



Gaden Trout Hatchery Report

December 2024 to April 2025

Climatic Conditions

A hot and dry summer was seen here at the Gaden Hatchery, with temperatures in the Thredbo River reaching 27.5 °C for several days over early February. Unfortunately, water temperatures above 24 degrees Celsius can cause stress and heavy mortalities, especially if the temperatures are high over consecutive days. Rainfall for December-March was 158mm, which is well below average. The Thredbo River has been running very low over this period (lowest .277m), with only one minor flood experienced in late November. Gaden Management decided with warm water temperature and low levels to release some of its stock earlier than usual to minimize stress and potential harm to the fish.

Fish Production

Due to the adverse climatic conditions between April and October, a very poor spawning run was experienced in the Thredbo River. A lot of Brown Trout were seen in the river below the hatchery on some good spawning redds, but unfortunately due to the lack of rainfall resulting in poor river flows, they were not triggered to move further upstream through the fish trap. A total of 626 Brown Trout were trapped, with a substantial portion of these fish in poor spawning condition. Some minor flooding in August resulted in around 450 Rainbow Trout captured in the Thredbo River fish trap. A big thankyou to the Dutton Hatchery who supplied us with the shortfall of Rainbows required for our fish releases for this year. Incubation of broodstock and wild ova was quite successful- with high percentage success seen across all 4 species.

Fish Releases

A big thank you to all the fishing clubs and acclimatisation societies that assisted us with fry and fingerling releases for the 24/25 stocking season. All available fry allocations were completed by mid-November 2024, with fingerling releases completed by January 2025. The help we received over the stocking period is invaluable and we thank you for giving up your time every year!

Gaden staff released 30,850 Sub-Adult Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout into Redfin affected waterways. These fish are 160mm or bigger and have a much higher success rate over fingerlings to survive against predatory fish. Poor climatic conditions (minimal rainfall and low river levels) saw stocking numbers down roughly 30%. Approx 360,000 fry were released, as well as approx. 340,000 Fingerlings and 1000 Adults

GADEN						
	TAS RT	DPI RT	TAS BT	DPI BT	DPI Atlantic	DPI Brook
JUL	-	16,400	-	-	3,500	5,000
AUG	-	5,650	-	2,100	-	-
SEPT	-	-	-	1,500	-	-
OCT	41,000	1,600	-	1,300	-	-
NOV	209,600	112,850	111,900	1,000	-	-
DEC	-	165,850	-	750	-	20,200
JAN	23,200	5,000	2,400	1,000	-	-
FEB	2,500	100	-	600	-	-
MAR	-	-	-	-	-	2,000
APR	-	-	-	-	-	-
MAY	-	-	-	-	-	-
JUN	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	276,300	307,450	114,300	8,250	3,500	27,200

All stocking information can be found on the DPI website

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/recreational/resources/stocking>

Stocks On Hand

Unfortunately, with the drier weather came large numbers of Pied and Great Cormorants. The Hatchery lost approximately 4000 fish to predation between spring and summer. Majority of these mortalities were earmarked for sub adult releases and future broodstock. We are currently rebuilding our on-site stocks to try and mitigate future environmental downfalls which may be experienced.

Atlantic Salmon

Atlantic Salmon	
Age	Number
Fingerlings	9000
Sub-Adults	250
Broodstock	150

Brook Trout

Brook Trout	
Age	Number
Fingerlings	1500
Broodstock	500

Brown Trout

The 2024 Brown Trout spawn run was well below what it usually is, with only 626 Brown Trout caught in the trap at Gaden between May-October.

Brown Trout	
Age	Number
Fingerlings	8100
Adults	100

Rainbow Trout

A total of 450 Rainbow Trout were trapped in the 2024/25 season. As mentioned, we have begun restocking the earthen ponds to mitigate any future shortfalls in Rainbow Trout production

Rainbow Trout	
Age	Number
Fingerlings	250
Sub-Adults	7400
Broodstock	100

Gaden Open Day

On October 13th 2024, Gaden Trout Hatchery hosted a Gone Fishing Day/Open Day with over 700 visitors attending. Our Open Day had something for all, enticing a diverse demographic. We had incredible feedback with visitors asking for this to be an annual event.

The event included guided tours of the new and improved tourist centre, hatchery grounds and also walking through our brand new hatching shed, where visitors were greeted by technical staff who explained all hatching shed upgrades.

Our Gone Fishing Day staff hosted fishing clinics throughout the day with each clinic fully booked. There were rods, lures and the main prize, a kayak handed out on the day. Gaden staff handed out hats, lures and stubby holders for promotional prizes.

Gaden's picnic area was picturesque, filled with various stalls, food vans and fishing demos. The event included information stalls, fishing tuition from Steve "Starlo" Starling, sessions with The Fly Program, fly casting with MAS volunteers, face painting and a slushie stall. The CWA ladies cooked up a storm, various local food vans were kept busy and fishing and tackle displays were a smash hit. Maritime had their boats on display and Cooma car club made an exciting entrance, displaying over 15 cars and chauffeuring our local mayor for the day. A fantastic event with excellent feedback. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers who made this event so successful!



Taylor Elkins giving visitors a guided tour of the new facility



Gaden Staff helping out the fishcare volunteers on the fish out pond. The kids who attended loved the opportunity to catch their first trout!



Jim Harnwell (program leader DPI) along with Steve “Starlo” Starling discussing the day’s events

CFA Conference

On Saturday 8th March 2025, the NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers hosted a mini conference “fishing for the future” at the Gaden Trout Hatchery.

The conference had a variety of speakers and presentations from Council of Freshwater Anglers, Monaro Acclimatisation Society, Gaden Trout Hatchery, Fisheries Research and Local Land Services.

Together they discussed the fishery and how habitat management can help sustain the freshwater fishery in NSW. The day was a great success with around 50-60 keen anglers in attendance and everyone enjoying the wonderful new facilities Gaden Trout Hatchery has to offer. A big thankyou to the organisers from the CFA who ran an absolutely fantastic event!



Guests enjoying their lunch on the newly built Gaden Tourist Facility Deck Area



The Australian Trout Foundation gave a fantastic presentation which was very well received by attendees



Gary Bickford - NSW CFA president addressing the group

Staffing

The Gaden Trout Hatchery welcomes back Courtney Francis who has started work as a casual in 2025. Courtney has previously worked at Gaden as her work experience in 2023. Gaden hatchery currently has 6 fulltime staff and one staff member on reduced hours.

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