



ROTORUA ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

February 2026

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Presidents Pen.

2026 is off to a good start!

Our first club Event at Hamurana Stream mouth was very well attended with many trout caught and mostly released. Our young A-Z Course attendee "Raphael" certainly showed the way enthusiastically covering all the area and picking a number of fish.

The Monthly Leaderboard Competition had 20 entries via our website. Congratulations to those who entered. The calendar month's results are collated by our Competition & Trophy Convener- Gwen Inskeep. The names for the Monthly leaderboard are then agreed by the Committee and made available to members. All entries for the month go into the ballot for the bottle of wine, which is drawn at the last Friday of the month club night.

The Lake Aniwhenua weekend is all planned and accommodation is booked. Talk to Gavin for details. Please support this event, the engagement and participation of club members is essential to ensure our club prospers.

Our "Saltie Weekends" under the guidance of Graeme Dawber have recommenced in January. For those of us who enjoy beach fishing, this is a must do.

The annual Interclub competition is fast approaching. Your Committee had its first 2026 meeting on 15 January at which time Gwen & Nigel volunteered to begin planning of this event. The intention is to seek at least 3 volunteers from the membership to assist with the planning and organization of this event. We hope to invite a greater number of clubs and perhaps gain sponsorship.

LEADER BOARD RESULTS DECEMBER

Lake Rotorua , Ngongotaha stream.

Brendan Davis w.1.75 c/f 50.6

Lake Okataina

Roger Bowden. W 4.15 c/f 54.6

Lake Tarawera

Roger Bowden w 3.42 c/f 70.4

Random Weight.

Clair Ngatai. All twenty entries were in the draw for a bottle of wine. Clair's entry of a 1.846 fish out of Lake Okataina was the lucky winner.

February 2 Fly tying, club rooms

February 6 Club night

February 13 Club night

February 14-15 Club weekend, Aniwhenua

February 20 Club night

February 27 Club night BBQ

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CLUB FISHING TRIP 14TH– 15TH FEBRUARY

LAKE ANIWHENUA

By Neal Hawes

This lake was formed by the construction of the Aniwhenua hydro dam on the Rangitaiki River, commissioned in 1980. In the early years, the fishery earned a reputation for the production of many trophy trout weighing in excess of 5kg. These fish also appear in the lake's major spawning stream, the Horomanga. More recently, mature trout average about 1.5 – 2kg, with the odd one up to 3kg, but the lake contains a big population of smaller, immature fish. Both rainbow and brown trout occupy the lake, and are mainly caught fly fishing either from the shore or, more usually, from drifting or anchored boats. The lake is also suitable for float tubing, as well as spinning and trolling, although the latter method is restricted by the extensive weed beds in the lake. Jigging the deeper holes along the old river channel can also be productive. Due to weed encroachment in summer, shoreline fishing can be restricted, and fishing from a boat allows the angler to reach water beyond the weeds.



Brown trout tend to cruise the lake edges in search of food, and several places around the lake allow the angler to stalk these fish. Rainbows will generally be found in deeper water.

Public boating access to the lake is restricted to two points, the camping ground and boat ramp at the lower end of the lake on Black Road, and at the "Rabbit Bridge" at the top end of the lake (small dinghies only can be launched here). Walking access ("Fisherman's Walk") extends from the camping ground on Black Road for much of the eastern shore of the lake. Silting over the years has resulted in the lake now being divided into three distinct sections – the very shallow area above and below the Rabbit Bridge, the slightly deeper section down past the Poplars, and the deeper section from there to the dam.

The upper section around Rabbit Bridge is the home to some large browns, which can be stalked and cast to with nymphs, water-boatman, or midge patterns. Some of this area can be waded, but this is not recommended as the bottom is very variable with many holes and soft "quicksand". A small dinghy or pontoon boat is more suitable (too shallow in most places for successful float tubing). Immature rainbows are best fished from a drifting dinghy. Throughout the year, flies like woolly bugger and killer patterns work well, cast out and stripped back to the boat. Damsel and dragonfly nymphs are productive in summer, as well as bloodworms and hare & copper type nymphs. Where this section drops off into deeper water, it is a good place to anchor in order to fish into the deeper water, especially after dark. If fishing after dark, get to your favoured spot in daylight, to position the boat so you are fishing into the hole or drop-off you wish to fish. All the usual night flies will work.

The bottom two thirds of the lake is much deeper, though quite weedy over much of it, particularly in summer. Fishing deeper, either drifting between the weed beds or anchored over one of the many holes between the weeds, will find some of the bigger rainbows as well as some browns. The canal leading from the dam to the powerhouse can also be fished using the methods of fly fishing with nymph or wet fly or spinning. The small header lake above the powerhouse can be fished from a few places around the shore.

Anglers are advised not to fish below the dam, as water can be spilled at any time.

Below Lake Aniwhenua, good spin and fly fishing in the main river is restricted by the lack of access points, but access is available from the Te Teko – Murupara road bridge at the head of Lake Matahina, and the Waihua and Mangamako stream accesses.

Waihua and Mangamako Streams: Access can be obtained from the road bridges, and fishing is possible upstream and downstream to the Rangitaiki confluences. Good nymph and dry fly water, but travel along the stream banks is for the fitter angler.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS



EASY AS TROUT WITH MAPLE SYRUP GLAZE

INGREDIENTS

800 gm [approximate] trout fillet cut to suit serving size
¼ cup unsalted, melted butter
¼ cup maple syrup (genuine maple syrup works best)
1tbsp soy sauce
1tbsp Dijon Mustard



METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 190 Celsius
2. Arrange the trout fillets in a baking dish.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the butter, maple syrup mustard , and soy sauce
4. Brush the maple syrup mixture over trout.
5. Add freshly ground pepper to taste.
6. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until trout flakes with a fork.

Delicious

Serve with long grain wild rice and seasonal, roasted vegetables.



OUT THERE DOING IT



Fresh snapper for the evening meal



Roger with another quality Tarawera trout.

Below left. Ralphael, proud of his first brown trout out of Lake Rotorua.

Below right. Patience rewarded. Bryce with well conditioned fish bound for the smoker



PUT THESE EVENTS INTO YOUR DIARY

Club trip to Lake Aniwhenua

Date. February 14th—15th

Accommodation. Black Road, Aniwhenua. Club member Glen Ballinger offers a stand-alone house that he rents out as a fishing lodge. All amenities provided, nine beds available.

Cost. Accommodation in the house \$40.00 per night per person.

If you wish to camp out, there is plenty of room in front of the house. Two hundred metres further on, there is a public camping ground with toilet facilities

Booking. If you are looking to secure one of the available beds, it is essential that you let the organiser know .Gavin Corbett. 0212263978

CARTER HOUSE RETIREMENT VILLAGE FISH OUT

Eastern Fish and Game and the Rotorua Anglers Association have been hosting residents and their caregivers for a day at the hatchery for more than fifteen years. This is an annual event, unique to the Carter retirement village. It is keenly anticipated by residents. Helping twenty or more elderly men and women cast a line and land a fish requires planning and commitment. The residents are accompanied by four or five trained caregivers, and coaching and assistance to land a fish is freely offered by volunteers from the angling club. It was a very rewarding day for all involved.



ROTORUA A&P SHOW

The Rotorua A&P show [agriculture and pastoral], staged in the first week of December, offered another opportunity for the Rotorua Anglers Association to reach out to the community. For a modest fee, we were able to set up our marquee, and talk to those interested about the benefits of joining our club.

Target trout, which had been modelled and decorated by Dave and Marie Hutchison were placed at strategic intervals and passers by encouraged to “have a go” with the club fly rods set up for the purpose. Experienced fisherman, absolute beginners, young and old, all seemed to enjoy the challenge of casting their fly line to the trout of their choice. The reward for the efforts, a fish of the chocolate variety.



The take away lesson for the club members who volunteered for the day, was the enthusiasm of the younger generation. Their passion for fishing and learning marks them as the future of fishing clubs like ours, and we should be seeking a means of bridging the gap between young and old.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

The sea fishing charters organized by Rod Hinnit, on behalf of the Rotorua Anglers Association, are proving to be popular, and rewarding given the high cost of fresh fish from the supermarkets. Departing from Whakatane, the vessel “*Aquarius*”, skipped by experienced local fisherman, Josh, set out to meet the first challenge. When the boat crossed the bar, the Whakatane River was flowing strong. It contained an alarming amount of debris, including full-sized logs released from somewhere up river. Josh appeared unconcerned, but we hurriedly donned life jackets.

It’s a long and challenging trip out to the mussel farms, especially so for land lubbers not used to the motion of the boat. Luckily, the seas flattened around midday, and every one was hooking up with some very good snapper. The entire catch was filleted and bagged during the trip back to base.



THE NGO CLUB

In September 2025, Simon Aston had a simple goal. It was to share knowledge and teach fishing skills to the young fishermen on the Ngongotaha Stream.

Because Simon was living out his retirement within close proximity to the stream, it meant that he had every opportunity to fish this renowned stretch of water, and to witness at first hand the efforts of anglers of all ages and ability levels. What struck Simon most was the enthusiasm and commitment of the children and teenagers who treated the stream banks like a second home. Some were more accomplished than others, some with quality rods and full fly boxes, others with only the most rudimentary gear and limited knowledge.

Simon decided he would help where he could. It began simply enough. He helped a child free a snagged line, assisted another with a net to land the catch, shared a favourite fly or two, pointed out the fish feeding in the current, taught line management skills and, in fact, anywhere Simon could see help was needed, he stepped up.

Word quickly spread, and the “skinny old dude” on the stream became the go-to for the young fisherman looking for help, advice and just perhaps, some handouts of gear that Simon had received as donations. The project began as one man’s mission to help, but quickly gained momentum and took on a life of its own. Help was needed and offered. Fellow fisherman of the stream recognized what Simon was attempting and stepped up to help. Time, knowledge and fishing gear was donated freely, and the confidence and ability of the young anglers increased exponentially. Simon notes that the ‘club spirit’ has resulted in less acrimony amongst the young fisherman, and that there is a preference for legal fly fishing methods as opposed to the use of bread or roe that was sometimes resorted to.

Eastern Fish and Game offered their support as did local retailers Hamills and the Rotorua Holiday Park. Rotorua Anglers Association club member Stuart Winn regularly supplied quantities of flies that he tied specifically for stream fishing, and the Rotorua Anglers Association was able to supply pre-loved fishing gear that had been donated to their club. This generous level of support means that some modest prizes could be offered each month for Best Boy Fishing, Best Girl Fishing and Photo of the Month.

Simon is grateful for the help by offered by Georgia at Eastern Fish and Game in establishing a Facebook page, the NGO Trout Fishing Club. Currently boasting over three hundred followers, the page has proved the ideal medium for the young anglers to post photos of their catches and share fishing knowledge. When asked about the future of the NGO Trout Fishing Club, Simon insisted that it would largely be decided by the fisherman themselves because it is their club, not his. The most encouraging indication is that young fishers who had learned and benefited from the advice and instruction offered were now sharing that knowledge with their own peer group.



Rotorua Anglers Association club member, Simon, helping a young lad catch his first fish.