



## Pembrokeshire Rivers Trust

### Catch and Release - Information and Advice



As a charitable organisation committed to protecting and restoring the wildlife and ecology of rivers and lakes in Pembrokeshire and the surrounding area, one of Pembrokeshire Rivers Trust's key objectives is to support those who are in a position to promote sustainable management of fisheries. We are therefore keen to work closely with angling clubs, fishery managers and community groups who are already doing a great deal to conserve fish stocks and the water environment generally. We realise that you may already have received some of this information via your existing network of contacts, but the trustees and I hope that, from your feedback, we will be able in future to provide information more closely targeted to your needs.

#### Salmon and Sea Trout Runs in 2004

Environment Agency Wales have released provisional fish counter results for the rivers Teifi and Towy, and because there are no fish counters on Cleddau, Taf and Nevern, these data may be our best indication of the runs on Pembrokeshire rivers during 2004. They indicate that the total number of fish running the Teifi was around 14,000 compared with 25,000 to 33,000 in recent years, and that up to the end of August some 10,000 fish had run the Towy. Counter efficiency may have been affected by gravel movement during the 2003/04 winter spates; nevertheless it seems extremely likely that in 2004 there was a very significant reduction in the runs of fish.

#### Catch and Release (C&R) Statistics

In recent years anglers on many rivers have released an increasing proportion of their catches, reducing their impact on stocks and adding to the number of spawners. Here is a summary of declared rod catches and release rates taken from Environment Agency rod licence returns:

Salmon	R. Taf			E. Cleddau			W. Cleddau			R. Nevern		
	Caught	Rel	% Rel	Caught	Rel	% Rel	Caught	Rel	% Rel	Caught	Rel	% Rel
1999	69	6	9	21	10	48	13	4	31	18		
2000	80	11	14	37	7	19	21	9	43	27	0	0
2001	99	35	35	21	2	10	25	5	20	30		
2002	41	18	44	7	1	14	27	12	44	19		
2003	32	9	28	10	2	20	26	12	46	34	4	12
Sea trout	R. Taf			E. Cleddau			W. Cleddau			R. Nevern		
	Caught	Rel	% Rel	Caught	Rel	% Rel	Caught	Rel	% Rel	Caught	Rel	% Rel
1999	523	123	24	678	332	49	539	217	40	893		
2000	266	48	18	412	126	31	329	104	32	584	87	15
		37	17	224	110	49	410	78	19	1078		
2002	561	224	40	428	127	30	421	108	26	846		
2003	474	107	23	274	85	31	443	130	29	1125	147	13



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For the year 2003, the recorded release rates for salmon on our neighbouring rivers were Towy 33% and Teifi 44%. For sea trout, the release rates in 2003 were Towy 39% and Teifi 44%.

For 2003 the England-and-Wales average release rate was 56% of salmon and 54% of sea trout.

Of vital importance, of course, is the proportion of released fish that survive to spawn, and if fish are returned carefully and without delay angling mortality can be very small indeed. Guidance leaflets have been published by the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) and by the Environment Agency (EA) promoting best-practice methods of releasing rod-caught fish. Copies may be obtained from NASCO on 0131 228 2551 and Environment Agency on 08708 506 506 - or select the 'hotspot' links in the pictures below:



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You may also be aware of two Fisheries Research Services video films discussing the pressures on salmon stocks and illustrating best practice catch and release. *Catch and Release: The Future is in Your Hands* was produced in 1998, and then the Salmonid 21C production *While Stocks Last* was launched in 2000. While illustrating catch and release in practice, these films also highlight the role that anglers can play in conserving salmon stocks at a time when, due to heavy losses in the high seas, we are faced with a significant risk of stock collapse on many of our rivers.