

River Don Brown Trout Conservation Policy 2011

The River Don is renowned for its brown trout populations with arguably some of the best wild trout fishing in Scotland and the UK as a whole. The brown trout populations are being studied by the River Don Trust and from early work it appears that many of the tributaries of the Don are well populated with juveniles. Much less is known about the current status of older/mature trout in the main stem which are the target of anglers. Scale reading from rod caught fish has revealed the age structure of the fish, with first spawning generally in the 3rd or 4th year of life (1.5-2.5lb). It is of course hoped that the excellent trout fishing will long continue, however with increased population growth on Donside together with changes in main stem river habitat, we must do all that we can to preserve and nurture our precious stock of wild brown trout. Ideally, a total catch and release policy is the answer, already employed in many rivers around the world. If however you do decide to kill fish, please observe the following recommendations:

Recommendations

Fly fishing only / barbless hooks preferred

Season: 1st April to 1st October.

Bag limit of 2 trout per angler per day (not transferrable)

Bag limit of 8 trout per angler per season

Return all fish under 12"

Return all fish of 18" and over (2lbs +) (mature fish which directly contribute to the spawning stock)

Use only knotless landing nets

Return all fish to the river carefully with wetted hands, held facing upstream until recovered.

In order to increase our knowledge on the River Don Brown Trout, please report all catches along with any useful related information to biologist@riverdon.org.uk

Scale samples from brown trout forwarded to the River Don Trust biologist@riverdon.org.uk will assist in the scientific research into our precious wild trout resource. Volunteers please contact Jamie Urquhart at the Trust, on 01330 830080.

Any waders/tackle which have been used outwith the UK are subject to anti-GS precautions.

Prepared by: River Don Brown Trout Improvement Association. (RDBTIA)