



THE GALA FISH COUNTER RESULTS 2015

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 2015, although the identification rates of Salmon and Trout was greatly reduced due to a problem with the clarity of video clips taken by the camera. With the absence of any significant rainfall in September and most of October, the first major run of fish was recorded on the 29th October when 409 fish were recorded through the counter in one day. As shown by the graphs on the following page, the bulk of the fish then passed through the counter between the 5th and 11th November, which is very late for the Gala Water.

Similar to 2014, it was of particular interest to see how the Salmon fish counter totals related to the generally poor catches in the main river. As with the 2014 totals, the number of Salmon was higher than would be expected from the catches with an estimated surplus of 643 Salmon in 2014 and 343 Salmon in 2015. This provides important evidence that despite the recent low catches, there were still more than sufficient numbers of adult Salmon to support juvenile stocks. Salmon totals were at their lowest 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. Multi-sea Winter Salmon 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.

Trout under 40 cm, which are presumed to be Brown Trout, although lower than the record year

in 2014, was still the second highest total with 574 fish.

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). * Due to very low identification rates of Salmon and Trout in 2015, an alternative assignment method was used based on averages from previous years.

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
2015*	999	2172 (574)	3171	343

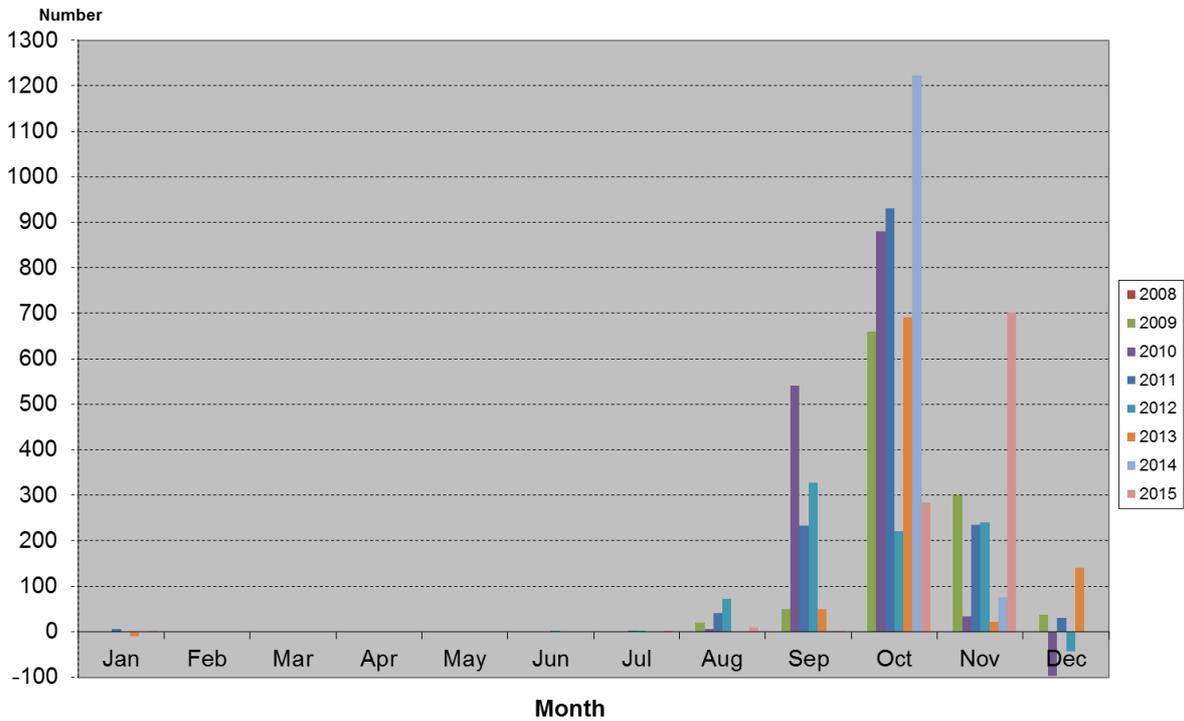
A fish trap continues to be run in the fish pass upstream of the fish counter on an occasional basis when fish are running. Trapping fish allows us to take scale samples for ageing fish and make species identifications to validate the results of the fish counter. Depth measurements of each fish (its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



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

