

Magic Trout at Moonbah (by Jeannine)

At the beginning of December John and I joined Lyall and his wife Carolyn at the Moonbah Lake Hut outside Jindabyne to practice our fly-fishing skills. Having participated in “Fly Casting for the Public” on the lawns of Old Parliament House in 2015 and 2016 it was high time I caught my first fish on fly!

Moonbah Hut and its surrounds are well looked after, the newly mown grass helped with wheelchair access. The property comprises two huts, a River Hut and the smaller Lake Hut. The Lake Hut, a small stone and slab hut with a wide wooden verandah overlooking a small jetty which sits above a dam stocked with trout. The layout of the hut includes two rooms, a large living room and a bathroom, the living room is equipped with a double bed, settee, bar fridge, electric kettle, hot plates, old fuel stove and an open fire. Underfloor heating supplements the open fire during the cooler months. A wood fired bbq is located next to the jetty. The hut was decorated with a pair of split cane rods with silk lines, period brand name tins and jars from the 1940s and 50s which brought back childhood memories and gave a relaxing ambience (OK so I am not 75 years old but you get the picture).



Because Lyall had rented the Lake Hut, we had exclusive access to the stocked dam and, as no one was staying at the River Hut, John took a 5-minute walk to the river to fish for unsuspecting trout while Lyall and I fished the dam. Under instruction, I was given the fly tying scissors and modified one of Lyall’s stock of flies. Then it was time to throw a line in. Picture this: you only have use of one hand and that hand has to retrieve the line using a one-handed lever action reel, so how do you maintain a bend in the rod to keep tension on the fish with an opening and closing hand? Think about it – not easy. With innovative angling, I landed two handsome browns – my first pair of trout on fly.



For anyone with mobility problems I think you would find the accommodation and surroundings favorable if you can handle three steps up to the hut verandah and for those who have partners who don't fish it's a relaxing environment to read and take in the Snowy Mountains surroundings. A big thank you to the owner and proprietor of Moonbah Huts Brett who made sure we had a relaxing and rewarding stay and put us onto the fish. Thanks also to his friendly help-yourself-to-the-sausages-on-the-BBQ troupe of chickens and the ever present collie dog Buster who was lucky not to be made into a traditional Scottish Collie Dog black and white salmon fly. It was certainly the first trip of many to Moonbah Hut.