimsy that I think fly fishers are often prone to experiencing, that, on the arrival of the solstice, I'll start a summer fishing the Adams, and, no matter what, I won't change patterns until the season dies. I might change flies — backcountry trout can turn even the sturdiest Adams in a fuzzy mess after a time — but I tell myself, I'll always just fish the Adams. I even had a book idea on the topic — “Adams Summer,” I was going to call it. But I've come to realize, those are the books written for the writer, not necessarily for the reader.

And then the whimsy goes away, only to come back on melancholy winter days when bare tree branches are visible through the office window and the landscape is generally white. Oh, to be fishing a big Adams, I think on days like that. For that would mean the trees would be green, the skies would be blue and the water around my ankles would be flowing free and not locked in the wintry grip that I've come to despise so much as I grow older.

And, of course, as I get older, I get more ... crotchety. Like the old man who is constantly yelling at the neighbourhood kids to "get the hell off my lawn!" That's when my thinking gets more and more rigid — and why wouldn't I, under that strident mindset, spend more time thinking about fishing nothing but an Adams over the course of summer.

Honestly, it could be done, and I bet the trout of the Rockies would be just as happy if I elected to solely fish one pattern over the course of a season. I'm guessing, too, that I'd catch plenty of fish, because in the creeks and streams where I spend the bulk of my time, the Adams seems to work, regardless of what's hatching and what flavour of trout is swimming in the water at my feet.

Clearly with age comes a measure of stubbornness, and I'm channelling more of that trait these days. Not only am I needlessly bitter about the change of seasons and the passing of the "Adams Summer" in favour of the unsettled weather that's finally taken over after a brilliant Indian summer, but I'm more inclined to wonder openly about the little things, like, "Why the hell did Halladay name the fly after Charles Adams?"

That would be like Kelly Galloup naming the Circus Peanut after the first dope who dredged one through the Madison below Quake Lake. What's better? The Circus Peanut or the Jones streamer? So, let's do a solid to old Leonard, and maybe make a notable change in how we reference this storied fly. Let's just call it the Halladay from here on out, if for no other reason than to mourn the passing of the season where the Adams — er, Halladay — is most prominently fished.

After all the fish the fly has managed to catch for us over the years, much like it did for Mr. Adams, that's the least we can do.

## ***Salmon wars; Salmon farms, wild trout, and the future Communities by Chris Becket***

Over the past few months there has been a lot of discussion on trout farming and its impact on the local environment. I found the following Canadian documentary on fish farms and aquaculture and their effect on the communities that surround them very interesting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rfxzvlzazz0>

## ***Local content by the Editor***

**I heard a wee comment at our last Club Meeting that "It was great to see more Local Content in the last newsletter" and I fully support that comment.**

**So, my question to you is "When are you going to put pen to paper?" and send through a contribution that I can add to next newsletter. I am looking forward to being inundated with lots of articles of your exploits out on a river or lake somewhere.**

## *Blue trout rare find for local angler by Tb News Watch*



Thunder Bay – A local angler pulled a rare find out of Lake Superior last weekend.

19-year-old Tanner Hrycyk was struck by an arresting flash of blue as he reeled a 27-inch trout out of the waters of Lake Superior.

Fishing with a friend in about 60 feet of water on Black Bay, Hrycyk marvelled at the unusual colouring, but didn't initially realize just how special his catch was. The college student said he's a relative newcomer to fishing on Lake Superior, usually angling for walleye and pike in smaller lakes.

The pair later determined the fish to be a rare blue rainbow trout. Their unusual colouring is believed to be a genetic mutation that occurs in a vanishingly small number of hatchery-produced rainbow trout.

"The next day my buddy did some research on it, and it turns out it's like 30 out of 40 million in a hatchery are blue, and it's even harder to catch one," he said. Hrycyk was unsure what he'd do with his lucky catch. He would have released it had he realized what it was at the time, he added.

Regardless, the find will live on as a treasured memory.

"It's probably one of the best fish I've caught," he said. "I've caught some pretty big walleye, big pike, but no blue rainbow."

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- Child (Age 7 -15) - \$25
- Row of 5 seats - \$150

Since the last newsletter, the breeding Kiwi's at Nag Manu have produced a new young Kiwi chick who has joined us at Nga Manu. The breeding Kiwis have now laid another egg which is fertile and if all goes well and it hatches it will stay with its parents.

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.

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*Newsletter copy to be received by  
Second Monday of each month, your  
contribution is welcome just send it to:*

[malcolm1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:malcolm1@xtra.co.nz)

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**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**

**President:** Michael Murphy 027 591 8734  
Email: [mnkmurf@gmail.com](mailto:mnkmurf@gmail.com).

**Secretary:** Peter Haakman 04 904 1056  
Email: [phaakman@icloud.com](mailto:phaakman@icloud.com)

**Treasurer** Ashley Francis  
Email: [ashleyfrancis.nz@gmail.com](mailto:ashleyfrancis.nz@gmail.com)

**Vice President** Tane Moleta  
Email: [tane.moleta@gmail.com](mailto:tane.moleta@gmail.com)

**Past President** Malcolm Francis: ph. 06 364 2101  
Email: [malcolm1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:malcolm1@xtra.co.nz)

**Committee:**  
Nick Weldon  
Email: [nandcweldon@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nandcweldon@xtra.co.nz)  
  
Leon Smith  
Email: [leonsmithplumbingltd@gmail.com](mailto:leonsmithplumbingltd@gmail.com)

Steve Taylor  
Email: [staylorbuilder@gmail.com](mailto:staylorbuilder@gmail.com)

Kras Angelov  
Email: [krasimir.angelov@gmail.com](mailto:krasimir.angelov@gmail.com)

**Club Coach** Gordon Baker  
Email: [kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com)

**Newsletter** Malcolm Francis: ph. 06 364 2101  
Email: [malcolm1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:malcolm1@xtra.co.nz)