

THE RIVER NITH CATCHMENT ANGLING CODE

for Salmon, Sea Trout & Trout Anglers

A guide to legal restrictions and good practice for fishing on the River Nith and its tributaries

All reasonable Salmon, Sea Trout and Trout anglers realise and understand that it is important to set a good example in standards of sportsmanship and in care of wild stocks of fish, the environment, wildlife and fellow anglers.

This code has been produced by the Nith District Salmon Fishery Board to encourage such standards and give guidance to all proprietors and anglers who fish rivers and burns within the Nith Catchment.

This Code comprises four sections:

Section A: Statutory Regulations

Section B: Regulations to be imposed by beat owners, including Spring and Autumn Salmon and Sea Trout Conservation measures.

Section C: Good Practice.

Section D: General Conduct.

Reference to Fish or fish in the code means salmon and sea trout.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE

Owners, managers, associations and clubs should ensure that the principles of this code are applied to their beats and are expected to withdraw permission to fish from those who contravene Sections A and B.

Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

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Section A: The Law

1. The season starts on 25th February and ends on 30th November.
2. There is no fishing for salmon and sea trout on Sundays.
3. As of 2015 it is a legal requirement that all salmon captured must be returned before the 1st April

It is illegal to:-

- Deliberately attempt to foul hook fish or to take fish which have been foul hooked i.e. those not hooked in the mouth.
- Kill kelts, smolts or parr.
- Take unclean or unseasonable fish being baggots, highly coloured, black or red fish and fish about to or in the process of spawning.
- Sell salmon or sea trout which have been caught with rod & line.
- Use natural shrimps or prawns on any part of the river upstream of the Kingholm Gates at the bottom end (tidal area) of the Dumfries Town Fishings.
- Fish for any fish without written permission (or permit) from the beat's owner or his representative.
- Fish with any form of salmon roe.
- Fish with a "fixed line."
- Use gaffs, tailers or knotted mesh nets.

All fish caught must be recorded with the beat proprietor with the exception of:

- a) Kelts, i.e. fish that have spawned.
- b) During spring only, sexually mature fish that have not yet spawned.

Breach of any of the above could lead to criminal prosecution, seizure of fishing equipment and vehicles.

Section B: Nith Rules

Regulations that the Board expect beat owners to impose.

The Nith Board expects all proprietors to implement the rules in Section B and to withdraw permission to fish from those who break them.

The rules have been carefully drafted to ensure their effectiveness whilst minimising the disruption to the legitimate fisherman. We hope that everyone to whom these rules apply will understand the need for responsible conservation based action and accept any inconvenience as part of ensuring the requirements to protect the fishery resource and to ensure that the fishery is sensibly fished

1. G.S.

In order to prevent the introduction of **Gyrodactylus Salaris (G.S.)** all angling equipment of whatever kind used outside Britain within the previous fourteen days **must** be decontaminated by either:

- (a) drying at a minimum temperature of 20 C for at least 48 hours, **OR**
- (b) heating for at least one hour at a temperature above 60 C, **OR**
- (c) immersing in a suitable solution. Virkon - 1% solution; Wescodyne - 1% solution; Na Cl (table salt) - 3% solution; Sodium Hydroxide - 0.2% solution **OR**
- (d) deep freezing for at least 24 hours.

Anglers will be required to sign a Declaration to this effect. The GS Form can be downloaded from the Nith Board's web site.

www.river-nith.com

2. Invasive species

No species of fish, bait or other wild animal or plant life of any type should be used or allowed to escape into the catchment.

3. Fish Conservation

- All salmon caught prior to 1st June must be returned.
- All hen fish caught in November must be returned.
- All sea trout under 10" and over 3 lb must be returned.
- Fish retained should be limited to no more than 1 Salmon and 1 Sea Trout in any day.
- It is recommended that barbless hooks be used especially when the intention is to Catch & Release
- Foul hooked fish i.e. those not hooked in the mouth, must be returned to water.
- Ripe or darkly coloured fish should be returned to the water. If in doubt, RETURN it!
- Fish being returned to the water should not be handled by the tail and should be released as quickly as possible. Remove the hook with forceps and return the fish facing upstream and gently support it until it swims away.
- Fish being retained should be killed as quickly as possible using a priest or appropriate instrument.

Section C: Good Practice

Our Recommendations

The Board recognises that the various Associations and Beat Owners on the river will wish to exercise their own rules and that many of these will necessarily vary.

We strongly recommend the following rules and conditions to anglers and to owners or Associations for inclusion in the beat's own rules.

General Rules

1. Respect boundaries between adjoining beats.
2. Anglers must show permits, tackle and catch to Bailiffs, Police Officers or other anglers if requested.
3. Anglers under 12 years of age should be accompanied by an adult when fishing.

Method & Equipment

1. Do not use sweep nets, ground bait or rod rests.
2. Do not fish from trees, bridges, etc. or use assistance from anyone in such a position.
3. When bait fishing or spinning, the bait/spinner must be kept moving through the water at all times.
4. The maximum permitted line breaking strain for all types of fishing should be 15lbs.
5. The maximum permitted hook size for bait fishing will be No 4.

Fly Fishing

1. Fly hooks or tubes should be properly dressed - with a coloured body and a reasonable quantity of hair/fur/feather in proportion to the hook size.
2. Anglers should not use weights or lead-core lines of any kind when fishing with the fly.
3. No retrieve, other than slow hand-lining should be made until the cast has been fished out.

Section D: General Conduct

It is important that all anglers know how to behave on the river and surroundings and that all participants are conscious not only of their own needs, but also the safety, welfare and enjoyment of others.

With this in mind they should:

- Always fish in a sporting manner.
- Give consideration to anglers on the opposite bank.
- Fish down through pools in rotation, taking at least one full step between casts.
- Avoid unnecessary wading or any avoidable disturbance to the water.
- Always respect the environment, wildlife, other anglers and members of the public.
- Not park vehicles so that they obstruct gateways or cause a hazard on the roadway.
- Remove waste nylon and personal litter from the river banks and parking places.
- Follow the Country Code. Always respect farm animals and crops.
- Not light fires or allow dogs to roam free.
- Always be conscious of and alert to hazards and look after their own safety and the safety of other anglers.

Remember to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself!

Re-Stocking Programme

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board operates a stocking programme, which introduces migratory fish fry into the river and its feeder streams when and where appropriate to do so.

Habitat Enhancement Project and Nith Catchment Fishery Trust

The District Salmon Fishery Board and Nith Catchment Fishery Trust operate a Habitat Enhancement Project the aims of which are to create good conditions for successful natural reproduction and growth of fish stocks. This includes combating bank erosion, developing cover and improving natural feeding.

The Project is advanced through the Trust Biologist with Board staff. The Trust is a registered charity whose primary aim is to secure the welfare of all fish species within the Nith Catchment.

The project is financed from a number of sources. Anglers are encouraged to support the venture through donations which can be sent to:

**Nith Catchment Fishery Trust
c/o Walker & Sharpe, Solicitors
37 George Street, Dumfries, DG1 1EB**

Alternatively donations can be made when purchasing permits through Fish Nith.

For more information on each of the above visit the Fishery Board website: www.river-nith.com

Keep a Watch Out ...

We encourage anglers to have an active regard to their own safety and security on the river. To protect yourself and the fishings:

- * Don't leave fishing tackle exposed in your car.
- * Keep an eye out for suspicious characters.
- * Report strange goings-on immediately to the River Enforcement Staff (07785 743663) or Police (0845 600 5701)