

SOUTH ESK TRACKING PROJECT



FIGURE 1
VIEW OF THE SOUTH ESK RIVER



FIGURE 2
A RECEIVER STATION ON THE SOUTH ESK, EACH FISH IS FITTED WITH A MINATURE RADIO TRANSMITTER (SEE BELOW)

Background

In response to local concerns about the status of early running salmon stocks in the River South Esk, Scottish Ministers asked Marine Scotland to investigate the underlying causes of the apparent decline in catches of these stocks and suggest appropriate management responses and remedial actions.

In 2012, a project to identify the spawning areas of early running salmon on the South Esk was started. Using radio tracking, a total of 213 (153 in 2012 and 60 in 2013) fish have been tagged and released to date.

Once the spawning areas have been identified, it may be possible to determine whether early running fish are from a unique population within the river and how vulnerable that population may be. The suitability of the habitat for supporting the freshwater stages will be assessed to identify where bottlenecks to salmon productivity may be occurring.



MINIATURE RADIO TRANSMITTER

Tagging the fish

Salmon are tagged using well established procedures – each fish is fitted with a miniature radio transmitter. After recovery, the fish is released back into the sea and its location can be determined using tracking devices once it enters fresh water.

Tracking the fish

Radio receivers (Figure 2) provide information on the movements of individual tagged fish during their migration up the river.

In addition to the South Esk (see Figure 3), receivers have also been deployed in the lower reaches of some other Scottish east coast salmon rivers: the Tweed, Tay, Lunan, North Esk, Dee, Don and Spey.



FIGURE 3
LOCATION OF THE RECEIVER STATIONS ON THE SOUTH ESK

Recovered tag

If you recover one of these tags, please contact the

Marine Scotland Science Montrose fieldstation on 01674 677070.

Further information

For more information, or to keep up to date with latest fish movements, please visit the Scottish Government website, <http://www.gov.scot/southesk>