



**CANBERRA ANGLER'S ASSOCIATION
Inc.**

GPO Box 2237

CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

<http://www.actco.org.au/canberraanglersassn/index.html>

Newsletter – February 2006

Coming Events

Feb 8 First meeting for 2006

Feb 19 Googong.

Mar 18-19 Coast Charter, be ready to commit deposit at Feb meeting.

JINDABYNE OUTING DECEMBER 2005

Ten starters attended the club outing on the weekend of 9-10 December 2005 and all stayed at the Snowline Caravan Park. The weather was fine but windy for the early part of the weekend but improved considerably by Sunday.

Ian and Peter fly fished the Thredbo fairly hard with many fish seen but few landed. The photo below shows Peter releasing a nice fish just before landing it. He was heard to mutter a few words, including something about maybe it would be worth buying that expensive landing net after all.



Ian christened his new rod (the warranty replacement for the one he broke at the Lyle Knowles outing) with a nice 56cm rainbow and didn't stop smiling for the rest of the weekend.

Saturday afternoon on the river saw an increase in the number of anglers but in general they managed to stay out of each other's way. A couple of nice fish were brought to the bank, including a brown of about 1.6kg.

Meanwhile the boat anglers were having a hard time finding any fish. The wind made conditions awkward for Scott in the club tinny and he wisely headed for shore sooner than he would have preferred. Alan found success with bait along the lake shore and in Wollondibby Inlet late on both Friday and Saturday nights, bagging out on rainbows. Fly fishing was less successful.

On Sunday morning Peter again rose early, making enough noise to convince Ian he should head to the river again. Not a sound was heard from Scott in the top bunk as they left. The river was a picture once again and obviously the fish thought so too because they refused to leave it.

After packing up the units at the caravan park people headed off in various directions. Ian walked downstream on the Thredbo from Bruce's favourite carpark to the backed up waters of the lake. He landed a beautifully coloured brown of 37cm not far from the start but had no more luck further down.

It was good to see a reasonable turnout at this outing so close to Christmas. The early starts and evening fishing meant that there wasn't much opportunity for everyone to gather at the one time but people managed to stay in touch with each other from time to time either out fishing or in the brief time spent at the park.

DECEMBER 2005 Closing Meeting at Lake Burley Griffin

A good number showed up, though it seems the fish have worked out that they should make themselves scarce from Lotus Bay at that time of the year.



Algae in NZ rivers could threaten Australia streams - Item from Council of Freshwater Anglers



There is growing concern in New Zealand about the spread of the invasive northern hemisphere alga *didymosphenia geminata*, commonly known as 'didymo'. The organism could be accidentally introduced into Australian waterways via un-sterilised fishing gear, wet clothing, etc.

There is a fair amount of conflicting information about didymo but we've pulled together the following summary and verified it as much as possible, especially against information on the NZ government's Biosecurity New Zealand website.

- Didymo is a freshwater algae native to the northern forest and alpine areas of Europe, Asia and North America. It is widely spread in lakes, but also in rivers. In NZ it appears to thrive in clear, shallow and steadily flowing water where it attaches itself to the river bed by stalks. As can be seen from the photo, it forms long tails of fibrous material.
- According to NZ reports it spreads and covers the bed of a stream, smothering aquatic invertebrates and plant life and displacing the habitat of fish. However in its native habitats in the northern hemisphere it is apparently not considered such a scourge, (and hence very little research has ever been done about controlling it.)
- Didymo can spread from a single drop of water. Once spread throughout the waterway didymo occasionally forms huge blooms. According to the northern hemisphere experience, the presence of didymo does not automatically lead to nuisance blooms. Indeed blooms seem the exception rather than the rule.
- Didymo looks slimy but feels like wet cotton wool, and when washed up on the banks looks very much like wet toilet paper.
- Despite the widespread concern about the algae, there is limited and unreliable evidence of negative impacts on fish and invertebrates.
- Angling and other human activities are not the only ways it can be spread. It can be spread, for example, by water birds and animals.
- Currently there is no known way to eradicate didymo once it is established. Biosecurity New Zealand is currently concentrating on containing outbreaks and assessing the impacts and range of the algae, and so far they are resisting calls for more aggressive action, in case the cure turns out to be worse than the disease.

- Most expert comments seem to conclude that there is no short or medium term possibility of eradication. There are no known methods that enable biologists to eradicate rivers of an organism of this type, on this scale.
- There is apparently no known explanation for why an algae that is widespread in lakes in the northern hemisphere is suddenly showing signs of thriving in southern hemisphere rivers.
- The very small amount of research into didymo does not yet indicate that fisheries are badly affected by it. Dr Gerry Closs of Otago University, in an overview of the problem distributed on the internet in early October, comments:

The limited information available indicates that didymo does pose a degree of risk for our rivers, particularly where water clarity is high and nutrients low. Equally, the limited available evidence suggests that didymo only occasionally forms significant blooms, and that they are generally limited in area and tend to disappear after varying periods of time. Whilst a total takeover of New Zealand rivers by didymo can never be excluded, there is no evidence to suggest that such a scenario is even vaguely likely.

- Didymo was first noticed in October 2004 in the Lower Waiau and Mararoa Rivers in Southland. It had already spread for many kilometres and it is likely that it had been present for some years prior to discovery. It has now been confirmed to be in the Hawea, Upper Clutha, Von, Oreti, Upper Waiau and Buller Rivers of the South Island. Biosecurity New Zealand is currently undertaking a major search of waterways to see where else it is present.
- Contrary to some reports there is no evidence that didymo is present in Australia, apart from a very dubious reference to it by a collector in the 1880s. Indeed the Biosecurity New Zealand website lists other countries in which didymo is found and does not mention Australia).
- With the significance of the angler tourist trade between Australia and New Zealand, this news is of grave concern for our freshwater fishery. Anglers travelling to New Zealand need to ensure that their fishing gear, that is waders, boots, net, reels, flies and wet clothing are adequately cleaned.
- Biosecurity New Zealand has already introduced strict controls on movement of items, animals etc out of affected areas. These controls include recommendations on cleaning gear (click <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests-diseases/plants/didymo/cleaning-methods.pdf> to view).
- Biosecurity New Zealand has also published maps of known outbreaks at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests-diseases/plants/didymo/>
- We are not aware of any action by AQUIS on this issue.

Further information is available from Biosecurity New Zealand's website at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests-diseases/plants/didymo/>.

Peter and Bill's Report

We've managed to get a few trips away to the mountains with mixed success - we seem to be very success in spooking the big ones and landing relatively small fish. Bill is ahead on the weight count if not the fish numbers. Still... it's nice to get out with good company and the fish are a bonus.



I've asked Peter to get closer next time so we can see the fish ☺