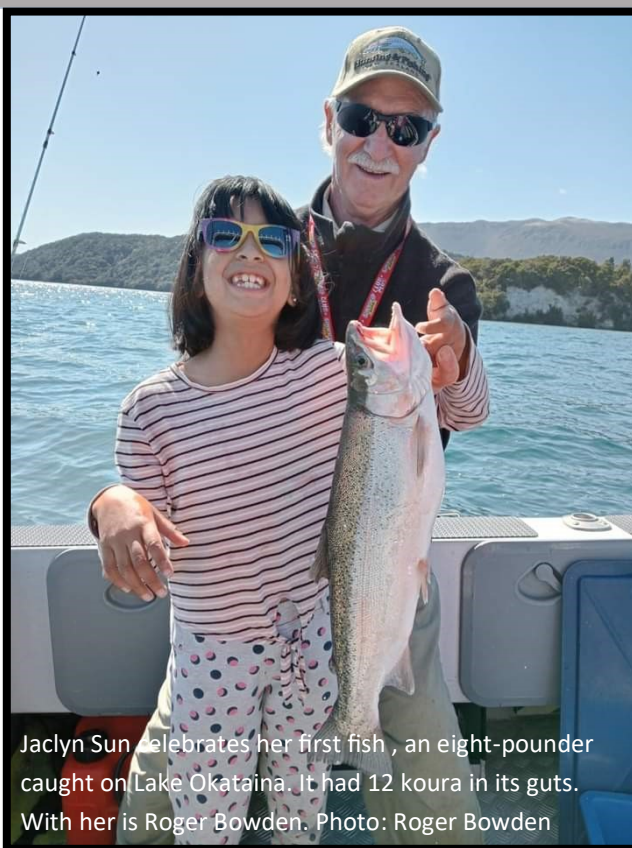


ROTORUA ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

February 2023

NEWSLETTER



Jaclyn Sun celebrates her first fish , an eight-pounder caught on Lake Okataina. It had 12 koura in its guts. With her is Roger Bowden. Photo: Roger Bowden

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Contribution Deadline: 20th of each month

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The content and comments in this newsletter are those of the authors or by participating members and not necessarily those of other Association members

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome everyone to a new year of fishing opportunities. Yes, while we are still able, let's enjoy our passions. I guess we cannot exclude mentioning the recent heavy rains. Who would have thought of Auckland, Northland, Coromandel and Tauranga having deluge disasters. And our main airport under water? Be careful of potholes, because any little crack in this rain quickly breaks out into a mud pothole. What was interesting to see were 6 little waterfalls coming off the sides of the Mangorewa Gorge (Tauranga Direct Road).

My business was affected when the sea became so rough that the pilot captain could not safely climb the ladder into the cruise ship to take over to bring the ship in through the channel. So the ship would just stay at sea while passengers enjoyed the slow trip to the next port. I took out some Mexicans from Chihauha south of the US border, and when he looked in my Visitor Book he said "No Way!" I had taken his sister out 8 years ago, and she was here again. A big thanks to Trevor from Drapes by Design for giving us a good deal on our curtains. See their advert, and please support them if you need quality drapes.

I walked the beach as the sea was not good for swimming, and saw 3 dead puffer fish, bluebottles (Portuguese Man 'O War) and oyster catchers foraging for pippies. They follow the wave back at low water and look for little strands sticking out of the sand, these being the feeding strands. They grab the shell, run up the beach before the next wave, open and eat it in 12 seconds. Unfortunately, the gulls have now begun harassing the birds.

I had a good trip with Neville Robinson on Tarawera and we got some very good rainbows. It was good to see Ross again at the club. He was in charge of extending the clubhouse (store room area). The Hamurana social went well although the fish had not woken up yet. Roy lost his faithful Land Cruiser key, and after some careful searching, found it behind a van. It had clipped out of his key purse. But this was not before he had to climb in through the roof!

Thanks to the committee for carrying on with the monthly BBQ while I was at the coast. We still need a secretary. Please BYO till we can get the liquor license done. We need to wait for the local streams to clear because they are presently high and brown.

FISH OF THE MONTH

A rainbow trout was caught by Piet Otto on Lake Tarawera, on 19 Jan. He was fishing with Neville Robinson on a boat. The fish weighed 2.5kg and was 60 cm long. These fish were eating Bullies and smelt



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FEBRUARY UPCOMING EVENTS and REMINDERS

- Sat 11th Ngongotaha Stream Team from 9am. BBQ midday
- Mon 13th Fly tying. Clubhouse 7pm
- Thurs 16th Committee meeting 7pm
- Mon 20th Dark moon. Deadline for the newsletter and fish of the month
- Fri 24th BBQ and register for the Interclubs.
- Sat, Sun 25, 26th Interclub championship. Organiser: Gavin. We hope that all club members will take part either fishing or volunteering or both. Put this in your diaries. The anglers can win really nice prizes .

TYING THE SNAKE FLY

Colin Cox

The snake fly is tied in two parts.

We tie the rear part first.

- Place the hook in the vise, place the braid on top of the hook and make 10x turns.
- Run the tag end back through the eye of the hook. Allow about 12cm of braid to go forward
- Place the zonker strip on the hook with the leather end just on the bend of the hook, secure and bring thread forward. Pull the zonker strip up to the eye and secure.

The second part

- Place the forward hook in the vise. Tie on the thread at the bend. Bring the braid forward and bind around the hook and secure with thread (you decide how long you want it to be)
- Take thread forward and bring the zonker strip to the front of the hook and tie down. Whip finish.
- Its important to secure all the joins with super glue. Also, the braid must be slightly shorter than the zonker because it must take the strain when a fish takes it

You can add eye or dubbing and flash to your liking



The snake fly . Photo: Colin Cox

NIGHT FISHING AT THE AWAHOU RIVER MOUTH - 40 YEARS AGO

Let me introduce myself. My name is Jack Phillips, and I am now in my 89th year and getting a bit creaky. Consequently, actively chasing wily brown and rainbow trout is now but a store of treasured memories, and it is one these recollections that I would like to share with you.

First, a bit of background to put things in perspective. I was a banker for 40 years who, with my family, lived and worked in numerous localities in New Zealand over the years, but there was a period in the late 1970's and early 80's when we were regular visitors to Rotorua at holiday times. They were magic days. It was then that I joined the RAA and have been a member ever since. However, to my great disappointment, I have never actually managed to visit the Club, or enjoy any of its varied activities over these many years, but the monthly newsletters are read with great interest, and keep me in the picture regarding the numerous thoroughly worthwhile issues in which the Club is involved. So, the bulk of my trout fishing has been elsewhere, principally Taupo, where I was also a member of that Club for a time while living there in retirement.

My favourite fishing spot in those earlier days, and remains so, is the Awahou River mouth in late January, particularly at night when the daytime breezes have dropped away, leaving a calm surface to the lake, and with the warmth of another sunny day still in the air. It was with a real sense of anticipation that waders were donned, and all the other fly-fishing accoutrements checked over yet again, before wading eagerly out into the lake as the twilight was gently descending. Other anglers were also on the move, with happy exchanges of good wishes for a successful night's fishing. By the time the longish wade out had taken us into water up to waist level, the sky was darkening, leaving the vault of the heavens spread out above us in a glorious splash of blazing white, if the night was clear. I recall too that sometimes the fiery trail of a spent meteorite was to be seen lending the whole scene a special atmosphere. On many nights, the sounds of possums fighting in the bush at the lake edge could be heard, and this was frequently offset by the wonderfully mellifluous singing wafting across the lake from the Meeting House on Gloucester Road. Where else would you want to be?

Such was the setting for the night in January 1979 where I caught the largest trout in my fishing career. The line of anglers was soon in action, and the exciting sound of whistling fly lines speeding into the darkness always gave me a thrill, with the simultaneous hope that in striving for distance, the cast had not been a poor one, which in that event would almost certainly result in a cursed wind knot. So, it was down to work. I was fishing with a number 7 'Meteor' Intermediate fly line, shortened to make a shooting head, with a long thin running floating line attached, and had a Keith Draper pattern 'Guardsmen' night fly (No 8) on the business end. This is still a good night fly, and simple to tie in Craig's Nighttime fashion. I have always tied my own flies. The Guardsman's black fur tail and chenille body, with the red breast feathers from a golden pheasant along the top makes a handsome fly. The trout seem to think so too!

The evening progressed happily, and it was interesting to realize that often the angler next to you was recognisable only by his voice, or the shape of his hat in the gloom, as we quietly talked together of many things. If we had later met in the street, there would have been no obvious recognition until we spoke! As is so often the case when fishing, the mind wanders, and as I was automatically drawing in line, it suddenly stopped and seemed to have snagged on something.

Oh dear. A few bad words followed! In trying to free it, I suddenly became aware that the bottom was moving steadily and relentlessly back into deeper water. It was then that I realized I was fast into a large fish. So as not to get tangled with the lines of fellow anglers, I moved back out of the row of fishermen to the point where there was plenty of room to do battle. From then on it was actually disappointing because the trout decided to swim in circles, which allowed me to gradually shorten line until I could place my net ahead of it, thus trapping it before it knew what had happened. The fun then began. Realizing that it had been captured, it thrashed about to such an extent that I thought I would lose it. In the end all was well, and when we examined the fish in the torchlight, we saw a beautiful brown hen in splendid condition. She weighed ten and a half pounds, and was subsequently mounted, and has graced the wall of the various homes we have lived in since that time. Whenever I look at that fish, I can experience again the great pleasures of night fishing for trout at Rotorua's Awahou River mouth. Fond memories live on forever. Tight lines folks, and as an old veteran of early days at Taupo would say "Good luck to the fish!"



The Awahou Stream mouth. Photo: from the collection at the Rotorua Museum

ANOTHER DAY AT THE WAITITE STREAM

Gwen Inskeep

It was a mid-January morning. The sun was rising across the lake as I stood on the footbridge over the Waitite Stream. On the true left at the lodge were a group of Asians having an early breakfast and watching the locals on the true right bank trying to catch fish. They were lined up almost shoulder to shoulder from the bridge to the lake edge, with three more out in the lake itself. It was going to be busy for a while. I looked the anglers over and noted a few nervous looks my way.

When I asked the first angler for his licence, he told me he had left it at home. After some more discussion it turned out that he did not have a licence. I made out the offence notice and sized his rod. He then said, "I am not the only one here without a licence. I asked how he know that. "I just know, and you will not do anything about it. You just turn a blind eye to them, your lot always do," while making a gesture to a group that were a bit further down the line. "Well sir," I said, "you are just going to have to wait and see what happens."

The next few anglers were no problem but then I came to the first of the next group. He did not have a licence and politely told me that he did not need one. Well, I had heard that before somewhere. So, rather than talk about it, he was issued with an offence notice and his gear was seized. With that, the next four started to leave. I told them that I wanted to see their licences before they left. Well surprise, surprise, they did not have licences. The first man had been right about one thing but not the other. I now had six rods and had experienced a lot of abuse but that's par for the course.

The rest of the anglers all had licences. As I turned to leave, a well-known local gang member stood on the foot bridge and informed me in a very loud voice that he was going to beat the s___ out of me and throw me in the stream. This got everyone's attention. I made my way back to the bridge through a mist of more abuse. The first man I had taken his rod from looked at me and said, "Now what are you going to do? I want my rod back now."

"No, you can't have it back, but you can look after these rods while I try and sort

the problem,” I said. I stood the rods up against the bridge and moved towards the person on the bridge. Once more he explained what was going to happen. I got to within about 3 ft of him and started to ask him to move on when he turned and ran from the bridge and was still running as he disappeared around the corner some 300 meters away. I then picked up the rods and thanked the man. I returned to my ute and placed the rods inside. It had been a busy morning.



A group of members at the January fishout at Hamurana enjoying the lunch break and a chat. Neal, Roy, Margaret, Gwen, David, Larry, Jo, Colin and Ron. Photo by Pete

FISHING THE RUAKITURI RIVER

In November 2022, Roger Bowden went on a trip to the Ruakituri River, in the Gisborne and Hawkes's Bay region of North Island. The river has its source north of Lake Waikareiti in the Te Urewera National Park. Initially, it flows northeast and then it turns southeast for much of its course. The spot where Roger fished is a 5-hour drive from Rotorua.

He writes "It is always a bit risky because with a slight sniff of rain overnight the river will flood and become unfishable. The river was clear when we arrived, and we had a half day (afternoon) of beautiful weather and another full day of beautiful sunshine. I caught and released 21 nice rainbows and browns in this window of opportunity and lost quite a few in this fast-flowing, rocky river. Then it started raining after midnight on the night of the eclipse and the river came down dirty and was unfishable by 8 am on Wednesday, so a 5-hour trip home was the agenda of the day. This is why the fishery is so good because it floods suddenly and very often."



Roger Bowden bringing in a fish



A brown trout caught on the Ruakituri River. Photo: Roger Bowden

INTERCLUB COMPETITION 2023

Gavin Corbett

Mark it on your calendar or enter the event into your phone or computer. The weekend of the 24th to the 26th of February is scheduled for the Rotorua Anglers Association to host the annual interclub competition. For those of you who have not experienced an interclub in previous years, let me sum it up. It's about fishing and friendship.

The current holders of the trophy are the Taupo Angler's Club, and this year they will be challenged by the Tauranga Anglers Club, and of course, the Rotorua Anglers Association. Sadly, two clubs who have competed in past tournaments no longer have the membership numbers to compete. As the host club, we get to define the basic rules for the weekend, and the allocation of various prizes which have been generously donated by Killwell. There will be prizes for individual anglers in the usual categories, and the trophy itself will be determined with each club submitting their best "bag of four" caught over the weekend. The tournament fishing grounds will be limited to Lake Rotorua and its tributaries. This gives



every opportunity for boat and land-based anglers alike to fish by any legal method.

Hosting the interclub tournament is an opportunity for the Rotorua Anglers Association to welcome anglers from other regions and have them experience the wonderful fishery that Rotorua offers. Your club needs your support. We need anglers represent the club, and hosts to ensure the weekend runs smoothly and brings credit to your club Full details will be released at upcoming club meetings, and at the official briefing on Friday evening 24th of February. Meanwhile, mark it on your calendar, and determine to be there.



The fate of Marie's fish — smoked, and eaten with biscuits and accompanied by a glass of wine. Not pictured are good company and a beautiful sunset.



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Marie Hutchison caught this 6lb fish at the eastern end of Lake Rotoiti. Photo:
David Hutchinson



One of the eight koura in Jaclyn's Lake Okataina rainbow trout.
Photo: Roger Bowden