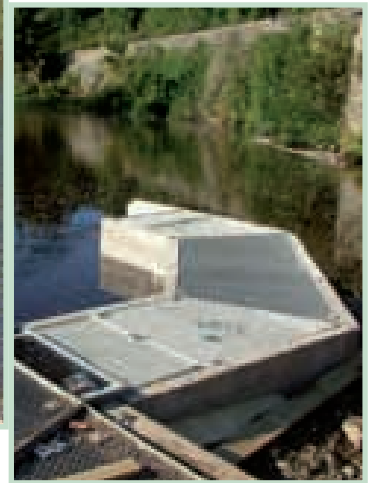
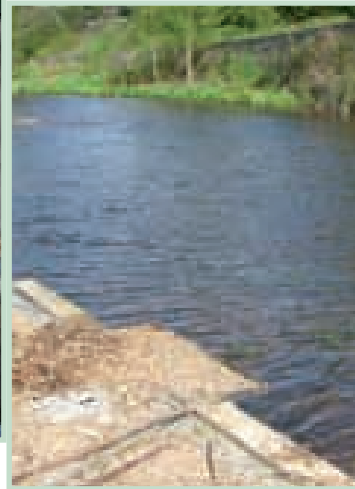




**THE Tweed
FOUNDATION**

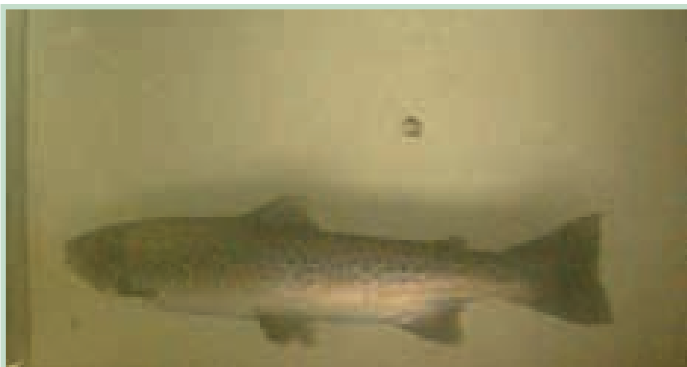
DOUBLE THE COUNT ON TWEED



Photographs at top of page from L to R: the Skinworks Cauld fish pass, Galashiels; work underway at the foot of the fish pass; the top exit of the fish pass before alterations; the top exit of the fish pass completed - to help prevent debris entering the pass and to ease fish passage.

After a year in the planning a new Vaki infrared fish counter has been installed at the Skinworks Cauld, Galashiels and, following a few minor alterations to reduce turbulence through

counter on the Ettrick having been in operation for the last 8 years. This will allow valuable comparison to be made between the fishstocks running these two rivers, one from



Trout, of 45cms, passing through the Gala fish counter on 18th October 2006



Salmon, of 54cms, passing through the Gala fish counter on 15th October 2006

the scanner, over 700 fish (Salmon, Sea-trout & Brown Trout) have been counted in October. It is an improved version of the Ettrick fish counter and photographs of each fish passing are now recorded in colour to enhance species identification - when a fish passes through the scanner, the lights are turned on for a ten second period and either still pictures or video clips are recorded. Alterations to the top and bottom of the fish pass were also made to ease passage for fish and keep the pass clear.

the North and one from the South. The Gala figures will be particularly interesting as there are no established Salmon or Sea-trout fisheries above the cauld.

The completion of the Gala fish counter now enables the Foundation to collect data from two Tweed tributaries - the fish

The Gala fish counter installation is part of a larger Scotland-wide project - the Conservation of Atlantic Salmon in Scotland LIFE project - focussing its action on improving the freshwater habitats used by Atlantic Salmon in 8 key Scottish rivers. The project is the single largest Salmon conservation project ever undertaken in Scotland (with a budget of over £3m) and is co-financed by the European Community's LIFE-Nature programme - a source of funding that targets conservation actions in areas where habitats and fauna are protected under the EC Habitats Directive or Wild Birds Directive.



SIGNAL CRAYFISH IN THE RIVER TILL

Following the capture of Signal Crayfish by an angler in the Milfield area of the River Till in September, the different sizes and high abundance from a small amount of sampling suggests that this population has been established for a number of years. The middle Till is the most vulnerable place in the Tweed catchment for Signal Crayfish due to their ability to burrow into soft banks which are common in this area and could lead to increased incidence of bank collapse. The source of the population is still unknown.

Two Signal Crayfish were also found on the Leithen Water this summer, one of which was correctly photographed and then destroyed by a member of the public. The other was captured by Tweed Foundation staff using some Rabbit pate! It is believed that these crayfish were recently released by a member of the public due to their exceptionally large size and the fact that they were both found just below a bridge and not anywhere else.



A typical Signal Crayfish specimen caught on the Till. The red-orange claws clearly identify this as a Signal Crayfish



The method employed for successful capture of a Signal Crayfish on the Leithen Water: bait with Rabbit pate..... & wait!



The captured specimen with his favourite snack!

It should be noted that a licence is needed to trap or hold Signal Crayfish.

Please report any sightings or any introductions to the Tweed Foundation Office.

Any information on the source of Signal Crayfish on the Leithen Water or River Till will greatly help investigations.

TWEED TROUT & GRAYLING INITIATIVE

JUVENILE TROUT ELECTRO-FISHING SURVEY

In Summer 2006 a large number of trout spawning burns on the Upper Tweed were electro-fished in an attempt to assess the juvenile trout populations. The electro-fishing was a repeat of a survey first carried out by the Tweed Foundation in 1995 with burns flowing into the Leithen Water, Eddleston Water, Manor Water, Lyne Water, Biggar Water and directly into the Tweed being fished. Although the results have not yet been fully analysed, most burns appeared to have very good juvenile trout populations with only a small number of burns either producing low trout numbers in both surveys or a considerable drop in numbers between the two surveys. These burns have been earmarked for habitat/obstacle surveys in early 2007.



Top: A good trout sample from electro-fishing the Fingland Burn
Bottom: the Fingland Burn, Upper Tweed
Left: Timed Trout electro-fishing sites in the Upper Tweed



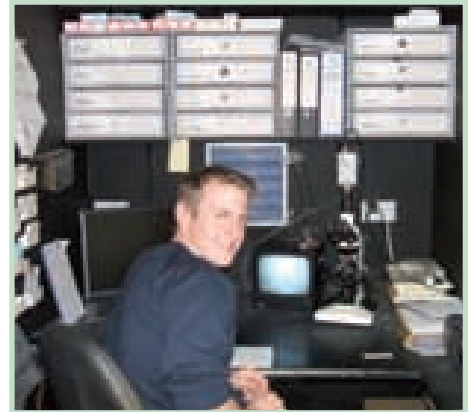
MIND THE GAP

Planning on heading to Edinburgh University to study Biology, I decided that a gap year sounded like an excellent idea. On being told I would actually have to do something in this time, a frantic search ensued to find a job. Luckily, an opportunity arose that simply couldn't be refused: a chance to work for the Tweed Foundation as an electro-fishing assistant for the summer.

Thankfully, the weather this year has been excellent and, as well as getting a good sun-tan, I have travelled all over the Tweed catchment helping to catch and count an infinite number of Salmon and Trout fry. I would now also like to class myself as a leading authority on fish counter repair, having spent countless days in the middle of the Ettrick whilst James Hunt swore at a seemingly endless list of problems with the counter. Working for the Foundation has also given me the opportunity to partake in a number of other activities including netting for Salmon and Trout at Paxton for the Exploitation Study, checking fish traps, trapping Signal Crayfish on the Till and, of course, not forgetting the 877 (and counting!) Salmon and Trout scales I have entered into the Foundation's database.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working as an assistant for the Tweed Foundation and have gained valuable experience that will hopefully stand me in good stead when I go to University. I am now very much looking forward to the rest of my gap year, and to heading off to Edinburgh next October.

Having completed this Summer's electro-fishing season with us, Shaun Robertson remains with us for the Autumn too, helping trap Signal Crayfish on the Till



Shaun working at his favourite task: scale reading!!



A world record Brown Trout from a monitoring site?

While electro-fishing a shallow run-riffle site for juvenile Salmon on the Lyne Water, this 60 cm Brown Trout was captured under overhanging bankside vegetation in a stretch of water that was recently fenced by the owner

New Tweed Website Launched

www.rivertweed.org.uk

The new site created by the Tweed Foundation and River Tweed Commissioners is a portal site for our news and also provides links to each organisation's dedicated site, as well as to other associated fisheries bodies.

A free subscription to received news 'as it breaks' also ensures that you will get both the fish counter totals directly every month.

SUMMER ELECTRO-FISHING

The monitoring of juvenile Salmon is currently undergoing a major change on Tweed with the traditional quantitative method that generates density values being largely replaced with a three-minute, timed sampling method. The emphasis is now on acquiring a much better coverage of the catchment (in more detail) and targeting the Fry stage of the life cycle (first years), since as many Salmon migrate to sea as one year old Smolts they cannot be sampled at the Parr stage.

Although the results for this year have not been fully analysed, results from monitoring sites on the Upper Tweed (relative to other sites in the Tweed catchment) found mainly good densities of juvenile Salmon and Trout. The new timed method was adopted for the Leader and Gala Waters and the data collected is currently being processed.

EXPLOITATION RATE TAGGING

This year the netting in the third week of September (the week after the Tweed netting season finishes) was at the Paxton House station for the first time, with the enthusiastic help of the netsman there, George Purvis. 56 Salmon and 12 Sea-trout were tagged in the three days we had before being washed off by a spate. Some of the Grilse did look a bit thin, but the Sea-trout were in superb condition, almost tubular in shape they were so fat - and two were of 10 to 12 lbs in weight.

The Tweed Trout & Grayling Initiative

To get further information on the Initiative, or to take part in some of the activities, either contact the Tweed Foundation office or visit the Initiative website:

www.ttgi.org.uk



THE MEGA SALMON OF THE ETTRICK: AN UNSEEN STORY

Last year, not long after a 41 lbs Salmon of 114 cms was caught at the Gardo netting station, a Salmon of 124 cms was recorded on video passing through the Ettrick fish counter - a fish that would have been around 45 to 50 lbs. The fish counter measures fish to an accuracy of plus or minus 3 cms and the checks we have done suggest that this is the case. However, in the days before the video equipment was installed, it has to be said that fish measured at much over 100 cms were rather ignored, it being assumed these large measurements were "glitches". Seeing is believing however, and after the monster of 2005 and another large fish measured at 118 cms caught on video this year, these past records of very large Salmon have now to be taken seriously. Checking back through the pre-video fish counter results has given the records shown on the right:

Year	110-114 cms	115-119 cms	120-124 cms
1999	7	1	2
2000	2	4	0
2001	2	1	0
2002	3	1	3
2003	0	1	0
2004	1	0	0
2005	2	0	2

Length	Weight	Year & Place
113 cms	41 lbs	2005 Gardo
114 cms	45 lbs	1986 Scotch New Water
115 cms	36 lbs	1922 Mertoun
116 cms	42 lbs	1908 Rutherford
119 cms	48 lbs	1889 Birgham Dub
124 cms	55 lbs	1889 Mertoun

It is difficult to put weights to these lengths as there is so little data available on very large Salmon, but lengths and weights that are known are shown in the table on the left.

Though it is difficult to be precise about weights - and the fish counter measurements have a range of 6cms - it does appear that at least one 40 lbs or so Salmon goes up the Ettrick each year, and in some years, maybe half a dozen. Though they don't get caught by anglers - they are there!

RAFFLE FOR HARDY ANGEL TROUT ROD

In a bid to raise further funds for the Tweed Trout & Grayling Initiative, the Tweed Foundation raffled a Hardy Angel 9' Trout rod after the end of the trout season on Tweed with the draw taking place at one of the Initiative's six-weekly management meetings. Hardys, via the Wild Trout Trust, very generously allow clubs, associations and associated fishery bodies to purchase a rod at a much reduced price to help raise funds for dedicated fishery conservation projects. The lucky winner of the Foundation's rod - much coveted by members of staff! - was Mr Christopher Roche from Saltburn in Cleveland. Mr Roche does not often fish the Tweed, but bought his winning ticket on a visit to the Tweed Foundation's stand at this year's Border Union Show. He has told the Foundation that he is a lapsed fisher who hopes to take up the sport again in anger. Let's hope that this magnificent rod spurs him on to catch many trout - wherever he chooses to fish!



Andrew Douglas-Home, Tweed Foundation Chairman, makes the Raffle Draw whilst Dr Andy Walker, Chairman, Tweed Trout & Grayling Management Committee holds onto the Hardy Trout rod.

TWEED TROUT & GRAYLING INITIATIVE

ANGLER SURVEY

A trial bankside angler survey (known as a creel census) was carried out in the last two months of the 2006 Trout angling season. The information gathered by the survey was wide and varied and ranged from angler pressure within the area surveyed through to what the angler is catching. Although the trial survey was on a very small scale it provided excellent information and has already highlighted an area that may have very high angling pressure. It is hoped that, with help from the Angling Association volunteers, the survey can be carried out on a far larger scale in 2007 with the information gathered being used to advise Angling Associations on issues such as bag limits for wild Trout.



TWEED TROUT & GRAYLING INITIATIVE

PHOTOGRAPHIC MONITORING

In a response to Angling Association concerns about the loss of adult trout habitat within the Tweed (such as deepish pools turning into shallow riffles, perhaps due to changes in winter high water levels), the Tweed Trout & Grayling Initiative (TTGI) has volunteers taking photographs of their Angling Associations waters using a standard procedure that allows the photos to be re-taken from the identical spot in the future. The pictures provide a baseline of what the Tweed is like at present and will allow future changes to be detected. At present, several local Angling Associations have provided photographs of large areas of their Association waters.

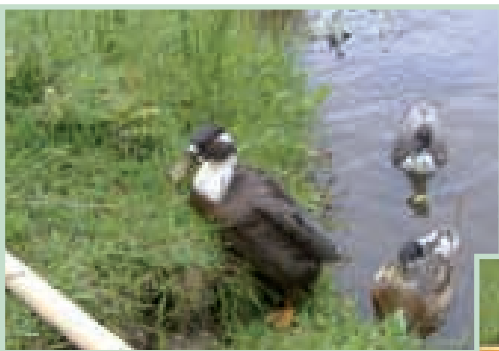


Two monitoring photos of the Tweed at Fairmile taken by Stefan Grzybowski, a TTGI volunteer from Gala Angling Association

INVERTEBRATE (“FLY LIFE”) SURVEYS

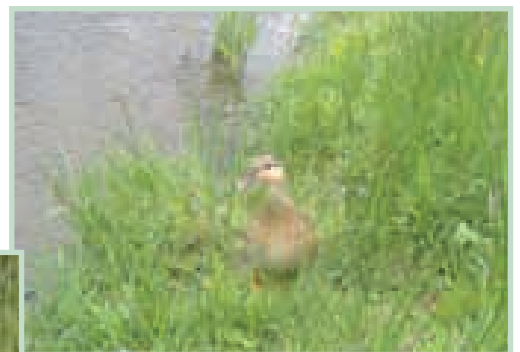
In April 2006 volunteers from many of the Angling Associations involved in the TTGI took invertebrate samples from given sites within their Association waters. Over the next few months, the volunteers brought their samples back to the Tweed Foundation and used microscopes provided by the TTGI to identify and count the invertebrates. For all of the volunteers, this was their first Spring sample with the results providing a baseline of what Tweed invertebrate populations are like at present. Future samples will allow trends in invertebrate numbers to be identified and logged.

FLY LIFE SAMPLING : A CAUTIONARY TAIL!



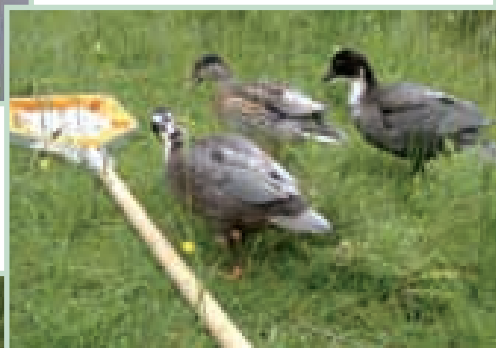
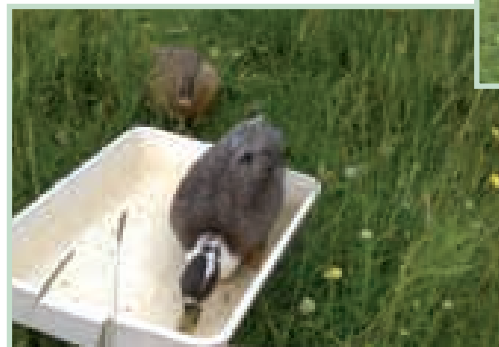
What's going on here, then?

Looks interesting.....



Wait for me!

Tasty!



Four Duck's sake!!!



SMALL GRILSE

There has been some concern this season about an apparent increase in the number of particularly small Grilse. This has been seen before on the Tweed: in 1977 Dr Derek Mills wrote a paper for the River Tweed Commissioners' Annual Report on the increased numbers caught in 1976. His conclusions were that these small fish were typical early Summer Grilse but had been delayed in getting up-river by the 1976 drought. When the water finally arrived in Autumn, these little fish raced upstream, and were often still sea-liced when caught far up-river - another feature that has been commented on this year.

An analysis is underway using the large archive of computerised catch records the Tweed Foundation now has to see how this season's proportion of small Grilse compares with these past records. This is not complete, but it is clear that such small fish are a feature of Summer - rather than Autumn - catches: in 1935 in the St Boswell's area, for instance, 14% of the fish caught in June and July were 3lbs in weight or less and, in 1934, 12% were. These two instances are the highest frequency found yet of very small Grilse - this year's proportion has still to be worked out for comparison.

EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION

One of the most important elements of the Foundation's work is to continue our programme of education. This year was no exception, with a number of events taking place giving us the opportunity to spread the word both about our work on Tweed and the importance of fisheries management - wherever you happen to be.



The Water Bailiffs from the River Tweed Commissioners help out by giving an electro-fishing demonstration to a class from Berwick High School on the River Breamish



The Tweed Foundation and River Tweed Commissioners stand at this year's Border Union Show included opportunities to learn how to identify fly life and how to fly tie, with volunteers from the Angling Associations

In April, the Foundation had a stand at the inaugural Tweed Angling Fair in Kelso; we carried out a number of electro-fishing demonstrations for various groups and, in addition, Tweed Foundation members were able to accompany staff on the summer monitoring days throughout the catchment; a number of presentations were given to local groups, including Rotary Clubs, Angling Association AGMs and University students; the Trout & Grayling Biologist assisted the TweedStart programme (aimed primarily at getting youngsters, and others, interested in fishing) by providing invertebrate identification skills. A major Conference was held in Newcastle Upon Tyne in October - the 15th International Salmonid Conference - and Tweed Foundation staff attended, Dr Campbell gave a paper and the Tweed hosted one of the field trips, demonstrating net and coble netting on the river at Paxton.

TWEED TROUT & GRAYLING INITIATIVE

CATCH LOG BOOKS

Of the 1,000+ Catch Logbooks that were handed out with the local season tickets for the 13 Angling Associations & Clubs involved in the Tweed Trout & Grayling Initiative (TTGI), 3.5% have been returned at the time of press. For a project of this nature, having one Logbook in 20 (50 in total) filled in constitutes a good result and we are still on target to achieve the 50 desired returns. Filling in a Logbook is the easiest and most important way for anglers to contribute towards the conservation of their rivers: as well as showing what the fishing is like for any one year, angling catches provide a sample of what is in our rivers with medium to long-term catches being able to highlight declines or increases in fish stocks.

The TTGI is giving a special, limited-edition, badge to the first 300 anglers to return a completed Logbook.



Grayling of just over 1 lb from the Walkerburn area. Caught, released & recorded in a Logbook, September 2006



RECORD TOTAL FOR THE ETTRICK FISH COUNTER

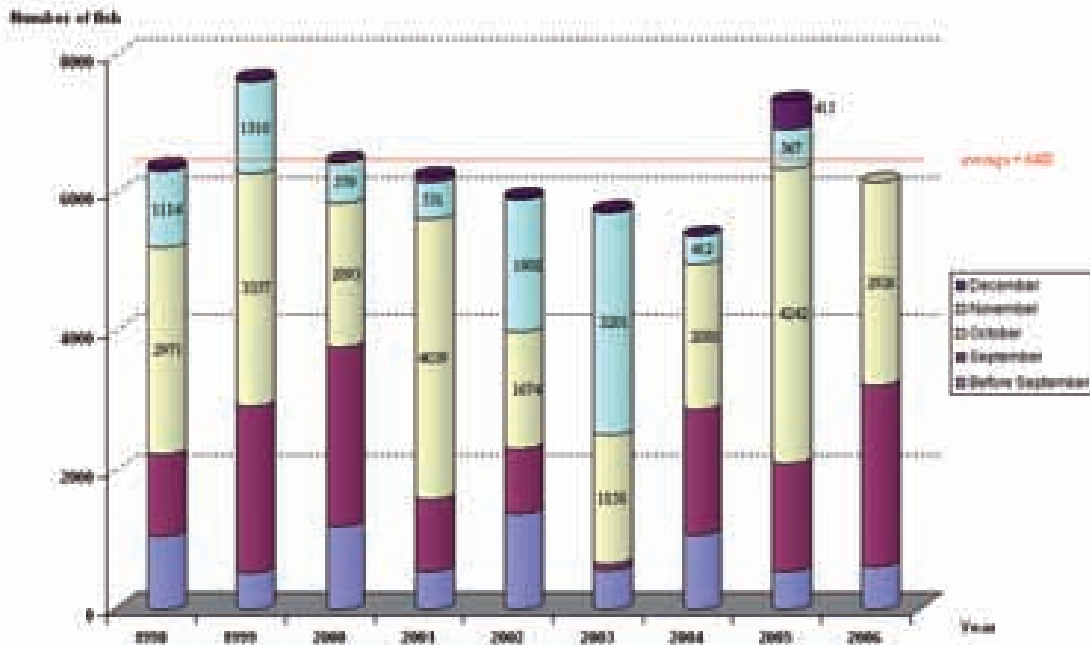
It has been a frustrating year for the Ettrick fish counter with a catalogue of problems making it impossible to produce an accurate total. Even with fish being missed in September due to a computer problem, this was still a record month with 2,629 fish recorded through the counter (the average for this month being 1,454). October has also been slightly above average (2,789), with a total of 2,926 fish passing through the counter.



A Salmon measuring 118cm, which is probably over 40lbs - recorded 27th September 2006



A small Salmon (43cm)



Ettrick Fish Counter Results 2006
Running totals for the Ettrick Fish Counter: net upstream for fish over 40cms in length

A fuller version of the fish counter data can be found at www.tweedfoundation.org.uk/counter

Monthly fish counter updates - for the Ettrick and Gala counters - can be found on the River Tweed News website: www.rivertweed.org.uk where you can subscribe, free of charge, to receive updates automatically



FIRST TWEED WHEELYBOAT



Not strictly Tweed Foundation business (!), but the Foundation, and River Tweed Commissioners, have been instrumental in designing and collaborating with The Wheelyboat Trust to bring about the first Tweed boat specifically for use by the less-able angler on Tweed. "Tweedability I" was launched on the River in October by Chris

Tarrant at the Lower Birgham beat. After christening the boat with a dram of whisky over her bows, Chris cut a ribbon on the boat and then rowed Barney Wilson - the first angler to use the boat - on the River.

Barney thoroughly approved of the boat and caught 8 fish with it over his fishing week and Ian Allan, Lower Birgham's head boatman, didn't want to give it back either - saying it rowed better than a normal Tweed boat! Tweedability I is heavier and more stable than a usual Tweed boat, to accommodate the extra weight of a wheelchair, and has a



special ramp and hydraulic system installed to allow safe loading of wheelchair-bound anglers.

The boat will be available for hire from the Foundation next season by any beat on Tweed with suitable access. We hope it allows many more anglers to enjoy the River.

TWEED FISHING AUCTIONS

As you may know, the Tweed Foundation holds an annual Auction of prime Autumn Tweed Fishing each year to allow us to continue with our programme of studies and research. What you may not appreciate is just how critical

this funding is in helping the Tweed Foundation function. Auctions not only provide us with significant funds themselves, but also enable us to use the sums raised to lever funds from other sources by matching grant sums. During the last three years our Auctions have raised in excess of £80,000 for the Foundation, not counting the proportion of funds which we also receive from the sale of Tweed lots in the Atlantic Salmon Trust's (AST) own annual fishing auction. Proprietors generously donate fishing dates (or make donations if gifting fishing is not possible) to either the Foundation or the AST - and in some cases, both - for our Auctions to help support work on Tweed. Our thanks go to all of you for supporting these important fund raising events: those who donate *and* those who bid.

The Tweed Foundation's projects are part-financed by:

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In addition, we are very grateful to The Wild Trout Trust, the local Angling Associations, landowners and many others for their financial assistance with our projects.



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Mr. K.A. Galt (Trout & Grayling Biologist)

Websites

Tweed Foundation: www.tweedfoundation.org.uk
Tweed Trout & Grayling Initiative: www.ttgi.org.uk
River Tweed News: www.rivertweed.org.uk

The above websites are all run by the Tweed Foundation from Drygrange

Tweed Foundation Membership

Membership of the Foundation is open to all and costs:

Annual Individual	£15
Annual Joint	£23
Life Membership	£250

Membership provides Newsletters, Reports, Seminar invitations and other river updates. Application forms available by contacting Drygrange.