



Association of Salmon Fishery Boards

Advice to Boards/Trust on recent incidences of fungal infections

June 2011

Background

There have been a number of reports of east coast rivers experiencing higher than usual incidences of fish suffering from the fungus saprolegnia. Saprolegnia is a secondary infection to either physical damage or another, primary infection. Saprolegnia is a natural fungal infection that is present throughout the year. Fungal infections can be exacerbated by a number of environmental factors such as low water levels or high or fluctuating water temperatures. These factors can lead to increased fish stress levels, making the fish more susceptible to infection. A number of samples have been sent to the fish health laboratory in Aberdeen and as yet there is no cause for concern. ***It is worth emphasising that there is no evidence to suggest that this infection is Ulcerative Dermal Necrosis (UDN).***

Advice

Marine Scotland offer a free diagnostic service. With regard to fish samples, live fish are always best, which would involve an inspector coming to the river in question. The fish health laboratory can be contacted at ms.fishhealth@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or 01224 295 525. Whilst they might not always be able to sample fish, reports of any outbreaks would be useful. Photos are also a useful diagnostic tool.

It is very important that fish to be returned are handled as gently as possible, as any damage to the fish will make them more susceptible to infection. ASFB has produced an angler's guide to catch and release and it is important that these guidelines are followed, if fish are to be released. This will help ensure that any risk of fungal infection is minimised. Please ensure that the guide is available to all anglers. If necessary, further copies can be supplied by ASFB¹.

For more information please contact:

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¹ Or alternatively the guide can be downloaded at:
<http://www.salmonatlas.com/forums/pdfs/catchandreleaseleaflet.pdf>