

River Ythan SLA Report September 2024

1. Introduction

The Don DFSB have been contracted to carry out fisheries protection, predator surveys, spawning surveys and habitat restoration activities across the river Ythan catchment throughout 2024/25 by the Ythan DSFB under a Service Level Agreement. Each activity is allocated a set number of man-days/patrols to accommodate the requirements of the annually agreed SLA. Activities are defined following consultation with the Ythan DSFB.

Any incidents relating to pollution and policing will be recorded and shared with the Clerk. Information from predator surveys will be collated and shared with the Clerk directly following the survey period. Information on spawning surveys will be collated and reported upon in a summary report following the end of the spawning period. Any seals reported above Logie Buchan Bridge will be reported to the Clerk as soon as possible.

All activities will be covered by the Don DSFB health and safety polices, as stated in the service level agreement.

2. Reporting

A log of all patrols and activities will be sent to the Clerk monthly.

SLA Activities/ Piscivorous Bird Count/September

Table 1. September SLA Activity/Policing Patrol allocation of shifts.

Date	Patrol Area	Time of Patrol	Notes/Incidents
5/9/24	Esslemont to Ellon	13.00pm to 17.00pm 2 staff = 1 day	River patrol and setting up of trail camera.
18/9/24	Ardlethan to Newburgh Estuary	12.30pm to 16.00pm 2 staff = 1 day	Pollution check and river patrol.

With water levels dropping across the river during September, anglers have been sparse on the fishing beats this month. Sea trout catches on the Newburgh stretch, have been fewer this month as numbers of anglers have also declined.

Pollution

There have been no reports this month on the Ythan catchment. Pollution checks have been on going on two areas. Ramornie beat and the outlet pipe directly above Ellon bridge, where in the past pollution discharge has been identified.

Table 2.SLA/Activity Autumn Piscivorous Bird Surveys 2024.

Table 1. Autumn Piscivorous Bird Surveys 2024	Number of Goosanders	Number of Cormorants	Number of Mergansers
River Ythan Bird Count, Date 26 th of September.	12	9	0

Areas where goosanders were recorded are as follows, Blairfowl 2 goosanders, Methlick 1 goosander bridge, Ythanbank 2 goosanders. A flock of 5 goosanders were seen at Ellon and 2 were identified in the pond at Ardlethan. 9 Cormorants were counted within the Estuary area.

Fyvie Gravel Washing

Following the identification of a silted spawning area, an engineering licence was applied for and granted from SEPA at the beginning of September. Works began on the 30th of September and will continue into the first week of October. The cleaning of compacted spawning gravel will increase survival from egg to alevin stage and through to emerging fry. More pictures will follow once this task is completed.



Fig 1, Gravel washing site, Fyvie

Jim Kerr
Senior Fisheries Officer
Acting on Behalf of the Ythan DSFB