



THE GALA FISH COUNTER RESULTS 2014

The Gala fish counter is located in the fish pass at the Skinworks Cauld (behind B & Q) in Galashiels. All fish travelling upstream have to go through the fish pass and are therefore counted. The counter consists of an infrared scanner for counting and measuring the lengths of fish and a video camera for species identification.



Summary

The Gala counter was in full operation throughout the main migration period of September, October and November. With the absence of any significant rainfall in September, only four fish went through that month. The first significant rise in water in October produced a run of fish on the 10th followed by a larger run around the 18th with the majority of fish being counted through in these two periods.

Of particular interest was how the Salmon fish counter totals related to the generally poor catches in the main river. Surprisingly, 1299 Salmon were counted by the fish counter, providing an estimated surplus of 643 fish in the Gala Water. This provides important evidence that despite the low catches, there were still more than sufficient numbers of adult Salmon to support juvenile stocks. Salmon totals were lower in 2012 and 2013 and this is believed to be related to a snow melt event in April 2010 that caused high mortality of Salmon juveniles. Fish from 2010 that spent two years in the river and two years in the sea would have returned in 2014 but there is no discernible reduction in numbers due to this.

Also of interest is the highest number of Trout under 40 cm yet recorded through the counter (874) which is more than double the total in most previous years. This could well be related to the good catches of Brown Trout by many anglers in the main river in 2014

Monthly fish counter totals and information about the river can be found at www.rivertweed.org.uk

Annual totals. The figure in brackets for the Trout total column is for Trout under 40 cm, the majority of which are assumed to be Brown Trout. Salmon surplus = number of Salmon minus spawning target of 656 fish (at egg deposition rate of 500 eggs / 100 m²).

Year	Salmon total	Trout total	Total	Salmon Surplus
2008	1954	2273 (345)	4227	1298
2009	1063	1889 (377)	2952	407
2010	1361	1362 (232)	2723	705
2011	1481	2354 (559)	3835	825
2012	821	1361 (239)	2182	165
2013	894	1494 (304)	2388	238
2014	1299	2294 (874)	3593	643

A fish trap continues to be run in the fish pass upstream of the fish counter on an occasional basis when fish are running. Trapping fish allows us to take scale samples for ageing fish and make species identifications to validate the results of the fish counter. Depth measurements of each fish (its flank height) are taken, to define the relationship between depth and length (the fish counter uses fish depth to calculate length).

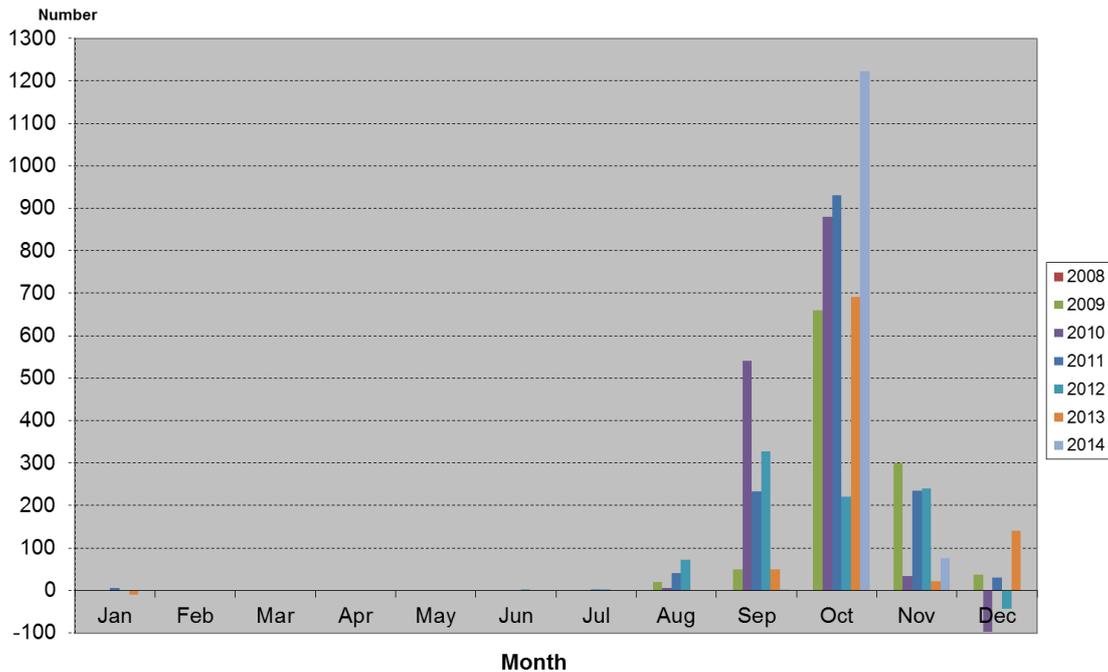
Monthly totals for Salmon and Trout are shown on the following page



Annual totals by month

The monthly totals confirm that the main migration of both Salmon and Trout is from August onwards, with the main run of fish in October. Kelts come back down through the counter in November and December so totals can be negative for this month.

Salmon



Trout

