



# Kapiti Fly Fishing Club

## January 2024 Newsletter



Happy New Year to all members and your family, I trust that you are able to enjoy time on a river somewhere during 2024.

**In this month's newsletter:** This is a photo of Wayne Cameron's 28-inch 9lb Brown trout, please read Waynes article in this month's newsletter on page 5.

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### Club activities

Date	Event	Coordinator
Monday 22 January	Club meeting – B.B.Q. Otaihanga	Graham
Monday 26 February	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	
Weekend 10 to 12 May	Turangi area – we have booked the AFAC Lodge	
Weekend 7 to 9 June	Turangi area – we have booked the AFAC Lodge	
Weekend 12 to 14 July	Turangi area – we have booked the AFAC Lodge	



## *Presidents report*

Hasn't the weather been great! I trust that you have been able to get out onto the water a few times at least over the Xmas/New Year period.

My trips have been very enjoyable, and the lower water has made it much easier on the wading. Not so much of the knee deep fast slippery stuff, but I suspect that weed is about to become a problem if we don't get a reasonable fresh or two. But none of that nonsense we had last January if you please when everything was literally wiped out.

Four of us went to the Manawatu a week or so ago. It is still very much in recovery mode, lots of empty water. We did find some fish, but they were few and far between, and no sign of any small rainbows that might indicate a successful spawning as in Hawkes Bay. But the good news is that the Tukituki and Waipawa at least have come back with fish in reasonable numbers, even if they are mostly small new season fish. The Tutaekuri and Ngaruroro though, are still struggling.

In our last newsletter, I covered off the good things the club is doing to support members and to encourage and assist new people to get into fly fishing. It still remains one of the best relaxations I know of – out there in the wild, in or beside a river or lake, not giving a toss about the world and its problems, and if you happen to be into tying your own flies too, that is a completely new and fascinating world, no matter how long one has been doing it.

I look forward to seeing lots of you and your families at the BBQ at Otaihanga Domain next week. I know it is Wellington Anniversary Day, but by staying local you can meet up with other anglers, tell some lies, have some faults in your casting corrected, try different rods and lines, eat great food in good company - and avoid the traffic!!

Tight Lines

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'G'.

Graham

*Look forward to seeing you at this month meeting and your family on Monday evening the 22 January at the Clubs B.B.Q at the Otaihanga Domain starting at 6:00pm.*

## *Fly Casting Tuition by Gordon Baker*

Club member Gordon Baker is available for one-on-one casting tuition. Gordon is a casting instructor with Flyfishers International (USA). He is available to help beginners get off to a good start and to assist more experienced members improve their distance casting skills. Although not yet an approved two-handed casting instructor Gordon is a keen learner willing to share new skills.

Email Gordon [kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com) or phone 0274946487 to arrange a suitable time for a lesson. There is no charge.

## *Mid-Week Fishing trips by Hugh*

For those members who are lucky enough to be able to fish mid-week during the forthcoming season please confirm if you wish to be included in the mid-week fishers email list to:

[hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com](mailto:hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com)

The emails are often sent out only giving very short notice to take advantage of the prevailing conditions and members availability, as an example the afternoon of day before the proposed trip.

**If you are interested in participating on any mid-week fishing trips, please email Hugh Driver with your contact details and you will be added to the email list.**

## *Slide and Negative Scanner*

If any KFFC member would like to digitise slides or negatives (with colour reversal) I have a scanner that you are welcome to borrow, at a cost of a small \$5.00 donation to the club.

Please email me to arrange: [hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com](mailto:hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com)



## *Kapiti Women on the Fly by Leigh Johnson*

Kapiti Women on The Fly NZ has just launched the 2024 series of Sunday fly fishing skill sessions in Otaki for women in the Wellington region. These sessions, under the tuition of Gordon Baker, are great for beginners or those looking to refine their skills.

In 2023, the monthly sessions attracted women from Manawatu, Wellington, and the Hutt, and we expect the interest to continue to grow. Like the Kapiti Fly Fishing Club, other clubs in the region are benefitting as we introduce more women to fly fishing and provide them with the skills and networks to grow their confidence.

The first session, to be held at 10:30 am on Sunday, 11th February, will cover casting basics. I'm sure you know someone who is interested in learning and connecting with other women who fish.

### ***Where to find WoTF?***

Please follow our activities on this [Facebook Page](#).

There is also a private [WoTF Facebook group](#) that provides a safe space for women who fly fish, (or would like to fly fish) to share information, arrange fishing activities, and learn from each other about all things fly fishing.

Or contact me directly at [leigh@leighjohnsonnz.com](mailto:leigh@leighjohnsonnz.com) or visit [www.womenonthefly.nz](http://www.womenonthefly.nz) to register your interest.

I broke the drought with a 4lb Hakataramea brown, my first on a dry fly. 🐟





## *Night Fishing by Wayne Cameron*

### **Big trout only come out at night!**

Where have you heard that before? But it's true. Yes, you will get some good fish throughout the day but the really big lunkers often wait until night to go hunting for food. Especially Brown trout. They get big because they eat big food. Mice, frogs, koura, and decent sized smelt.

Fishing at night can be very rewarding. But for success two things are paramount: Preparation and Safety. Unless you know the water intimately it's critical that you research the area where you are planning to fish to increase your chances of success.

Where would you most likely intercept any of the above-mentioned food sources? Clearly you don't have to be in deep water because most of these foods hug the banks or shoreline. (For good reason!) A good starting point is to look for any intercepting water sources into the main stem of the lake or river. It doesn't have to be a big tributary. Even a small drainage pipe can be a place where a bigger fish will wait for food to come to them.

Choose a darker night. Full moons have never worked for me. Nor have great starlight nights, the darker and the fouler the night the better. Yes, it is pleasant to fish when you can see what you are doing but remember that the fish can also see well at night. They could spot your headlamp switched on to recharge your lumo fly or to limit stumbling around in the dark.

So, get to the water you wish to fish in the daytime. Check the most likely place where trout will await prey. Test the water depth if you feel you may need to wade. (I don't personally ever see the need to wade unless the water stays shallow for quite a distance). Unusually I fish at night in gumboots so that the temptation to wade is limited!

I like to find a current to swing the fly in. It doesn't need to be the current of the side stream entering the lake... but it does help. Side stream currents run far further than one thinks. I know of one spot in the lake where it is just as rewarding to fish around in the next small bay away from the tributary inflow. The flow may travel for up to 100 M away from the inflowing water source. Wind lanes create currents. Fish them as well.

That's where fish lie. They like the food coming to them.

Preparation: I find that a slow sinking line works well in Lake Taupo. I have never felt the need to fish much deeper at night than 1 to 1.5 M. The fish will come right into the shore if it's dark enough. Think about it. The trout is trying to limit the escape route for its prey. If it can force the prey against a bank, then it has limited the prey's escape pathway by one whole side of the compass.

Recent case study: I recently had an hour to fish at the Taupo lakeside. On the first night I rigged up my gear, put on a size 10 black marabout fly with a lumo body and headed off down to the lake at 10 pm. A bit early I know but I was impatient. (I recall one old timer telling me that it was a waste of time fishing before 11 pm!). I had already checked out the inflows and depths and decided that I would not rise to the temptation of wading. It was a great starlit night and over the course of the next hour. I spotted a number of satellites passing overhead and counted hundreds of stars but not one touch did I feel.

Disappointed? No. It's more likely that I had fished on the wrong night. (Or maybe used the wrong fly!). Better to wait until the night was darker. That happened 2 nights later. I changed the fly to something a bit darker and less flashy. It was a darker night. In fact, it was a foul night. The wind was horrible, and I struggled to get the line out into what I figured would be rewarding water.

I knew that I should have shortened my leader to about 1.5M but I had been lazy and attached my nymphing line to the slow sinking Polly leader. 4<sup>th</sup> cast and fish on. Fairly solid from the feel of it but I have the whole lakeshore to play it on ...haven't I?

No. There are rocks out there and other obstructions.

10 minutes later and this fish is telling me what it's all about. Solid, strong, and definitely not playing easy to land. The questions start running through my mind, what breaking strain is my leader (8lb fluoro), will the Hends ring on the end of my polyleader be strong enough?

I wonder how big this fish really is. How far out into the lake is it? If it's close turn on the red light of my headlamp? Can't see on the red. Let's try the white light. There it is. Now it's off out into the lake again. It doesn't like the bright headlamp light!!

This sequence is repeated over the course of the next 20 minutes.

Until finally its close enough to the shore for me to tail it and take it well away from the shore. Because it was immediately apparent that this was no ordinary sized trout. The depth of it was more akin to that of a Grouper. If that's the case how heavy is it? I don't have any scales! I gave caught trout around the 6 lb. mark, but this is different.

I really should get a proper fix on the size of this trout.



Have to wait until the morning and buy some scales in Turangi, need to get an independent verifier (Valerie). Next morning: Scales bought.

Best trout ever for me, a Brown trout, 28" long, just a shade over 9lb and condition factor 53. I am one ecstatic fisherperson.

I checked the gut contents later, stomach fairly empty but I'm pretty sure it was a small trout that was lodged in the gullet! Certainly, bigger than a smelt.

**Big fish do eat bigger meals!**

## ***Camouflage: The Art and Importance of Disappearing by Richard Donnelly***



The other day I sat on my porch cleaning fly line. There is not enough time to do these things. If the day is sunny and wind-free, you want to be on the water. If there are thunderstorms, your spouse expects you to stay inside working on your 110-year-old house. Does a 110-year-old house need work? Yes, about 110 years' worth.

Neglecting to clean line is a common mistake which I suggest you correct immediately. Using a wet cloth and a dab of dish soap wipe the line clean, then rinse with fresh water. You won't believe the gunk that comes off, the dirt and algae. Dry with a clean towel and buff with line conditioner. Personally, I like car wax. Then stand back. The next time you fish your rod will fire like a bazooka.

That day cleaning fly line I heard my wife's voice calling and froze. I am sure she has a chore for me (what other reason would she call?) and am in danger of being taken from an important and pleasurable task and given an unimportant and unpleasurable one.

The seconds tick by. I happen to be wearing a blue tee-shirt and brown cargo pants, perfectly matching the wicker chairs and cushions. The floor creaks as she pauses at the screen door. Then walks on, the danger passing like the shadow of a hawk.

We have a lesson here, an important one for trout anglers. That lesson is camouflage. When correctly deployed, one becomes invisible. To trout. And your wife.

Today we shall stick with trout. My friends, fly anglers have a problem. There is a disturbing trend toward ornament in today's gear. Olive hats are embroidered with red and white logos. Fishing shirts are sold in blue, lime, or electric yellow. Even vests are trimmed with jaunty orange pockets. Clothes like these might help you blend into the annual Corn Feed at the Boone Valley Sportsmen's Club. Not so much a trout stream.

You've seen it. If a trout senses danger, he won't bite. Unsettled fish, spotting something they don't like (usually you) point noses upstream and enter a hold and wait pattern. Trout, after all, have splendid vision. I can personally attest to having my size 16 blue quill refused, when they were hitting size 18. You can't tell the difference. But they can.

How about colour? Take a moment the next time you net a spawning brookie. Turn him over. With their green sides, orange fins and yellow spots, they are as colourful as male ducks. They



need to be. The sharp dresser gets the girl. Not to wade too far upstream, but some of you single fishermen might take note.

Now place the trout in the water. Take your hand away. Instantly he vanishes. Looking closer, a fin moves. He's still there. But invisible.

What happened?

The trout is one flashy fish, but not from above. The olive back is mottled with paler, worm-like markings. The very picture of running water. A bald eagle, hunting rifles, can't see him. And an eagle has eyes like... well, like an eagle.

Nature always has a lesson. Camouflage is one of her greatest.

A trout angler's clothing needs to match the foliage. You wouldn't go duck hunting in a red bowling shirt. Why would you go trout fishing in one? If it's early spring or mid-fall, put on a buff-coloured shirt. In summer wear olive green. Better yet, buy a warm-weather camo shirt, the kind turkey hunters wear. These are ideal.

What to do with that pricey vest with orange-trimmed pockets? How about your favourite hat, the deer hunting one in army green with the purple and white Vikings logo? Throw them out. Just kidding. Buy a brown felt tip pen from the craft aisle or office supply store. It will hurt a little, but colour over the orange pockets. Do the same thing to the logo on your hat.

When it comes to shading, dark is good. Light tan should be avoided unless it's early or late in the year and you want to match dormant colour of grass and pale leaves. Don't forget face and arms. Keep sleeves rolled down. If you're not lucky enough to be dark-skinned, consider a bug mask. I personally wear a camo bandana, bank robber-style, when working close to feeding fish. Particularly if I can't avoid standing in the sun, with my face glowing like a searchlight.

I realise I am emphasising small stream tactics. Or close casting scenarios. Adjust my advice as necessary. You can probably get away with wearing anything in a drift boat, launching massive casts at loafing rainbows. This is the equivalent of duck hunting from a helicopter. You wouldn't have to wear camouflage doing that, either.

Camouflage is one way to keep Mr. Trout from seeing you. But not the only way. The other is to just plain hide.

We all have seen anglers "bank fishing" or walking boldly up to pools. Don't be that angler. Get in the water and stay in the water, creating the lowest profile. Walk slowly. Keep foliage behind you, and if possible, remain in the shade. Creep up behind fallen trees, crouch when approaching a good lie. Think of your living room window, with a good view of the street. The trout's whole world is a living room view.

My wife, incidentally, found me that day. Despite my camouflage. I had snuck from porch to basement and sat organising my fly bench. She put me to work replacing a light fixture. A pretty good sportsperson in her own right, she used the time-tested strategy all anglers eventually learn: They gotta be somewhere.

## *The Easy Way to Release a Snag by Domenick Swentosky*



Get your nymphs down to the fish. Put them in the strike zone — low — where the trout live. Keep your streamer near the riverbed because that's where the baitfish are. Cast your flies over by that wet log. Trout love structure.

It's all true. And to fish well, to be effective with our underwater patterns, we must take chances. Get low, but not so low that you hang up every cast. Target the structure and get close, but not so close that you drive the hook into a dead log.

Snags happen.

I've fished with people who see every hang up as a failure — every lost fly as a mistake. But inevitably, that mindset breeds an overcautious angler, too careful and just hoping for some good luck.

Hang ups are not a failure. For a good angler, they're a calculated risk — an occasional consequence after assessing probability against skill, opportunity against loss. We all hang up the fly sometimes. So, what.

Now let's talk about how to pop that underwater snag loose ...

### **Don't Drive it Home**

Let's assume you cast upstream, and the fly is drifting back down toward you when the line stops.

Good fishing is about being in contact with the flies. So, the instant the fly stops (whether it touches a rock or a trout's teeth) we should see it or feel it. Usually, we set the hook.

And that's a good thing. Since we set when the line pauses, the fly doesn't have much chance to bury itself underneath a complicated mass of rocks and tree parts. When the angler's rig is in touch with the flies, most snags end up on the edge of something — like a rock.

When we set the hook on a rock, the worst thing to do is *keep* setting the hook into the rock. Don't do that. Don't pull downstream over and over and expect the fly to come out.

Instead, try a different angle. Try pulling up and then maybe sideways. Half the time, that works. But when it doesn't, a good pull on the snag, 180 degrees from the angle it went in, is almost a sure thing. Unless the hook is buried in wood, you're getting your fly back. Here's more ...

### **Get It On the Backside**

Wade to an angle that gets your rod tip behind the fly — upstream from where it went in. (Often, it takes only a step or two.) With a long fly rod, we can reach behind the nymph and pull it out — reverse of the way it went in.

The backside angle needs to be deliberate and precise. Pull 180 degrees from the angle where the fly entered the snag, and the fly will release with little effort. Most often, that pull is directly upstream, so it takes a low rod angle and an intentional placement of the rod tip upstream of the snag.

What's the best way to get that angle?

### **Don't Blow 'em up**

Wade directly behind the snag, stripping in slack as you go, until you can reach with the rod tip and get that low 180-degree angle on the upside of the snag. Then pull it free. This approach ruins far fewer fishing opportunities than if you wade upstream and beside the snag to get the angle. Wading above or next to the snag is simply unnecessary, and it blows up all the fish in a wider area.

Snags happen. We deal with it and get back to fishing. But we don't want to lose more fishing opportunities than we have to. Wading behind the snag and reaching in front simply saves more water for catching more trout.

### **The 'push-button' release**

So, the next time you trout-set on a stick-fish, don't drive the hook home with another hard pull. Change the angle and pull it from the backside –180 degrees, and it'll pop loose.

This trick is so reliable that my friend, Paul, calls it the push-button release. It's just another tip that makes fishing more fun out there.

### **Fish hard, friends.**

*Editor's note: here is the link to a short video on how to use this technique to release a snag,*

<https://youtu.be/dToM4f1-WQQ>

*Here is one on how to get Your Flies out of trees which has worked for me in the past:*

<https://youtu.be/22WontWm-uk>

## *Giving Soft Baiting a Go by Mike Noon*

Firstly, if you are only interested in fly fishing, this article is not for you as it is about soft baiting. I had read a bit on soft baiting and thought I would like to give it a go. So, my combined Birthday and early Christmas present was a light spinning rod and reel spooled with 3 Kg braid and a couple of packets of soft bait waggler tail lures and 1/8oz lead heads.

You see, we were off on a 6 week plus holiday in the campervan around the South Island and I had the idea that there had to be fish to catch, and I wanted to have a few casts in the famous Tekapo canals. Could be a monster there.

As it turned out there were places where we camped that were close to fishy water, in fact the South Island had great looking rivers and lakes around every corner, and I did get to try a few.

We stayed at a lovely camp on the west Coast north of Westport called "Gentle Annie." It is a great spot close to the Mokihinui River and a wild west coast beach. It was near the end of the whitebait season, and they were running and baiters with scoop nets doing well near the mouth.

So, first off, I went to the mouth with a whitebait like soft bait thinking I might get a kahawai. Well, the sea was rough and the river in a bit of a fresh so that was not a happening thing. I thought, there must be trout here feeding on the whitebait, so I walked upstream a couple of hundred meters until the river became a river.



After a couple of casts bang, I got a ferocious strike and a very nice sea run brown started cartwheeling all over the place. I only had a 5lb leader, so it took me a while to land this lovely 4lb fish.

As you can see in the photo, I was a happy chap. I was back at the camper in less than half an hour and it ate beautifully on the BBQ. When I cleaned the fish, it was full of whitebait.

As we travelled around, I tried shore lake fishing and other rivers. Fishing the lakes, it was a case of looking for drop offs or along weed beds casting quite a long line and varying the retrieve. Some of the lures are almost exact baby trout replicas and this one which looks like a little brown trout was very effective.

They did get a few chases, taps and some hook ups at the Mavora Lakes and Lake Ohau but the trout and salmon were not on the bite the morning I tried the Tekapo Canals. No one was catching that day and the locals said there was too much flow, so no monster for me this time.





My next fishing success was when we were at a camp near Kurow on the bank of the Waitaki river. Again, I was using the little brown trout lure. Casting upstream at about a 60-degree angle and twitching it down stream and a swing through the top of a run.

I only got to do that four or five casts before this very well-conditioned rainbow hit hard. Again, a tussle as light leader and a big river. This fish was full of insect larvae including large dragon fly. I always thought it was the brown trout that ate the rainbows, but this was the other way around

I had met a man who said he had caught a couple of small salmon in lake Hawea casting where the lake outlet is. We later stayed at the camp at Lake Tekapo which was only about a 10-minute walk to the outlet of that lake. The lake itself was very low, lower than I have ever seen it.

Anyway, I woke early as one does in the camper and thought as it was calm, I would have a few casts at the lake outlet. If it had worked at lake Hawea it should work at lake Tekapo was my reasoning.



This time I used a lure with a bit of silver on it. I climbed out over some boulders to get further out in the lake and got in a good position. I cast out and then thought, I can sit on that rock and fish in style.

Well, I never got to sit down, a salmon took the lure on the drop. A few casts later another was on but dropped off and a couple of casts later another salmon was on. Two is the limit so I was all done in quick time.

I am not sure what species of salmon these were, but they were very silver with scales that went right onto their tails. Quite different than trout to look at. They were not super fat, but the flesh was pink/orange, and they were delicious out of the smoker.



These were the three lures I used; the waggle tail has a great action in the water and the movement is what attracts the trout or salmon.

Giving soft baiting a go was very productive and I think more fun than just spinning. The takes when they happened were very hard, a lot like streamer fishing, so the drag needed to be backed off.

With the light leader I was using I had one break off when I had the drag too tight for the take. For longer casting a ¼oz jig head was better but the lighter heads were fine for the rivers. If you do not have much time to get all the fly-fishing gear out and just want to have a go and a quick fish, this style of fishing is a great compromise

## ***Still rivers run deep by Bess Manson***



**Fish & Game Chief Executive Corina Jordan with her dog, Bracken, by the Rangitikei River at Vinegar Hill near Rewa**

The message on Corina Jordan's answer phone tells callers if she's not picking up, she's probably down at a river with a fishing line.

That's where the Fish & Game boss is happiest – knee-deep, casting off, angling for her supper. Makes you want to don your waders and join her.

“My happiest place would be hanging out down by the Rangitikei River. That's my awa now. I take the horses down there. The dog too. “Just being down there in the water, being in the environment with the animals around me. That's my happy place.”

Jordan, 48, is surrounded by a menagerie at her 16.5-acre lifestyle block at Waituna West, nestled in the middle of Rangitikei sheep and beef country.

Her fur family comprises two pigs. Tinkerbelle the Kunekune and Dorothy, a Saddleback sow, both huge units basking in the sun-warmed hay. Two heifers, Holly and Jemima, and a calf, as yet unnamed until she can decide if it will be family or food, munch in a paddock.

A small flock of Wiltshire sheep – “good feet, good teeth, good fleece” – are not for eating but their offspring might be for the freezer.

Horses, William and Tama, have stables under a giant 150-year-old oak. Bracken the shorthaired pointer rescue dog is her constant shadow.

It's a bucolic nirvana.



“I’ve always been around animals,” says Jordan. “That’s part of who I am as a human and what keeps me healthy.”

“The thing with animals is that they are in the moment ... They are not thinking about that next board meeting, how they are going to manage those people, what agenda have we got, what strategy are we employing.”

She’s been doing plenty of the latter in her role as Chief Executive at Fish & Game, the organisation that manages licences for fishing and game hunters. In fact, she’s been doing a certain amount of damage control since she returned to lead the institution last year.

She knew the lie of the land having worked there in various roles for nine and a half years between 2008-2016. Returning to Fish & Game from Beef and Lamb New Zealand, where she had worked in policy and strategy, was like “coming home”, albeit a broken one.

“The organisation had gone through what I consider to be five years of a really traumatic period in its development,” she says.

A targeted ministerial review commissioned in 2020 by then Minister for Conservation Eugenie Sage in response to internal conflict and governance problems found a raft of issues plaguing the organisation.

There was a perception of an “old boys club” with pākehā men making up the vast majority of its 144 elected councillors representing 12 regions. Only 2% were women. It found a bloated management structure, which the review recommended be slashed by 100 councillors.

The organisation lacked good governance, had issues with councillors intruding into operational matters, and had poor handling of conflicts of interest. There was a fraught relationship between Fish & Game and Māori.

The review noted the majority of feedback was that the organisation was unnecessarily aggressive and confrontational. It was tough reading, says Jordan.

“I thought it was quite a sick organisation when I came back to it. It really needed help. It was struggling. It was impacting on the wellbeing of its people and its ability to be able to do its job.”

There is much the organisation does well, she says. It brings in about \$11.5m a year and is New Zealand’s prominent freshwater advocate. It’s 100% funded by licence holders.

“It’s probably the most effective organisation in the country at putting wetlands back in place and protecting freshwater environments. It does a huge amount of heavy lifting in the natural resource space. “It does a lot to protect the environment and to provide access for hunting and angling for everyone.”

The ministerial review didn’t talk about the amazing stuff the organisation does, she says, but she agreed with a lot of its findings. Fish & Game has got some serious challenges, and it needs to modernise, she says. Part of the problem was that people in governance roles had not had the necessary training to perform in those council roles.

Many of these people were passionate about hunting and fishing but didn't understand the difference between governance and operations, she says.

“You had 177 governors that were empowered to have complete autonomy over these regions which had a financial basis to them bringing in their own money from licence holders and spending it as they saw fit.

“It was really fractured with low trust within its ranks and infighting, particularly off the back of the review. There was a lack of trust, a lack of transparency. There was bullying.”

Jordan says hard decisions needed to be made, and quickly.

She visited all the regions, talked to all the staff, started the process of rebuilding trust across the organisation. One of her five key objectives is giving effect to Fish & Game’s commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

“Building relationships with iwi, understanding mana whenua’s tikanga and their history and culture, having an organisation that deeply understands it and can reflect it - that’s going to be a generational journey for [us],” she says.

Jordan has focused on culture and language, health and safety, resilience and tikanga. Governance training is undertaken on a regular basis. Some councils are amalgamating voluntarily.

Ideally, Fish & Game would operate with seven regional councils with, potentially, six councillors each, she says. But that requires legislative change.

When the review was released in 2021 it was more or less shelved. The then Conservation Minister Kiritapu Allan pushed it back to Fish & Game to ask what their vision was for success.

“But essentially... that slowed it down and there was never any ownership of picking this up and implementing those legislative changes,” Jordan says.

Having Todd McClay as Minister now responsible for Hunting and Fishing would provide an opportunity to put through those changes. “I get the impression there’s a willingness there.”

She wants to nationalise the licence income. At the moment the money comes in and goes through a levy system, causing a huge amount of tension around where it goes and makes it difficult to financially manage the organisation.

They need to look at the way they elect people to the Fish & Game New Zealand Council, she says. It needed to promote gender, age, and ethnic diversity.

“One of the recommendations was ministerial appointees and that might be a good start to create a little bit more diversity across the organisation while it tries to encourage more diversity from its licence holders.”

The next council vote is October 2024 so it would be good to get legislative changes coming in before then, she says.

Jordan is mega focused on getting more women into hunting and fishing. There’s a way to go here. The number of women holding fishing licences has slowly risen from 2% in 2005 to almost



14% last season. Women made up only 4.6% of hunting licence holders during the 2023 game bird season.

She wonders if perhaps things might run more smoothly at Fish & Game with more women councillors in situ. “This might be a gross generalisation, but women take a bit more time to think about their responses. Females can have a calming influence in the workplace. I’ve seen that in council meetings. [They are] more open to the emotions around the room and how people are feeling.”



She recently enlisted Dame Lynda Topp as Fish & Game’s ambassador for their Rewild campaign encouraging Kiwis to get into hunting and freshwater fishing.

It’s all about creating this as a thing all New Zealanders can do, having more women, more ethnic and gender diversity interested in hunting and fishing, she says.

It’s about getting kids out fishing in their local spot, getting them off their devices and into the fresh air. “Angling has huge mental health and wellbeing benefits. Internationally, reconnecting to nature is seen as one of the cornerstones of trauma management.”

Taking time to disconnect and go out into the environment, Jordan calls it “active relaxing.”

Hooking a fish is really just a bonus.

It’s about catching your own kai, providing for your family, understanding your environment, and giving back to it by supporting restoration projects to keep that environment abundant, she says.

“If we all did that, it would be a healthy country and we would be a healthier people.”

“If we all did that, it would be a healthy country and we would be a healthier people.”

### **A ‘challenging’ child to raise**

Jordan (Ngāpuhi) and her two younger sisters were raised in New Plymouth. She spent holidays in Tauranga Bay in Northland where she and her sisters ran wild catching flounder, saving each other from drowning, creating mayhem, she says.

She was catching and gutting fish from the age of six. They were expected to get stuck in, not just sit around watching. Always mad for animals, the extended family had an assortment of creatures, great and small.

It was quite normal for her aunty’s goat, Nathan, to accompany them to the beach. She was forever trying to save and nurture animals. She remembers hand-raising fledglings that had dropped out of their nests. Jordan admits she was a challenging child to raise.

Her mother decided she needed structure, which she found in horse riding and dancing. She started dancing when she was five and went on to train in classical ballet and jazz. She became a Taranaki cheerleader and danced competitively into her teenage years.

She still dances at home. “I dance in my head a lot when I'm driving. I dance at home. I dance on the furniture. I dance around the lounge with Bracken.” Horses have always featured large in her life, ever since she got her first pony when she was 9. She would bunk school to go riding any chance she got.

As a teenager she started training and rehabilitating horses, but a terrible accident put her off an equine career. “I broke my face when I was 15 and nearly died. A horse bolted then fell over and landed on top of me. It crushed my ribs and put a rib through my liver.”

In another accident a decade ago she broke her back and hip.

That hip – made arthritic by the accident – has just been replaced so horse riding is off the cards for a while yet.

It all builds character, she says. Makes you tough.

She went on to train as a veterinary technician and got into critical and trauma care and small level animal surgery before managing veterinary clinics in Sydney. But eventually the toll of having to put animals down became too much so she returned to university in Aotearoa to complete her science degree.

As an animal lover and hunter, she finds that passing from life to death challenging. All these years hunting and fishing haven't dulled that.

“But hunting is about self-sufficiency. I do eat meat, but I really care about animals and sentience [and] I think the most ethical way to be a meat eater is to harvest it yourself.”

It's empowering to be able to shoot her kai, she says.

She has a rifle and is pretty fond of practising her aim shooting at inanimate objects. “I like to do things well ...”

Jordan is a high achiever. In the past, that's sometimes worked against her. She's had burnout twice as a consequence of working too hard, not knowing what her boundaries were and pushing through them. She's needed time off to reset.

Here at her Rangitikei farmhouse, surrounded by pigs and horses and cows and sheep, a dancing dog, she gets to reset every day.

**And the river always beckons.**

***It's about time – Father time is heartless scoundrel who steals impunity, and we carelessly neglect to lock our doors by Tim Schulz***



In the time it takes our planet to complete an orbit around its sun, my friend Mike Sepelak goes fishing at least fifty-two times. More often, if possible, but he's set the bar at an average of once a week. I met Mike through his writing on a blog called *Mike's Gone Fishin' Again*, and, with a title like that, my only surprise about the frequency of his fishing was that he didn't fish more.

Because I was spending the academic year on sabbatical in North Carolina, I contacted Mike, and he generously invited me on a few of his outings. Many of his trips are well-planned and researched, but his goal-securing outing for that year sprung from a simple invitation.

"I'm feeling itchy. Perhaps a quick trip early next week?"

"Please, and thank you," I replied.

With seven days in a week, fishing fifty-two times a year should be easy. But it's not. We fritter away hours, squander days, and unwittingly populate our past with fishless week after fishless week. Father Time is a heartless scoundrel who steals with impunity, and we carelessly neglect to lock our doors. For those of us residing above the 45th parallel, the situation intensifies when our rivers vanish below an impenetrable floor of ice and snow for months at a time. And if we get little solace from chugging shots of Red Bull and Jägermeister while dangling a frozen line through an eight-inch hole in the ice, then we're left with two options to cope with the endless winter. Brood and pout or migrate south for the season.

After brooding and pouting for over twenty years, my migratory home for the winter was about eleven degrees of latitude below—and over thirty degrees of temperature above—my usual residence. So, when Mike and I met the morning of our trip to the river, I wore a thin fleece jacket and a thick wide smile. Mike wore the same. He said we'd drive for two hours, fish for six or seven, and then drive home. I had fished only once in roughly three months, so I hoped to devour those six or seven hours and leave little for Father Time to nab.

We parked in a small clearing near the river, where two overweight Labrador retrievers promptly greeted us. The dogs knew Mike from his many previous trips, so they enthusiastically volunteered to accompany us for the next four or five hours, presenting their watchful eyes and intimidating snarls as safeguards from the wild creatures that prowled the woods. In return for their services, they asked only that we occasionally pat their heads and speak a few comforting words in their general direction.

When we arrived at the river, Mike put me on a fishy-looking pool and waded downstream to swing streamers through a swiftly flowing run.

“Any advice on what I should do?” I asked.

“Fish for trout,” Mike said.

I knew little about this river, only that it was a tailwater, and the fish would likely feed on tiny midges. So, naturally, my first fish came on a size 18 bead-head pheasant tail, a fly I used only to get the trailing size 20 midge down to the trout. Another reminder that if and when I select the right fly, the trout—and only the trout—will let me know.

I released the fish and snuck a glance at my watch. It was noon. Father Time had already seized a couple of hours; if I didn’t turn up my game, that merciless bandit would undoubtedly steal more from this glorious December day.

I fished steadily for another hour, then noticed Mike strolling along the bank behind me on his way upstream. “Without looking at your watch, what time do you think it is?” I asked.

Mike glanced toward the sky. “I’d say it’s noon.

“One o’clock,” I sighed.

“That’s later than I thought. We better keep casting.”

Mike waded into some faster water and motioned for me to follow. A little later, he spotted a pod of rising trout in a foamy eddy along the far bank and guided me into a perfect position across from the fish. I asked for advice, and he again suggested I “fish for trout.”

Most of the fish I’d seen that day were between eight and ten inches, and I had no reason to believe these were different. Regardless of the size of the fish, the margin for error with a size 20 or smaller dry fly is slight. In my probability class, I teach my students that if you toss a coin enough times, you can eventually see eight, ten, fifteen, twenty, or more successive tosses showing tails. You only need to be patient and persistent. And so, it is with tiny flies and me. If I cast with purpose and care, the improbable sometimes transpires.

“Damn, it’s dragging again,” I blurted as the tiny fly seemed to skate near the end of its drift. Just then, though, the fly disappeared beneath a voracious rise, and the fish bolted for deeper water. “Or drifting perfectly,” Mike suggested as he snapped his net from its magnetic clasp.

After releasing the trout, I realized Mike had netted a fish for me on only our second outing. Was it too soon? Was our relationship ready for such intimacy? We did have much in common. We used the same waterproof camera, owned the same St. Croix rod, and were both compelled to check and recheck the truck's locks twice before walking away. Perhaps it was the right time.



Mike looked at his watch. “Hey Tim, what time do you have now?” he asked with a hint of scepticism. Then it hit me. The last time I wore my fishing watch was five days before legislative decree had obliged our clocks and watches to fall back one hour. So, as I joyfully spun my watch’s crown to recoup the precious hour I’d lost, the ebullient overweight retrievers howled with delight. And somewhere in the distance—far beyond our guard dogs’ perimeter—a deflated Father Time angrily cursed his loss.

Mike and Tim had another hour to fish.

### ***Fly Fishing for Brown Trout in Summer and Early Autumn by Kent Klewein***



**This brown trout was coaxed out of a deep undercut bank.**

**Over the years, I’ve made the mistake many times of walking past trout water that I thought was too shallow to hold trout.**

Most of the year trout prefer depth transitions where shallow water flows into deeper water. These transitions provide shelter from excessive current and increased safety for trout and locating them is usually the ticket to finding and consistently catching trout. However, during the summer months, brown trout particularly will often disregard these areas, opting instead to hold tight to the banks in extremely shallow water. They do this to take advantage of terrestrials falling into the water, but I think they also do it because there’s generally shade available, and they instinctively know it’s a good spot for them to remain largely undetected.

Kissing your beetles, ants, hoppers, and general attractor patterns against the banks during the summer and early autumn months is a great tactic for targeting big mature brown trout.

It’s great to have a nice current seam or foam line nearby, but it’s not always mandatory. The most important variable in targeting water against the banks is having stream bank foliage or undercut banks. Trout water flows during the summer months as well as the beginning of autumn generally runs low from the lack of rainfall. These low flows have trout spooky and very aware of their surroundings.

Fly fishing during this season of the year demands stealth and a good first presentation to increase chances of catching fish. When guiding clients this time of year, we slow down and work as a team. I'd rather have a quality presentation over quantity.

The first tip I teach my clients is to scan likely holding water before casting. Quite often, your best shot is to catch a big brown trout off guard, and the best way to do that is to make an accurate presentation and drift right off the bat. Scan the water for white mouths opening and closing and look for the tails of fish slowly kicking in the current. The shadow of a fish on the bottom of the stream bed is another give-away.

Slapping your fly down on the water can be a powerful way to trigger an aggressive take (excellent tactic when Cicada are active). Unfortunately, it doesn't always work and in some cases can spook the fish. Another tactic is to subtly twitch the fly when it enters the fish's field of vision once or twice. A brown trout that's positioned close to the bank and regularly feeding on terrestrials gets very accustomed to seeing struggling movements from land-born insects that have fallen in the water. So, keep these tactics in mind if a standard dead-drift presentation isn't working.

Work the fish with your leader during your presentation and drift, while keeping your fly line out of the fish's sight during the cast and drift. If I know I'm going to be dealing with educated trout, I sometimes will lengthen my leader a few feet to give me extra stealth. A lot of fly anglers will tell you about the best terrestrial fishing in the summer and early autumn is during the middle of the day, when bugs are the most active.

Although this can be the case, I've found my best success at fooling big brown trout is during the early morning hours, or last couple hours of the day when the sun is low in the horizon. Big brown trout tend to feed more frequently during these times because they feel more comfortable and safe.

Keep it Reel.

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If you have never seen a Kiwi in its natural environment (near natural) then I would recommend the Kiwi Night Encounter at Nga Manu, you will need to book as it is limited to 10 people each night.

### ***Newsletter content with built-in links to other documents by Editor***

Readers of our newsletter may not realise that when you see a name or wording underlined in an article, as an example [a Harvey leader](#) this is a link to another article or video where you can find more information. All you need to do is hold down your CTRL key and click on the words and the link will open.

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*Newsletter copy to be received by  
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[malcolm1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:malcolm1@xtra.co.nz)

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**Purpose:**

**To promote the art and sport of Fly Fishing.**

**To respect the ownership of land adjoining waterways.**

**To promote the protection of fish and wildlife habitat.**

**To promote friendship and goodwill between members.**

**To promote and encourage the exchange of information between members.**

**Club meetings**

You are invited to attend our club meetings that are held on the **Fourth Monday** of each month.

The venue is the **Turf Pavilion Sport Grounds**, Scaife Street, Paraparaumu,

Our **meetings start at 7:30pm** with fellowship followed by speakers of activities.

Club Committee meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month and the meetings are held at the Waikanae Boating Club and start at 7:30pm.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

*Please remember that the club has two Five Weight 8'6" fly rods that members are welcome to use, just contact Malcolm Francis*

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