

March 2011 update on the Society's stocking programme in the Oberon district.

Last Friday, 11th March 2011, the Society received the latest consignment of 600 rainbow trout fingerlings from Triton Trout Farm, Tumut. Four members (John Flakelar, Peter Johnson, Warren Stoyles, and the undersigned) were on hand to help with the release.



As one can see from the photos, this is a rather unceremonious affair! The not-so little trout (about 3-4 inch "fatsos") went into five dams on one property near Edith. This latest release concludes our stocking programme for the current financial year, as all the funds budgeted for this purpose have now been spent.

As you will recall, the Society's stocking programme commenced in October 2009.

A total of seven dams, two one property and five on another have been stocked to date with a total of about 3000 fingerlings (200 browns, 2800 rainbows). The total cost of this exercise to the Society to date is \$3500, ie a bit over \$1 per fingerling. The latest release coincided with the Society's annual Oberon Landholders dinner.

Over the weekend, most of the stocked dams were visited by various members to check on progress of the survivors.

Three of the dams yielded some hard fighting rainbows of legal size, up to 1 pound.

One of those dams also contains much larger fish (3-5 pounds) from previous stocking efforts by the landowner. Some of those larger fish could be seen patrolling the margins, but none has been caught so far.

These dams are now certainly worth a visit by interested members.

The fish in the two dams on one property are more elusive. It is too early to determine the cause – more efficient cormorants, or visiting at the wrong time of day, or any other excuse.



However, the undersigned was lucky enough to find a rising / swirling fish in the lower dam on Sunday morning.

After many casts, it took a Shaving Brush dry fly, and was successfully hooked and landed.

A very fat brown, 40 cm long, exactly 2 pounds. This fish is most likely one of the 100 brown fingerlings released into this dam in April 2010 – an amazing growth rate indeed!

To my knowledge, this was the first-ever "Keeper" from the RFS stocking programme.



Hopefully the first of many to follow, but at this stage, it can rightly be called a "\$3500 fish"!! Though white-fleshed, it was delicious to eat, fresh from the hot smoker (see picture).



Over the next few months, Council will decide on the stocking programme for the next financial year.

In the meantime, member's comments on this initiative are invited, and should be directed to the President, Andrew McKenzie, tel. 9489-3372, or e-mail brixton@optushome.com.au.

Any member who wishes to fish any of these stocked dams should contact the undersigned for directions: tel. 9387-6641, or email ausbenz@bigpond.com.

Gerhard Benz
St. Patricks Day 2011.