

A “New” Salmon River in Ireland

A recent review of fish stocks in the River Tolka in north Dublin, by Inland Fisheries Ireland has indicated the presence of numbers of juvenile wild Atlantic salmon in the river in three locations in the Glasnevin and Finglas areas. This is the first record of wild salmon reproducing in the Tolka for at least 100 years.

The reestablishment of a wild salmon population in the Tolka is due to the coordinated efforts of a number of State Agencies. Earlier this century the Office of Public Works, working closely with three County Councils (Dublin, Meath and Fingal) carried out a flood relief scheme in the Tolka. Inland Fisheries Ireland worked closely with these groups advising on fishery aspects of this scheme. This involved either the removal or modification of a significant number of man-made weirs to “open up” this system to migratory fish. On completion of this scheme adult sea trout immediately ran the system all the way upstream to its headwaters in Dunboyne for the first time in, at least, 150 years.

Now we are seeing the recolonisation of the river by the “King of Fish” – the Atlantic Salmon. There is no doubt that the presence of juvenile salmon, a species that only survives in clean water, also reflects the hard work of the County Councils in reducing pollution levels in this largely urbanized river.

In a further development, Dublin City Council is in the process of implementing an Inland Fisheries Ireland fisheries enhancement plan in the Carriffsbridge Park area. Once complete, there will be a linear park along the Tolka River at the Pelletstown area which will include the improvement of fish habitat and the eradication of Giant Hogweed.

Dr Ciaran Byrne, CEO of Inland Fisheries Ireland said today ‘Up to the year 2000 Dublin and Reykjavik were the only two capital cities in Europe which had a wild Atlantic salmon stock in a river within city boundaries. Now Dublin can boast about having three salmon rivers within its boundaries – the Liffey, Dodder and now the Tolka! In environmental terms this is an important step forward’.

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Media Enquiries

Suzanne Campion
Head of Business Development
Inland Fisheries Ireland
Anglesea Street,
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.
Tel: 052 6180055 **Fax:** 052 6123971
Email: suzanne.campion@fisheriesireland.ie **Website:** www.fisheriesireland.ie

Notes to Editor

Inland Fisheries Ireland is a statutory body operating under the aegis of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and was established under the Fisheries Act on 1st July 2010. Its principal function is the protection and conservation of the inland fisheries resource. IFI will promote, support, facilitate and advise the Minister on, the conservation, protection, management, development and improvement of inland fisheries, including sea angling and develop and advise the Minister on policy and national strategies relating to inland fisheries and sea angling.