



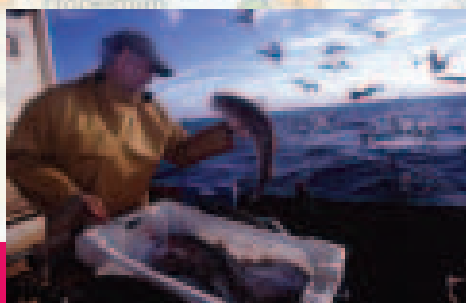
# Moray Firth MATTERS

## FISHING in the MORAY FIRTH

This edition of Moray Firth Matters takes a look at the wide range of fishing activities in the Moray Firth. Did you know that more than one third of Scotland's main salmon rivers flow into the Moray Firth, making it one of the most important catchment areas? Or that £22million worth of shellfish is landed annually from the Moray Firth, much of which is exported?



We have selected a range of articles, from contributors across the industry, to give a flavour of the history, current issues and the future of fisheries in the Moray Firth.



### Pages

- |     |  |       |  |
|-----|--|-------|--|
| 3   | "Fisheries in the Moray Firth" - report of the recent MFP seminar                      | 10    | Angling and recreational fishing   |
| 4/5 | Past and present - the 19th Century herring boom and developments in the last 50 years | 9/11  | The future of commercial fishing in the Moray Firth and Developments in navigation and fish location |
| 6/7 | Managing our fisheries and seals and salmon  | 12/13 | Offshore wind farms, shellfish marketing and mussel farming  |
| 8   | Salmon netting and the work of the District Salmon Fishery Boards                      | 14/15 | Ospreys and Modern Fishing Apprenticeships   |

Welcome to this seventeenth edition of Moray Firth Matters, which is themed on Fishing of all kinds in the Moray Firth. As part of its ongoing work programme, the MFP aims to become more involved in fishing issues and has taken some important steps towards establishing contacts with the main commercial fishing organisations.

The role of the MFP is not to "take sides" on issues, but to provide an open and neutral forum so that its members and other stakeholders can discuss issues in an informed and non-confrontational way, as well as sharing information and ideas. The fishing industry has a large number of organisations representing different sectors, and this lack of a unified front is now being recognised as detrimental to pushing forward for industry reforms. The MFP aims to encourage representatives of these organisations to join the MFP so that their individual concerns can be raised and so that progress can be made on establishing areas of common ground and agreement on the way forward. The MFP fishing seminar on 28 March 2003 was successful in bringing a number of these organisations together and we are looking forward to continuing this process.

On a wider front, the MFP is currently working on a number of new projects:

- A pilot project is underway to identify and establish better access to the wide range of environmental data about the Cromarty Firth. It is hoped that this will assist in the planing of future developments.
- We are developing a major coastal heritage initiative. This will provide a focus for communities to develop and link initiatives relating to our long and rich history of coastal activity and to our wonderful coastal environment.
- A project to co-ordinate work on coasta litter is being developed for funding.
- The implementation of the Management Scheme for the Moray Firth cSAC for dolphins and sandbanks is now well underway. We have recently attracted sponsorship from BP towards the provision information to the wider community.

If you can help us with any of these projects, we would be delighted to hear from you.

We are also starting a process to develop closer links with the many communities and businesses around the Moray Firth, and to involve them in our work. The Partnership is currently undertaking a review of its activities, aimed at developing a plan for our future work. This should be completed by mid-summer, following which we should have more to report. Linked to this we are also contributing to the development of the National Coastal Strategy, which should set the framework for our activities in the longer-term future. As you can see, the Partnership has been very busy and there is still a lot more to do.

## "FISHERIES IN THE REPORT OF THE MFP SEMINAR

The Partnership wishes to focus more attention on the important issue of fisheries in the Moray Firth. Following previous meetings with fishing representatives, we decided to start the process with a seminar which would provide an opportunity for all interested parties to meet and share ideas. Through the seminar we hoped to enable a better understanding of the main issues impacting on the fishing industry in the Moray Firth and to identify those which can be addressed through partnership working.

25 years of fisheries in the Moray Firth  
Key issues for fisheries in the Moray Firth  
Interaction between oil and fish  
Shellfish marketing – trends and opportunities  
Regulating orders  
Integrating environmental concerns and fisheries management  
EU Directives and coastal water quality  
A new era in fishing  
The role of the Moray Firth Partnership & next steps

## REVISION 1 OF THE MORAY FIRTH SAC MANAGEMENT SCHEME HAVE YOU GOT YOUR COPY?

In 1996, a large part of the Inner Moray Firth was proposed as a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) to safeguard the resident bottlenose dolphin population. Submerged sandbanks were added as an interest to the cSAC in 2001. Revision 0 of the cSAC Management Scheme was launched in October 2001. The scheme has since been updated to include the sandbank interest and this was published as Revision 1 in January 2003.



Revision 1 was produced following a wide ranging consultation with interested parties. The scheme looks for different and sustainable ways of doing things to identify opportunities and benefits for the users of the Firth whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing the dolphins and the sandbank habitat.

If you would like a copy of Revision 1 or the Annual Progress Report for 2002 then please contact Ben Leyshon, SNH. Tel: 01349 865333 e-mail: [ben.leyshon@snh.gov.uk](mailto:ben.leyshon@snh.gov.uk)

# THE MORAY FIRTH

SEMINAR 28 MARCH 2003

Fifty delegates attended, from all around the Firth. They represented practically all of the relevant interests and organisations including the many fishermen's organisations, fish processing and marketing organisations, The Scottish Executive, public bodies, ports, fisheries research and others.

The programme provided up to date information on all aspects of fisheries, from speakers who are experts in their fields:

Roddy McColl & Sandy Patience	Fishermen's Association Ltd.
Ian Duncan	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
John Watt	Scottish White Fish Producers Assoc. Ltd.
Jon Harman	Seafish Industry Authority
Peter Davidson	Highland Shellfish Management Org'n
David Donnan	Scottish Natural Heritage
Ronald Daalmans	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Tony Hawkins	North Sea Commission Fisheries Partnership
Chair – Mike Comerford	Moray Firth Partnership

Through the presentations and discussions the seminar delegates identified the key issues and suggested ways forward. These are fully documented in the seminar report on our website.

- The main recommendations identified the need for:
- a strategy or "vision" for inshore fisheries in the Moray Firth, to identify ways of achieving an integrated approach and devolving more responsibilities from the centre to the local level.
  - a system for enabling more integrated and co-ordinated management of inshore fisheries in the Moray Firth, involving all interests
  - greater co-operation in place of conflict. Scientists and fishermen need to work together more and potentially conflicting interests/ issues need to be addressed through an integrated process.

- The seminar identified many positive ways forward to enable a more healthy fishing industry in the Firth, with wider benefits to the community. These included:
- investigating the 'total economics' of inshore fisheries to provide a better understanding of the full picture
  - investigating the potential for sustainable harvesting of new species in the Firth, and their market potential.
  - adding value to the primary product through more, diverse local processing, creative marketing and establishing links to local markets. It was noted that 80% of shellfish landed are exported raw, mostly abroad.
  - investigating new opportunities for improving fish-stocks in the Moray Firth and for utilising new methods for sustainable fishing.
  - enabling better access to accurate and relevant data on the state of the fisheries in the Moray Firth, to provide a realistic picture of the available fish stocks.



- taking steps to develop a more sustainable fishery in the Moray Firth, based on good information and a better understanding of the causes of current problems.

It was felt that the Moray Firth Partnership has an important role to play in co-ordinating and activating some of this work. The benefits from the 'neutral' status of the Partnership were identified. This enables us to bring together the many diverse interest groups and to help them to develop joint actions. Fishermen and their organisations were encouraged to join the Moray Firth Partnership, in order to improve the fisheries input and to guide our work.

Following on from the seminar, the Moray Firth Partnership is now looking at ways of taking forward some of the issues raised. The next steps have been agreed, and include:

- the production of this special fisheries edition of our newsletter
- the establishment of a Moray Firth fisheries task force, involving the key fisheries organisations
- events to explore and promote the potential for adding value to the Moray Firth fishery and the local economy
- investigation of the potential to develop a more co-ordinated approach to the sustainable management of fisheries in the Firth
- investigation of ways of tackling some of the conflict issues relating to fisheries in the Firth

This will be an important area of our work in the future, and is full of exciting opportunities to improve the current situation with the inshore fishery.

A full report of the seminar is available on the MFP website: [www.morayfirth-partnership.org](http://www.morayfirth-partnership.org)

For more information contact the MFP Manager Tel. 01463 225530  
e-mail: [info@morayfirth-partnership.org](mailto:info@morayfirth-partnership.org)



## WHITEHILLS IN THE 1930's

Lena Brown



**T**he sound of the sea is ever present in our lives. We depend on it for our bread and butter, as most of our fathers are fishermen.

But the sea also robs many families of a loved one. We know everyone in the village and most of us are related either through blood ties or marriage. Now, in the 1930's, Whitehills has a population of around one thousand and is a bustling and almost self-contained fishing village.

Along the shore, fishermen make for the harbour with their baited lines in a wheelbarrow ready for the day's fishing. A group of old fishermen are sitting outside an upturned old boat ("the Parliament") discussing the weather and the best fishing holes, while mending the nets of the family business.

From a fish curer's shed, one of the female workers empties a bucket of fish offal over the beach, accompanied by a flock of hungry, screeching seagulls.

The smells from the many fish smoking sheds and the four bakeries when the loaves come out of the ovens permeate the whole village.

Up in the village, the blacksmith's shop is a hive of activity - hammer clanging on the anvil, sparks flying and the smell of burning hoof as horses are shod. The latest gossip is always to be had at the smiddy and it is the first port of call for the village "bobby" when he needs to know the names of the culprits of the latest misdemeanour.

Down at the harbour, the fishermen are busy. Some are mending and "barking" (tarring) their nets, some are stretching and tarring ropes, others are making their boats ready. The babble of the fish salesmen carries along the pier as a fishwife loads her creel and hoists it onto her back to start a long walk into the countryside to sell her fish.

From the beach, we can hear the sound of children playing and the future generation of fishermen sailing their hand-made boats in the Hythe.

## "50 YEARS OF FISHERIES IN THE MORAY FIRTH"

Roddy McColl FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION LTD.

**T**he Moray Firth covers a sea area of 2020 square miles or 5230 square kilometres to the west of a straight line 75 miles long drawn between Duncansby Head in the North to Rattray Point in the South and contains the Dornoch, Cromarty and Beaulieu or Inverness Firths.

In Charles I reign (1625-49) the "Royal Fishery of Great Britain and Ireland" was founded for the development of British fisheries, then largely in Dutch hands and efforts were made by Scottish Authorities to exempt the Moray Firth from the operations of the Society and to keep it as a reserved water for the use of local fishermen.

In the Statistical Account of the Parish of Avoch 1793 the Reverend James Smith mentions the sprat and herring fisheries pursued by the local fleet from late September through to March.

Herring were the mainstay of the Scottish fishing industry from the 1900's to the 1960s and were of major economic importance in post war years. Herring declined drastically in the North Sea from the 1950's, leading to the closure of the fishery in 1977 as a result of overfishing of adults and immature fish on nursery grounds and the poor survival of young herring. From 1977 until 1983 all directed catches of North Sea herring, including those of the Moray Firth were banned in order that stocks could recover. The Kessock Herring Fisheries peak year was 1966/67 when 200 boats were engaged in drift net, ring net or pair trawl fishing.

The Moray Firth based vessels have been of significant importance in the Scottish fishing industry economy in the last 50 years during which time the Scottish fleet has reduced from 4,764 vessels and 38,000 men in 1952 to 2,247 vessels and 6,637 men in 2001. The Moray Firth fleet and men have consistently been a high % of these. The 2001 statistics show that 25% of the all Scottish vessels were based in the Moray Firth ports with 34% of the total men working on these vessels being based on Moray Firth vessels. In 1962, 28% of the Scottish vessels a similar percentage to 1952 were based in the Firth with 29% or 3,964 men engaged on the Moray Firth vessels.

Norway Lobster (Nephrops) is now the most important commercial fishing in the Firth although scallops, squid and velvet crabs are also fished today. In 2002 there was a 6 weeks squid fishery prosecuted by boats from Fraserburgh, Buckie and Lossiemouth. Although the great days of the Firths fisheries are over and any fishery prosecuted today has to be sustainable there might be scope for new fisheries to be developed e.g. a shrimp fishery. This Association would like to see an under 10 metre drift net / anchor net herring fishery being established, which could provide a sustainable fishery from October to March for a small number of boats in the Kessock area.

*"For a dream to be realised first the seed must be sown"*

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email: [rodny@mccollassociates.com](mailto:rodny@mccollassociates.com)



# HELMSDALE AND THE HERRING

Lorna Jappy **TIMESPAN**

**If we could step back in time to 1818, Helmsdale Harbour would look very different to the quiet, picture-postcard image we see now. Fishermen, their wives and families, coopers, gutting lassies, buyers and ships' crews would all mingle, busy at their work.**

At that time, over two hundred boats fished from our harbour and over five hundred men were employed at the fishing. Men from the opposite coast with fishing experience were encouraged to move here to teach the ways of the sea to the crofters, cleared from the Strath of Kildonan.

Seven hundred women worked at gutting, cleaning, washing and salting the thousands of barrels of herring. The salt they used was imported from Spain or France.

The fisherman's wife would bait his lines every evening with mussels, one for every hook. Children had the job of collecting the shellfish from the seashore. During the day she would sell fish to the outlying crofters, carrying them on her back in a creel (a large basket). The more productive Seine netting arrived in 1928 and took over from line fishing, saving a lot of work.

Seventy coopers worked here in 1818, making wooden barrels for the packing and export of the fish. The catch was loaded onto large sailing ships and exported as far as the Baltic.

By comparison, in 2003 there were only 4 prawn boats and 3 lobster boats working from Helmsdale and only 14 men employed. The last white fish boat, the "Bunillidh" was sold to England in 1999. The total population of Helmsdale is now just under 800.

The herring fishing formed Helmsdale - lots of employment - new people - building of the Telford Bridge - curing yards and the expansion of the harbour. A planned village that we can still recognise today began to appear and spread. All this from some small, shiny fish - 'The Silver Darlings'.

## "QUEUING FOR FISH AT AVOCH"



**T**oday, the villagers of Avoch buy their fresh fish from a travelling van. Over a hundred years ago the position would have been reversed - the villagers would have been selling their own fish! Depending on the season, you would have seen many different kinds of fishing boats tied up in the harbour.

There were the small 'skufteys' which were used close to shore. They also carried people back and forward to larger boats lying offshore.

For the winter herring season there were the clinker-built 'scaffies', made locally with Black Isle larch wood.

Later, the more robust 'Zulus' and the straight-stemmed 'Fifies' allowed the fishermen to fish further afield, from Caithness down to Buchan, and even as far as Lowestoft and Yarmouth.

It was not only the men who were involved in the fishing. The women were kept busy too and even followed their men to the English ports where they would spend their days gutting and packing the fish into barrels.

The fishing industry in the smaller communities like Avoch went into decline in the early 20th century, with the advent of large steam trawlers and depleted stocks of fish. Despite this, Avoch still manages to maintain the atmosphere of a fishing village, with the harbour as its focus.

Article from the new Black Isle Partnership web site:  
[www.blackisle.org](http://www.blackisle.org)  
Tel: 01381 621981 e-mail: [s.maher@blackisle.org](mailto:s.maher@blackisle.org)



## "FLEECE JACKETS FROM COLA BOTTLES !"

### How can we recycle fishing nets?"

The Danish Skagen Education Center is conducting a pilot study within the Save the North Sea Project on recycling mixed-material fishing nets and other plastics. The scheme aims to get Danish fishermen to bring back their old, used nets, buoys, floats and fish boxes to shore where they can be recycled, instead of being burned or dumped. A recycling machine weighing six tons has been placed at Skagen Harbour, which can chip and flake a vast amount of waste plastic materials. The fine material that comes out can be melted and turned into new plastic products

(This study is part of a larger environmental project costing 5.7 million Euros, of which 2,8 million Euros is co-financed by the EU Interreg IIIB Programme. )

### Nets – deadly traps for marine mammals

Discarded fishing nets drifting in the water, so called "ghost nets", can be a deadly trap for fish, birds and other marine mammals. They also get entangled in propellers, causing financial costs and down-time to boat owners.

### What happens here?

In the Moray Firth area, nets and discarded plastic are dumped in landfill sites. There are no statistics readily available about the quantity of fishing nets discarded, but it has been estimated that approximately 30 tonnes per year are collected from Fraserburgh and 183 tonnes from the larger port at Peterhead.

Did you know that discarded cola bottles can be recycled into fleece clothing? Other plastics are recycled for garden furniture and some are used as fuel to heat up cement industry kilns.

### Let's get recycling!

For more information about the Skagen Recycling project click on [www.savethenorthsea.com](http://www.savethenorthsea.com) or contact: [hanna.hedenius@savethenorthsea.com](mailto:hanna.hedenius@savethenorthsea.com)

# "NEED FOR HOLISTIC ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT"

George MacRae THE SCOTTISH WHITE FISH PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION LTD.

**O**ur fishing communities face a very uncertain future caused by the political mismanagement of commercial fishing allied to a failure to apply a holistic approach to the marine ecosystem. The reduction in fish stocks is due to a number of reasons, of which over fishing is only part. There are many reasons for the decline in certain fish stocks, e.g. cod, around the UK coasts, including pollution, changes in sea temperature, fish predation of each other, sea mammal predation of fish, all of which only emphasise the need for a radical and comprehensive approach to ecosystem management.

Commercial fishing has been a political football for a long number of years, with fishermen being excluded from a political management system which takes scientific advice when it suits and ignores it when it does not. The scientists themselves admit that the basis on which their scientific knowledge is acquired is very inexact, resulting in assumptions having to be made on which management advice for the politicians is prepared, but apparently no information is available on any or all of the other major issues which impact on fish stocks either because no scientific advice has been done on some of these issues or, if available, is even more inexact than the science on which the political decisions for commercial fishing is based.

This situation must change, because our fishing communities have to be protected as much as the environment in which they live and work. That protection is not achieved only by encouraging Government to throw money at the communities. Fishing is one of our oldest Industries which encapsulates fluctuating fortunes over generations – an Industry which has developed as a way of life which has changed little in style over these years.

Sustainability of our fishing depends on the equation being balanced between viable fishing effort and regenerated stocks, but cannot be achieved by reducing commercial fishing activity to a level where viability cannot be achieved. We can learn a lot from our Canadian colleagues, where their huge cod fishery was closed in 1992 and the stocks have never recovered. However, the scientists have stated that between the early 1970's and 1996 the Harp Seal population in Canadian waters grew from approximately 2 million to 5.2 million (the population has remained fairly stable since 1996 due to seal harvesting). There is concern that the explosion in seal numbers created an imbalance in the ecosystem, contributing to there being no cod recovery.

Accordingly, a balanced holistic approach to ecosystem management is fundamental, but this need is not recognised within the present political climate, as politicians use both scientific data and management advice to further narrow, national, vested political interests.

# SEALS AND SALMON IN THE TAY

**The number of seals in the Moray Firth is of concern to fishermen. The Tay Estuary Forum is also addressing this issue.**

The river Tay is a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) primarily because of its European importance for Atlantic Salmon and Otter. The firth of Tay and Eden Estuary is also a cSAC because the site is of European importance for Common (Harbour) Seals and Estuarine Habitat.

It was recognised that both sites being candidate SAC's would help to highlight the delicate relationship between seals and salmon and a dedicated session to discuss "Seals and Salmon in the Tay" was held during the Tay Estuary Forum Annual Conference, March 2003 to facilitate communication between different interest groups. Two speakers, Dr Marshall Halliday from the Esk District Salmon Fisheries Board and Callan Duck from the Sea Mammal Research Unit, (SMRU) St Andrews University, were invited to discuss the main issues.

The SMRU is responsible for collecting information on the distribution and size of grey and harbour (or common) seal populations around the UK, which then forms the basis of the scientific advice which the Natural Environment Research Council is obliged to provide to the Scottish Executive and the Department of Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) under the Conservation of Seals Act 1970.



Callan Duck outlined a number of detailed studies underway at the SMRU, including the use of satellite relay data loggers which can be attached to seals and which record their location, diving characteristics and swim speed. Callan also informed delegates that, now it is possible to establish where seals forage, the SMRU wants to study what they are feeding on, because most studies are based on the hard remains of fish or cephalopods (beaks, bones and otoliths)

found in seal scats recovered from haulout sites. New technology allows video cameras to be deployed on seals which might provide more detailed information on their diet, particularly when further offshore.

Dr Halliday advised that Salmon populations are currently under threat by seal consumption, particularly in Spring stocks. Therefore it is time that a balance was achieved through appropriate management of Seal numbers. Dr Halliday explained that The Seal Conservation Act of 1970 has been very successful, however due to the increasing numbers of seals around Scotland it is now time for a management Scheme to be put into place so that seal populations are managed at an optimal level which does not favour their survival at the cost of other equally important populations of fauna, such as Salmon.

For more information please contact Katriona Finan  
(Project Officer), Tay Estuary Forum  
k.finan@dundee.ac.uk Tel. 01382 344933

## BLEATHERINGS FAE THE WEEK SOCIETY



**By mid nineteenth century, the town of Wick had the largest population increase and the highest herring catches of all the Moray Firth Ports.**

One Scaffie could make as much money for a good night's fishing as a crofter could make in a full year. Fortunes were made by fleet owners, the curing yards and exporters. Money was "found" to improve most of

Donald Sinclair WICK HERITAGE SOCIETY

the harbours around the Moray Firth coastline. When the herring season was over, the standard of living dropped significantly and only relatively few men had work. The shoals of herring were thought by most fishermen as being inexhaustible and if fishing methods had not improved that may well have been the case.

Neil M. Gunn's "The Silver Darlings" gives a great insight into those memorable days of the herring boom. Or better still, visit The Wick Society's Heritage Centre and art gallery in Bank Row. See a restored fisherman's house with tableaux of fossils, toys and 19th century fashions, fish kiln, a cooperage, blacksmiths shop, a complete harbour and the famous Johnston collection of photographs of 115 years history.

Open June to September, Mon – Sat. 10am – 5pm Tel: 01955 605 393

# THE DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARDS

Salmon fisheries in Scotland are managed by a system of District Salmon Fishery Boards, which were first established in the 1860s for the preservation of salmon fisheries. The Boards are river catchment based and regulate both rod and line and netting industries within their region.

Fishery Boards can appoint Water Bailiffs who have extensive powers of search seizure and arrest in relation to salmon fishery offences. The District Fishery Board Bailiffs are the main deterrent against salmon poaching and are increasingly well trained and equipped with modern surveillance and communications technology.

Whilst the Boards have statutory powers and duties, they are privately funded by levying a tax on any owner of salmon fishing rights within their region.

In recent years the role of the District Salmon Fishery Boards has evolved significantly, many now employ a full time biologist or are associated with a local Fishery Trust. The Boards are linked by an Association of Salmon Fishery Boards, based in Edinburgh which plays an important co-ordinating and lobbying role.

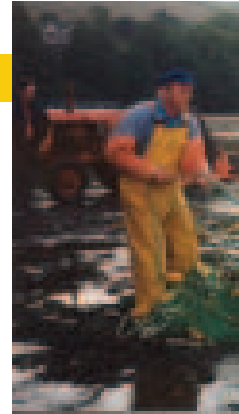
Many Boards are also members of the Scottish Fishery Coordination Centre. This is a fishery research organisation formed by a partnership between Fishery Boards, Fishery Trusts and the Scottish Executives Fishery Research Services. The Scottish Fishery Coordination Centre has developed standardised methods for collecting and storing river habitat survey and juvenile electro-fishing data. There is also a training and certification system to guarantee the quality of data gathered. These types of survey gather baseline data on the quality and quantity of freshwater habitat available and the extent to which it is used by juvenile fish. Fishery data gathered through the SFCC membership can be analysed locally or nationally using Geographical Information System technology. The SFCC has also recently developed a framework for the production of Fishery Management Plans, which can be used to translate research into more effective management.

By developing partnerships with government agencies, Fishery Trusts and universities many Boards are actively involved in research programmes that assist in the understanding and improved management of wild salmon stocks. Some Boards and Trusts have developed education programmes to assist schoolchildren and community groups to appreciate the value and vulnerability of Scotland's wild salmon.

Simon Mckelvie, Conon District Salmon Fishery Board

Tel: 01997 433405 e-mail: conondsfb@aol.com

## SALMON NETTING IN THE MORAY FIRTH



The art of trapping salmon and other fish has tested man's evidence that fish traps were in use more than 6,000 years. Weirs or yairs can be seen along the north side of the Beaulie in Ardersier. These were often curved lengths of stone walling, built to trap fish as the tide receded.

Modern Stake Netting follows these same principles, but uses nets which stretch out to sea at right angles from the shore. There are many examples in the Moray Firth, and what little commercial netting of salmon is done is by net and coble or bag netting.

### Net & Coble or Sweep Netting

A coble is a small, blunt ended boat, specifically designed to pull the net as he rows. At least three people are required to set and pull the net in rivers or estuaries. The shore end of the net is given to "the hauler" who is paying out the net as he goes in a semi-circle, until the other end is reached. Attached to the pole end is a rope which is long enough to reach the shore. The net is hauled in, either by hand or by winch.

Sweep netting is carried out in the inner Firths. Nowadays, most is done at Dornoch Bridge, Rosemarkie, Longman and Alturlie Point.

### Bag Nets or Fixed Nets

These nets are fixed in position by anchors which run out from the shore to the top of the floating net which the fisherman undoes to empty the net out in the outer Firth. It has declined to a great degree, with only a few examples in the Moray Firth, including Helmsdale, Brora, Balintore and Portmahomack. Some have been bought out by the Atlantic Salmon Trust.

The numbers of both netting stations and salmon caught in the Moray Firth in the last 50 years. In 2001, the numbers of salmon netted were significantly lower than nowadays, as you can see from the table below, most salmon

	Rod and Line*	Net and Coble
<b>Year 1952</b>		
Numbers	15,057	45,760
weight – kg	63,428	166,827
<b>Year 2001</b>		
Numbers	18,098	1,229
weight – kg	58,679	3,246

\* the number of grilse caught by rod and line and retained rose from 3,239 in 1952 to 16,859 in 2001  
 \*\* the number of fixed engine fish traps (bag nets etc) fell from 376 in 1952 to only 16 in 2001  
 Salmon and grilse caught by rod and line then released have only been recorded since 1999

Salmon catch and effort information was provided courtesy of the FRS Freshwater Laboratory. For more information contact Tel. 01674 677070





# "THE FUTURE OF FISHING IN THE MORAY FIRTH"

Dr Ian Duncan SCOTTISH FISHERMEN'S FEDERATION

ingenuity for many centuries, and there is evidence in the Moray Firth. Examples of old fish traps in the Moray Firth and another was recently excavated at Easter Fearn, which was strengthened by wicker fences, which trapped

a wall of netting, supported by tall stakes, but there are now no Stake Nets known to be operating in the Moray Firth. The only fish (and sea trout) remains is done either by

to assist a single-handed oarsman to feed out the net and haul in the net. Fishing is carried out on a "boatman" system. The boatman rows out from shore, and the "pole" end is within the semi circle. The boat is then hauled back to shore. Once ashore, the rope is

main sweep netting stations are at Easter Fearn,

on the shore. There is a flap loosely fixed in the net into the boat. Bag-netting is carried out at only a few stations currently operating in the Moray Firth. Many of the former netting stations

in the Moray Firth have declined dramatically over the years to less than 2% of the 1952 catch. Indeed, the majority of fish are caught by rod and line.

(Fixed Engine) Bag Nets/ traps**	Totals
54,097	114,914 no.
195,003	425,258 kg
608	19,935 no.
1,668	63,593 kg.

9,031 in 2001, a rise of 279%  
 in 2001 and the net & Coble effort also reduced in this period.  
 4. In 2001, 8,860 were caught and released (30,784 kg)

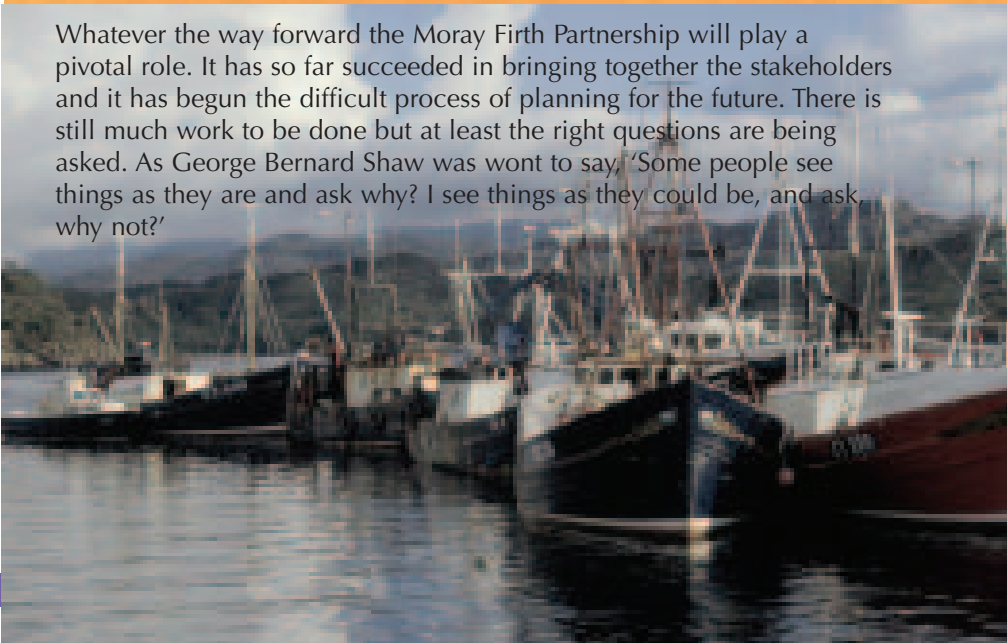
For further information, please see their website – [www.marlab.ac.uk](http://www.marlab.ac.uk) or

**F**ishing around the Moray Firth has an ancient pedigree. Evidence from ancient middens reveals that early man enjoyed the fruits of the sea, as much as we do today. Indeed judging by the diversity of remains, probably more so. Things have changed slightly since Neolithic Man gathered the shellfish from the shore or waded out to net fish. However, some things do not change. Fishermen still rely upon instinct and an appreciation of the environment around him. No doubt ancient man was just as perturbed to find himself out in stormy weather.

The great difference between the past and the present is the development of technology to assist in the harvest of the deep. Until the turn of the last century fishing had probably changed little in a thousand years. Men in ever greater craft relied upon strong winds or strong arms. The advent of the steam trawl changed all that. Today technology has advanced to such a degree that man holds in his mortal hand the power to control the destiny of the fish of the sea – a truly biblical power.

So perhaps the real test for the fishing industry in the Moray Firth and elsewhere, just as it was with Adam in Eden, is good husbandry. How do you manage such a vital resource? The first step is a sound understanding of the ecosystem in general and fish stocks in particular. The second step is securing the co-operation of all the stakeholders both on sea and on land in a sensible management regime. Taking these two steps moves you forward, but the real question is, 'is it in the right direction?' To answer this question will require the involvement of the Scottish Executive, the body that controls fisheries resources both financial and logistical. At the moment the Executive has included the inshore in its 'strategic framework' for fisheries management, but there is no flesh on the bones. What is the aim of inshore fisheries management? Is it to maximise landings? Maximise return? Provide greater employment? Prevent environmental damage? Enhance the attractiveness of the area to encourage tourists? Or indeed, is it all of the above? And finally, the killer question, 'How?' Answering this question will not be easy particularly in an industry undergoing tumultuous changes.

Whatever the way forward the Moray Firth Partnership will play a pivotal role. It has so far succeeded in bringing together the stakeholders and it has begun the difficult process of planning for the future. There is still much work to be done but at least the right questions are being asked. As George Bernard Shaw was wont to say, 'Some people see things as they are and ask why? I see things as they could be, and ask, why not?'



# HOOKED ON FISHING....



**Angling within the Moray Firth Partnership area is in a fairly healthy state with encouraging numbers still participating in this age-old sport. Schools and clubs throughout the area encourage new members and give tuition including fly casting, fly tying and, importantly, safety issues.**

Clubs are also striving to provide improved facilities for less able anglers.

There are three main types of fishing :

- **Game fishing: for salmon, sea trout and brown trout, which requires a permit**
- **Sea Angling: no licence is required, unless fishing for salmon or sea trout which are migratory fish.**
- **Course Fishing: for species such as pike, carp, roach & arctic char. No licence is required, but the permission of the riparian owner should be sought.**

The Moray Firth provides the estuaries for an abundance of excellent salmon rivers. Those include the Wick, Helmsdale, Brora, Shin, Cassley, Oykel, Alness, Conon, Beauly, Ness, Moriston, Garry, Oich, Nairn, Findhorn, Spey, Lossie and Deveron.

The sound conservation and management practices in vogue on these rivers are still striving to sustain a healthy population of juvenile Atlantic salmon and sea trout (smolts) returning to the marine environment. Once at sea however the prospect of their return as adult fish is questionable to say the least. Pollution, predation, industrial fishing and oceanic warming are but a few of the hazards facing migratory fish today and marine mortality rates are exceptionally high.

All of the above rivers have angling clubs or associations which offer good quality fishing at very reasonable cost. Some of them welcome 'out of town' or 'country' members so it isn't critical that you live within a particular catchment area in order to join a specific club. There are of course limits on membership numbers, so there may be a waiting list in a few cases.

Wild trout fishing is readily available throughout the Partnership area and again the local tackle shop is the

place to get the best advice. Stocked fisheries (rainbows) provide an excellent alternative and there are quite a few first class venues within the area. They also have a secondary purpose in relieving pressure on wild trout stocks.

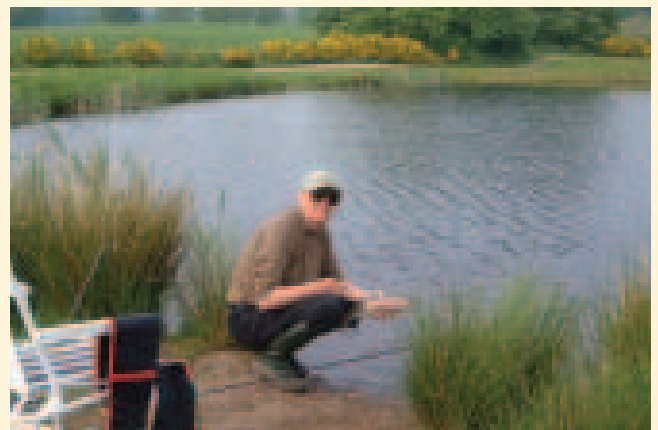
Course fishing is mostly confined to pike in this part of the world and there are local clubs with pike fishing enthusiasts. Pike fishing is mostly confined to the winter and early spring months.

Sea angling has become less actively pursued on the Moray Firth coast in recent years, mainly due to the reduced number of boats able to comply with the more stringent and costly Health & Safety and licensing requirements. However, there are significant numbers who travel to enjoy their chosen sport, and clubs with sea angling sections are not hard to find.

All in all, angling within the Moray Firth Partnership area is very much alive and kicking and is enjoyed by many thousands each year. Not to mention the visiting anglers that it attracts.

Sustainable? Yes! – But only just!

Kenny Macdonald, secretary of the Federation of Highland Angling Clubs and Associations, is always willing to offer advice and help. Tel. 01463 240095.



# THE INSHORE STORY CONTINUES...

**The "Tale of Inshore Fisheries" is no longer to be found in the dusty shelves at the back of the bookshop. It might not share window space with Harry Potter, but you might just stumble across a copy next to a favourite Agatha Christie, or the Cat in the Hat.**

So why is inshore fisheries enjoying this new attention? As in so many other areas, the Scottish Parliament has brought with it a new appreciation of regional issues. And problems in the offshore fishing industry have turned attention to the inshore grounds. In Europe, the review of the CFP has raised the profile of the idea of regional management, as well as the notion of the "ecosystem approach". The inshore grounds may well be the ideal place to pioneer these approaches.

Inshore fisheries is managed largely through the use of the Inshore Fishing (Scotland) Act 1984. This is a useful piece of legislation, which allows all sorts of controls to be implemented to tackle individual issues. However, there has been a general appreciation across the board that a more strategic approach is needed to manage inshore fisheries in the new millennium.

Most would agree on a few priorities for the inshore: sustainable fish stocks, sustainable fishing communities, focus on a quality product. But when it comes

to taking action, the diversity of activity in the inshore is a challenge. What is best for the Moray Firth is unlikely to be suitable for Shetland. Fishing activity is a key consideration for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), but can be viewed by some as the Big Bad Wolf of the marine environment tale. This is not so! In the absence of a strategy for inshore fisheries, individual issues of conflict can cloud the bigger picture, and make a "happy ever after" scenario seem unlikely.

The Scottish Inshore Fisheries Advisory Group (SIFAG) has been working hard to develop a strategy for the inshore. The Group brings together the key inshore stakeholder groups and while "happy ever after" is not quite the aim, a lot of positive work has been done. A review is underway to look at how effective inshore management has been to date, and to develop key principles for inshore management in the future. Once a draft strategy begins to take shape, we hope that the MFP, among others, will take the opportunity to contribute.

NB. Membership of SIFAG does not include the Brothers Grimm, Snow White, and the Seven Dwarves.

Gabriella Pieraccini Head of Inshore Fisheries SEERAD  
gabby.pieraccini@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

## FROM PIANO WIRE TO ECHO SOUNDERS – DEVELOPMENTS IN NAVIGATION AND FISH LOCATION

Sandy Patience MORAY FIRTH PARTNERSHIP

**After the Second World War 1939 – 1945, more prominence was paid to the use of navigation equipment and fish location in the fishing industry. Aerial transmission by way of sound was introduced, allowing a boat using a Direction Finder to locate a beacon or beacons at fixed points all around the UK and to get a cross bearing which, when transposed onto a navigation chart, would give the vessel's location.**

On leaving school at 15 in 1960 to start my career at sea, my skipper, George Jack, first taught me to recognise all the lighthouses on the north and west coast of Scotland, as each had its individual sequence of flashes. The courses to steer from given ports, and time and distance ran on each passage the vessel made. Remember, all those sea journeys were made by hand-steering the vessel and you shared a two hour watch with an experienced crewman.

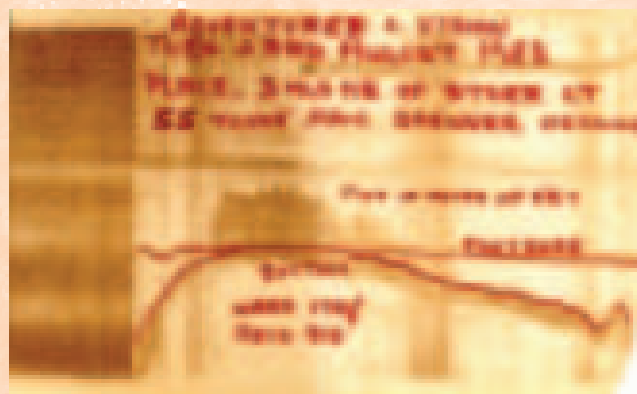
The first echo sounder introduced to the Avoch fleet was in the late 1940's, a Kelvin Hughes and Marconi Graphette. This took over from the "feeling wire", which consisted of 40 fathoms of fine piano wire, to which was attached a heavy lead weight, all wound onto the end of an old wooden fish box. The vessel's speed would be reduced to just allow a boat to go through the water. The wire would be paid out until the lead hit the bottom, then 6 foot retrieved. The man on the end of the wire could then feel fish hit the wire and could judge if the shoal was sufficient to encircle or not. If the lead was allowed to follow the seabed, it could be used to determine the type of bottom. Men who were good at the art saved many a day's hard work mending torn fishing gear.

From the late 1960's, electronic equipment began to play a more major part. Radar, Decca Navigator systems allowed vessels to track their position over the grounds they were working and avoid wrecks and other seabed obstacles, as well as giving a record of where the best fishing areas were.

During the 1970's, sonar played an important part on the pelagic scene as it showed the size of shoals of herring, mackerel or sprats and defined, in the case of the larger pelagic vessels, if it was worth shooting their fishing gear or not.

Today's state of the art wheelhouse resembles a computer shop, as technology is now so far advanced that trawl winches, engine, trawl instrumentation, radar, plotting systems and auto pilot are, or can be, all interlinked.

A very far cry indeed from 43 years ago, when piano wire was still used to determine if a shoal of fish was herring, sprats, mackerel or the feed fish "sandeels".





# "GO WILD ON MUSSELS!"

**T**he Common Mussel (*Mytilus Edulis*) is found in many places in the Moray Firth. They can form huge beds particularly in areas where conditions are good for larval settlement, and where there is plenty of food. The largest wild mussel fishery in Scotland is in the Dornoch Firth and run by Highland Fresh Mussels Ltd. on behalf of the Highland Council. The fishery employs 4 staff, rising to 8 at busy harvesting periods, as well as supporting a number of jobs in shore based businesses. Income generated goes to the Tain Common Good Fund.

The mussel fishery has had a long association with the people of Tain. In 1612, ownership of the mussel scalps and the right to fish for mussels was bequeathed to the Royal Burgh of Tain by James VI of Scotland. The Dornoch Firth Mussels provided an important source of food during times of famine, and are today considered a highly desirable food item.

Approximately 60% of the mussels are exported directly to France. Much of the remainder is sold to two local companies in Tain, who clean and grade the mussels, pack them in 5kg bags and sell to customers across the UK.

Mussels are extremely high in proteins, calcium and iron while being low in fat and calories. They are also excellent for your heart, containing the highest amount of Omega3's of any shellfish.

The Dornoch Firth is regarded as an area of high ecological value. The Firth is virtually unaffected by industrial development and supports a wide range of marine and bird life. Around one third of the Firth lies within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and forms part of the proposed Marine Special Area of Conservation.

Dornoch Firth mussels are not farmed like most of the mussels sold in supermarkets. We fish wild beds that regenerate naturally and take great care to ensure these are not over-fished. Stock surveys are carried out annually using a variety of techniques including underwater cameras. These then determine the harvest levels for the coming year.

For further information on the mussel fishery in the Dornoch Firth and on purchasing mussels, please contact Dafydd Morris, Fisheries Development Officer, Highland Council. ([dafydd.morris@highland.gov.uk](mailto:dafydd.morris@highland.gov.uk)) or check out the website at [www.highlandmussels.com](http://www.highlandmussels.com)

# "SHELLFISH - OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE MORAY FIRTH"

SEAFISH DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR **Dr Jon Harman**



**O**f the £70 million of fish landed annually from the Moray Firth area, £22 million worth is shellfish. However, research conducted by Seafish has shown by implementing comprehensive fishing management schemes and taking the time to

**look at market trends and industry needs, there is potential to increase the volume and variety of shellfish landed in the Moray Firth.**

There is also potential to build on current marketing initiatives to try and raise awareness of the quality of local produce and encourage increased consumption.

It is acknowledged that a major weakness in the onshore sector is marketing. Our team of Trade Development Executives can offer support and advice on how to address marketing needs.

Businesses can also get involved with Seafood Week, (3-10 October) Seafish's national campaign aimed at promoting the diversity of fish to consumers.

We encourage businesses to spread the message about seafood to as wide an audience as possible, and offer a range of literature and promotional materials to help them do this.

There is also potential to increase exports of locally landed species.

For example, we recently commissioned a study to investigate exports of velvet crab from the UK. This showed there is potential to add value to exports especially to countries such as France, Spain and Portugal and especially if issues relating to quality and grading are addressed.

With continuing pressure on supplies, businesses in the UK seafood industry must ensure they optimise the commercial benefits from their business activities.

Those in the Moray Firth who take the time to do this will reap dividends.

For further details on any of Seafish's services, tel: 0131 558 3331 ([seafish@seafish.co.uk](mailto:seafish@seafish.co.uk)) or go to [www.seafish.co.uk](http://www.seafish.co.uk)



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Membership of the Moray Firth Partnership is open to everyone with an interest in the Firth and its future. There is no membership fee.

Each member will receive:

- A regular newsletter, raising awareness about the Moray Firth, with the opportunity to contribute articles opinions about management of the Firth
- The opportunity to obtain copies of all other Partnership publications and reports
- Automatic invitation to attend various discussion groups, the Partnership AGM and annual Partnership conference
- Rights to vote on company matters

There are 2 categories of membership:

Ordinary: open to individuals.

Corporate: open to organisations (whether incorporated or unincorporated). Corporate members are required to nominate a voting representative. In addition they may have up to 9 additional contacts on the Partnership mailing list subject to approval. They will receive 2 invitations to attend each AGM.

If you use, plan or manage any part of the Firth, please use this form to become a member of the Moray Firth Partnership. Return your completed form to:

**The Moray Firth Partnership**  
27 Ardconnel Terrace  
Inverness  
IV2 3AE

Tel: 01463 225530

Fax: 01463 225207

E-mail: [info@morayfirth-partnership.org](mailto:info@morayfirth-partnership.org)

## MORAY FIRTH WINDFARM STILL AT INFANCY STAGE

**T**alisman's Environment Manager Jan Rusin outlines the current position and points the way ahead.

The potential development of an offshore wind farm next to our Beatrice oilfield is, unsurprisingly, of great interest to the many stakeholders in the Moray Firth area and in the Highlands generally. With this in mind, this month's newsletter provides the ideal platform to update readers on the state of play with this potentially exciting but still very much conceptual development.

Let me emphasise straightaway that any development would be east of the Beatrice oilfield, at least 25 - 35 kilometres from shore in either direction, and should present minimal visual impact from land.

Moving on to where we now are, a recently secured grant from the DTI will enable us - and our partners Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE) - to undertake a major engineering study into the design, fabrication and installation of substructures in deepwater locations. The objective of the study, which will take several months to complete, is to identify a new financially viable design that can be produced and installed with minimal disturbance.

In a separate but linked development, a Talisman/SSE-led consortium has submitted a bid to the EU for funding of a 'demonstrator' project for 2005 adjacent to the Beatrice oilfield infrastructure. If successful, the bid will enable the consortium to build and deploy two machines to prototype the next generation of turbines to be sited in deepwater and demonstrate the structural design and installation concept for deepwater developments far from shore.

The project would not only provide power to the Beatrice oilfield but also present an opportunity to develop appropriate operations and maintenance procedures for deepwater offshore wind farms. The experience gained from the project would be instrumental in shaping the regulatory, safety and environmental standards for offshore wind farm development.

We are very much in the infancy stage of planning a wind farm in the Moray Firth. It is not going to happen tomorrow. Indeed, assuming the study and demonstrator projects are successful, we are still looking at a lead time of several years. Extensive consultation would be required with the local community, regulatory authorities and other interested parties, including fishing organisations, before approval for the project would be given.

## BAG IT & BIN IT – DON'T FLUSH IT

**A** national campaign to help clean up Scotland's environment gets underway this summer, funded by the Scottish Executive and Scottish Water through Clean Coast Scotland. In a bid to help clean up beaches and reduce the cost of dealing with sanitary waste, everyone is being asked NOT to flush items like tampons, condoms and nappies down their toilet.

A Beachwatch survey for 2002 found sewage related debris accounted for 5.8% of total waste found on Scottish beaches!

In Scotland it has been estimated that a staggering 340 million items of sanitary waste are flushed every year. The waste water system simply wasn't designed to cope with these things and they can cause blockages in pipes and damage screens at treatment plants. As a result, this waste can also get into the environment, polluting rivers and beaches and harming wildlife."

Items which should NOT be flushed include:

- Nappies and wipes • Cotton buds • Sanitary towels and tampons • Panty liners • Condoms • Razors •

The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are human waste and toilet paper (not too much!).

## BAG IT & BIN IT – DON'T FLUSH IT

For further information please contact [janice.mudge@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:janice.mudge@scottishwater.co.uk)



# The Partnership Needs YOU!

Please complete all parts of this form

Type of membership applied for (tick box as appropriate)

Corporate  Ordinary

Member's name: .....

Job title (if appropriate): .....

Organisation (if appropriate): .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Tel: .....

Fax: .....

E-mail: .....

Website: .....

NB Corporate members may supply the names and addresses of up to 9 additional contacts that they wish to have included on the mailing list.

**Corporate members only: Please nominate one voting representative to vote on behalf of the corporation for the purposes of Article 6 of the Articles of Association of the Company. The address and contact telephone number of our representative is as follows:**

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Tel: .....

Such representative shall continue to represent the nominating member until termination of the appointment is notified in writing to the Secretary. A Corporate Member may appoint a substitute representative for the purposes of a specific meeting by notice in writing to the Secretary.

I/We apply to be admitted as an Ordinary Member/a Corporate Member\* of the Company called The Moray Firth Partnership and agree to act as a guarantor of the company to an extent not exceeding £1.00 in terms of the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association. Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association are available on request from the Secretary.

Signature .....

Date .....

\*delete as appropriate

This information is to be processed by computer and used for administrative duties relating to the work of the Partnership. We may, on occasion, pass this information to other organisations/individuals with similar interests. Should you NOT wish this information to be divulged, please tick this box.

The osprey, or fishing eagle as its Gaelic name describes, is our only bird of prey to live exclusively on fish. The osprey's keen eye can spot fish up to 70 metres above the water's surface. This method of feeding relies on clear water and on the fish being close to the surface, which many of the bays and shallower firths round the Moray coast provide.

Despite the severe persecution which led to the ospreys' extinction in the 1900's, ospreys found their own way back to Scotland in 1954. The early recolonisation was very slow, with only 14 pairs by 1976. The rate of increase improved after this, with 71 pairs only 15 years later.

Ospreys generally build their nest on top of a large tree, always near water — be it a land-locked loch or sea loch. In late April, two or three white eggs are laid and incubated for just over five weeks. Like most other birds of prey, ospreys divide the nesting duties very clearly between the pair. The female does almost all of the incubating, brooding and direct feeding of the young. The male, on the other hand, plays a major and often sole role of food provisioner for the female and young. The chicks fledge after about seven weeks, and both parents then continue to provide food for the young. In September and October the birds migrate to Africa for the winter.

Ospreys are among the ten regular British breeding species most seriously threatened by egg collecting. With the changes in the Wildlife Laws and ever increasing sympathy and public awareness, such practices must surely become confined to the history books. Hopefully, in the coming years, osprey numbers will continue to increase and their range will continue to expand.

The RSPB hide at Udale Bay offers a shelter where you can look out for ospreys, or why not visit the Loch Garten Osprey Centre. Tel. 01479 831476.



IOLAIR IASGAICH

For further information, please contact Kenna Chisholm, RSPB

Tel: 01463 715000 Fax: 01463 715315 e-mail: kenna.chisholm@rspb.org.uk www.rspb.org.uk/scotland

## "GOLD AWARD FOR ROSS-SHIRE PROJECT"

The Fishing Industry Training Association has won a Gold Award for Centre of the Year 2002 from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) for its "Ross-shire Project". This enterprising scheme for fish processors was set up by Ross & Cromarty Enterprise to address the lack of vocational qualifications, skill shortages, poor staff recruitment and retention, and poor job perception among Fish Processors in Ross-shire.

The Ross-shire Project aims to establish SVQ's (Scottish Vocational Qualifications) in Fish Processing companies; promote training; promote Family-Friendly Working Policies including looking at childcare provision; and improve management-employees workplace communication.

When the project started in 2001, there was an absence of SVQ capability. To date there are 8 newly qualified SVQ Assessors working in three companies and 33+ Food & Drink Manufacturing Operations SVQ candidates registered for Level 2.

Congratulations are due to three Ross-shire companies participating in the Project - Wester Ross Salmon (Dingwall) and Aquascot (Alness) who have completed their first batch of SVQ's and Riverside Salmon (Dingwall) who are also well on the way.

Due to the success of the Ross-shire Project, this scheme is due to be extended to Fish Processors around the Moray Firth.

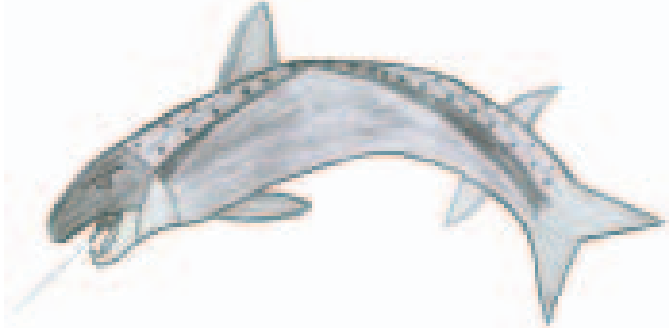
For further information, contact the FITA Ross-shire Project Officer, tel. 01463 772234

or mobile 07968 134735, e-mail: sea.moore@zetnet.co.uk

## "SALMON GOES TO SCHOOL"

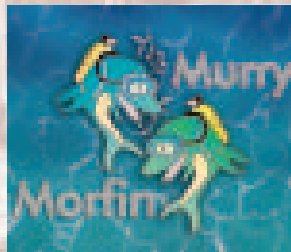
The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust was delighted to be granted £1,000 by the Moray Firth Partnership Community Grants Scheme towards their educational project. The money will purchase six mini hatcheries for their "Salmon Goes to School" project for schools in the Deveron River catchment area and a digital projector for school talks and presentations.

The Trust recently carried out a similar project in Rothiemay Primary School. Salmon eggs were reared in the school and the older children helped to "plant out" the fish in the nearby Castle Burn. During the summer, the children will be shown the electro-fishing survey procedure in the same burn, where they will hope to catch some of the young fry that they planted out during March. "Invertebrate kick" survey techniques will also be demonstrated and the children will be asked to identify some of the bugs and beasts that provide the food source.



For further information about the project, please contact Robin Vasey, Project Officer, The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust. Tel: 01466 711388 e-mail: robin.vasey@deveron.org website: www.deveron.org

## "NAME THE DOLPHIN" COMPETITION



We were delighted to receive over 150 entries to our "name the dolphin" competition in the last edition.

Congratulations go to Ashleigh Thomson from Buckie, who won the under 12 section with the name of "Murry". Jeni Nichols from Golspie won the 12-16 section with her name of "Morfin". Ashleigh won a family dolphin watching trip which was kindly provided by Moray Firth Cruises Inverness. Jeni won a year's membership of Friends of the Moray Firth Dolphins, including a dolphin watching trip.

Gwyn Tanner of Dolphin Trips Avoch and Karl Nielsen of the Benbola, Buckie, also generously offered a prize.

All these operators are accredited under the Dolphin Space Programme, which means they agree to act in a dolphin friendly way, to minimise disturbance to these special creatures. If you want to watch dolphins, please choose one of the accredited operators. (See [www.greentourism.org.uk/DSP](http://www.greentourism.org.uk/DSP) )

Alternatively, there are various viewpoints around the coast where you can spot dolphins from the shore. If you look at the website of wildlife photographer, Charlie Phillips, you will see just how good a view you can get from shore, as all his photos are taken from land. [www.charliephillipsimages.co.uk](http://www.charliephillipsimages.co.uk)

## MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS FOR THE FISHING INDUSTRY

With all the changes that are taking place in the fishing industry, one ray of light has started to shine. Traditional young entrants haven't had a clear pathway through the education and certification routes, but now a Modern Apprenticeship scheme has been developed for the fishing industry.

The immediate impact will be that all new entrants can access funding not only for initial training but ongoing training and education to Certification levels. There is also the opportunity for candidates who have gained their Level II VQ (Vocational Qualifications) to access funding to allow them to gain Level III certification before they reach the age of 25.

The new Modern Apprenticeship means that there is now a formal system to aid and support new entrants into the industry through the initial stages of certification. This is not only a large financial boost but will also have major safety implications. All candidates will cover watchkeeping duties so that they can play a significant role in the watch keeping duties if required to do so.

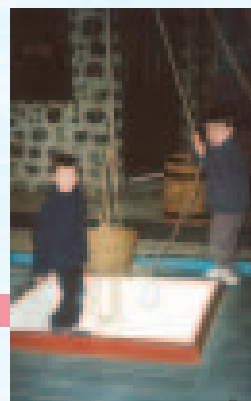
For further information, please contact David Cook, Sector Manager, Maritime Studies, Banff & Buchan College. Tel.01346 515777



## FRASERBURGH SEA HARVEST

The Moray Firth Partnership gave a Community Grant of £1,000 towards upgrading displays in this excellent exhibition at Fraserburgh's award-winning Heritage Centre.

Hands-on, interactive activities and local guides make it fun for all the family to find out about local heritage and, of course, fishing — boats, methods, nets, local customs, etc. Special school resource packs available.



Open 1 April to 31 October, Mon-Sat, 11-5, Sun. 1-5. Group visits also Nov-March. Tel. 01346 513802 [www.fraserburghheritage.com](http://www.fraserburghheritage.com)

# Dates for your diary



There is so much going on over the next few months that it is impossible to list more than a few events here. The Rangers have exciting summer programmes for all the family, so please contact them for full details. The RSPB, Moray Firth Wildlife Centre and others also have some great days planned. We hope to meet up with you around the Firth.

## Cruise Liner Visits - Invergordon - 2003

14 July - 10.00 - 17.00 hrs - Wind Surf\* (5 masted sailing ship) 14,745 tonnes - 300 pax (American)  
 22 July - 07.00 - 20.00 hrs - Sea Cloud II (sailing ship) - 3,849 tonnes - 85 pax (American)  
 13 Aug. - 08.00 - 18.00 hrs - A'Rosa Blu - 70,285 tonnes - 1,300 pax (German)  
 (for more information about cruise liner visits, contact the Cromarty Firth Port Authority tel: 01349 852308  
 cfa@cfa.co.uk (\* Maiden visit)

## Sat. 28 and Sun. 29 June 2003 10.00 onwards

Scottish Traditional Boat Festival, Portsoy  
 "A cornucopia of sailing and shoreside events." Lots to do even for those not interested in boats or the sea. Games, crafts, stalls, good food, evening entertainment etc.

## Wed. 9 July 14.00 - 16.00

Grade A Family event "Aquabeasts - River Dip"  
 Book your place to join the Ranger investigating the bugs and beasties that live in the River Nairn.  
 Tel: 01463 724312 - The Highland Council Ranger Service (Planning & Economic Dev't)

## Sat. 26 July

Cromarty Boat Club Regatta see [www.cromartyboatclub.org](http://www.cromartyboatclub.org) for full details of timings and entry.

## Also Aberdeen University Lighthouse Field Station Open Day

in new building on harbour front 12.00 - 16.00

## Sun. 3 August 14.00 - 16.00

Shifting Sands at Culbin - Grade B walk  
 Meet the local Highland Council and RSPB Rangers at the East Beach Car Park for a walk around Culbin Sands looking at wildlife and local history. Contact Kenna Chisholm, [kenna.chisholm@rspb.org.uk](mailto:kenna.chisholm@rspb.org.uk)

## Wed. 13 August 13.30 - 15.30 pm - Grade A family event

**Dolphin Diary**  
 A walk along the sea wall to find out about dolphins and other creatures that live in the Beauly Firth.  
 Meet in Turning circle, South Kessock Pier Contact: Katy Stirling, Inverness & Great Glen Ranger Tel: 01463 724260

## Mon. 25 August

**"Whale Aware Day"**  
 Have a whale of a time as you learn more about the occasional visitors to the Moray Coast that can be seen here from late summer. These include Minke, Pilot and Humpback Whales and Orcas.  
 Full size Orca on display. Slide talks. Whale themed art activities and games for children.  
 Moray Firth Wildlife Centre, Speybay. Tel: 01343 820339

## Beachwatch 2003 - the UK's biggest beach clean

(all equipment, bags & gloves provided)

## Sat. 20 Sept. 2003 10.00 start

Fraserburgh beach clean - prior booking essential  
 Contact Banff & Buchan Ranger 01261 813299 or Fraserburgh Seashore Centre Warden 07786 021786

## Sun. 21 September 14.00 - 16.00

Roseisle Beach Clean Up. Meet 2pm at Roseisle Car Park.  
 Contact Moray Forest District Recreation Ranger. Tel: 01343 820223

## Sun. 28 September 14.00 start

Sinclair Bay, Wick - collect and record beach litter. Meet at North Baths, Wick Harbour.  
 Please contact East Caithness Ranger Tel. 01955 607758

## Fri. 17 - Mon. 20 October

Moray Walking Festival  
 Themed walks and fun for all ages, including "Animal Orienteering". For details, contact Elgin Tourist Office on 01343 542666 or [www.walkingfestival.net](http://www.walkingfestival.net)

## Fri. 3 - Fri. 10 October Seafood Week 2003

All seafood processors, retailers, caterers and manufacturers (and consumers!) are invited to take part in this week long promotion of the rich and abundant varieties of seafood available in the UK.  
 For details contact 0131 524 8646 or e-mail: [seafoodweek@seafish.co.uk](mailto:seafoodweek@seafish.co.uk)



The splendid new "UK Sea Fish Industry Wall Map" gives a truly comprehensive picture of the UK Fishing industry, including the number of vessels at each of 372 named ports, weight of fish landed, fish producers, processors, wholesalers, marine fish farms etc.

Copies from Agri-Food Market Analysis. E-mail: [maps@agri-food.co.uk](mailto:maps@agri-food.co.uk) Tel: 01505 862380

## YOUR MFP TEAM

Here are the current contact details for the Partnership team:

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<b>Ben Leyshon, SNH</b> Tel: 01349 865333	e-mail: <a href="mailto:ben.leyshon@snh.gov.uk">ben.leyshon@snh.gov.uk</a>

## THE MORAY FIRTH PARTNERSHIP IS CURRENTLY RECEIVING FUNDING/SUPPORT FROM:



"This newsletter aims to provide updates on the work of the Partnership and to pass on information about the many other coastal and marine initiatives around the Moray Firth. We would like to hear from you, so please send your news, views, articles, questions and dates for the diary.

For further information on the Partnership or the articles in this newsletter, please contact:  
 The Partnership Manager, Moray Firth Partnership, 27 Ardconnel Terrace, Inverness, IV2 3AE  
 Tel: 01463 225530 Fax: 01463 225207  
 Email: [info@morayfirth-partnership.org](mailto:info@morayfirth-partnership.org) Web-site: [www.morayfirth-partnership.org](http://www.morayfirth-partnership.org)



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Disclaimer  
 The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Moray Firth Partnership. Whilst the information contained in the articles is believed to be correct, the Moray Firth Partnership accepts no responsibility for its accuracy or content.

Designed by The Moray Council June 2003

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