

2017 SALMON CONSERVATION POLICY

| Area | Date | Conservation Policy | Restrictions on baits and Lures |
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| River Moriston SAC (Grade 3 Conservation Status) | 15 th January to 15 th October | Mandatory catch and release of salmon will be in force across the River Moriston SAC throughout the 2017 salmon fishing season. Exploitation of the River Moriston stock has been deemed to be unsustainable and so mandatory catch and release has been implemented. Any salmon caught, including any dead or bleeding fish, must be returned to the water with the least possible harm. | The River Ness Salmon Fishery District (Baits and Lures) Regulations 2007 prohibits the use of prawns and shrimp throughout the Ness district and worms for salmon and sea trout above Dochfour Weir (including the Moriston). Any spinning lure or plug should have only one hook no bigger than size 6. Preferably all hooks should be single, barbless or crimped. |
| Ness District Excluding the River Moriston SAC | 15 th January to 30 th June (Grade 3 Conservation Status) | Mandatory catch and release of salmon will be in force across the Ness District from the 15th January to 30th June. Salmon destined for the River Moriston SAC will pass through, and be available for capture/killing in the wider district. Evidence suggests that the majority of fresh run Moriston fish will have entered the system by the 30 th June. Salmon should not be retained anywhere in the Ness district before 1 st July to ensure protection of the Moriston stock. | Anglers should not fish with worms anywhere in the district while mandatory catch and release is in force. A high proportion of fish caught using this method are deeply hooked, reducing their chances of survival. Any spinning lure or plug should have only one hook no bigger than size 6. Preferably all hooks should be single, barbless or crimped. |
| | 1 st July to 15 th October (Grade 2 Conservation Status) | All hen fish of any size and all cock fish over 8 pounds (69cm/27 inches) must be released. Furthermore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one cock fish weighing 8 pounds (69cm/27 inches) or less may be retained per angler per week, with a maximum of two per season; and • All coloured and unseasonable fish must be released, providing protection for Moriston SAC fish throughout the season. • Guidance on the sex and condition of fish provided overleaf - IF IN DOUBT PLEASE RELEASE THE FISH. | Anglers should not fish with worm anywhere in the district after the 31st August. A large proportion of fish captured after this date are 'coloured'. Any spinning lure or plug should have only one hook no bigger than size 6. Preferably all hooks should be single, barbless or crimped. |



This conservation policy represents a **MINIMUM** requirement in terms of helping to ensure that the Ness district and River Moriston SAC meet their future conservation limits. Fishery proprietors and anglers are urged to go 'above and beyond' and practice total **CATCH AND RELEASE** across the Ness district



How can salmon be recognised at the different stages of their life?

Fresh-Run Salmon

Recognised by the pristine condition and bright silver flanks. Fish straight from salt water have loose, easily detached scales and many carry sea lice which drop off within a few days. Hen salmon (illustrated) have a tiny kype on the lower jaw, but unlike cocks they retain normal head proportions while in the river.

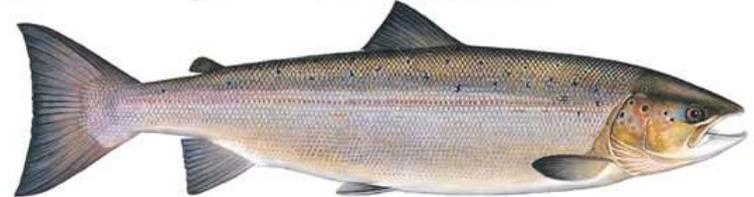


Maturing 'coloured' Cock & Hen

Cock: The combination of "tartan" colours is typical although shades vary - the fully developed kype, used in fighting rivals, and the enlarged adipose fin, are the most consistent indicators of maturity.



Hen: These are usually less coloured than cocks of similar age and they never have enlarged jaws. This one will have spent a few weeks in river or estuary - note the coloured head and lack of true silver flanks.



'Unseasonal' Cock & Hen in Breeding Dress

Cock: The combination of 'tartan' colours is typical although shades vary - the fully developed kype, used in fighting rivals is the most consistent indicator of maturity.

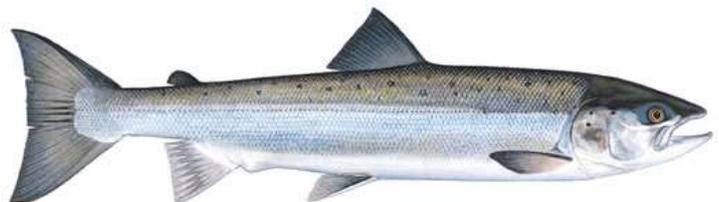


Hen: This is a summer fish – 'springers' are often darker by spawning time while late entrants may still be silver flanked. Fully mature hens have soft, swollen bellies and spawning is imminent if they also have protruding vents.



'Unclean' Kelt

Kelts are salmon which have spawned. Usually identified by the thin shape, distended vent and presence of "gill maggots" on the red gill filaments, they are often encountered by anglers in spring when they regain a silvery appearance and can be mistaken for fresh run 'springers'. Kelts must be returned unharmed.



(Illustrations used with permission from the Atlantic Salmon Trust www.atlanticsalmontrust.org)