



Website; www.cromarty.dsfb.org.uk

Director's Report January 2013

General

Broodstock collection and stripping at Loch na Croic continued into January. Just over 1,300 fish were caught in the trap which is higher than last year's total of 1,221 although there were fewer multi sea winter salmon and a large number of small grilse. The cold low water conditions which persisted during the trapping period extended trapping into January and resulted in many fish dropping downstream and spawning further down the Blackwater. Just under 2 million eggs were collected for the hatchery. The first of the eggs are now eyed and shocking to remove infertile or weak eggs will take place in February.

Consultation as the Aquaculture and Fisheries Bill passes through Parliament is ongoing, this includes the investigation of options for carcass tagging schemes.

Projects / research

After four years of hard work by bailiffs and conservation volunteers all 6km of the banks of the Orrin which had been covered with dense rhododendron have been cleared. This project has been supported by the SEPA restoration fund and Fairburn Estate. It has transformed the banks of the Orrin, restoring riparian and in-river habitat and allowing the restoration of a fishery. There is more work to do, with funding from the Woodlands Trust native trees will be planted into some of the cleared areas and follow up spraying of any rhododendron regrowth will take place to prevent reinvasion.

This year's mink monitoring and control programme has been planned with RAFTS. At present this is funded through the Scottish Mink Initiative, it is hoped that an EU funded project will allow the continuation of this and other invasive species work from the end of this year.

Data from mink, electro-fishing and tagging projects is being entered into databases. A new online map based database for invasive species recording and monitoring has been commissioned by RAFTS. It is nearly completed and will allow members of the public to report sightings as well as see distributions, treatment works and their effects.

Meetings attended / consultations

Setting IFM / ASFB Bailiffs Examination meeting
ASFB Bailiffing development meeting
Online data management demonstration with APEM
Aquaculture Bill Parliamentary Committee evidence
Inverness Canoe Club meeting
RAFTS invasives database meetings x2
Loch Achonachie AA AGM
Mark IFM / ASFB Bailiff Exam
RAFTS OS mapping meeting
SFCC Biologists Meeting
TCV Apprenticeship progress meeting
Nigg extension EIA consultation
Scottish Govt Carcass tagging meeting
ICES tag return
Distillery burn hydro scheme consultation
Scottish Mink Initiative planning meeting