

Inland Fisheries Service Report - Anglers Alliance Meeting – May 2014

Hot Topics

Litter is an ongoing problem at Lake Kara

The IFS has responded to calls from north west coast anglers to improve fishing opportunities and in particular to re-establish Lake Kara as a family fishery. IFS has funded adult stocking, new screens on the outflow and vegetation management to promote shore based access. Regulations have been changed for the 2014/15 season to reflect the new management of the fishery.

The success of these initiatives has been recognised by the majority of anglers and the local tackle industry.

Unfortunately not all anglers have responded in a positive way with litter and human waste being an ongoing problem. IFS would like AAT to sponsor a local club or group of anglers to adopt this water and conduct a regular clean up day in association with Clean Up Australia and also to clean any debris from the screens if they are visiting the lake.

RBF applications

IFS have submitted the following applications to MAST's Recreational Boating Fund for 2014:

- Little Pine Lagoon concrete ramp, pontoon and break wall
- Brushy Lagoon replace existing concrete ramp on eastern shore
- Penstock Lagoon concrete existing gravel ramp and construct a timber landing
- Pumphouse Bay (Arthurs Lake) develop a site plan for a ramp to operate throughout the rise and fall of the lake

IFS has also assisted Northern Midlands Council to develop an application for a new ramp and pontoon at Lake Leake

MAST will conduct public meetings to assess project applications on the 12th 13th and 14th May.
(Details on the MAST website)

Anglers Access – Neil Morrow

River Access

IFS have completed inspections and maintenance on all river access projects completed to date and the Lake Fergus walking route. Work included repair and replacement of infrastructure and weed removal. Follow up spraying and stem poisoning of willows at Woolmers Bridge was also completed by sub contractors.

AAT have lodged an application for round 28 of Tasmanian Community Fund for a South Esk River Anglers Access project for 2014/15.

Recreational Boating fund and associated projects

MAST has almost completed construction of a dual lane ramp and pontoon at Bradys Lake (Whitewater). The ramp was opened to the public on the 17th of April. This project has been jointly funded by Hydro Tasmania and MAST.

The installation of 31 navigation lights at popular boat ramps throughout the state has been completed with the exception of Bradys Lake, Lake Rowallan and Lake Crescent. Project funded by MAST and Hydro and project managed by IFS.

Hydro Tasmania dam works at Lake Rowallan are progressing. The IFS is collaborating with Hydro with a view to a new boat launching area being incorporated into the site works. Work is likely to be completed in April 2015.

Lamberts Dam

A new footbridge has been installed over the spillway at Lamberts Dam to provide foot access to the dam wall.

Road projects

IFS has collaborated with Fulton Hogan, the contractors building the Midland Irrigation Scheme, to complete repairs to the Woods Lake Road post construction. In a jointly funded project the road has been graded, additional gravel added and some widening completed.

Hydro Tasmania and IFS have collaborated to repair and upgrade Gunns Marsh Road from the Cowpaddock to Tumbledown Creek. Work included vegetation clearing, culvert repair, installation of guide posts and potholing, gravelling and grading. 40kmh Advisory signs have also been installed.

Maintenance work was also completed on the 4wd track from Gunns Lake to Little Lake.

Licensing and Administration – Tony Wright

2014-2015 Season

A successful celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the first trout hatching was held on the 3rd and 4th May 2014 at the Salmon Ponds Plenty. The event was blessed with pleasant weather and around 4500 people attended the weekend. The commemorative medallion and pin were launched together with the reprint of Jean Walkers book "The origins of the Tasmanian trout". The memorabilia has been well received.

Liawenee Open weekend will be held on the 17th and 18th May 2014 and significant effort and resources has been invested to modernize and improve the event.

Preparations have commenced for the launch of the 2014-2015 fishing season with the theme of the season being "Get back to trout fishing". Sponsorship has been provided by the Tasmania Ford Dealerships to enable the giveaway of a Ford Ranger XL Dual Cab 3.2 liter diesel motor six speed manual gearbox for the sesquicentenary. The value of this vehicle is over \$50,000. All full season adult, pensioner and senior licence holders and five season licence holders who take out their 2014-2015 licence prior to the 31 March 2015 will be eligible to go in the draw to win the vehicle. Current five season licence holders who took out their licence in 2013-2014 will also be eligible to be in the draw.

The lucky winner will be announced on Saturday 16 May 2015 at next year's Liawenee open weekend.

Licence Sales

A total of 26,533 licences have been issued this year to the 30 April 2014, of these 1,202 were 5 season licences, 20,048 full season licences and 5,283 short term licences. The majority of short season licences were 48 hour and totalled 2,296 in number.

Carp – Chris Wisniewski

Juvenile Carp Surveys- Lake Crescent and Sorell

Lake Crescent

The Lake Crescent juvenile carp survey was conducted from Tuesday the 11th to Friday the 14th of March. The aim of this survey was to confirm that carp had not re-established back into Lake Crescent, and to look for any signs of new recruitment if spawning had occurred during the past few months. This survey has been undertaken annually since the last known carp was captured from Lake Crescent in 2007. No carp of any age class were captured in Lake Crescent.

Lake Sorell

The Lake Sorell juvenile carp survey was conducted from Monday the 17th to Friday the 21st of March. The aim of this survey was to determine if spawning had occurred during the past few months by looking for any signs of new carp recruitment in potential spawning habitat. One of the key objectives of the Carp Management Program is to prevent carp from spawning. This is partially achieved by over 14 kilometres of barrier net, which has been deployed across the front of all the major marshlands around Lake Sorell along with techniques to trap maturing fish. Despite an extensive survey no indication of any new recruitment in Lake Sorell was detected.

The Clyde River Survey

In conjunction with the Sorell & Crescent juvenile carp surveys, a carp downstream survey of the Clyde River using back pack electro-fishing equipment was also undertaken. The survey examines selected sites that possess ideal carp habitat from immediately downstream of Lake Crescent to Hamilton. The survey has been undertaken annually since carp were first found in lakes Crescent and Sorell. In addition to small numbers of redfin perch and tench the sampling revealed a healthy population of brown trout with a 100 metre stretch near Bothwell yielding 31 trout up to 400 grams

in weight. Larger trout were also sighted in the deep pools, however with the strong water flow at this depth it was difficult to sample these areas. It is likely that recent wet winters, combined with the improved flows delivered by the Clyde River Water Management Plan, have supported improved trout recruitment and river health. Most importantly no carp were found, which is consistent with previous years and indicates that the containment strategy employed since 1995 continues to be successful.

Chemical and Surgical Sterilisation of Carp (FRDC TRF 2012/039)

For additional information contact: Jawahar Patil (japatil@utas.edu.au or jawahar.patil@ifs.tas.gov.au)

As previously reported the sterilisation project (FRDC TRF 2012/039) is progressing well. Summarised below are the activities and achievements for the period January to March 2014.

Monitoring of sterile Judas carp in Lake Sorell

The sterile Judas carp (deployed in October 2013) are being monitored on a regular basis. These fish have integrated well back into the wild population. As and when the Judas fish were re-captured they were also assessed for their ability to express milt. So far none of the recaptured sterile Judas fish have expressed milt confirming that they have remained sterile. Significantly the fish have continued to assist in the capture of feral carp.

Shannon Lagoon update – Chris Wisniewski and Rob Freeman

We are awaiting reports from Entura on the fish habitat and the macrophyte surveys that were recently undertaken

Shannon Lagoon Fisheries Assessment Survey: April 2014

As part of the feasibility review for establishing Shannon Lagoon as a viable fishery, the Service undertook a survey to gain information on the trout and native fish populations of the lagoon. Over a three day period during 7-9 April, a combination of box traps, fyke nets and electrofishing were used to capture primarily brown trout.

In general, the catch rate per unit of fishing gear set was very low and likely reflects the low abundance of brown trout within the lagoon.

In total, 42 brown trout were captured; however, just 28 of these were adult fish, the remainder (14) were young of the year fry between 55-82mm length (see fig 1). Of the 28 adult fish captured, the average weight was 942 grams with the average length 433mm. Fifty four percent of fish were nevertheless, 1 kg or over, with the largest fish being 1.32kg (see fig 3). The majority of fish (86%)

were in good to excellent condition (see fig 2) with only 4 fish being classified as poor. No rainbow trout were evident.

There was only one brown trout captured in the 100-320mm length range suggesting one to two years of minimal recruitment (see figure 1).

A large number of the native spotted galaxias (112) and the threatened fish species the Shannon paragalaxias (40) along with two climbing galaxias were captured while electrofishing the inflow stream.

The max depth of the lagoon is 1.26m with the vast majority of the lagoon being just 0.66m deep or less (see fig 4). Sediments depth ranged from 0.3m to 1.3m plus, with most areas being at least 0.5m.

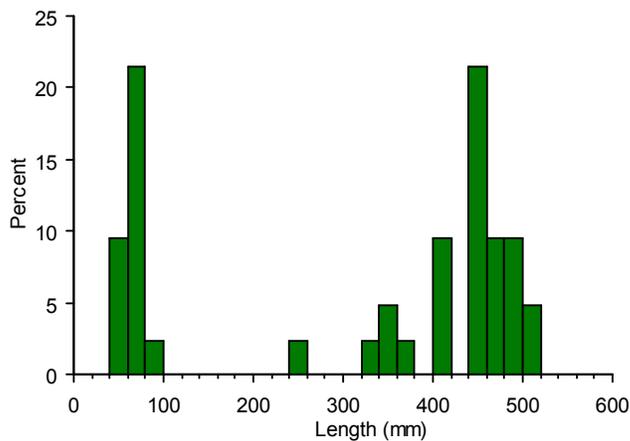


Figure 1: Percentage of brown trout in each 20mm length range – Shannon Lagoon.

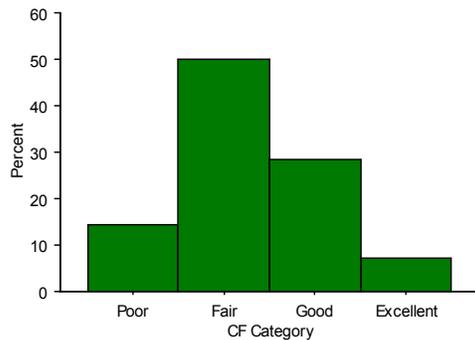


Figure 2: Percentage of brown trout in each condition factor category – Shannon Lagoon.

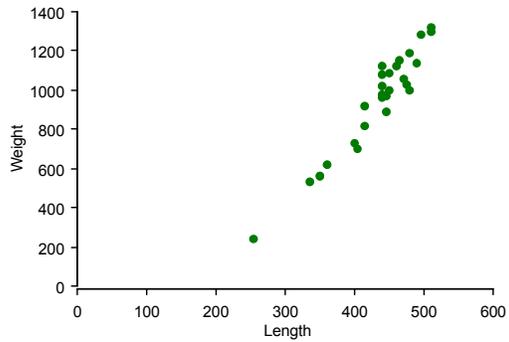


Figure 3: Length/Weight relationship for adult brown trout – Shannon Lagoon.

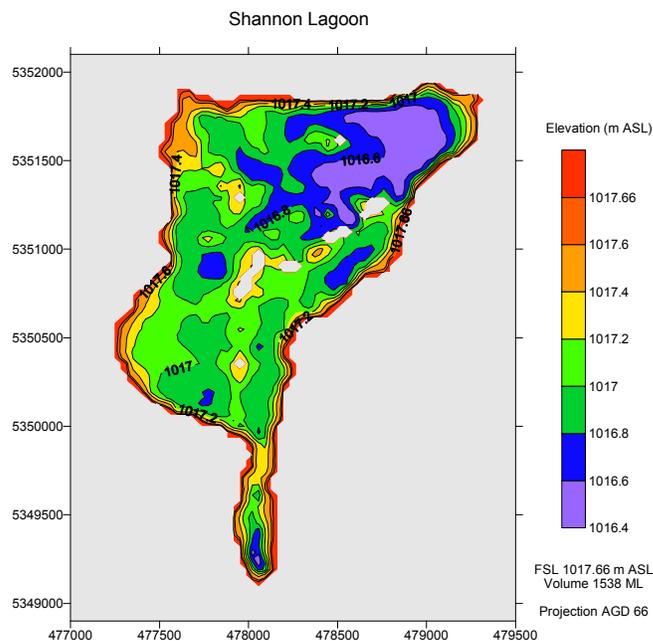


Figure 4: Bathymetric map of Shannon Lagoon (*Manser and Uytendaal unpublished*).

<http://www.ifs.tas.gov.au/news/shannon-lagoon-fisheries-assessment-survey-2013-april-2014-1>

Arthurs Lake Trout recruitment control infrastructure – Chris Wisniewski

After an exhaustive planning and approval process the earthworks and construction of fish traps at Tumbledown and Scotch Bobs Creek was completed in mid April. A concrete weir acting as a velocity barrier has been built on each of these creeks, a diversion channel with headwall leading into a concrete trap designed along the lines of the Liawenee trap have also been constructed. Aluminium screens have been purpose built to suit the Arthurs site and the first trapping of fish is about to commence.

Compliance – Stephen Hepworth

1/7/13 to 1/5/14

- 71 Fisheries Infringement Notices issued for 77 offences.
- 43 Infringement notices endorsed as conditional cautions issued
- \$13,000 in infringement notice fines
- Over 3,000 angling and 82 Whitebait licences inspected

For this reporting period 1/2/14 until 30/4/14

- 570 licences inspected.
- 13 infringement notices and 7 Conditional cautions issued totalling \$1,755.
- Compliance patrols were carried out on 18 weekend days and on all 6 public holidays patrolling many inland waters across the State. The objectives of the patrols were to ensure recreational angler compliance under the *Inland Fisheries Act 1995, inland Fisheries (Recreational Fishing) regulations 2009*, and the *Marine and Safety Act* to ensure angler awareness of fishery regulations and fishery management strategies.

Prosecutions Matters to Date

- Christopher John MARTIN of Burnie was convicted on 3/7/2013 in the Burnie Magistrates Court of possessing 19.95 kilograms of whitebait without a whitebait licence and fined \$2,770 consisting of fine and special penalties.
- Wayne Wilfred LING 62 years of Riana was prosecuted in the Devonport Magistrates Court on 6/12/13 for (1) Releasing fish in inland waters without authority and (2) Possess fish on inland waters without authority. The defendant pleaded guilty and convictions were recorded on both charges and an undertaking was given that he be of good behaviour for 12 months.
- For this reporting period 6 prosecution matters were attended to for first appearance and plea at Devonport, Burnie and Smithton courts.
- 9 prosecution matters are being prepared, or are now listed before the Magistrates Court.
- Two Burnie men were interviewed over the Easter period regarding the take and possession of giant freshwater crayfish (*Astacopsis gouldi*).

Hatchery – Brett Mawbey

The 2014 spawning run has started at Liawenee Canal, Great Lake. Good autumn rainfalls and mild temperatures have combined to provide an encouraging start to the annual migration of brown trout. IFS hatchery staff commenced stripping on the 29/04/14; a few hundred female trout were handled and stripped of 200,000 ova. The fertilised eggs have been carefully transported to the New Norfolk hatchery and laid down in upwelling incubators. A constant temperature of 8 ° C will result in a projected hatching in six weeks. As more brown trout migrate up the Liawenee canal in the coming weeks, the hatchery and stocking team will continue to harvest more ova. The average size of trout in this years' run is slightly smaller than in previous years, overall the condition of both fish and ova is excellent.

The hatchery has been shut down for the first time this year since January on a trial basis and will be back in operation in the first week of May, to coincide with the brown ova collections and first hatch.

Legislation Amendments for the 2014/15 Angling Season – Rob Freeman

All references to Lagoon of Islands to be omitted from the Inland Fisheries Regulations and Seasons and Waters Order, as the lagoon no longer functions as a trout fishery.

The daily fishing times at the following waters has been extended to; one hour before sunrise to three hours after sunset (presently, the allowable times are one hour before sunrise to one hours after sunset). These waters are; Brushy Lagoon, Craighourne Dam, Huntsman Lake, Curries River Reservoir, Four Springs Lake and Lake Crescent. The intent of this amendment is to provide anglers with the opportunity to continue to fish into the extended twilight period during spring – autumn, while keeping this rule relatively simple.

Within the Inland Fisheries Regulations and Seasons and Waters Order there are a number of references to specific areas defined for fishing by means of 'white post'. Where practical, 'white post' markers are being replaced by specified map grid references, this is being done to clarify and simplify the present regulations and will not affect how these areas are managed. The waters primary affected are; Canal Bay and Tods Corner. The present white post markers at these two locations will remain in place for the immediate future until anglers become familiar with the map reference system. Other waters are: the Blythe and Cam rivers, Bream Creek and the Weld rivers in both the North and South of the State. The boundary for the taking of Indigenous fish (ie bream) at

Bream Creek has been moved upstream slightly to an easily defined point, the current vehicle bridge.

A number of waters that are presently closed to fishing are to be opened for fishing within the brown trout season. These areas are;

- the canal flowing from Lake Sorell to Lake Crescent below the Interlaken Road only;
- waters flowing into Lake Kara;
- waters flowing into Lake Rowallan, except the Mersey River (the Mersey River at this point has its own set of specific regulations allowing for fishing);
- waters within the Sisters Creek Birdland Nature Park as demarcated presently by white post.

The Maximum size limit for fish at all waters under regulation 17 (2) has been reduced from 600 millimetres length to 500 millimetres length. Waters affected are: Blackmans Lagoon; Bradys Lake (including the whitewater); Brushy Lagoon, Craighourne Dam, Curries River Dam, Four Springs Lake, Lake Barrington, Lake Binney, Lake Leake, Lake Meadowbank, Lake Tungatinah, Tooms Lake and Woods Lake. Waters added to this list for the 2014/15 season are: Dee Lagoon, Lake Kara and Lake Crescent. The minimum size limit for Dee Lagoon, Lake Kara and Lake Crescent has increased to 300mm, with the daily bag limit at Dee Lagoon and Lake Kara reduced to 5 fish. Therefore, all the above waters will have a minimum size limit of 300mm and a daily bag limit of five fish of which only two fish over 500mm are permitted to be taken.

Threatened Freshwater Fish Conservation – Rob Freeman

During 2-4 April 2014, the golden galaxid populations at lakes Crescent and Sorell were monitored as part of the ongoing management of Tasmanian threaten freshwater fish. The catch rate per unit of fishing gear set was high indicating a high abundance of fish. Recruitment of young fish was also strong, highlighting the importance of maintaining high lake levels during the spawning period July – September to provide access to critical spawning habitat.

State River Surveys – Tim Farrell

The 2014 electrofishing survey of the state's river fisheries and post cormorant recovery

Following on from last year's investigation into the state of Tasmania's river fisheries an electrofishing survey was conducted during the last week of February and first week of March 2014.

Anecdotal reports from anglers suggested that the situation had improved in terms of reduced cormorant predation occurring during the 2013/2014 season. Anglers caught more fish in the rivers and far fewer cormorants were sighted in general.

The raw results of the 2014 electrofishing survey are displayed in graphical form below. They show that many of the rivers surveyed improved in terms of numbers of fish caught but this improvement was not universal. More consistent was the increase in weight of trout caught at each site during the survey for 2014. The number of takeable fish, those over 220 mm in length also showed widespread improvement amongst the rivers surveyed in 2014. The exception was the Tyenna River, which showed a decrease in all of the three parameters for the 2014 survey. This may be due to operational (survey) inconsistency as the river has by anglers' reports shown great improvement for the 2013/2014 season.

It is to be expected that in recovery (post cormorant predation peaks) the stocks of fish in the rivers will increase in weight and to a lesser extent the number of takeable fish after suffering from cormorant predation. This is due to the selective nature of predation by the birds in leaving the youngest fish behind as they can avoid predation by seeking cover easily. Cormorants tend to prey on the "middle" age classes of fish, those in the 150 mm to 400 mm.

A full report will be available on the IFS website by the end of May 2014.

Whilst recovery is occurring naturally across most of the rivers surveyed, there may be some cause for stocking enhancement later in 2014 at the River Leven which has shown minimal recovery and anecdotally was still fishing poorly throughout the 2013/2014 season. Some rivers were stocked to aid recovery with a focus on fisheries that have been degraded due to other causes late in 2013. The Rubicon and Break O'Day rivers are two examples where stocking with brown trout fry in 2013 has been used to aid recovery.

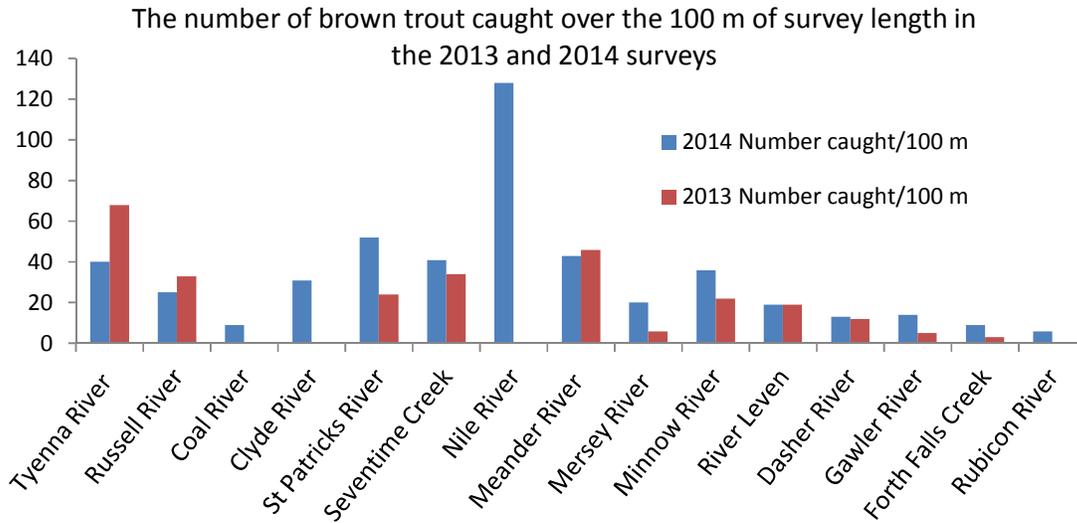


Figure 1: The number of brown trout caught over the 100 m of survey length in the 2013 and 2014 surveys.

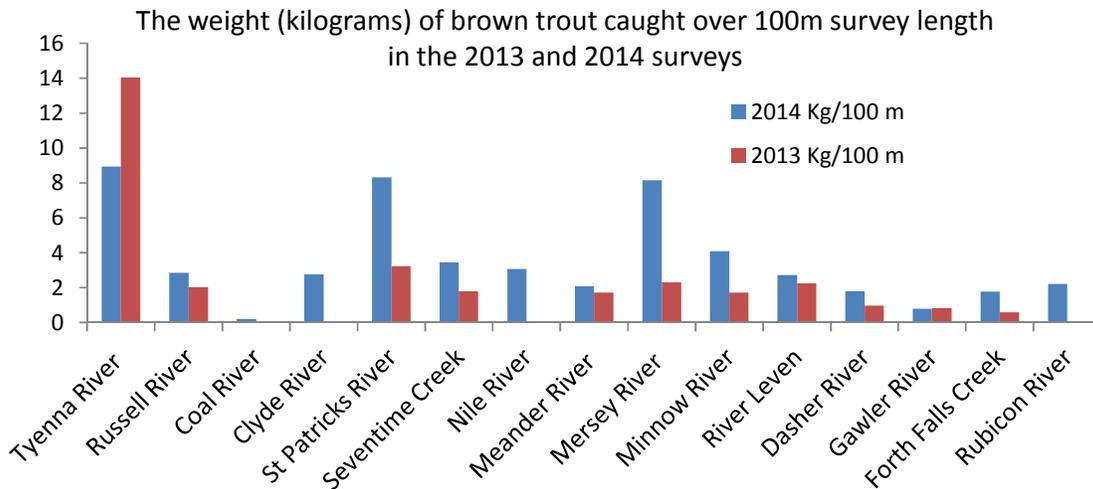


Figure 2: The weight (kilograms) of brown trout caught over 100m survey length in the 2013 and 2014 surveys.

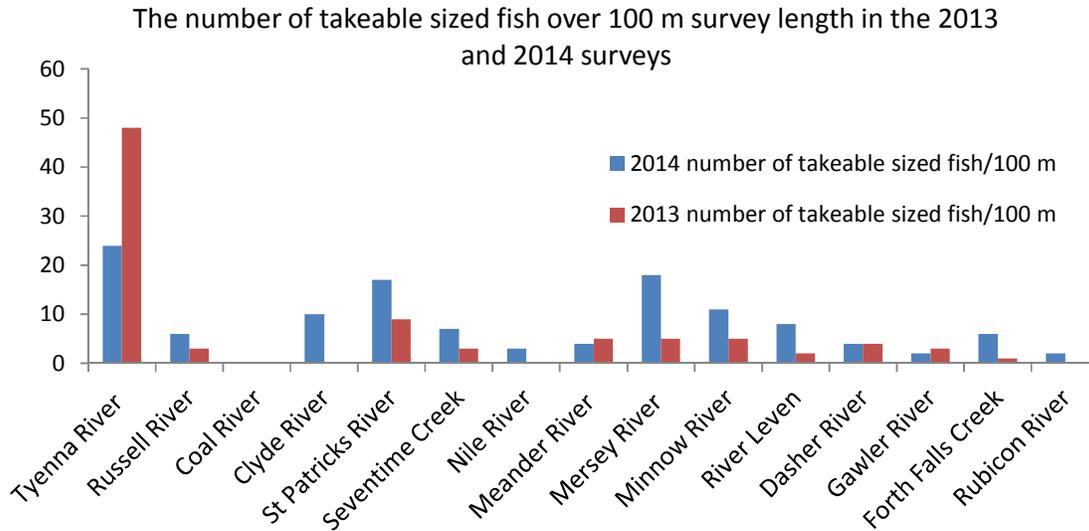


Figure 3: The number of takeable sized fish (>220 mm) over 100 m survey length in the 2013 and 2014 surveys.

Meetings/Events/media

14/3/2014 Fly Tyers Club

21/03/2014 CSIRO delegates presentation and tour of the Hatchery and Salmon Ponds.

25/03/2014 Van Diemens Fly Fishing Club presentation.

9/04/2014 Gordon River Anglers Club presentation.

11/04/2014 Glenora School hatchery and Salmon Ponds tour and stocking presentation.

27/04/2014 Back to Steppes Day

3 & 4/5/2014 Salmon Ponds 150 year anniversary

4/5/2014 A Sesquicentenary Celebration

8/5/2014 Kingborough Anglers Association

Exemption Permits Issued from February 2014- - 14

Angling Exemption Permits Issued from February 2014 5

Stocking – Tim Farrell

Lake	Date	Number	Species	Age	Type	Stock	Weight (g)	Origin
Tooms Lake	10/04/2014	5,000	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	60	Springfield Fisheries
Craigbourne Dam	10/04/2014	10,000	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	60	Springfield Fisheries
Cluny Lagoon	15/04/2014	5,000	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	60	Springfield Fisheries
Meadowbank Lake	15/04/2014	10,000	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	60	Springfield Fisheries
Lake Leake	16/04/2014	110	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	800	Springfield Fisheries
Lake Repulse	16/04/2014	5,000	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	60	Springfield Fisheries
Wayatinah Lagoon	16/04/2014	10,000	rainbow trout	Fingerling	Triploid	Domestic	60	Springfield Fisheries
Rocky Lagoon	01/05/2014	50	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Carters Lake	01/05/2014	100	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Second Lagoon	01/05/2014	25	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Lake Paget	01/05/2014	50	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Camerons Lagoon	01/05/2014	50	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Bruisers Lagoon	01/05/2014	50	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Lake Duncan	01/05/2014	70	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal
Lake Lynch	01/05/2014	70	brown trout	Adult	Diploid	Wild	750	Liawenee Canal

Stocking of public waters 8 February to 1 May 2014

Water	Area	Date	Number	Species	Stock	Type	Weight (g)	Origin
Lamberts Dam	24/2/2014	Railton	1,000	brown trout	Wild	Triploid	20	Salmon Ponds

Stocking of dams for public/club/junior fishing 8 February to 1 May 2014