



# ROTORUA ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

*May 2026*

## Kids Fish Out, April 2026

### Gavin Corbett

My back aches, my knees hurt, and my voice is hoarse, but what a thoroughly rewarding day. There was a sense of real satisfaction in helping children experience the excitement of catching their first trout.

The praise and gratitude that many of the parents expressed to me underlined the value of the Kids Fish Out Day. One young mum remembered her own experience on the pond thirty years ago and was thrilled to be taking her young son on the same adventure.

Just as important to me was the sense of belonging to a team. A group of anglers all committed to making the day a success. The number of volunteers was down a bit in the first hour or two, but everyone just adapted to the situation and moved the queue of children through. As the morning moved on, more help arrived, not only from R.A.A members, but volunteers arrived from different sectors of the Rotorua fishing community amplifying the sense of teamwork and camaraderie.



Anticipation at a high level



Fish On!



Claire is up to the challenge of filleting hundreds of fish.

**May 1st Club Night**

**May 4th Fly tying, Club rooms**

**May 8th Club night**

**May 15th Club Night**

**May 22nd Club Night**

**May 29th Club Night, Pot Luck Meal**

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## THE FLY TYER'S DESK

### Woolly bugger

**Hook:** 4X long streamer hook, sizes 6–12

**Thread :** Black or olive, 6/0

**Tail :** Marabou (black, olive, or brown)

**Body:** [Chenille](#) (matching tail colour)

**Hackle:** Saddle hackle feather (colour matching tail and body)

**Weight (optional):** Lead or lead-free wire wraps or a bead head



#### Secure the hook

Place the hook in your vise and ensure it is stable. If you require weight, wrap lead or lead-free wire around the hook shank near the eye to add sinking power.

#### Start the thread base

Attach your thread just behind the hook eye and wrap it back to the bend, creating an even thread base.

#### Tie in the tail

Select a clump of marabou feathers about the length of the hook shank. Tie it in at the bend of the hook, securing it firmly with several wraps of thread. Trim any excess marabou.

#### Prepare and tie in the hackle

Select a saddle hackle feather and tie it in by the tip at the same spot where the tail is tied. The shiny side should face forward.

#### Attach the body material

Tie in the chenille at the tail base. Wrap the thread forward to about 1/8 inch behind the hook eye, leaving room for the hackle and finishing steps.

#### Wrap the body

Wrap the chenille forward in even, tight turns, covering the hook shank. Stop just behind the hook eye and secure the chenille with thread wraps. Trim any excess.

#### Palmer the hackle

Wrap the hackle feather forward in open spirals over the chenille body. Secure it near the hook eye and trim any excess feather.

#### Build the head

Create a smooth, tapered head by wrapping thread in front of the body material. This ensures a neat finish and secures all materials.

#### Finish the fly

Whip finish or tie a few half-hitches near the hook eye to secure the thread. Apply a drop of head cement for added durability.



# EASY AS SMOKED TROUT DIP

## Ingredients

- 1 250g tub of cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp. lemon zest
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 250g [one fillet] smoked trout
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh chives



## Method.

1. To a food processor add the cream cheese, sour cream, minced garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, pepper and salt. Pulse until well combined.
2. Remove the skin from the trout. Discard the skin. Flake the trout. Add about half of it to the cream cheese mixture in the food processor. Pulse a few times to mash it up and blend it in.
3. Transfer the cream cheese mixture to a to a medium bowl and stir in the remaining flaked trout and the chives.

Taste it and add more salt, pepper, and lemon juice, if desired. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

**Hint.** The smoked trout is the hero of the dish. When you add the remaining trout to the dip you have created in the food processor, be sure to have chunky flakes of fish. This will add to the visual appeal and texture of the dish



Hot smoked trout, the hero of the dish

# OUT THERE DOING IT

## The luck of the Swiss

Roger Bowden

My Swiss friend, Roland, had planned for a couple of days fishing on his way back from Twizel and his South Island adventures, on the 11th April. However, due to the petrol crisis, he decided to advance his ferry crossing to the 7th. Providentially, the impending cyclone would have made fishing very unpleasant on the preplanned days. On 9 April, we fished Okataina on a windless day with nice conditions, patches of sun amongst the cloud, contrary to the forecasted rain. Roland caught a nice 3.3 kg jack after a few hours of wondering if there were any fish in the lake. When the bite came, we had some great tussles and ended up keeping four prime fish and releasing six.

The next day we fished Tarawera. It was another calm day with pleasant, cloudy conditions. My very first drop produced a feisty 3.75 kg jack adorned with an X24 tag and within 10 minutes three fish came to the net. We were only two hundred metres from the boat ramp. The next two hours proved a challenge, even though we were fishing in a known hotspot. Half dozen other boats remained fishless there too. Finally, boredom convinced us to relocate to White Cliffs. We struck a bite time there and nailed some beautiful 2.7 kg maiden footballs.

Roland had wanted some of the magnificent Rotorua Lakes fish to spread around his many New Zealand friends. Some smoked trout would be taken to China and Thailand via his return to Switzerland. We kept seven of the ten landed. I was not looking forward to the next day's filleting, which was, coincidentally, cyclone day, the day the trip had been originally planned for. He left Rotorua laden with trout and was already looking forward to planning trips on his return later in the year.



**Top:** Roland with a magnificent 3,75kg jack

**Centre:** Roger is consistently catching good conditioned fish.

**Bottom:** When the fishing is so good, you can afford to let the smaller ones go.

## SERVICE REVIEW

Clare Ngatai.

**10/10 Service.** I stayed at Ron's and was served this masterpiece. The Eggs Florentine were exquisite, the sausages were perfectly browned, and his 'famous' coffee is the only reason I survived the day.

Honestly, Ron's cooking is so good it clearly used up all my luck for the day—because while he was reeling in trout, I was just out there practicing my 'catch and release' method without the 'catch' part. Obviously, the next thing is for me to work on is my fishing ability.



## ROTORUA BOYS HIGH SCHOOL

Gavin Corbett

It's hard to imagine. six teenage boys, quietly seated, cell phones turned off and totally focussed on the task in front of them. These young men were participating in a workshop organised by a teacher from Rotorua Boys High. The challenge that faced them, was tying a streamer fly.

Teacher Stephanie Kiesel was instrumental in setting up an extra-curricular activity for students who wanted to learn more about fly fishing for trout.

Stephanie had approached the Rotorua Anglers Association and asked if it were possible to tap into the knowledge and experience that members possessed. After some discussion, it was agreed that we would host six individual classes covering two basic skills. They were casting a fly line and tying two or three basic flies. Each student paid a nominal fee and attended six, one-hour-long, tutorials at the Rotorua Anglers clubrooms. Their enthusiasm to learn was evident from the first few minutes. One or two of them were already skilled enough to fish the local streams. For the remainder, everything was a new skill to be mastered.

For the club members who gave up their time to teach these young fishermen, it was a very satisfying experience. Thank you to Colin, Richard and Gordon. Watching these young men tie flies or perfect their casting was reward enough but

as a bonus, expanding our reach beyond the club may help boost Rotorua Anglers Association membership and secure its future.



# BAROMETRIC PRESSURE

Barometric pressure is one of those subtle forces that quietly shapes trout behaviour—often more than anglers realise.

When pressure is high and stable in typically clear, calm weather, trout tend to become less active because the increased pressure slightly compresses the water column. As a result, they often hold deeper, move less and feed selectively. On these days, success usually comes from slowing things down—think nymphing deep pools or presenting flies with minimal drag.

In contrast, falling barometric pressure—usually ahead of a weather front—is prime time for fishing. Trout seem to sense the change and feed more aggressively, almost as if they know conditions are about to deteriorate. This is when you'll often see more surface activity, opportunistic takes, and generally less cautious fish. It's a great window to fish nymphs, streamers or dry flies with confidence.

Once a front passes and pressure begins rising quickly, trout can shut down again. Sudden changes tend to put them off the bite, and fishing may slow until conditions stabilise. In practical terms, the "sweet spot" is often just before or during a gentle drop in pressure. For anglers around places like Rotorua's lakes and streams, keeping an eye on the weather forecast isn't just about comfort—it's a tactical advantage.

In the end, barometric pressure doesn't act alone, but paired with light, temperature, and water conditions, it can be the difference between a quiet day and one to remember.

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Send your comment to [corbettgavin@gmail.com](mailto:corbettgavin@gmail.com)

## MARCH LEADER BOARD

### Lake Tarawera

Roger Bowden (two fish)

Weight.3.52kg	Length 64cm	Condition factor 48.5
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Weight 3.53kg	Length 66cm	Condition factor 44.4
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### Lake Okataina

Ron Cole

Weight 2.4kg	Length 60.5 cm	Condition factor 40.
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Roger Bowden

Weight 3.16 kg	Length 66cm	Condition factor 39.7
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# THE WANDERING FISHER FOLK

David and Marie Hutchison

South Island 2026

It is nearly 2 months to the day since we last reported on our adventures. Leaving Lake Taylor in the Hawarden district, we travelled to Hamner where Marie conquered Mt Isabel solo, an absolute personal best for her. We visited family & friends in Christchurch and then travelled to Tekapo, briefly fished the Tekapo canal before travelling through to Twizel and fishing familiar canals. Marie got up the next morning and decided to bike from Tekapo to

Twizel, meeting me and the caravan at Lake Wardell. The scenery and magic of the Mackenzie Country captivate both Marie and I. We love the colours, the sunrises and sunsets as well as the night sky. It is a place of much beauty for us. However, in the more than seven years we have visited there, it is quite noticeable how the fishery has diminished. In my view, this is a scenario that has been played out all over the world where vibrant fisheries have been over-fished. It appears to me that many New Zealand citizens choose to ignore good fishing practices and regulations at an individual level. All of these rely on voluntary compliance. Marie and I have witnessed practices that contravene good fishing etiquette and regulations. In addition, another contributing factor is years of underfunding of our excellent and committed regulatory body.

Later, one lovely dawn immediately downstream of the Lake Pukaki Control Gate, I caught and released a lovely fat brown (Est 4- 6lb) which provided a very lively fight on light gear. Great fun! In the days following, we observed lots of smaller fish. However, walking back to the caravan at Lake Wardell, I spotted out of the corner of my eye, a tail the size of the wingmirror of our ute. The fish was sitting in the in the shallows, facing upstream enjoying the sun. It was the biggest rainbow I had ever seen. The beast was deep green along its back with a magnificent flash of red along its side, and the belly of a Sumo wrestler! I now know what a 20lb rainbow looks like in the flesh. This fish was well in excess of that. All I could do was observe in wonder, before this leviathan moved off into deeper water. There is nothing further to report, despite several days of fishing at many different locations.

We travelled to Cromwell to spend time with family and friends. Marie completed the Lake Dunstan trail with them. We both fished Lake Dunstan for rainbow trout and redfin perch from the shore behind our camp, which made for a pleasant distraction.

The next stop was Glenorchy, a lovely spot at the head of Lake Wakatipu and where the wind defeated all our fishing efforts. However, the scenery certainly made up for it. A highlight was travelling up to Kinloch and Diamond Lake, and part way up to the now abandoned early settlement of Paradise.

We then travelled down via Kingston to Lumsden to hunt wild brown trout in the Oreti River. This was a first-time experience of chasing wild browns in a braided river. We are now both well and truly hooked on this sport! One day turned into three days and we made a plan to return once we had travelled further south. Time went very quickly, with a bike ride from Lumsden to Mossburn and return. My reward in Mossburn? A king-size sausage roll and a slice of lolly cake, washed down with a large latte. Such delicacies are very much rationed these days!

We learnt a lot We found fish which obviously had seen us first and this caused us to improve our limited fly-fishing skills. I have now learnt to change flies whilst on my knees, hiding behind a shingle bank in the hope of enticing two large browns out from under a willow tree and in very shallow water. Eternally optimistic, but in terms of skill, both Marie and I have heaps to learn.



The next stop was the southern coast via Otautau, Tuatapere, Orepuki and a free camp known as Monkey Island (Te Puka o Takitimu). It is a wind-swept, ruggedly beautiful, gently shelving sand beach and bay. It is also the location of Gemstone Beach where Marie was in her element. Several banded wrasse were caught and released around Monkey Island. We spent five days there and then travelled to Invercargill via Riverton, a place we thoroughly enjoy and did more bike riding.

After five days in Invercargill, we travelled through to Alexandra. By this time the fuel crisis had arrived and we decided to travel less and stay longer. Sadly, our return trip to the Oreti River and Lumsden was postponed. Alexandra and environs produced another beautiful brown, a little bigger than the previous one plus numerous redfin perch. It was all catch and release and good fun. We also enjoyed a very pleasant return bike ride to Clyde. The autumn colours are quite something.

We chose to return to Lake Wardell in the McKenzie country and spent 12 days there fishing the canals where we met with some success. It is a truly unique spot as the photos show.

We then returned to Christchurch for a short time to resupply and then travelled up to Kaikoura where we currently are as I write this article. We will be here for 7 days. South Bay is a favourite fishing spot and has proven its worth yet again. It produced two good-sized blue moki, one each to Marie and me over 2 days, turning them into six servings of pad Thai.

From here, it is a short trip to Blenheim to catch the ferry and begin our journey homeward to the North Island.

The diesel prices have severely curtailed our wanderings, but you have to roll with the punches. It's now wine o'clock and my job is all but done, until the next time.

