

Press release: Anglers urged to report non-native salmon catches

The Environment Agency is urging anglers and commercial fishermen to report unusual catches after a non-native pink salmon was caught in North East waters.

The fish was captured in a commercial net, close to the mouth of the River Tyne in early June. Since then, there have been further unconfirmed reports of pink salmon being caught in coastal nets in the North East.

Around 200 non-native pink salmon were caught in waters off the North East and Yorkshire coast in 2017 and by anglers in the rivers Tyne, Coquet, Wear and Hull, but this is the first confirmed catch of 2018. Further afield, anglers have confirmed catches in rivers in Scotland and in western Ireland.

Pink salmon (*Onchorhynchus gorbuscha*), also known as humpback salmon, originate from the northern Pacific Ocean.

Millions were stocked in the White Sea region of north Russia from the 1950s until the early 2000s to develop a net fishery. As a result, some have established self-sustaining populations in rivers and coastal areas in Russia, Finland and northern Norway. These populations now appear to be expanding. This is the most likely origin of the pink salmon recently caught in the UK and Ireland.

Non-native species have the potential to disturb the natural balance of our environment so, the Environment Agency is collecting data on sightings of pink salmon so officers can monitor and review any potential impact on biodiversity.

The Environment Agency's Jonathan Shelley said:

The high numbers of pink salmon in our waters in 2017 was quite unusual. Now we've seen the first pink salmon caught in 2018, we're asking anglers and netsmen to make us aware of any other pink salmon they catch.

I'd urge them to contact us if they see any non-native salmon in the waters, with a date, location and if possible a photograph, which would really help us identify them and build up a picture of where they are.

At this stage we don't think there's likely to be a major impact on wild fish stocks, but it is important we build up as comprehensive

a picture of the number and distribution of pink salmon arriving, so we can take any necessary action.

Fishermen who hold a salmon licence and catch pink salmon are asked not to return the fish to the water if they are confident in their identification. Instead they are asked to dispatch them humanely and make the fish available to the Environment Agency for inspection and further analysis. If this is not possible, they are asked to send a sample of the scales. Coarse and trout anglers who catch pink salmon are asked to retain them in a keep net if possible and alert the Environment Agency to arrange collection. If this is not possible, the fish should be released.

Data collected will help the Environment Agency, fisheries researchers and other organisations with an interest in fisheries management in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Scandinavia, better understand how to manage the arrival of pink salmon in the UK.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the North East environmental monitoring team on 0800 807060 or email jonathan.shelley@environment-agency.gov.uk.

[News story: Data revolution for students](#)

Job prospects and graduate salary are two of the most important factors for students when it comes to deciding which university to attend, the Universities Minister has revealed today (21 June).

The [new research](#) undertaken by the Department for Education (DfE) shows the value of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) for prospective students. It comes on the same day that the DfE released a record amount of data showing [graduate outcomes](#) for every university in England – revealing the average earnings and likelihood of employability 1, 3 and 5 years after graduation.

The new information highlights the huge variations in outcomes depending on what subject and where students go to study, demonstrating just how this information can help students and their families find the right place for them. For example, for Economics graduates the median earnings ranged from £17,000 at the lowest institution to £68,600 at the highest 5 years after graduation, whereas for Medicine and Dentistry median earnings range between £42,100 and £49,800.

Universities Minister Sam Gyimah said:

This Government is increasing the information available to students so that they can make informed choices about what and where to study.

I am hugely encouraged to see that students and applicants are already using the TEF to inform their decision about where to study. Their voice is helping to develop the new subject-level TEF and helping to put even more clear information into the hands of students.

We know that employability and salary are key things that students look at when deciding where to study, but for many it goes beyond this and that's why we've made the decision to publish over half a million cells of data showing graduate outcomes for every university.

With more data than ever before being made available to students, Sam Gyimah has also announced plans to work with coders and tech companies to create new digital tools to help students choose where to study.

The Universities Minister will unveil the competition to create this app, worth £125,000 on Monday, 25 June.

[News story: Reduced fishing effort for area VII scallop fishery explained](#)

For the third quarter of 2018 (1 July to 30 September 2018) the fishing limit for scallops in the Western Waters ICES area VII, which includes the English Channel, is being set at 30 days. This is happening in order to carefully manage the remaining effort for this year and help avoid an early closure of the fishery.

The development follows a recommendation by the Scallop Industry Consultation Group (SICG) after its meeting of 7 June, which has now been agreed by UK Fisheries Administrations. The SICG includes representatives from scallop fishing and processing companies, as well as government representatives.

Uptake of scallop fishing in area VII is very high currently ([59% at 12 June](#)) and industry negotiations with France to increase the UK's fishing effort in the area through exchanging additional effort ('the Baie de Seine agreement') are still ongoing. During the SICG meeting the group looked at a number of scenarios, which made it clear that a reduction in the quarter 3 limit was required.

A further review of the limit will take place once the outcome of the

negotiations are known, likely to be mid-July. A variation taking effect 1 July 2018 will soon be issued affecting all vessels of 15 metres and over.

More guidance and explanation of 'days at sea' [appears elsewhere on GOV.UK.](#)

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Press release: Secretary of State extends appointment of members of the Equality Commission for NI

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Karen Bradley MP has extended the appointments of eleven members of the Equality Commission for Northern

Ireland.

Joseph McVey, William Gamble, Reverend Lesley Carroll, William McKee, David Rose, Tom Hartley, Hazel Francey and Judith Gillespie have been extended until 31 May 2018 and Geraldine McGahey, Deborah Donnelly and Robin Mullan have been extended until 28 February 2020.

Notes to Editors:

The extensions will allow the introduction of a more staggered approach to future appointments and improve business continuity.

Biographies of Appointees

Biographies can be found [here](#)

Terms of Appointment

The positions are part-time.

The position of Commissioner attracts an annual remuneration of £5,000 and the Deputy Chief Commissioner receives an annual remuneration of £10,000.

These positions are non-pensionable.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories within the last five years to be made public.

Lesley Carroll declared that she stood for election as an Ulster Unionist candidate at the 2016 Assembly elections. Tom Hartley has undertaken activities on behalf of Sinn Fein, including representing the party on the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition.