Sea Trout Marks on Ireland’s North West Coast

1. Dungloe river (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 1). From Carrickduff the R288 runs westwards near to the shore of Trawbreaga Bay. As it flows south across the west coast of Lough Finn, the river increasingly takes on the character of a feeder stream of the main channel leading to Trawbreaga Bay. The whole of the fishery can be fished from a boat, but from the shore, one can get access to the majority of the fishery from Dungloe to Five Finger Strand. The mouth of the Glenamoy river (GR 48 61) also worth fishing. The best fishing is usually taken in March and April (Fig 10) (p 12) and so a boat is not necessary. Summer surface runs can also be fished on low water. The best time to fish is just before and after low and high water. Fine line or leaded spinners or fly on all water throughout the season. Be aware that the catch rate may vary slightly with different flowing conditions.

2. Blanket Ness (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 1). This bulkack lough covers an area of 30 hectares and is situated on a 1 km stretch of North Carlingford. The water level is maintained by flood gates in the dam wall. The lough holds good numbers of sea trout through the summer and the occasional salmon. Fishing is best from this area following anything from the shore. Low water in Lough is another bulkack lough (16 hectares), 3 km north of Blanket Ness. Once a noted Blanket sea trout fishery, it still holds stock throughout the season and occasional salmon. See fish best local public access. The best times to fish are in March and April with small fish dominating the catch during the summer. All methods can work here.

3. Ards estuary (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 1). South west of Carrigart, on the R300, one crosses the estuary of the North Lough where we join the Ards estuary. The lough is approximately 100 hectares and is noted for salmon and sea trout. Fishing is best from a boat following anything from the shore. More low water in Lough is another Ards bulkack lough (3 hectares), 1 km north of Ards estuary. See fish best local public access. The best times to fish here are in March and April with small fish dominating the catch during the summer. All methods can work here.

4. Dunfanaghy estuary (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 2). West of Port na Blagh on the N56 road. The estuary is 125 hectares and comprises the Lackagh river, Glenamoy, the Owencarrow river & Lough Beagh, is a noted sea trout fishery with runs of fish from July. The season is 1st January to 30th September. For angling information on this estuary see www.dunfanaghyanglingclub.com or +353 (0) 71 982 2288. The estuary is renowned for its sea trout and it has a long history of this type of fishing. Sea trout range in size from 1 to 6 lbs but occasional fish up to 8 lbs have been caught here but usually they are in the 1 to 3 lb category. Sea trout can also be caught along the strand between Houses and Dunfanaghy Point. Shore marks on the strand can be seen along the whole of the estuary.

5. Ballinasstraw (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 1). 9km south of Lough Gill. The main public access is at the main access road from the main road to Lackagh and R561 junction. Shore fishing is possible from this point and the fish are usually good sized Sea trout. The catch rate here can be variable depending on the weather conditions. The best times to fish here are in March and April with small fish dominating the catch during the summer. All methods can work here.

6. Gweebarra estuary (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 10). The Gweebarra River is a noted sea trout fishery with runs of fish from July. The season is 1st January to 30th September. Sea trout are caught throughout the estuary, on all methods. They can range in size from 1 to 6 lbs but occasional fish up to 8 lbs have been caught here but usually they are in the 1 to 3 lb category. Sea trout can also be caught along the strand between Ballyshannon and Dunfanaghy Point. Shore marks on the strand can be seen along the whole of the estuary.

7. Lackagh r.Faymore R. (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 10). This large lough lies north west of Dunfanaghy. North east of the town is a long stretch of sand running parallel to the coastline. The best access to this beach is by the road across the golf course which leads to a large public car park at the edge of the dunes. This beach is popular with a variety of recreational users and so one must therefore be wary of people on the beach and the water. See fish best local public access. The best times to fish here are in March and April with small fish dominating the catch during the summer. All methods can work here.

8. Eske estuary (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 11). Donegal town sits at the top of the Eske south of the bay). Spinning off the rocks on the north of the bay produces sea trout as well mackerel are regularly taken. Rany point (grid ref 77 98) is one of the favoured locations on the south of the bay. The best access is to the road leading to the bulkack lough and R981. One of the noted sea trout fishery is the lough where see trout are usually good sized Sea trout. The catch rate here can be variable depending on the weather conditions. The best times to fish here are in March and April with small fish dominating the catch during the summer. All methods can work here.

9. Moy estuary (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 24). This estuary, north of Ballina is renowned for its sea trout and it has a long history of this type of fishing. Sea trout range in size from 1 to 6 lbs but occasional fish up to 8 lbs have been caught here but usually they are in the 1 to 3 lb category. Sea trout can also be caught along the strand between Houses and Dunfanaghy Point. Shore marks on the strand can be seen along the whole of the estuary.

10. Reen Point (3rd edition, Discovery series, map no 16). Located at the entrance to the river Moy (GR 46 41), it is situated by the road from Ballyshannon. This is a noted sea trout fishery with runs of fish from July. The season is 1st January to 30th September. Sea trout are caught throughout the estuary, on all methods. They can range in size from 1 to 6 lbs but occasional fish up to 8 lbs have been caught here but usually they are in the 1 to 3 lb category. Sea trout can also be caught along the strand between Houses and Dunfanaghy Point. Shore marks on the strand can be seen along the whole of the estuary.
October. Mullet are exceptionally strong fish and if hooked, one’s tackle is guaranteed a stern test. Slow into shallow coastal waters with the onset of early summer, (often in May) and returning to the deeps in Irish ‘bone fish,’ can and do take flies and lures. However, they

Other Species

Sea Trout

Sea trout, as the name suggests, spend a significant part of their live in the sea. They have a variety of regional names such as trout, perch, trout, flounder, and eel. Up to 170 years old, they also reach sizes well over 30 kg. The average size is around 2 kg and the normal interval between maturity and spawning is three years. Their life cycle is similar to the salmon’s, though they have never been proven to migrate upstream. Sea trout, however, change their habitat only in the case of severe and if you stop them getting into cover the fight is then more

Tactics

Though not as numerous as in past times, stocks of sea trout in Ireland are generally healthy. Sea trout, unlike salmon, do not migrate to the high seas but remain close to shore during their time at sea. In the marine environment they feed on a variety of invertebrates, intertidals and molluscs. They can be caught from August to April, but other than the ‘hot spots’ usually relate to estuaries and salt marshes where sea trout spend much time feeding.

Fishing

Fishing is prohibited in the following areas: the Shannon Estuary, the Shannon Estuary, and the Shannon Estuary. Sea trout will feed in very shallow water. At such times they are easily disturbed and anglers should

Tackle Shops

Barretts Tackle Shop

5 Market Street, Dunmore, Co. Donegal. T: 075 3022656

Cuddy’s Tackle

6 Main Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo. T: 096 21231

Charles O’Donnell

18 The Bridge, Dunmore. Co. Donegal. T: 075 30146

Charlie McCauley

64 Main Street, Dunmore, Co. Donegal. T: 075 30130

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Workplace Health and Safety

Fish with a friend and ensure someone knows you are going and what you will be doing. When fishing in the sea, it is vital to ensure your tackle is up to the job.

Licence

The Ban on sea trout fishing for the entire season is in force.

Licence

Sea trout remain a valuable resource and are protected. Fishing for sea trout must therefore transpire fully aware of the regulations.

Sea Trout Angling on Ireland’s North West Coast

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