References and annotations

The following list is replicated from the book-text of Nomads, but I have added annotations for the use of those beginning to collect or in the process of collecting seatrout literature. CBMcC

In the following, the term ‘sea-trout’ is given in book and chapter titles as either ‘sea-trout’, ‘seatrout’ or ‘sea trout’ following the hyphenation (or lack of it) of the original edition. Where the term appears in our annotation, we have used the hyphenated form ‘sea-trout’ – as we have done throughout. The standard abbreviation ‘ff.’ stands for ‘and following pages’. ‘n.d.’ in a date reference stands for ‘no date’, i.e. no date ascription is given by the publisher to the original work.

Paper sources


Sixteen chapters on various Irish salmon, sea-trout (called throughout this book ‘white trout’) and trout fisheries, including anecdotes – a fine gazetteer.


A report compiled largely by Irish fishery scientists reporting to the Minister for the Marine in 1992. The report’s authors concluded carefully that ‘There may be a connection between the presence of lice and sea-trout mortality’ (p.14) – a conclusion abundantly demonstrated in much subsequent research – and recommended the fallowing of fish-farm sites as a ‘main element’ (p.45) of a management strategy for fish farms. The members of the Working Group are named on p.5 of the Report.

Anon (n.d. [2008]) *Salmon and Sea Trout Angling in Ireland*. Dublin: Failte Ireland.

Hugely useful paper guide (illustrated brochure) prepared by Failte Ireland in collaboration with the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards, The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and the Loughs Agency in Northern Ireland. Contains details of important salmon and sea-trout angling centres together with a map of ‘centres of excellence’ and contact addresses/numbers for gillies, guides and regional accommodation. The companion guides to brown trout fishing and to sea fishing are equally detailed and useful. May be ordered from e.g. Dublin Tourism, Suffolk Street, Dublin 3 (+353 (0)1 605 7700 or click on [www.discoverireland.ie](http://www.discoverireland.ie)).


Anon (n.d., [2010]) *Kylemore Abbey and Victorian Walled Garden*. Kylemore Abbey, Galway, Ireland: Tourist brochure


Seasonally-organised guide to fly-fishing in Ireland, with sections on the Ballynahinch, Delphi, Glencar and the Cork and Kerry Blackwater as well as asides on fly-fishing for coarse fish and fly-fishing for
saltwater species. The section on the Kerry Blackwater (p80ff.) includes an account of fishing with one Ken Whelan. Lovely photographs.


The pages devoted to sea-trout are relatively few in number, but the section on dapping (pp.102-109) is in principle useful if the tackle set-up described is adapted to modern materials.


This is the revised edition. The first edition appeared in 1975, pp. 295-324 detail sea-trout fishing, and are a compressed (and slightly updated) version of the material which appeared in Falkus’s monumental *Sea Trout Fishing* (see below).


Calderwood was among the first to describe the ‘plastic’ nature of the sea-trout’s biology: ‘We are dealing with a very plastic species’ (p.74). Or again, of relevance to how we have come to think of Irish sea-trout, ‘[t]he whitling [Calderwood is here referring to juvenile sea-trout – finnock: McC] roams in from the sea and lives in tidal lagoons for a time, then slips out again.’ (p.74)

Cass, A.R. Harris (n.d. [probably 1920s or 30s]) *Catching the Wily Sea-Trout*. London: Herbert Jenkins.

Based on the author’s angling in the English Lake District, this is nevertheless an important book of interest to all sea-trout fishermen. Chapter 1, ‘When the sea trout run’, is full of useful (and still very pertinent) information. Chapter 5 details ‘Fly-fishing for sea trout’, and although the author didn’t think much of this method, his observations on the efficacy of a dragging fly (as opposed to a fly fished inertly on a relatively slack line) are again spot on.


Section three, p.91ff., details ‘The Quest for Sea Trout’ and is a minor masterpiece – beautifully written (e.g. as in the author’s lovely comment about dapping: ‘...an art with a strong natural logic in it and a streak of the fantastic about it’, p. 117) and indeed comprehensive.


Important and (for its period) ground-breaking work on Irish sea-trout by an eminent fishery biologist.


This is the revised second edition. The first edition appeared in 1962. A hugely influential work, and justifiably so. It’s a comprehensive account of the author’s experiences of over 30 years’ intensive sea-trout fishing, both on the Cumbrian Esk and on waters further afield, including several Irish loughs and sea loughs. The chapters on night fishing for sea-trout will probably never be surpassed, and chapters XIII (on lake fishing) and XIV (on saltwater fishing) are also important.


This is a 1970 paperback reprint of a classic work first appearing in Collins’ New Naturalist Series in 1967. Important material on migratory forms of the trout may be found throughout.

Important scientific publication, based on large samples, by major Irish fishery scientists. The abstract of the paper states that

The relationships shown in the present study indicate that sea lice from marine salmon farms were a major contributory factor in the sea trout stock collapses observed in aquaculture areas in western Ireland. If recovery of depleted sea trout stocks is to be achieved in this area it is critical to ensure that ovigerous sea lice levels are maintained at near zero levels on marine salmon farms over the spring period prior to and during sea trout smolt migration. This must be achieved on a consistent annual basis for a successful sea trout recovery.


This is the 4th edition. Important survey of all the insects of relevance to stillwater trout fishers. Dressings of artificial flies are given in a large Appendix, p.208ff.


Superbly illustrated by Stuart Carter. Pp.50-51 examine the life and distribution of varieties of *Salmo trutta*.


While only rather indirectly concerning *Salmo trutta trutta*, nevertheless Chapter 1 of this work contains interesting and thought-provoking material on how the charr may differ in evolutionary origin from the trout and the salmon.


If I (CBMcC) were forced to choose one work on angling to accompany me into the hereafter, this would be the one. Chapter VI concerns ‘Sea Trout Fishing’ and is quotable throughout. Like many sections of Falkus and Kingsmill Moore, I have much of it by heart.


Hard copies of the original text editions command fierce prices that to date have been well beyond my pocket. The full text of the first edition (2 vols.) may, however, be consulted freely on the internet, since the hard copy has been digitised for the electronic archives of Harvard University Library: [http://www.archive.org/details/salmonriversire01grimgoog](http://www.archive.org/details/salmonriversire01grimgoog)


This is a 2003 reprint of a classic work first published by Witherby in 1933.

Hansen, Lars Peter and Malcolm Windsor (eds., 2006) ‘Interactions between aquaculture and

An important report, freely available from NASCO (11 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2AS), since embedded in the proceedings of the symposium is a public admission by some aquaculturists that salmon farming, as this has been practiced in Norway, Ireland, Scotland and elsewhere, has to date had a hugely negative impact on wild stocks of salmon and sea-trout (see e.g. and in particular ‘Take home messages’, pp.64-69).


Chapter IX, p.111ff., contains material on fishing the Ballynahinch River in Connemara.


A comprehensive and important work, more extensive – and in places, more in-depth – than Falkus. Indispensable.


This is the revised edition of a work which first appeared in 1952. The revised edition has been many times reprinted. While it’s a classic work of entomology, and thus of greatest interest to the brown trout angler, any sea-trout fly-fisher will find the plates on p.141 most interesting, since they show trout flies dressed ‘Irish style’ from the late 18th century (the fly-dresser was Cornelius Gorman, of Ennis, Co. Clare). It seems likely that when fly-fishing for sea-trout began in Ireland, these were the style of flies used – even if the dressings then used were in Ireland just slightly more colourful (e.g. in their use of blues and magentas) than those dressed onto equivalent flies used for brown trout fishing.


The author’s experience is most extensive on Scottish waters (Maree, Uist), but his chapters on loch fishing (including fishing with the dry fly) are required reading for all sea-trout fly-fishers.


Analysis of salmon fly patterns described in Henry Newland [1851].


Description of the invention and subsequent history of what became known as Devon minnows.


Holiday’s work is nowadays not so often cited as that of e.g. Falkus but Holiday nevertheless has some interesting things to say about sea-trout and about fishing for them, though I would not use the knots he recommends. Chapter 11, ‘Fishing in estuaries’, is valuable.


Strangely neglected work on sea-trout fishing. A very fine contribution to the literature.


Focussed very largely on the author’s fishing for sea-trout on and around the Scottish west coast (in particular, on Skye), chapters 6-8 include useful generalisations about different forms of sea-trout fishing, and chapter 9 is devoted specifically to ‘Sea-trout in Ireland’.


The author was Professor of Philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin, and this work, centred on Irish fish and fishing, is always articulate, considered, and weighty without being portentous. Would that I could write so clearly. One of my favourite angling books.


This is the first, hardback edition of a work which two years later appeared in paperback under the Oxford University Press imprint. A provisional (and now somewhat dated) dictionary of fly-fishing, pp. 202-208 contain an extensive entry on the sea-trout together with notes on the history of sea-trout fishing. Perhaps I’ll update and revise this work...one day.


Chapter 4, ‘Dark of midsummer’, concerns sea-trout fishing, as does the final chapter.


These ‘sketches’ are a selection from – I’m afraid – my own work, and include what is probably a favourite from among my own angling pieces, ‘The day of a bit of a doff’ (about fly-fishing on Screebe Lough in Connemara when Screebe still enjoyed a big run of white-trout – see the relevant entry in the Gazetteer here). Even I was smiling, gently, as I constructed the words. Pencil illustrations by the Dutch artist, writer and fisherman Ad Swier.


Included in this collection of what are usually short pieces of prose is an account of travels to Donegal [2009] in search of sea-trout (see e.g. the essay ‘The haunting of Yeats and terns’, pp.153-56).


Despite the small format of the work this is a most useful introduction, with chapter 4 (‘Sea pools, estuaries and the open sea’) being especially valuable.


Important benchmark survey consisting of chapters by eminent scientists. Particularly interesting, perhaps, are chapters 7 (‘The Great Game: the interaction of field sports and conservation in Britain from the 1950s to 2008’), 8 (‘Going fishing: recent trends in recreational angling’), 22 (‘Riverflies’), 33 (‘The seashore’) and 34 (‘The offshore waters’).


This is a reprint of a work first published in 1984 by Colin Smythe, which then appeared in a second, revised and enlarged edition from the Flyfisher’s Classic Library (1993). It’s probably the most comprehensive work to date on Irish trout and salmon flies, and includes highly interesting and generous historical notes on tyings and fly-makers. The dressings are given in great detail, including variant dressings, and wherever known, the provenance of individual flies is listed. Illustrative plates are excellent. Indispensable for those tying their own flies – and those interested in fly-fishing history.


This is a reprint of a work which first appeared in 1892. The book is in the best sense a riot, which includes (as the work’s sub-title has it) ‘Legendary tales, folk-lore, local customs and natural history’ – a heady mix. Despite its occasional laboured wordiness – something entirely characteristic of some 19th century prose – it’s a wonderful book, and is written out of all forms of energy and abundance, the author’s included.


This is the second, revised and enlarged edition of a work which first appeared in 1960. No fly-fisher in Ireland (whether for salmon, sea-trout or brown trout) should neglect this book. If anything, the second edition is even greater than the first, since its Appendix details how trout and sea-trout may see the angler’s fly in a wave, and in deeply stained water. This Appendix provides some of the clearest rationale for choice of (wet-) fly in different conditions that I have ever read.


Part II, ‘Sea-trout’, contains different authors’ accounts of saltwater sea-trout fishing (though these accounts don’t include Ireland). The book also contains highly interesting material on catching mullet on the fly – something that many fly-fishers in Ireland might like to study, since mullet share many of the estuaries in which Irish sea-trout feed, and through which they run, and may provide an interesting diversion at those times when the sea-trout aren’t feeding or taking.


A somewhat miscellaneous collection of essays by the great man, who clearly preferred to fish the dry (twitched or dragging) fly for sea-trout. Mottram also often fished the floating fly downstream-and-across. There is also an intriguing hint that fly-fishing for sea fish was practiced in the Scottish Islands during the early 20th century (p.2: ‘[O]ne of the men of the party...fished with flies from a neighbouring headland’ – although the context indicates that the gentleman was fly-fishing for cuddy, juvenile ling). The notion that there was an incipient tradition of saltwater fly-fishing in the early 20th century is explored elsewhere in *Nomads*. Mottram’s notes on the construction of floating flies for sea-trout, i.e. that they should be light in construction and preferably buoyant enough to float on/across the surface rather than in it, are also still highly pertinent.


Engaged and engaging work focussed on sea-trout angling in the SW of England. Mountjoy puts forward an innovative theory on why the sea-trout takes (or moves to, or rejects) a fly, bait or lure, and I agree with much of what he proposes, though confess I’ve never (yet) fished for sea-trout in the south-west of England. I fully endorse the author’s comments about selectivity and restraint in angling.


Probably the single most important work on the life and habits of the sea-trout published in the 20th century. There’s an emphasis on Scotland (the sub-title of the work is ‘Especially in Scottish Waters; with chapters on the reading and measuring of scales’). Some of the implications of the observations contained in this major study still remain to be scientifically explored (e.g. the author’s belief that sea-trout from the River Till make one – and usually only one – spawning run back across the North Sea from their feeding grounds off the Dutch coasts), while others have only recently been revisited...and confirmed.


Justly acclaimed biography.


Autobiography, memoir and reminiscences of fish, fishing and fishery management from one of the most influential figures in later 20th century Irish white-trout and salmon angling, particularly as that was developing in Connemara and Mayo in the period 1960-1990.


Instructive and beautifully illustrated book about the biology of Irish brown trout, including important notes on e.g. the interactions between pike and brown trout in loughs and the benefits of stream enhancement programmes to wild trout stocks. Material on both sea-trout and slob trout will be found on p.29, and we wholeheartedly agree that ‘[t]here are a lot of unanswered questions concerning [slob trout]’ and that the mechanism that triggers anadromy in brown trout ‘is not clearly understood’ (p.29).


4th edition, and a work which will doubtless go into many subsequent and updated editions. Indispensable guide to almost all major Irish stillwaters. Includes grid references, maps, ticket information and commentary. See also the following entry.


Perry, Thomas G. (n.d.) May Madness! Fifty Years of Fishing on Shannon, its Tributaries and Amusing Incidents [sic]. Privately printed.

A work which has never, to my knowledge, reached hard print – the book was copied for me from another photocopy by an old friend – but an absolutely splendid, and splendidly chaotic, account of fishing in Ireland (largely on and around Lough Derg at mayfly time) which still makes me smile every time I read it. I particularly like the chapter on ‘Ghillying for Bertie Nestor’. Bertie lived in a caravan. Bertie’s car – ‘a minute Morris Minor’ – was ‘full to the roof with pipes, cigarettes and daily papers’ (p.125). Bertie was also in the habit of going for a walk up ‘Ogonnoloe mountain very early in the morning.... saying “God’s fresh air is good for what ails me”. Sometimes’ (comments the author) ‘I really do not think he knew what was ailing him....’ (p.125). I also relish the account of David Minogue, the farmer and occasional gillie, who was in the habit of sucking his pipe so loudly that the hearer often mistook the sucking noises for those of trout feeding on mayflies. I’d love to have met David...and Bertie – and the author of this often-misspelled masterpiece. And I’d love to have fished with them all.


Survey of some important west coast fisheries. Includes some significant historical asides. I was surprised and touched to find that in what’s now the distant past, and although we have never met in person, Bill Rawlings and a very young McCully had fished the same waters in Connemara during the same month of the same year – August 1974.


Detailed and well-illustrated work on dressing many important salmon and sea-trout flies, including Skunks, Sunk Lures, Wake Lures and Waddingtons.


I have worked with the first edition of the text in the John Rylands University Library, Manchester. Chapter 1 of this peerless work includes material on how the trout may see the fly (pp.11-14).


This is an unusual edition since it prints both the first edition of Sawyer’s great work (1958) with the second (1970). Included in the second edition is the chapter ‘Journeys to Ulster’ (pp.181-95) which among other things describes a visit Frank Sawyer made to the Erne estuary at Ballyshannon, where he caught small sea-trout both on Rogan’s Gadget and on the Killer Bug.


Significant and comprehensive work (for its period) on sea-trout fishing, centred largely though by no means exclusively on Scottish fishing. There’s an extensive section on tackle, with much of which we almost wholly agree – particularly on the necessity of avoiding excessively tip-actioned fly-rods ‘like the plague’ (p. 62).


Beautifully written. Chapter 8 describes fishing for trout and sea-trout in The Rosses (Donegal), chapter 9 describes dapping, including dapping on Lough Owennamarve (Donegal), while chapter 10 describes episodes of fishing on Gowla and Athry (Connemara) when those waters still held big stocks of white-trout every summer. Wonderful book.


This is the second edition, edited by Rafael Sabatini, of a work which was first published in 1917. Passionate, opinionated, and with an infectious enthusiasm for sea-trout – Scottish sea-trout – Stuart’s chapter on saltwater fishing (‘In tidal waters’, chapter VI) is splendid, as are his descriptions of sea-trout fishing on Uist. As the reader will have noted, the sub-title here, ‘Nomads of the tides’ is a phrase originally coined by Stuart.


Indispensable for all those wishing to fish in the west of Ireland (or in the Scottish Hebrides). A classic.

and G. Witherby.

The author fished extensively in Ireland, especially on and around Lough Eske (Donegal). His work is more descriptive and reflective than that of, for example, Falkus – but in its own meticulous way it’s no less detailed and thoughtful.


Neither as large nor as comprehensive as the author’s earlier *Newly from the Sea*, this is nevertheless an astute, thought-provoking work. See also the entry for Spencer (1991), below.


A work edited by that fine fly-fisher and writer, Jeremy Lucas, after Sidney Spencer’s tragic death in a car accident in Donegal in 1976. It is a very judicious selection and distillation of Spencer’s evocative and – that word again – meticulous writings on trout, salmon and (above all) sea-trout. Lucas’s introduction is itself very fine.


Useful, well-written and well-illustrated history.


This is the second edition of a work first published in 1963. It was among the first fishing books I ever read (a copy borrowed from Bingley Public Library in 1967). It seems dated now, and the chapter on sea-trout (by F.W. Holiday) is partial, but nevertheless the author’s insistence on a longish, relatively soft-actioned rod is entirely justified and his remarks on working the fly are still most pertinent.


Important and well-written work on the construction and fishing of sea-trout flies, including the Snake together with different dressings of Sunk Lure and Wake Lure.


Like the author’s earlier *Sea Trout Flies*, this work blends the description of the dressing of sea-trout patterns with evocative descriptions of days and nights fishing for sea-trout. As with the author’s earlier title, the construction notes and illustrations which accompany the text are most useful.


pp.140–42 give a thorough overview of the possible origins of the Kill Devil Spider, an artificial pattern used in Wexford and Wicklow. A wonderful, meticulously-researched and beautifully-produced book.


Went, Arthur (1968) See *Selected web (URL) references* below under ‘Irish Fishery Investigations’.


This is a reprint of a work which first appeared in 1989 – part of a trilogy on game, coarse and sea fishing. KW will be too modest to say anything about it. I find the work to be a splendid little (144pp.) introduction to fishing for salmon, sea-trout and brown trout in Ireland, and many of its pieces of advice and description stand up proudly to the test of time.


The 1986 edition is the sixth edition of a work which first appeared in 1949. The 6th edition includes a list of modern natural and artificial flies by Donald Overfield – a splendid piece of updating. Because of the work’s careful historical scholarship I find it still invaluable, all these years on.


Contains two of Spencer’s indispensable titles, Salmon and Sea-trout in Wild Places (1968) and Newly from the Sea (1969).
Selected web (URL) references

Dublin Penny Journal (1832-33)
http://books.google.co.uk/
Accessed August and September 2011

Doolough Tragedy
Accessed 3 January 2011

Fishing in Ireland
www.fishingireland.ie
Accessed 2009-2012

Judd Ruane’s website, focussed on sea-trout fishing on the Moy estuary.

The Fishing Museum Online
http://www.fishingmuseum.org.uk/index.html
Accessed September 2011

Hugely useful website hosted by Andrew Herd and Jon Ward-Allen. Wonderful illustrations of natural and artificial baits, many of them from Chris Sandford’s world-class collection.

A Fly Fishing History
http://www.flyfishinghistory.com/contents.htm
Accessed throughout the making of Nomads.

(Another of...) Andrew Herd’s website(s). Erudite, witty and detailed. Indispensable to any angling historian.

Global Fly Fisher
http://www.globalflyfisher.com
Accessed since 2003

Wonderful site developed and hosted by Martin Joergensen.

Henry, Mitchell
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitchell_Henry
Accessed 29 January 2011
http://www.mitchell-henry.co.uk/published.html
Accessed 29 January 2011

The last-named site is the Mitchell Henry family website.

Inland Fisheries Ireland
http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/
Accessed throughout the writing of this book.

The site includes .pdf files relating to annually updated salmon and sea-trout statistics for the past decade (2000 onwards), e.g. total allowable catches in nets, rod-and-line catches, percentages of fish over 40cm, percentages of fish released and so on.
An Irish Angler’s World

www.anirishanglersworld.com
Accessed from 2011 onwards

Ashley Hayden’s angling blog.

Irish Fishery Investigations

http://oar.marine.ie/bitstream/10793/125/1/No%203%201968%20Irish%20Fisheries%20Investigations%20Series%20A%20Freshwater.pdf


Accessed 30 December 2010

Nore and Suir Rivers Trust

http://www.noresuirrivertrust.org/
Accessed 3 September 2011

O’Malley, Grace (Gráinne Ní Mháille)

Accessed 10 January 2011

Restoring the Avoca

http://www.fishingireland.net/environment/avocareport.htm#execsum
Accessed 20 November 2011

Sandeel

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandlance
Accessed 7 January 2010

Sea Trout Fishing: a Web Guide

http://www.seatroutfishing.net/index3.htm
Accessed throughout 2008-2011

Site written and hosted by Paul Hopwood. It’s Welsh-focussed (largely because Paul seems – lucky chap – to do much of his sea-trout fishing in Wales) and contains hugely useful details of fly patterns including Snakes, Sunk Lures and Secret Weapons. There are also useful links to fly-tying pages by Sid Knight and Iain Finlay.

Slaney River Trust

http://www.slaneyrivertrust.ie/
Accessed from 2010 onwards

Tide tables

Accessed since 2009

DVD