

## TFFC (Middelpunt) Fishery Report for the 2014/2015 Season

### Summary

Although the rainfall was below average for this period we were fortunate to commence it with full dams which did help produce favourable results. A total of 2155 rainbows were caught during this period of which 780 killed and these fish averaged 898g in weight. Although 64% of fish caught were released it is evident that a fairly high percentage of these do not survive on account of poor release practice and a steady increase over the years of predators such as white breasted cormorants and Cape Clawless otters.

Fortunately we had virtually no reports of anchor worm this season and hopefully this will no longer be a major problem in the fishery, but it is unlikely that that the parasite will disappear completely from our property. However, in retrospect it now appears that it was a mistake to remove grass carp from Dams 1 and 2 as part of the strategy to combat anchor worm, and the programme to restock these dams with this fish is proving expensive and will probably not yield positive results to reduce the aquatic weed for some years. Once again we were unable to obtain browns of a suitable size for stocking.

With regard to the future the serious leak at the overflow of Dam 3 has been repaired, but all indications are that after 10 years of average/above average rainfall we are entering a dry cycle with accompanying higher temperatures which may last some time. This will without doubt be a serious test for all the Mpumalanga trout fisheries.

#### 1. **Rainbows stocked vs. captured: 1994 - 2015**

Season	No. stocked	No. killed	No. C&R*	% killed	% killed+C&R.
1994/5	3206	1923	454	60,0	74,1
1995/6	2684	1730	373	64,5	78,3
1996/7	2523	1864	518	74,1	94,4
1997/8	2599	1784	454	64,3	93,8
1998/9	2518	1188	708	47,2	75,3
1999/00	3352	1394	715	41,6	62,9
2000/01	3035	1778	1360	58,6	103,4
2001/02	2746	1714	1477	62,4	116,2
2002/3	2455	1454	850	59,2	93,8
2003/4	2349	888	576	37,8	62,3
2004/5	2400	1236	1063	51,5	95,8
2005/6	2480	1019	1142	41,1	87,1
2006/7	1495	715	860	47,8	105,4
2007/8	1861	861	1159	46,3	108,5
2008/9	1498	767	992	51,2	117,4
2009/10	1926	705	1014	36,6	89,3
2010/11	1844	802	1209	43,5	109,1
2011/12	2066	709	1374	34,3	100,8
2012/13	2064	677	1362	32,8	98,8
2013/14	2000	657	1282	32,9	97,0
2014/15	2200	780	1375	35,5	98,0

\*C&R = Catch & Release

2. Relationship between size of Rainbows stocked & recapture rate: 1994 – 2015

Season	Avg. size stocked - grams	% killed	% killed+C&R.
1994/5	530	60,0	74,1
1995/6	672	64,5	78,3
1996/7	718	74,1	94,4
1997/8	649	64,3	93,8
1998/9	596	47,2	75,3
1999/00	556	41,6	62,9
2000/01	759	58,6	103,4
2001/2	765	62,4	116,2
2002/3	734	59,2	93,8
2003/4	673	37,8	62,3
2004/5	721	51,5	95,8
2005/6	706	41,1	87,1
2006/7	755	47,8	105,4
2007/8	645	46,3	108,5
2008/9	768	51,2	117,4
2009/10	701	36,6	89,3
2010/11	813	43,5	109,1
2011/12	646	34,3	100,8
2012/13	703	32,8	98,8
2013/14	750	32,9	97,0
2014/15	727	35,5	98,0

Although there is a strong correlation between size of fish stocked and recapture rate dry cycles coupled with high temperatures tend to drive recapture rates down while cooler summers result in lower mortality and therefore improved angling. In addition the impact of anchor worm had a negative effect in 2009/10 and possibly for a few years thereafter.

3. All trout (rainbows + browns) stocked vs recapture rates: 1994 – 2015

Season	No stocked	No. killed	No. returned	No. killed + C&R
1994/5	3206	1923	454	2377
1995/6	2684	1730	373	2103
1996/7	2523	1864	518	2382
1997/8	2599	1784	454	2238
1998/9	2590	1188	708	1896
1999/00	3403	1417	766	2183
2000/01	3235	1807	1454	3261
2001/2	2891	1766	1622	3388
2002/3	2625	1516	940	2456
2003/4	2349	901	594	1495
2004/5	2521	1260	1131	2391
2005/6	2455	1050	1231	2281
2006/7	1645	732	941	1673
2007/8	2064	879	1178	2057
2008/9	1713	789	1072	1861
2009/10	2080	726	1047	1773
2010/11	1928	810	1248	2058
2011/12	2122	716	1414	2130
2012/13	2104	685	1378	2063
2013/14	2000	657	1286	1933
2014/15	2200	780	1375	2155

C&R= Catch & Release

4. Avg. length, CF & mass plus total mass killed (Rainbows): 1996 – 2015.

Season	Avg. length	Avg. CF	Avg. mass killed	Total mass killed
1996/7	41,5 cm	122	852g	1638 kg
1997/8	41,1 cm	117	824g	1426 kg
1998/9	41,5 cm	119	815g	968 kg
1999/00	39,7 cm	118	735g	1024 kg
2000/01	41,1 cm	122	841g	1495 kg
2001/2	41,8 cm	123	901g	1544 kg
2002/3	41,0 cm	120	837g	1216 kg
2003/4	40,2 cm	124	806g	706 kg
2004/5	40,5 cm	129	852g	1053 kg
2005/6	40,9 cm	126	860g	876 kg
2006/7	42,0 cm	126	936g	669 kg
2007/8	41,1 cm	119	818g	704 kg
2008/9	41,1 cm	121	836g	641 kg
2009/10	40,9 cm	123	842g	594 kg
2010/11	43,0 cm	119	955g	766 kg
2011/12	41,0 cm	127	879g	623 kg
2012/13	40,0 cm	130	832g	563 kg
2013/14	41,4 cm	126	899g	591 kg
2014/15	41,5 cm	126	898g	700 kg

5. Five largest fish in 2014/15.

Mass	Angler	Month	Dam	Species	CF	Length
2,30 kg	Damster S. (visitor)	Feb	3	Rainbow	138	55 cm
2,20 kg	Beyler, H	Dec	4	Rainbow	132	55 cm
1,90 kg	Botha, B	Oct	5	Rainbow	121	54 cm
1,90 kg	Lahner, D	Aug	3	Rainbow	135	52 cm
1,80 kg	Krantz, C	Dec	1	Rainbow	108	55 cm

6. Breakdown of 2014/15 results by dam: No. Stocked vs. Killed & C & R\* – Rainbows only.

Dam	Stocked	Killed	Killed as % Stocked	C&R	C&R as % Stocked	C&R + Kill as % Stocked.
1	192	63	32,8	107	55,7	88,5
2	216	53	24,5	118	54,6	79,2
3	591	161	27,2	369	62,4	89,7
4	177	89	50,3	82	46,3	96,6
5	392	157	40,1	296	75,5	115,6
6	276	112	40,6	210	76,1	116,7
7	356	145	40,7	193	54,2	94,9
	<b>2200</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>35,5</b>	<b>1375</b>	<b>62,5</b>	<b>98,0</b>

\*C&R= Catch & Release

7. Breakdown of 2014/15 results by dam: Length, CF & Weight of Rainbows killed.

Dam	Mean Length cm	Mean CF	Mean Weight grams
1	40,9	135	1052
2	42,8	119	975
3	42,6	127	1011
4	42,0	126	913
5	40,3	124	789
6	40,7	126	866
7	40,8	122	809
<b>Middelpunt</b>	<b>41,4</b>	<b>125,6</b>	<b>898</b>

8. Number of members compared with number visits

Year	1998/9	1999/00	2000/1	2001/2	2002 /3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
<b>No. Members</b>	90	91	91	95	95	95	100	100	100	110	110	110	110
<b>No. Visits</b>	500	542	617	623	603	439	479	476	388	453	432	394	446
Year	2011/2	2012/3	2013/4	2014/5									
<b>No. Members</b>	110	110	110	110									
<b>No. Visits</b>	424	405	435	433									

In order to keep fees at a reasonable level the membership was increased up to 2007/8 but after a peak during 2000 to 2003 fishing pressure has remained fairly level during the last 7 seasons. The number of visits in the 2006/7 season was also well down because the clubhouse was closed for renovations during the winter of 2006.

A 'visit' is based on a form which is completed by each angler recording fish caught and this represents approximately 1,5 days angling effort. In theory nil returns should also be recorded but this is not always done.

Peter Arderne, July 2015  
mwardern@mweb.co.za