

# Aberdeen and District Angling Association

Honorary President, Alastair H. Hume MBE, 162 North Deeside Road, Milltimber, AB13 OHL



[www.adaa.org.uk](http://www.adaa.org.uk)

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Roseanna Cunningham MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
The Scottish Government,  
St. Andrew's House,  
Regent Road,  
Edinburgh EH1 3DQ

16 July 2018

Dear Ms Cunningham

## THE MISSING SALMON PROJECT- PREDATION

You will be aware that the Atlantic Salmon Trust have commenced the above project.

The Association has seen a dramatic decline in salmon catches in recent years in its local rivers the Dee, Don and Ythan. This is the case across all of Scotland.

I am writing on behalf of the Associations Management Committee members to express concerns that predation was potentially having an adverse effect on Atlantic Salmon stocks as highlighted in the River Dee Trusts presentation to our members at our AGM in January 2018.

Recently published research from the Trust in the declining salmon numbers on the river Dee has identified the predation on a vast scale by both Goosanders and Mergansers.

The Trust has identified that on average each of these avian predators consume between eight and eleven juvenile salmon each day let alone the number that they may damage and later die whilst hunting in the river. Equally, the Trust has identified by their research, that juvenile salmon which were tagged in the upper catchment area of the river Dee – the offspring of Spring run Salmon, suffered greater mortality when compared with those tagged in the lower reaches on their migration to the sea by these avian predators.

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These birds are non-native to Scotland though they do seek protection by the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and accordingly, given this protection their numbers have greatly increased which, as research has now identified is reflective to the declining runs of juvenile salmon to sea. Therefore, it would seem feasible and without unnecessary delay, to impose a greater cull of these birds prior to their breeding season and by doing so will ease the predation of juvenile salmon whilst in the river.

Although this decision may result in conflict with protectionist organisations, the RSPB and the BTO it is pleasing to note, that the government agency Scottish Natural Heritage, responding to the declining wading birds such as the Curlew and Oyster Catcher by predation from Ravens also a protected species, and acting on scientific evidence, granted a licence to cull such numbers as to halt the decline. The resulting effect has been noticed by this year's wading bird breeding success.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Toseland  
Secretary/ Treasurer  
Aberdeen and District Angling Association

CC  
ADAA Management Committee members

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## **Information about Aberdeen and District Angling Association:**

The Aberdeen and District Angling Association was formed in 1946 and is one the biggest and most successful of its kind. It has approximately 800 members.

It was established after the Second World War to enable access to salmon and trout waters to local residents at a reasonable cost and this still maintains to this day, indeed now membership is open to all regardless of geographical location.

## **General Information about angling:**

More than 3 million anglers contribute at least £3.5 billion to the UK economy each year.

Tens of thousands of people are employed in angling and its related industries.

Angling provides huge benefits for health, education and wellbeing to people of all ages, and it is often the only outdoor activity easily available to urban communities suffering deprivation.

Anglers invest millions of hours of volunteer time into the maintenance and improvement of water environments by clearing litter, restoring habitats and monitoring pollution.

According to the Scottish Government, in 2004 angling was estimated as worth some £113m per year to the Scottish economy, £31m of which to the north east economy.