

FLY FISHING THE LOCHS OF SCOTLANDS HIGHLANDS AT SCOURIE

by Greg Wood



Location/area

Fishing, wildlife, walking, lochs, mountains and beautiful highland coastlines all await. This stunning corner of Scotland offers something for everyone. Although renowned for excellent trout and salmon fishing there's far more to discover around Sutherland.

History

Before we left for the UK back in Nov 18, a kind gentleman (who I will not name) tasked me with a challenge to organize a Fishing weekend whilst we were both here in London. This challenge I kindly accepted with earnest as I was a member of the Canberra Anglers Association in Canberra and I was keen to accept.

I ventured out and found that London has a Fly Fishing Fair each year. After spending a couple of days at the Fly Fishing Fair I sought further information from a stall at the Fair run by the Scourie Hotel, in Scourie, Scotland.

Richard and his staff were very accommodating and thus a weekend trip away from London was planned in Aug 19 for 4 x couples from the Australian High Commission who were also here on Posting to London.

Unfortunately, COVID ruled out our trip in 2020 but 2021 was organized. The trip in 2019 was that much of a hit, the numbers grew from 8 people to 20 from various countries – Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America.

In 2021, organizing a group of people from London to attend a weekend of Fishing for the guys, relaxing and fine food for the ladies and getting away from London was a welcome trip for everyone to what we all been through in the past 18 months. Also taking into account, a number of lads have never Fly Fished before.

The weekend was a hit and a yearly event was in train.

Accommodation

Base yourself at Scourie Hotel and enjoy gentle beach walks or more strenuous hikes through magnificent scenery and rugged landscapes. Enjoy spectacular bird watching with a trip to Handa Island or a day out on one of the stunning golf courses at Durness or Dornoch. If you're driving, or cycling, the North Coast 500 (NC500), the area around Scourie is one of the most stunning stretches. Travelling the coastal road from Ullapool north through Kylesku and onto Scourie shows Scotland's West Coast at its best.

Scourie Hotel is the place to come for exciting trout and salmon fishing. The hotel boasts some of the finest wild brown trout lochs in Sutherland. They offer fishing across more than 300 lochs and lochans over more than 20,000 acres, split into 50 hotel-controlled beats.

From your bar stool at the Hotel, you can see what is widely regarded as the world's finest collection of cased wild brown trout. All of these fish have been caught in Scourie Hotel waters, many of which in recent years. It is a longstanding tradition of the hotel that anyone catching a hill loch brown trout of 4lbs or more can display their prize in the lounge bar.

Whilst I was there I was fortunate enough to see the weighing in of 7 lb 10oz Brown Trout that was caught by a young chap who had only caught a 1 lb 5oz trout before. As you could imagine, he could not keep a smile off of his face. I spoke to him at breakfast the next morning, still the smile was there.



Licenses/tackle

Fishing permits on the Hotel's lochs are included at no extra cost for stays of three nights or more. If you are planning on staying for less than three nights and would like to fish then a permit may be obtained at a cost of £20.00 per rod per day.



Ghillies

Not everyone in our group have done Fly Fishing before, so a Ghillie for each group was essential to ensure everyone had a great couple of days.

Please note that guests fishing on Loch Stack will require the services of a Ghillie at a rate of £85.00 per day payable direct.

Lochs

Boats on Loch Stack are available at an extra cost of £60.00 per day and Loch More at an extra cost of £50.00 per day. Fishing on Garbet Beg is available at £40.00 per rod per day (maximum of three rods) subject to availability. Please note that fishing on Loch Stack, Loch More or Garbet Beg should be requested at time of booking.





Our group: New Zealand, American, Canadian, Australian and two local Ghillies.



The Ladies enjoying a cruise one of many Scotland's Loch's.



Some of the local Scenery! Just another Castle!





Paul showing us he could Fly Fish as well. The Lochs offer ample of room to fish from the bank.



Q, a newbie to Fly Fishing showing his skills assisted by his Ghillie!



Q's son, who wanted to go in his Dad's place, missed out but his dad showed his skill to land a nice Highland Brown.



Neil chaffing at the bit to get on the Loch, listening to a briefing from the Ghillie.



One of Neil's Highland's Brown's for the weekend, he ended up landing 6 for the weekend, and he keeps reminding us of it!



Jim is chuffed even if it was a small brown! Or a few more Drams needed!





Amazing scenery!



Dale, Tony, Lachy & Neil enjoying the weekend!



Paul & Q fishing from the boat and just a tad happy.



The Ghillie did not more than just point and fix rods! Managing the fish net.



Nothing better than a wee Dram to warm you up on a cold day! Leigh & Jim show how its done!



Leigh, trying to remove the bad taste that was Richmond's AFL Season this year! He still managed to catch something.

I managed to get away to Scourie the week before the Group turned up. I travelled to Scourie by Overnight Train leaving London on Sunday evening, arrived at 0830 hrs. in Inverness. Hire a car and drove 2.5 hours up to Scourie.







Being tall, I find it difficult in not spooking fish close in, therefore I have to revert to other tactics.





I was fortunate enough to land a **ARTIC CHARR**.

It is a cold water fish in the family Salmonidae. It is native to Arctic, sub-Arctic and alpine lakes. Very few have been caught with some Ghillies not seeing them for 2 years and I was fortunate enough to land one.

At the end of the day, what a way to relax and celebrate with a great bunch of friends.



On our final night, it was Scottish Theme Night, Kilts all around!



Paul, Leigh, Jim, Neil, Tony, Greg, Lachy, Dale and Q



Just a bit more Glenmorangie Signet to be consumed.



Neil, Paul, Lachy and Jim – happy they all caught fish! P.S Morag photo bombing!



Then who could forget the Hairy Cow!!



A great time was had by all and unfortunately I will not be there next year as I will be back in Canberra.

Management & staff at the Scourie Hotel looked after our group, with fine food and catered for our needs.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who made this trip to Scourie, we had a great time and it was great to share it with great friends.

A special note of thanks to my wife Jane, Neil & Morag, Viv & Debbie who made this trip what it was, great! And of course to you all making this trip enjoyable.

Thanks & G'Day

Greg Wood