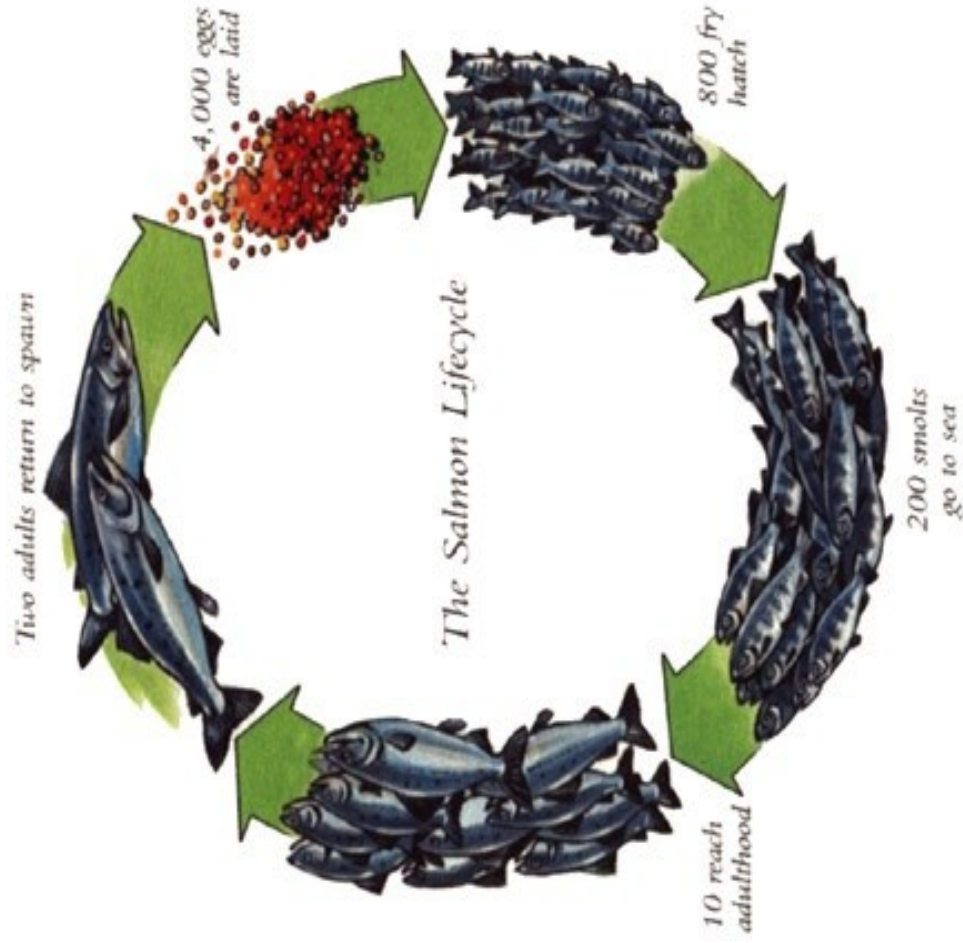


RIVER FINDHORN



ANNUAL REPORT 2011

Chairman's Report 2011 Season

2011 Season

Two features mark the 2011 season, firstly the spring outbreak of Saprolegnia and secondly the poor grilse run.

Although relatively few fish were caught in the lower river in February, March and early April the temperature barrier above Poolie was breached early and a significant number of salmon were caught from Logie upstream in April, with the Lethen beats doing particularly well and one fish being caught as high up as Tomatin.

Towards the end of April reports started coming in of diseased fish and with fish already well distributed up to Drynachan and above it rapidly became obvious that we were suffering a fairly major outbreak of a fungal disease. Early suspicion, subsequently confirmed by Marine Scotland's Fish Health Inspectorate, identified the disease as Saprolegnia, caused by a fungus which occurs naturally in fresh water and colonises bumps and scrapes on the mucus which normally protects the scales of fish. The disease is usually fatal, is commonly associated with early season low water conditions and was found in several other Scottish rivers this year.

There were some unfortunate rumours circulating on other rivers and even in the fishing press which overdramatized the Findhorn situation however nature, as is her habit, took her course, produced probably the most consistent high water for several years and flushed out the system. That said, I heard the view expressed on more than one occasion that, while there were plenty fish in the river, they were unwilling to take and some suggested that the diseased and dead fish may have played a part in this.

Will there be any long term effect? It is difficult to say but judging by the stock of large multi sea winter fish in the upper river there has not been a significant impact on the stock of spawning fish. There are lessons to be learnt, firstly that river managers have no influence on the course that Saprolegnia takes; secondly, and more importantly, that un-necessary and unfounded rumours help no-one and that in the event of a future outbreak of this or any other disease information should be disseminated as quickly and as clearly as is possible. The Fish Health Inspectorate will be holding a briefing on disease reporting and fish handling in the New Year; details will be published by the Fisheries Trust.

The grilse simply failed to appear in significant numbers. The total catch, at 516, was under half the 10 year average and the lowest since 1999. Looking at the long term figures for grilse since the nets came off in the 1980s there have only been 4 poorer years but grilse numbers do fluctuate markedly either side of the 10 year average. I see a year such as the past one as a marker to keep an eye on the situation but not as a reason to worry unduly.

Of more concern is the continued poor showing of spring salmon although the overall salmon catch is satisfactory. **The importance of achieving a high release rate of spring fish cannot be overstated.**

Conservation Code

Once again a satisfactory release rate has been achieved with salmon at 78% and grilse at 62% giving an overall total of 74%. The spring salmon release rate was 75% and, given the obvious pressure that this component of the stock is under, any encouragement to anglers to release early fish can only be welcomed.

The size/weight conversion chart has been updated to give more practical imperial measurements and electronic copies (.pdf) of the 2012 Code and Catch and Release guidance are available from the Fisheries Office (admin.fnlfisheries@btconnect.com or 01309 611220).

Fisheries Office

The Fisheries Office at Logie Steading continues to develop, serving the Board and the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Trust.

A major advance this year has been the appointment of a Director and biologist for the Trust. Bob Loughton, who currently works for the Spey but has overseen much of the Findhorn's scientific work for the past few years, takes up the position in January 2012. Bob will continue to work for the Spey as well but will be employed by the FNL Trust and work mainly out of the Fisheries Office. He will coordinate various projects where both Board and Trust are involved.

Anyone who has the opportunity is welcome to visit the office but a telephone call or email to Beth Dunlop, who runs the office, is advisable (admin.fnlfisheries@btconnect.com or 01309 611220).

AGM

Thanks to the generosity of Bill and Richard Benyon, the AGM was held at Glenmazeran in August. Attendance was up on 2010 but I would like to remind all those with an interest in the river that the AGM is the opportunity to get your voice heard if you have an opinion.

River management is coming under increasing public scrutiny (see below) and it is vitally important that the Board has the authority to exercise its powers. The Board does need the active participation of proprietors and others if it is to maintain a high standard of river management and continue to protect the health of the river system on which success of migratory fish runs depend.

Aquaculture and Fisheries Bill

A Scottish Government consultation on a propose Bill dealing with marine and freshwater matters opened on Monday 12th December and runs until the 2nd March. It can be found at the link below:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/12/06081229/0>

The Bill, assuming it becomes an Act, will have a significant influence on the way fisheries and fishery boards are managed and regulated and the Board will be contributing to the Association of Fishery Board's response to this consultation in the New Year.

This Bill will have a direct influence on your interests and I strongly encourage you to participate in the consultation.

With best wishes for the 2012 season.

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Forres

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River Findhorn Juvenile Survey 2011

S. Burns and R. Laughton
(Spey Foundation)

Similar to 2010 poor weather leading to elevated flows through the summer of 2011 hampered electrofishing surveys, however, total 29 core survey sites were revisited on the Findhorn and details of the presence of salmon and trout fry and parr (1+ and 2+) are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Presence of salmon and trout 0+ and 1++ age classes at 23 electro-fishing survey sites completed on the River Findhorn during 2010.

	Number	%
Salmon Fry (0+) Present	24	83
Salmon Parr (1++) Present	27	93
Trout Fry (0+) Present	20	69
Trout Parr (1++) Present	20	69
Total Site Surveyed	29	

Patterns of distribution were similar to previous years with 83% of the survey sites producing salmon 0+ and 93% of sites producing salmon 1++.

In general distribution was similar to previous years with salmon present throughout the catchment. The lower tributaries such as the Dorback and Divie produced good densities of fish as again did those in the Tomatin area (Corrybrough, Ailt Bruachaig, Banchor. In the upper reaches surveys indicated a further slight improvement from 2009 and 2010 with better distribution of salmon fry and improved densities in the burns within Coignafearn.

Trout distribution was less than salmon with 69% of site containing trout 0+ and 69% of site containing trout 1++. This was very similar to 2010. The better trout populations were generally located in the Dorback, Divie and Berry Burn areas.

Generally other fish species were rare species, with eel, lamprey and minnow only present in 3 of the 29 sites visited, but this is a similar pattern to previous years.

, Further work on fish population densities in the catchment will be completed in early 2012 and a report compiled to the Board. A report on the juvenile survey results from 2010 (Laughton, 2011) is now available, and copies of this and previous survey reports can be obtained from Robert Laughton, research@speyfisheryboard.com.

RIVER SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT 2011

Fishing Season

Once again the opening ceremony for the Forres Angling Association was well attended. People's hopes were high for the forthcoming season. Unfortunately this was short lived (as you will see from the returns). Catches of salmon and grilse combined were down on last year by just over thousand.

The salmon spring run in the lower reaches was slightly down on the previous year from February to the end of April. Overall the salmon figures were boosted by an increase in catches during July to September. The grilse run was very poor 26% down on 2010. It is also very alarming that the sea trout figures seem to have decreased over the last three years.

Poaching

As in previous years we kept a very high profile to deter poaching activity on the river and coast line. Two nets were retrieved from Roseisle beach in the months July/August. On 3rd September a youth was apprehended for netting. He received 2 years' probation.

Seals

The Moray Firth Seal Management Plan is still on-going and was carried out over the period March / April and once again I must stress my concerns at the population of grey and common seals at the entrance to Findhorn Bay.

Hatchery

The hatcheries at Lethen and Corrievorrie continued to be very successful in 2010/2011 producing good fed fry which were released into the burns in the Tomatin area. This year was the complete opposite from last year in the sense that the brood stock for both hatcheries was collected in four days. During the collecting, there were no grilse seen and there was an abundance of good sized hen fish. I would like to thank members of the Forres Angling Association and Allan Hodgson and his team for their help.

This season I have been assisted by Sean MacLean, Assistant Bailiff and would like to thank him for his hard work and support.

Albert Duffus
River Superintendent
December 2011
Tel: 01309 674244
Mob: 07879295670
Email: sh-alb1383@tiscali.co.uk

LOCATION		No	Wt lbs	SALMON RET.	Rel	No	Wt lbs	GRILSE RET.	Rel	No	Wt lbs	S.TROUT RET	No	Wt lbs	S.TROUT REL	Rel	
Coignafearn																	
Daltonich																	
Glenmazeran																	
Dalnigavie																	
East Clune																	
Glen Kirk																	
Strathdearn (Banchor)																	
Dalnigarry																	
Glen Kyllachy																	
Findhorn Bridge (Old Clune)																	
Kyllachy																	
Corrybrough																	
Tomatin																	
Balnespick																	
Moy (Upper)																	
Moy (Pollochraig)																	
Drynachan (Cawdor)																	
Banchor																	
Lethen																	
Glenferness																	
Coulmony																	
Logie																	
Dunphail / Dive																	
Moray Estates																	
Altyre Estate																	
Forres AA																	
TOTAL		1	9	1	9	3	25	1	11	2	14	100%	1	9	1	11	50%

70% below Moray Estate to FAA & 100% upstream of Moray Estate

RETURNS FOR FEBRUARY

2011

RETURNS FOR MARCH												2011		
LOCATION	No	Wt lbs	SALMON REL.			Rel	GRILSE RET.			Rel	S.TROUT RET			Rel
			No	Wt lbs	%		No	Wt lbs	%		No	Wt lbs	%	
Coignafearn														
Datmich														
Glenmazeran														
Dalmigavie														
East Clune														
Glen Kirk														
Strathdearn (Banchor)														
Dalmigarry														
Glen Kyllachy														
Findhorn Bridge(Old Clune)														
Kyllachy														
Corrybrough														
Tomatin														
Balnespick														
Moy (Upper)														
Moy (Pollochraig)														
Drynachan (Cawdor)														
Banchor														
Lethen														
Glenterness														
Coulmony														
Logie														
Dunphail / Divie														
Moray Estates	4	33	10	115	71%									
Altyre Estate	1	11	3	30	75%									
Forres AA	4	39	4	43	50%									
TOTAL	9	83	17	188	65%									

70% below Moray Estate to FAA & 100% upstream of Moray Estate

LOCATION		No	Wt lbs	SALMON RET.		ReI	GRISE RET.		ReI	S.TROUT RET		ReI	S.TROUT RET		Wt lbs	No	%
2011		No	Wt lbs	SALMON REL.		ReI	GRISE REL.		ReI	S.TROUT REL		ReI	S.TROUT REL		Wt lbs	No	%
70% below Moray Estate to FAA & 100% upstream of Moray Estate																	
TOTAL		19	168	68	792	78%											
Forres AA		3	28	6	81	67%											
Altyre Estate				11	108	100%											
Moray Estates		10	80	26	313	72%											
Dunphail / Divie																	
Logie		1	9	3	27	75%											
Coulmony		1	8	1	12	50%											
Glenferness																	
Lethen				17	199	100%											
Banchor																	
Drynchan (Cawdor)		3	29	3	40	50%											
Moy (Pollochraig)		1	14			0%											
Moy (Upper)																	
Balnespick																	
Tomatin				1	12	100%											
Corrybrough																	
Kyllachy																	
Findhorn Bridge(Old Clune)																	
Glen Kyllachy																	
Dalnigarry																	
Strathdearn (Banchor)																	
Glen Kirk																	
East Clune																	
Dalnigavie																	
Glenmazeran																	
Daltonich																	
Coignafearn																	

RETURNS FOR JUNE															2011			
LOCATION	SALMON RET.			SALMON REL.			GRILSE RET.			GRILSE REL.			S.TROUT RET			S.TROUT REL		
	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%
Coignafearn																		
Daltmich																		
Glenmazeran																		
Dalmigavie	1	9	0%															
East Clune				5	53	100%				1	3				1	3		
Glen Kirk																		
Strathdearn (Banchor)	3	23		4	48	57%												
Dalmigarry					21	100%												
Glen Kyllachy																		
Findhorn Bridge(Old Clune)																		
Kyllachy																		
Corrybrough	1	11	0%															
Tomatin	1	8		3	32	75%												
Balnespick					13	100%												
Moy (Upper)																		
Moy (Pollochraig)	5	42		1	10	17%												
Drynachan (Cawdor)	8	63		10	106	56%				2	9	100%						
Banchor	3	19		3	31	50%									1	2	100%	
Lethen	4	32		25	251	86%												
Glenferness	10	77		19	186	66%		2	7									
Coulmony				1	14	100%				1	4	100%						
Logie	1	9		3	34	75%												
Dunphail / Dive								1	5									
Moray Estates	2	15		9	75	82%		1	4									100%
Altyre Estate				4	41	100%												100%
Forres AA	11	101		2	16	15%		1	5						1	3		75%
TOTAL	50	409		93	931	65%		5	21						1	3		88%

Based on 65% release

RETURNS FOR JULY														2011		
SALMON RET.														SALMON RET.		
LOCATION	No	Wt lbs	SALMON REL.		Rel	GRILSE RET.		GRILSE REL.	Rel	S.TROUT RET		Wt lbs	No	Wt lbs	Rel	
			No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%		No	Wt lbs	%			%	
Coinafearn																
Daltomich					100%											
Glenmazeran																
Dalmigavie					100%				3						18	100%
East Clune									1						5	
Glen Kirk																
Strathdearn (Banchor)	4	34			0%											
Dalmigarry					100%											
Glen Kyllachy																
Findhorn Bridge(Old Clune)																
Kyllachy	2	18			33%											
Corrybrough																
Tomatin	4	30			73%				1						2	100%
Balnspick					100%											
Moy (Upper)																
Moy (Pollochajg)	9	77			44%											
Drynachan (Cawdor)	20	178			77%				4					1	10	33%
Banchor	3	28			73%											
Lethen	7	58			90%				3						10	100%
Glenferness	11	88			71%				3						12	57%
Coummony					100%				1						5	0%
Logie	2	14			60%				1						5	50%
Dunphail / Divie	1	6			50%										5	100%
Moray Estates	2	16			78%				10						39	55%
Altyre Estate	2	16			75%				3						10	50%
Forres AA	13	81			35%				21						53	40%
TOTAL	80	644							44					4	167	51%
									45					8	19	83%
									173					37	26	83%

Based on 65% release

Based on 65% release																		
LOCATION	SALMON RET.			SALMON REL.			GRILSE RET.			GRILSE REL.			S.TROUT RET			S.TROUT REL		
	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%	No	Wt lbs	%
Coignafearn																		
Datmich																		
Glenmazeran																		
Dalmigavie						100%												
East Clune													6					
Glen Kirk						100%												
Strathdearn (Banchor)	1	9				80%												
Dalmigarry	1	10				89%												
Glen Kyllachy																		
Findhorn Bridge (Old Clune)						100%												
Kyllachy	1	10				83%	1	5				4	18	80%				
Corrybrough						100%												
Tomatin						100%	1	4				1	3	50%				
Bainespick						100%						1	4	100%				
Moy (Upper)	1	9				50%												
Moy (Pollochraig)	8	69				71%												
Drynachan (Cawdor)	20	183				82%	11	45				22	121	67%	3	7		0%
Banchor						100%	3	18				1	3	25%				
Lethen	4	35				92%	10	42				28	101	74%				
Glenferness	16	126				64%	14	47				13	43	48%				
Coulmony						100%	3	10				2	7	40%				
Logie	1	7				67%	3	11				2	6	40%				
Dunphail / Dive						100%	1	4				2	8	67%				
Moray Estates	2	12				82%	12	44				21	79	64%				100%
Altyre Estate						100%	4	17				11	42	73%				100%
Forres AA	10	109				33%	35	145				34	137	49%	3	6		77%
TOTAL	65	579				80%	98	392				143	578	59%	6	13		76%

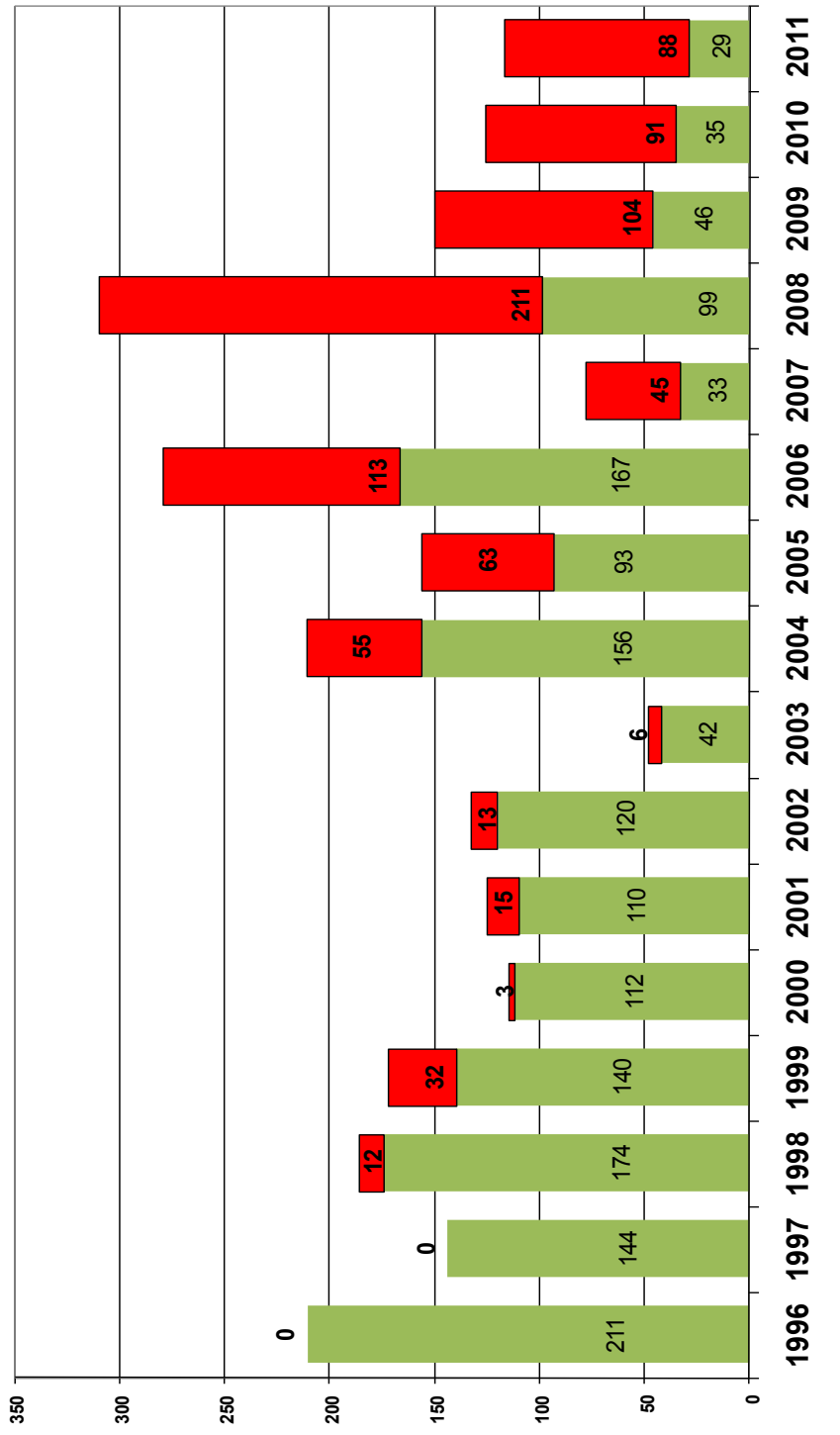
RETURNS FOR AUGUST

2011

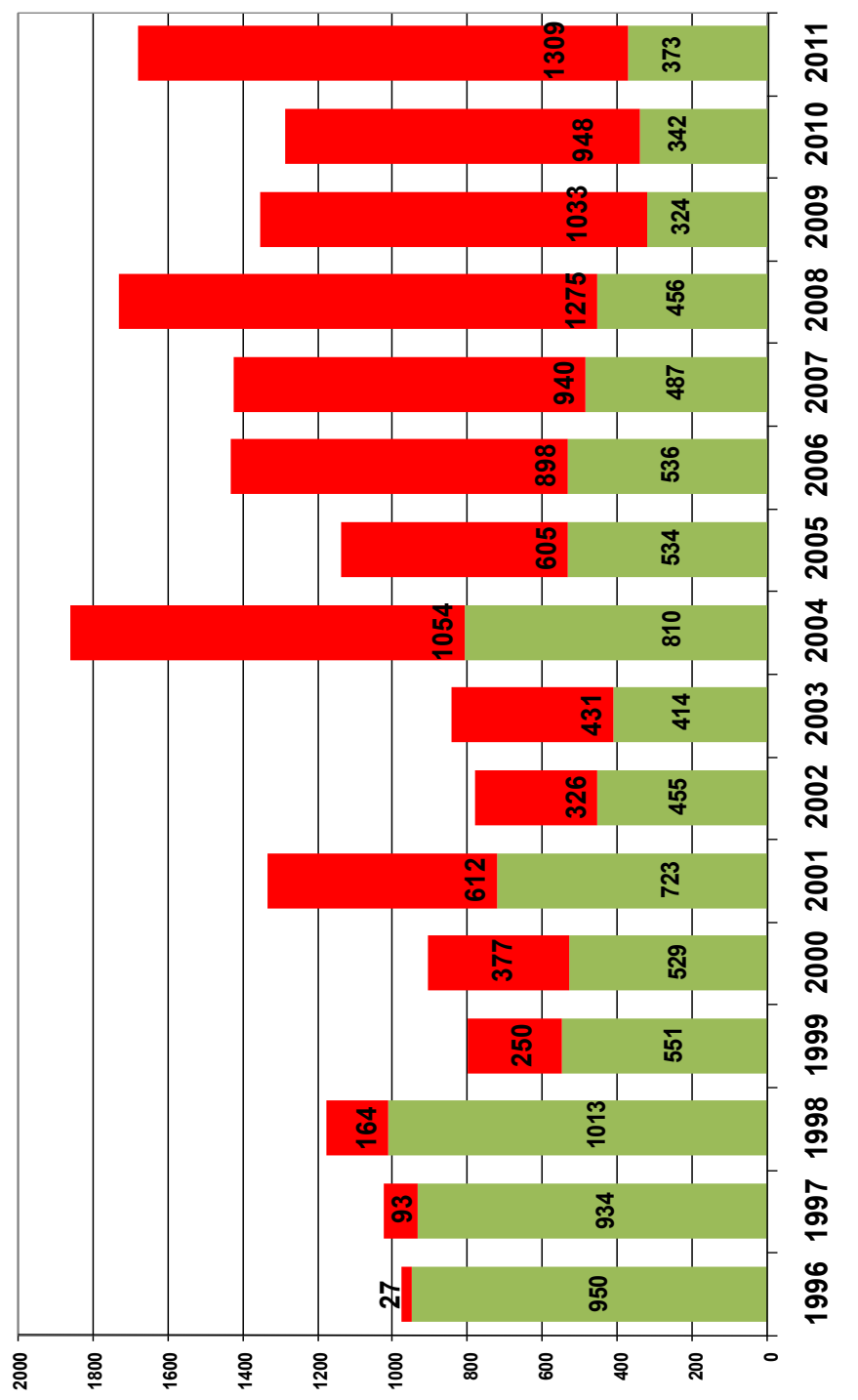
RETURNS FOR SEPTEMBER														2011						
SALMON RET.														S.TROUT RET.			S.TROUT REL			Rel
LOCATION	No	Wt lbs	SALMON REL.		Rel	GRILSE RET.			GRILSE REL.		Rel	S.TROUT RET		S.TROUT REL		%				
	No	Wt lbs	No	Wt lbs		%	No	Wt lbs	No	Wt lbs		No	Wt lbs	No	Wt lbs					
Coignafearn																				
Datmich			7		100%						1									
Glenmazeran	1	8	7		88%															
Dalmigavie			14		100%						10									
East Clune			15		100%		4				7									
Glen Kirk	1	11	13		93%						4									
Strathdearn (Banchor)	29	247	26		47%		11				3									
Dalmigarry			19		100%		5				1									
Glen Kyllachy																				
Findhorn Bridge(Old Clune)			6		100%		4				4									
Kyllachy			7		100%						3									
Corrybrough			3		100%						1									
Tomatin	6	62	43		88%		4				14									
Bainespick	2	14	15		88%						1									
Moy (Upper)	1	9	7		88%						1									
Moy (Pollochraig)	14	125	49		78%						1									
Drynachan (Cawdor)	23	211	172		88%		23				16									
Banchor			13		100%		8				2									
Lethen			75		100%		7				15									
Glenferness	1	5	44		98%		9				4									
Coulnony			1		100%															
Logie			1		100%						1									
Dunphail / Divie																				
Moray Estates			9		100%		45				6									
Altyre Estate	1	7	7		88%		11				5									
Forres AA	6	41	18		75%		53				16									
TOTAL	85	740	571		87%		184				116									
														Based on 70% release						

LOCATION	2011		CONSOLIDATION				2011		2315		Salmon & Grilse Caught In		Based on 65% or less released
	SALMON RETAINED	SALMON RELEASED	% RE-LEASED	GRILSE RETAINED	GRILSE RELEASED	RELEASED	OVERALL PERCENT RELEASED	S TROUT RETAINED	S TROUT RELEASED	RELEASED			
Coginafearn	No	4	0%	No	No	%	0%	No	No	%			
Datmich	2	9	82%	1	1	100%	83%						
Glenmazeran	2	7	78%				78%						
Dalmigavie	8	29	78%	13	13	100%	84%						
East Clune	2	21	91%	1	10	91%	91%	1	1	100%			
Glen Kirk	1	19	95%	4	4	100%	96%						
Strathdearn (Banchor)	37	40	52%	3	3	50%	52%						
Dalmigarry	1	31	97%	2	1	33%	91%						
Glenkylachy	1	1	50%				50%						
Findhorn Bridge (Old Clune)	3	7	70%	1	4	80%	73%						
Kylachy	5	15	75%	1	7	88%	79%						
Corrybrough	1	6	86%	1	1	100%	88%						
Tomatin Estate	13	73	85%	3	15	83%	85%	1	1	100%			
Balnaspick	5	23	82%	2	2	100%	83%						
Moy (Upper)	2	8	80%	1	1	100%	82%						
Moy (Pollochaig)	53	89	63%		1	100%	63%						
Drynachan (Cawdor)	88	377	81%	22	42	66%	79%	4					
Banchor	11	40	78%	5	3	38%	73%		1	100%			
Lethen	22	269	92%	12	46	79%	90%		1	100%			
Glenferness	46	127	73%	22	23	51%	69%						
Coulmony	2	10	83%	4	3	43%	68%						
Logie	7	16	70%	4	6	60%	67%						
Dunphail / Dive	1	5	83%	2	5	71%	77%						
Moray Estates	25	97	80%	32	42	57%	71%	1	11	92%			
Altire Estate	4	35	90%	10	19	66%	79%		7	100%			
Forres AA	56	43	43%	70	70	50%	47%	9	28	76%			
TOTAL	402	1397	78%	194	322	62%	74%	14	50	78%			

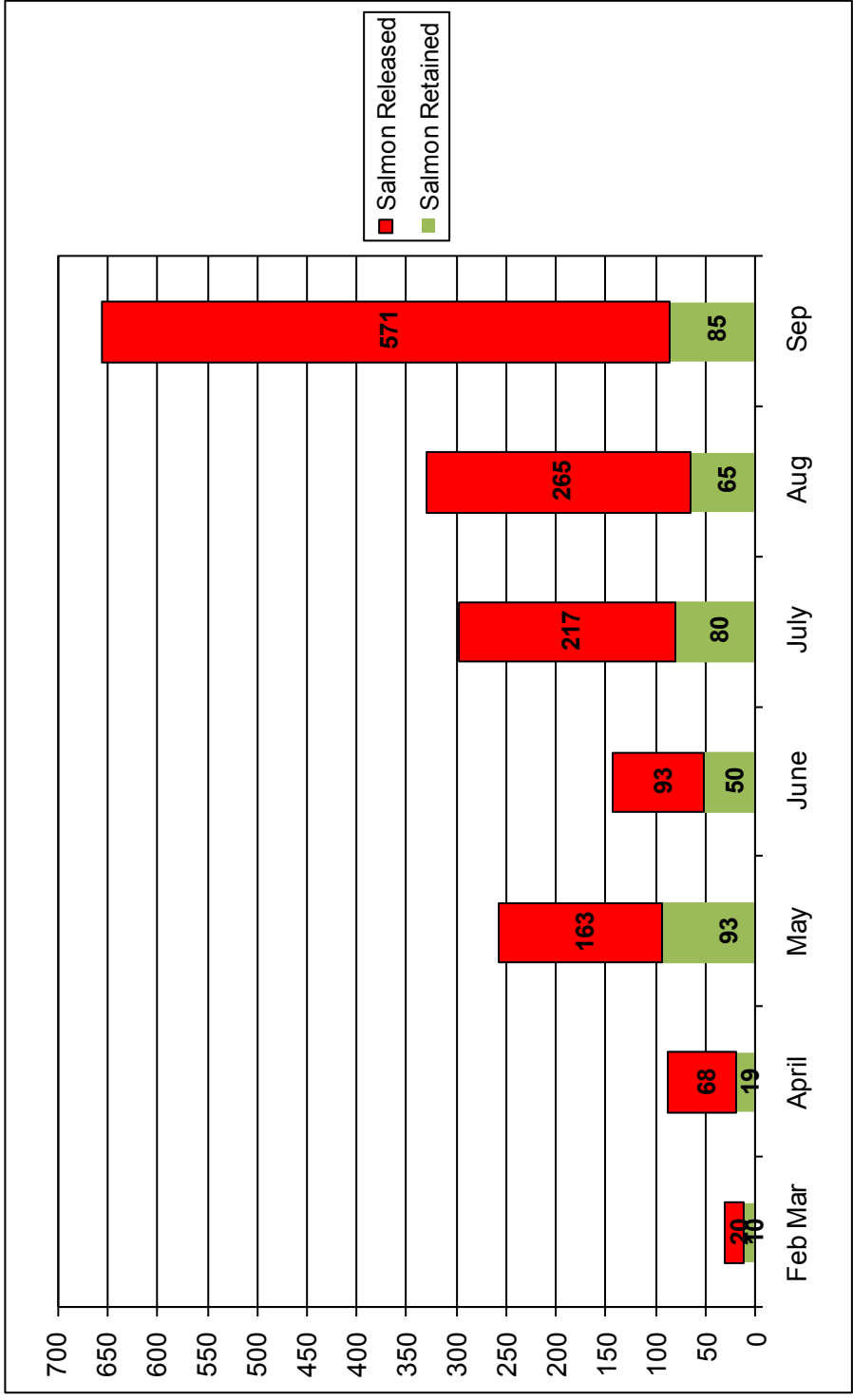
Spring Salmon
 Retained / Released
 10 February - 30 April 1996 - 2011



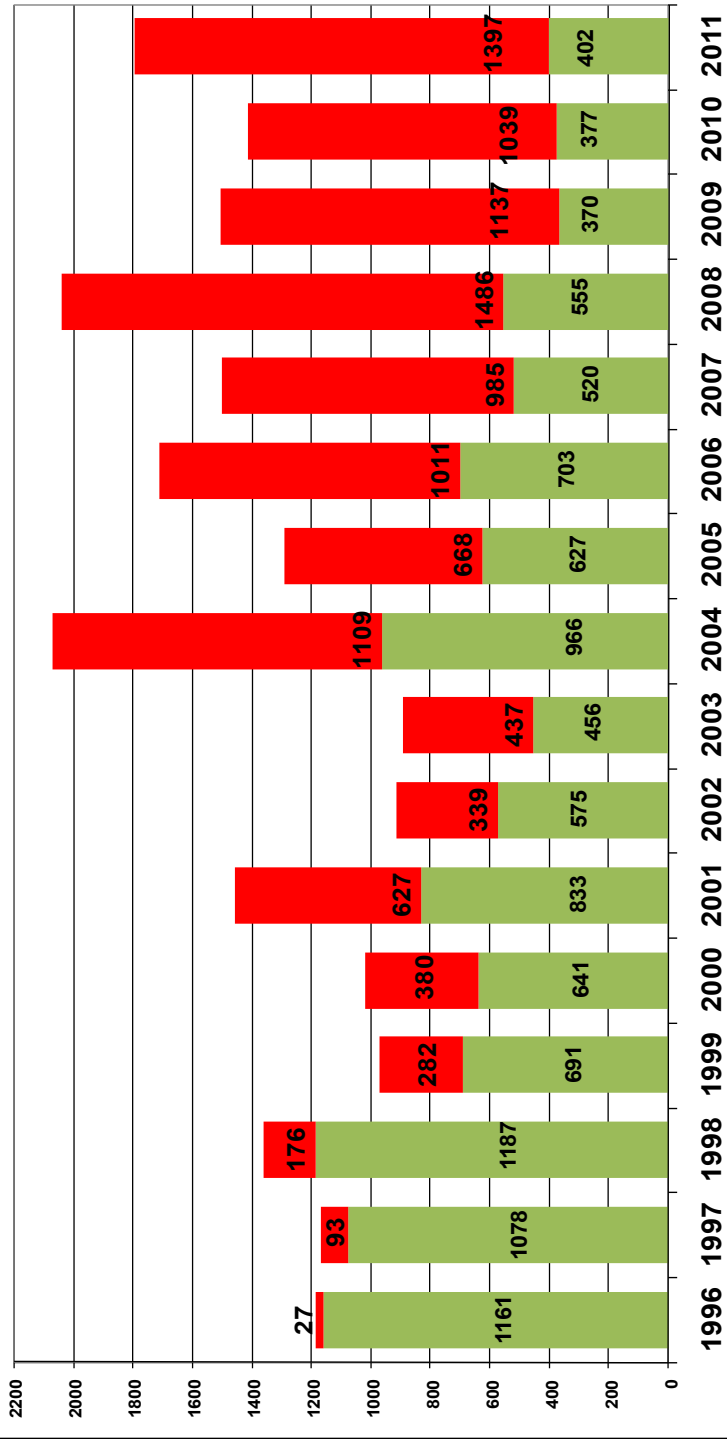
Summer Salmon
 Retained / Released
 1 May - 30 Sept 1996 - 2011



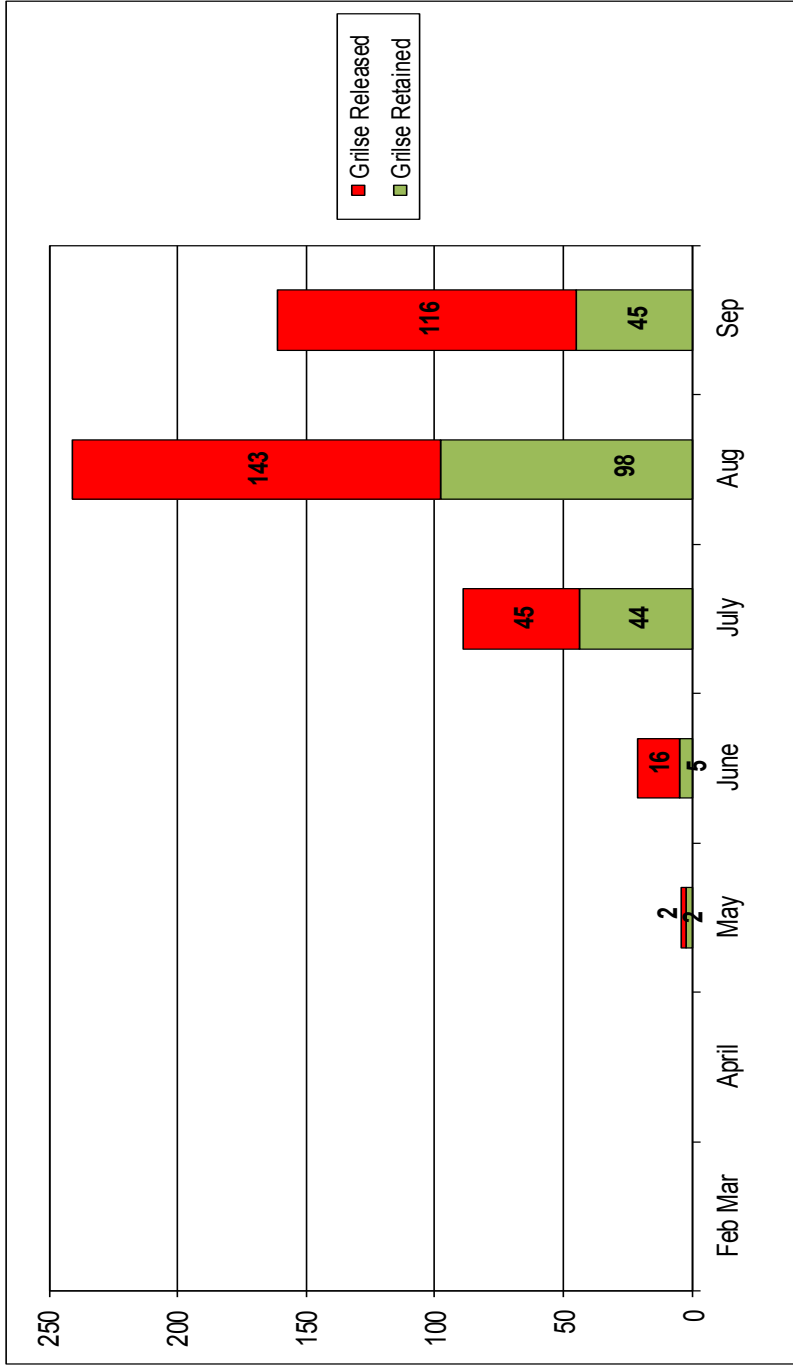
Salmon Retained/ Released February to September 2011



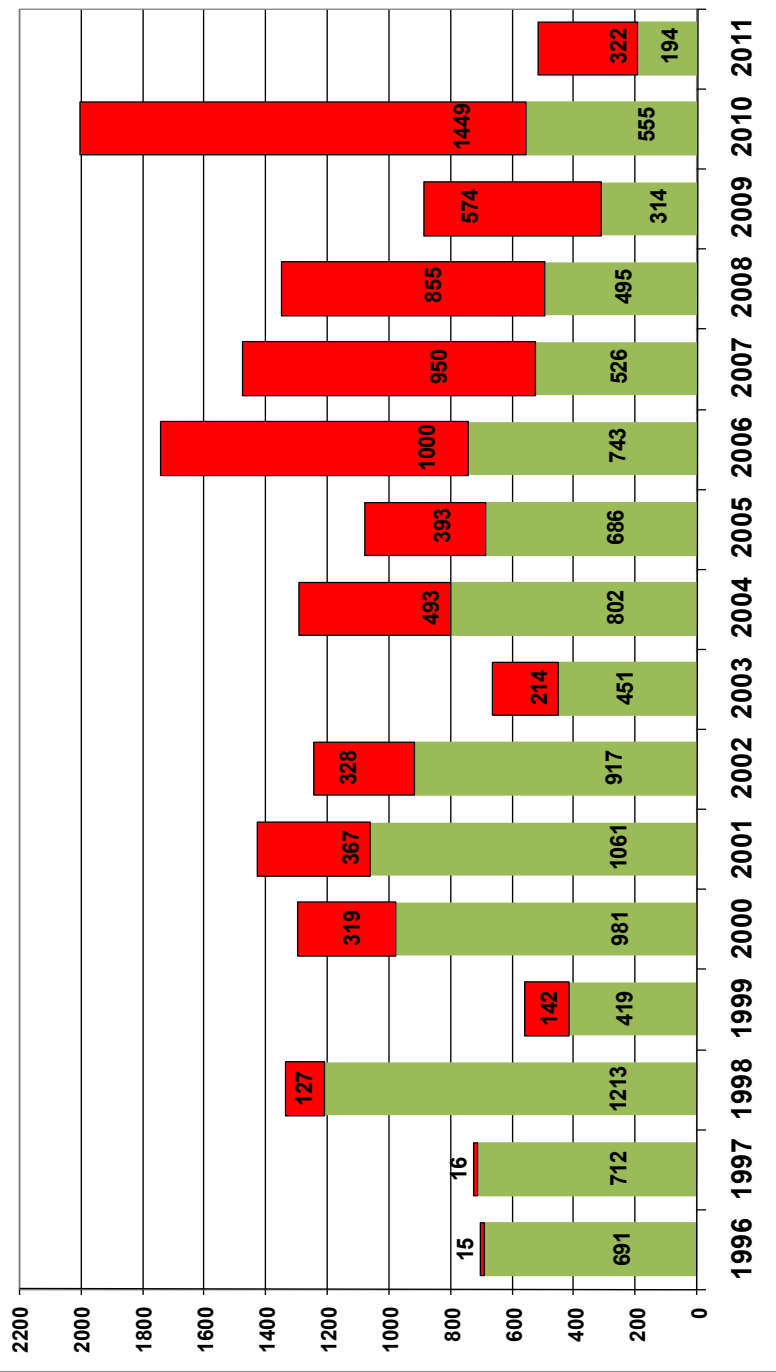
Salmon Retained / Released 10 Feb - 30 Sept 1996 - 2011



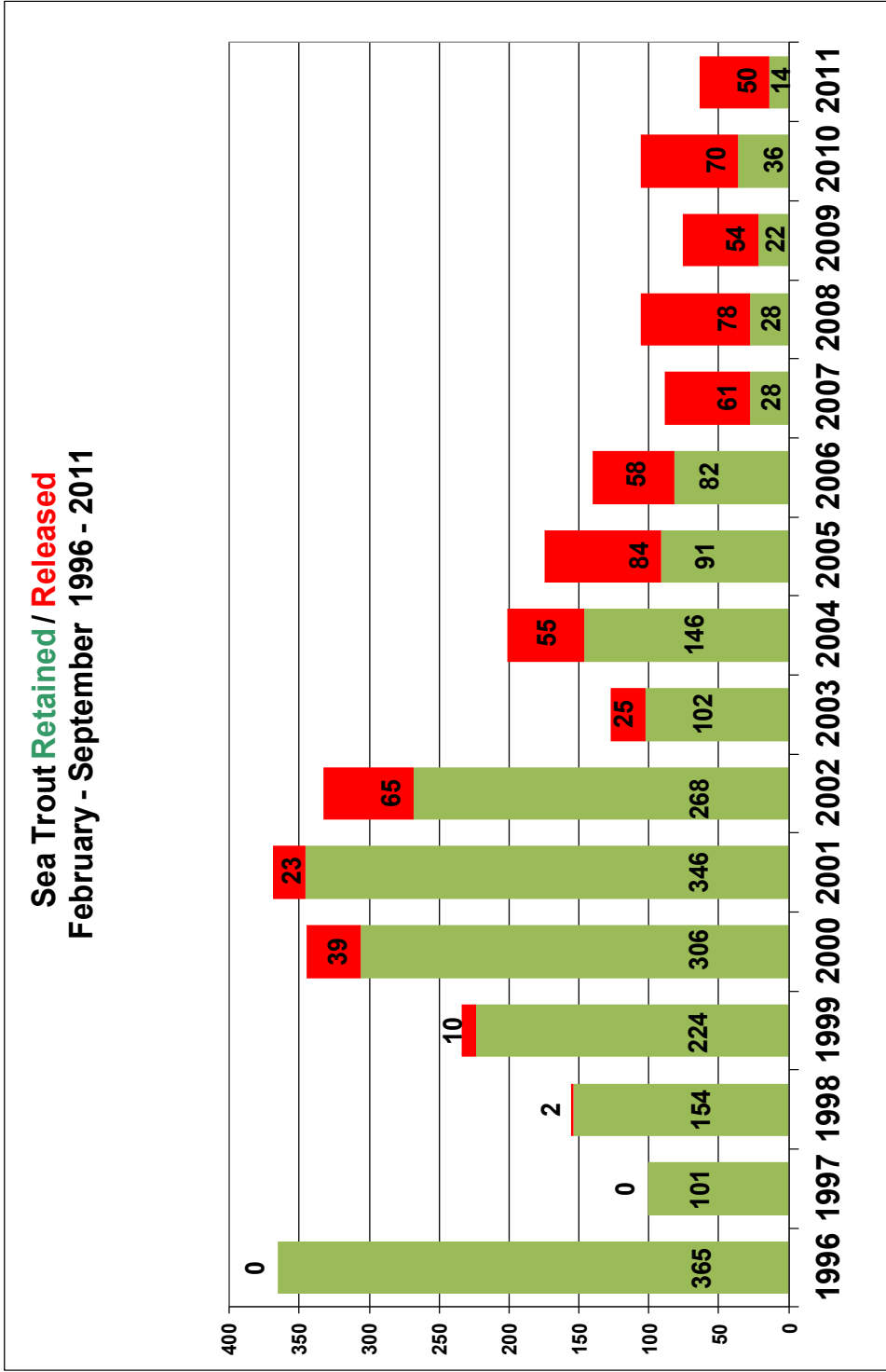
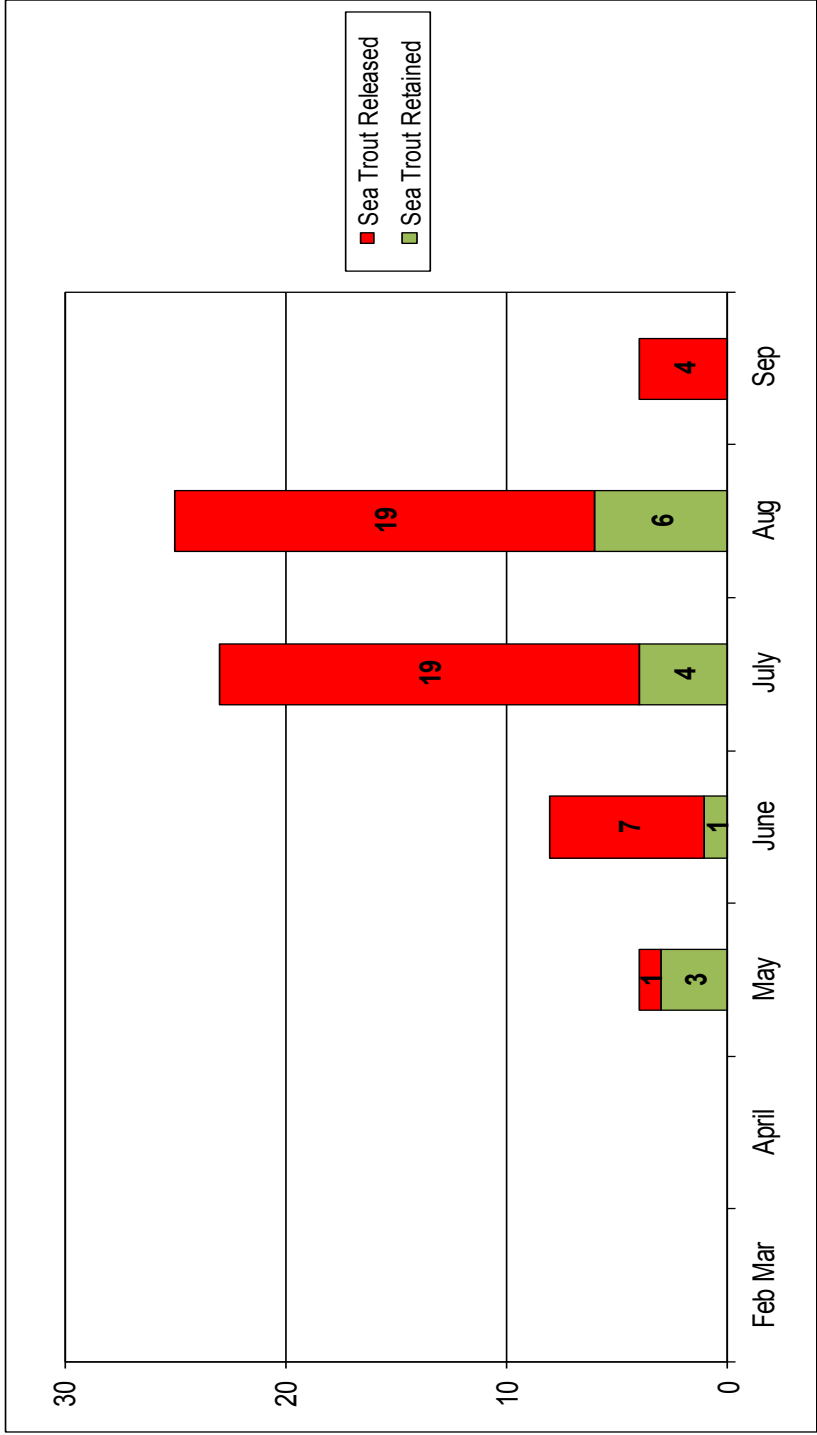
Grilse Retained / Released February to September 2011



Grilse Retained / Released February - September 1996 / 2011



Sea Trout Retained / Released February to September 2011



Combined **Salmon & Grilse**
Retained / Released
Ferbruary - September 1996 - 2011

