



AUSTRALIAN TROUT FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2018

From the Editor

Welcome to the June issue of the Newsletter. There has been a lot happen since the last newsletter - testament to the hard work of the ATF Committee and the many members and supporters who freely give so much of their time to ensure the ATF is active in a range of projects that benefit our trout fisheries.

We provide an update on the Jordan - Scotty Incubator Trials, including a call for help with the latest round of deploying the incubators.



There is a report on the Strategic Planning Day held to develop a Strategic Plan for the ATF.

An overview of the Habitat Workshop at Myrtleford is provided and there is a report on the recent presentation of life membership of the ATF to Mick Hall.

We also cover the riparian planting day held on the Steavenson River and lastly there is a report on the activities of the ATF in WA.

Important Notice

At the 2017 AGM a proposal to increase the membership fees by 25% was approved. The increase is necessary to keep pace with rising operational expenses incurred by the ATF. No elected or nominated committee member receives any remuneration from the ATF but there are costs associated with running the organisation. **The new fees apply from July 1st 2018 as follows:**

- 1-year fee increase from \$20 to \$25
- 2-year fee increase from \$40 to \$50
- 3-year fee increase from \$50 to \$65



Drawing by Emily Pendergast

The Australian Trout Foundation has a facebook page with current news, announcements and updates.



Not an ATF Member?

Come and join with the rest of us to protect, rebuild and promote Australia's trout fishing heritage. Membership is open to any person or association with an interest in trout fishing, whether you fish with fly, lure or bait. It only costs \$25.00 per year to be an individual member and you will be helping to ensure that trout fishing in Australia remains alive and well for future generations to come.

To apply for membership or refinance your subscription go to: <http://www.atfonline.com.au/home/page/membership>

Jordan Scotty Incubator Trials Update

compiled by Russell Hanley from information supplied by Terry George and Matt Byrne.

In the last issue there was a story on the Jordan Scotty Incubator Trials of in-stream incubation of eggs. If you missed the story on the rationale for the trials and how in-stream incubators work the last issue has a comprehensive account by the ATF President Terry George.

At the completion of stocking of the incubators which were placed in the Jamieson and King Rivers and Traralgon Creek there were about 25,000 eggs left over. The ATF is very grateful to the VFA for agreeing to supplement the trials by stocking the fingerlings from these excess eggs into four locations on the Buckland River. DNA samples from this batch of fingerlings have been recorded into the database and the fingerlings were released mid November 2017.

In January 2018, electrofishing surveys were conducted in the vicinity of the incubator sites on the King, Jamison, and Traralgon Creek and also on the Buckland near to where the excess fry were released.



The survey teams reported reasonable to good numbers of young fish in the size and weight range at locations which suggest they have originated from eggs in the incubators on the three rivers where these were deployed. The proof will be provided by the DNA tests on

samples collected at all survey sites. Thanks to all who assisted with the electro fishing surveys.



Help Wanted!

We'll be installing the Jordan Scotty Incubators in the same streams in which we installed them last year; the King River Tribs., the Jamieson River and Traralgon Creek. This season, two more streams have been added to the trials at the request of the Bairnsdale Fly Fishing Club. The extra streams chosen are the upper reaches of Crooked River and the Upper Dargo River. Both of these Rivers, together with the Wonnangatta River, form part of the Mitchell River catchment area in Gippsland.

The eggs have already been stripped at Snobs Creek hatchery and the donor trout fin clipped to record their DNA on a data base. Electro fishing will be undertaken in each of the ensuing 3 years, and fish caught will be fin clipped and their DNA matched against the donors' DNA to ascertain if the trout are the progeny hatched via the incubators.

The proposed date for loading the incubators at Snobs Creek hatchery is 16th June, dependent on the eggs being "eyed up" and ready at that time, then the incubators will be installed in the chosen locations over the ensuing 4 - 5 days.

We welcome Angling Cubs and Anglers who wish to volunteer to assist in loading or installing the incubators. If you wish to be involved please register your name and contact details with Matt Byrne by email to: Stocking@ATFOnline.com.au

Strategic Planning Day

a report by Russell Hanley

The ATF has been very busy with a range of activities that promote the Foundations objectives. Like all organisations, however, it is useful from time to time to take a step back from our hands on role and assess our progress to date against our objectives and to define our hopes and aspirations for the future.

On Saturday the 17th March 2018 a strategic planning workshop was held at Lilydale. The aim was to produce a draft strategic plan. The workshop was organised by the ATF Committee and attendees included committee members Terry George, Ray Buckland, Paul Stolz, Tom White, Russell Hanley, Lyndon Webb, Dave Guertin, Tim Curmi and Adam Cox. The committee members were greatly aided on the day by key inputs and participation from Shane Houston (YVFF), James Hearne (LVFF), Ivo Kavelj (SFF), Ray Throup and Peter Murray (Sale FF), Graham Godber (MaDFF), Marianne Wallace (VFFA, CVFFC), Alan Burgess (MADFF), Brian King and Ray Beavis (WFF).

With guidance from our facilitator Kevin Lynch, the group spent the day engaged in a lively and robust exploration of the issues facing the ATF in the context of achievement of objectives. The group identified a series of areas (aims, issues and ideas) to be discussed further. From this list four key areas were identified by consensus. We then broke into four groups with each group discussing more deeply specific aspects of one of the key areas with a focus on how the ATF should proceed (strategy and KPI's) to improve our outcomes in each key area.

At the end of the day, we consolidated all deliberations and comments. The ATF secretary Paul Stolz took on the heroic task of deciphering our scribbles from the many sheets of paper and summarised a draft Strategic Plan. The draft has now been further polished by Ivo Kavelj with the support of a subcommittee of the SFF. The draft Plan is now being reviewed by the ATF Committee.

Broadly, the plan defines our Vision:
 "The ATF seeks to ensure that all Australians can enjoy trout fishing now and for future generations to come"
 and our Mission:
 "The ATF's mission is to protect build and promote Australia's trout fishery"

The Plan identifies a strategy that will address four key areas of focus through a range of Actions and these will all be measured through a series of KPI's.

The four key areas of focus are:

- Resources (e.g. people, information, and funds).
- Partnerships (e.g. govt agencies, NGO,s angling clubs, RecFish, retailers)
- Habitat (e.g. information, manuals, advice, mentoring)
- Communication and Education (e.g. newsletter, electronic media, press releases, public meetings, conservation)

Detailed Actions for each key focus area have been developed and for each Action there is a set of KPIs. Once the Plan has been adopted by the ATF it will be available in full on the ATF website.

One of the Actions in the key focus area of Resources is a recruitment drive.

The Plan is a great road map of where we want the ATF to go and how we are to get there, but it can only happen if the Plan is embraced by the membership. That means more people will be required to take on active roles to enable the ATF to implement the Plan. The current Committee cannot handle the extra workload that will be needed. The Plan has identified that several sub committees will be required.

Interested in helping? We will be calling for assistance as soon as the Plan is finalised.



Habitat Workshop - Myrtleford

a report from Terry George on behalf of the ATF and ARI Committees.

Well it's now over and the stress is fading away; although there's no doubt that the Habitat Workshop held recently at Myrtleford in Victoria's north east will create tonnes more work for many of us including the passionate recreational fishers/conservationists who participated on the day. We had 61 attendees, some had to leave early and some came later including some who could only attend the visit to the Buckland River Habitat project.



We were fortunate to have the in-stream work completed on Friday 27th April wherein 84 tonnes of boulders and 35 trees were installed; the trees with root balls intact, were pinned in with 150 red gum stakes measuring 6m x 220mm dia.

The Riparian restoration will take some time to poison blackberries and plant selected native trees and shrubs, and in creating appropriate access tracks so that all fishers, including disabled and elderly fishers, will be able to enjoy access.

We intend to organize an Opening Event" in September after the winter rains (we need so badly) have enhanced the stream flow and created much needed habitat around the boulders and trees. We do hope the opening won't clash with other Fishery activities and we'll check with you to ascertain your availability to attend prior to setting the date, because we want you there!

The Workshop presentations and discussions went extremely well according to the feedback received on the day and over the ensuing weekend.

We must acknowledge all of the expertise and work by Jarod & Renae in put-

ting the program together and assisting in the presentations during the day. One most valuable session (thanks Renae & Jarod) was to break up into 4 groups with Goulburn-Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) & North-East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) region maps showing the relevant streams. The participants were



able to identify a number of locations where they suggested mainly riparian restoration, and also some in-stream projects as well.

Terry George & Tim Curmi did the "Welcome" opening and TG enlarged upon "Why Are We Here" by referring to the "Talk Wild Trout" Speakers, Dr Dan Douwalter and Dr John Morrongiello's research (commissioned by VFA) regarding the effect of riparian shading on water temperature and the increase in abundance of fish by returning snags to our streams.

Jarod Lyons (Arthur Rylah Institute) opened the event with a professional presentation on "Healthy Habitat, Flows and Fish", followed by Brian Eddy (Harristville AC / ATF Delegate) with a case study "Trout bounce back after fire and floods".



Tim Curmi (NFA)

Further case studies followed:

- Tim Curmi's (Native Fish Australia) excellent presentation on on Hughes Creek, Seven Creeks, Lower Ovens and plans for Lake Kerferd;
- Kris Leckie (VRFish) did a very professional job on the forthcoming 'Angler Riparian Partnership' tree planting day

on the Steavenson River which detailed which native trees and shrubs were appropriate for the area.



Kris Leckie (VR Fish)

(c) Matt Byrne (ATF) gave a great presentation on the Boulder seeding of the Delatite and Howqua Rivers done by GBCMA, plus replanting the Riparian Zones on the Delatite River after the removal of willows, and fencing off stock access. He also showed the good work done on the planting day at the Jamieson River.; another 'Angler Riparian Partnership' project.



Matt Byrne (ATF)

(d) Jim Castles (GBCMA) spoke about the recent joint RFL Boulder seeding projects and the effectiveness of past in-stream habitat projects. Jim then described some of the Native fish habitat projects including Macquarie Perch and NFA involvement and lower Goulburn River projects and Toolamba & Numurkah & GVAAC involvement. As usual, Jim's presentation was excellent and well received by all.

(e) John Douglas and Taylor Hunt (Victorian Fisheries Authority) captured everyone's attention with JD's informative talk on Habitat Connections, and how good riparian plants can assist in



John Douglas (VFA)

providing food and shade, etc. Taylor finished off with other VFA information

including a promo for the next TWT Conference. Codference was also mentioned of course. – In all, a blooming good session.

We then had an "Open Forum" where John Pendergast (Benambra A/C Pres.) put forward a project for Morass Creek which involves fencing off and planting riparian zones, plus installation of boulders and snags. Andrew Briggs (NECMA) is liaising with John on this project. John will also be looking at possible riparian locations on Livingston Creek. It was a good and very relevant presentation.

Terry George mentioned a proposal the ATF had received from Bairnsdale FFC which entails poisoning and removal of blackberries and broom on the Mitta Mitta River upstream of the Hinnomunjie Bridge to the gorge. This project will complement previous and ongoing work above the gorge to remove these pest plants, will provide improved angler access and greatly improve the fishery in that area due to establishing grass and native vegetation in place of the blackberries and broom. It will bring improved food sources such as beetles, grasshoppers and terrestrials in general.



Renae & Terry

At lunchtime, Matt Byrne and John Douglas displayed the Jordan-Scotty incubators and talked through the video prepared last year by JD showing the loading, installation and removal of the incubators. They explained about the DNA testing and the subsequent electro-fishing earlier this year to get clippings from young of year trout to match against the DNA of the donor trout. Attendees were very interested and there was a brisk Q & A time.

We thanked all for their attendance and participation; some had to leave to drive home and then those remaining drove out in convoy to the Buckland habitat restoration project where Andrew Briggs and Terry George explained to

the group how the placement of the boulders and snags would create and enhance in-stream habitat to provide cooler water (depth), refuge and food sources for the fish that would gather in those areas. There was a lively question and answer session and "Briggsy" was in his element answering questions and entertaining the crowd!

It was time to go and we once again thanked all for attending and participating in the discussions. We have a target to get 6 new habitat projects resulting from the Workshop and we believe this will be attained in the ensuing months. Our other objective of building the



army of habitat soldiers will surely be met with attendees eager to become involved.

We had 20 camping out at Lake Buffalo on Saturday night when we put on a "gourmet" BBQ meal cooked up by the 5 Hat Chef, Jarod Lyon, with able assistants, Renae Ayres and Tim Curmi.

It was a most enjoyable function and as Matt Byrne said on Sunday morning, we had VFA Fisheries managers, JD & Taylor, ARI's Jarod & Renae, Tim & Paul from NFA plus other members, ATF Committee Members TG, Tim, Tom, Adam, Ivo, plus VRFish's Kris Leckie and members of local Angling Clubs, all camped out together at Lake Buffalo. (Is this a first of many similar events - it certainly works!)

Thanks a million to Myrtleford District Sports Fishing Club for their support and their hospitality of making their facilities available at Lake Buffalo.

Please also be aware that ATF & NFA members worked tirelessly at the "Sign In" tables, giving hearty welcomes to Attendees and putting together the

goodies and handouts provided by VFA, ATF, NFA & ARI.

Thanks also to VFA and DELWP for providing the funding for these Workshops.

I started a brief summary but sorry, it just got bigger and bigger!

Life Membership awarded to Mick Hall

At a luncheon held at the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club on 4th of May 2018 the ATF awarded Mick Hall Life Membership in recognition of his outstanding service to the ATF and the wider recreational angling community.

Mick has served the ATF for over 20 years between 1992 and 2012 (including approx. 10 years as president) and was a founding member of ATF. He stood down from an active role in 2012 due to ill health.

The presentation was attended by Mick and his wife Alaine, Travis Dowling and Anthony Forster from the VFA, past president of the ATF, Rod Barford, ATF member Andy Zarro as well as Ineke Claus (ATF member and partner to Tom White). The ATF Committee members present were Terry George, Tom White, Dave Guertin, Paul Stolz and Ray Buckland.



Travis Dowling (VFA) spoke about Mick's many accomplishments

After lunch was taken Tom White spoke at length about Mick Hall's contribution to the ATF and the wild trout fishery in Australia and particularly Victoria.

After Tom spoke Ineke presented Alaine Hall with a bouquet of flowers to recognize her part in the support and work done together with Mick. Terry George spoke on behalf of the ATF

and thanked Mick for his dedicated service to the ATF and to the development of the wild trout fishery.

Travis Dowling spoke on behalf of the VFA recognizing the canny political ability Mick had in being able to reach a compromise position without sacrificing the essence of the negotiation.

The ATF then presented Mick with a drawn and framed caricature of Mick which was received with delight.



Terry presented Mick with his caricature

Riparian Planting on the Steavenson River

Held at Maryton Lane, Marysville on the 5th May in conjunction with VRFish and the Goulburn Broken CMA over 600 trees were planted along the river bank to support the health of the Steavenson River.



This project is part of the "Angler Riparian Partnerships Program".

Around 60 people including volunteers from numerous fishing clubs assisted along with organizers to plant the trees



provided by the CMA.

The local land-owner was very welcoming and a BBQ lunch provided to all volunteers and fly-casting lessons were also provided to anyone interested following the event.

It was a great example of Partnerships, Projects and working together as a team.



News from the WA Branch of the ATF

by Russell Hanley

First Branch Meeting

In the last week of April, the fledgling branch of the ATF in the West held a meeting to develop a strategy for the future growth and activities of the ATF in the State.

There was no shortage of issues and projects identified that the WA branch could pursue, including maintaining sufficient water in our rivers and streams, habitat restoration, access for recreational fishing, and signage to name but a few.

All present however, recognised the first priority has to be a membership drive to ensure we have the resources to take on even some of the many potential projects identified.

While the current number of members allows us to form a state branch incorporated under the Associations Act, there are simply not yet enough people to take on all the committee roles required by the Act.



The Fish ladder on Nanga Brook needs to be repaired

Therefore those attended resolved to actively recruit new members with the aim of achieving the numbers required to set up a functioning branch by the end of 2018.

Several initiatives were discussed including the preparation of a brochure advertising the work of the ATF and the aims of the WA branch. In addition, the ATF will be represented at the RecFish West/ Fisheries trout stocking day in September. A regular contribution showcasing the achievements and aims of the ATF will also be provided to Freshwater, the

magazine of the WATFAA club.

Anyone interested in learning more about the activities of the WA Branch can contact Russell Hanley at this email address:

WA@ATFOnline.com.au

FFRG Meeting

The Freshwater Fisheries Reference Group (FFRG) is convened by RecFish West and provides advice and recommendations to the Department of Fisheries on locations and numbers for the stocking of trout each year. Occasionally the FFRG also makes recommendations about policy and management of the Fishery and one recent change has seen the abolition of a closed season for trout in WA. This change has been incremental with most of the larger rivers and their tributaries already open all year. The rationale behind the decision to abolish the closed season is that the great majority of fish stocked each year are rainbow trout and there is little evidence of natural recruitment. Therefore there appears to be no good reason for closure of waters in WA over the spawning season.

The FFRG met in May to discuss and recommend stocking locations and numbers for 2018.

There has been a significant turnover in membership of the FFRG since 2017 and there were a lot of new faces at the first meeting of 2018.

The ATF is represented on the FFRG by Russell Hanley and Stewart King (Stewart is also President of WATFAA).

The stocking of yearlings and broodstock fish is now underway and fortunately the recent rains has meant there is now a little bit of flow in our rivers and streams again and so the fish should encounter favourable environmental conditions.



Did You Know?

by Russell Hanley

Trout are currently found in rivers and impoundments in 5 states in Australia. Stocking programs are undertaken by the various Fisheries Departments in each state but in 3 states, Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales there are some sustainable populations of wild trout, mostly browns but there appears to be some self sustaining populations of rainbows as well. In SA and WA however, it appears that continued stocking is essential for the maintenance of the recreational fishery in most if not all rivers and impoundments. That said there is a population of trout in the Serpentine Reservoir in WA that has been self sustaining for many years. Unfortunately angling in public water supply dams in WA is strictly prohibited.

In a recent review of minimum size limits that apply in each of the 5 states I found there is a considerable range between states. I have summarised this in the table below and also added NZ for comparative purposes.

The rationale behind these differences is presumably based on stock assessments within each of the states, but it is curious that WA, where there is apparently little recruitment from wild stocks, has the largest minimum size for trout. I suspect this is an anachronism because in the early days of the attempts to establish a viable recreational fishery it was likely the hope was that fish reaching 300mm might have had one or more opportunities to spawn.

State	Minimum Size	Notes
Victoria	none	limits apply on some waters
NSW	250mm	
Tasmania	220mm	
SA	280mm	
WA	300mm	
NZ	none	limits apply on some waters