



Angling
Ireland



TROUT ANGLING
ON IRISH RIVERS



INTRODUCTION

Brown trout are the most common angling species native to Ireland and are found in nearly all of our watercourses. Their abundance is due to a number of factors, including Ireland's relatively cool climate, the presence of large limestone deposits providing good trout habitat, a proliferation of gravel which is essential for spawning and a historic lack of competitors and predators. The fact that trout are so widely dispersed throughout the country means that you are never too far away from a trout stream or the possibility of casting a line...

Irish river trout are entirely wild and so present the trout angler with a real test of their skills. We do not stock our rivers and while this may make trout fishing a bit more challenging, there is nothing that compares to catching wild fish in a wild environment.

Despite trout being widespread, many of our rivers are relatively under-fished. There is a strong tradition of lough (lake) fishing for trout in Ireland which means that many of our rivers are overlooked in the early part of the season, when the lough fishing is

at its best. There is also a great tradition of salmon angling in Ireland, and trout fishing is often neglected on rivers where both species are present. All this means that the trout angler will rarely be troubled by overcrowding on any of our rivers and can often spend a day fishing without encountering another angler.

This brochure contains some basic information to help you get started on your Irish trout fishing adventure. There is a short description of the basics of river trout fishing in Ireland and a brief introduction to some of the main fisheries that consistently produce good fishing. The map on the flip side of this brochure highlights these fisheries and the key towns in which you could base yourself.



There is much more detailed information on the www.fishinginireland.info website and on the accompanying Google map: <https://goo.gl/RPsWTS>

FISHING SEASONS

The early part of the season in March & April is usually characterised by cold weather and cold water. As a result, fly hatches, when they occur, tend to be in the warmer part of the day from midday until about 3 p.m. and fishing should be concentrated in this period. At this time of year finding rising fish can be difficult and sub-surface methods using wet fly or weighted nymphs to search the water are often the most productive. However, there can be some

prolific hatches of large dark olives from April onwards and this can lead to some very good dry fly fishing. Other flies hatching in the early season include medium olives, small dark olives and iron blue duns.

As the days lengthen and get warmer in May and June, fly hatches become more abundant and the productive fishing period can extend from morning through to evening. The variety of insect life also increases at this time of year as mayflies begin to hatch on some rivers and these are accompanied by pale wateries, yellow evening duns, sedges/caddis and two important terrestrial flies: the hawthorn fly and the black gnat. By the end of June into the start of July, it is possible to encounter feeding fish throughout most of the day. As the range of food on offer increases, trout can become quite selective, honing in on a particular species of fly or even on a certain stage of the fly (nymph, emerger, dun or spinner). Both sub-surface methods and dry fly fishing can be productive and the 'klink & dink or dry/dropper' approach with a weighted nymph anchored below a Klinkhammer style fly can be a very effective method for taking fish throughout the water column.

As we move further into July and on into August, daytime activity tapers off and the fishing tends to be concentrated into the 2-hour period before and into dusk. This can be some of the most exciting fishing of the year, as the previously tranquil, sun-soaked river, suddenly comes alive with feeding trout and for a short period, the angler is spoilt for choice as to which fish to cast to. It can also be quite technical fishing, as trout can quickly change from feeding on nymph, to dun, to spinner. If you get it right, you can have a super evening's fishing. If you get it wrong, you can leave the river wondering about what could, and probably should, have been...

Towards the back end of the season, in late August and September, the daytime fishing picks up again as the evening fishing (for resident trout) becomes less productive. However, on some rivers, at this time of year, the resident stock of river trout is often bolstered by an influx of larger lake trout that migrate from the lakes into the rivers to spawn. These trout, with local names such as 'Croneen' or 'Dollaghan', are most often taken in late evening or even into darkness using tactics and flies that are more akin to sea trout fishing.

EQUIPMENT

Irish rivers are small by international standards and so they can be fished with relatively light tackle. An eight or nine-foot rod rated AFTM 4 or 5 will be able to cover most angling situations while lighter/shorter rods will be preferable on the smaller streams & tributaries. Line choice is nearly always a floater and one would only use a sink tip if fishing streamers through deep pools. A pair of breathable waders & boots, wading jacket and a wading stick are a necessity on many rivers as bank access is often poor and wading is generally the most productive way to fish.

OPEN & CLOSED SEASONS

The open season for river trout varies depending on where in Ireland you are fishing. Rivers begin to open for the season on various dates in March and all rivers will be open by April 1st. At the back end of the season, all rivers will be closed for fishing by 30th September. Due to the variance in open/closed seasons, it is advised that anglers intending to fish a particular river in March or September check in advance to ensure that the river is open. Fishing is completely closed from October to the end of February.

ACCESS, LICENCES & PERMITS

In Ireland, you do not need to buy a state licence to fish for brown trout. Trout fishing on rivers is most often controlled by local angling clubs who usually lease the fishing rights for a few kilometres of river and make day tickets available to the visiting angler. These tickets are usually no more than €10 - €20 and can usually be purchased in a local shop.

CATCH & RELEASE

We all have a responsibility to protect and conserve our fisheries so that they can be enjoyed by future generations. Most fisheries face multiple threats including pollution, water abstraction and illegal fishing, all of which have a negative impact on fish stocks. For that reason, we would ask that all anglers consider practicing Catch & Release for the majority of fish they catch. Record any trophy fish with a quick photo and then carefully return to the water. Remember: [#CPRsavesfish](#)

OTHER METHODS

Fly fishing is the most popular method of fishing for trout in Ireland but there are other methods that can be just as effective. Spinning with light tackle using very small lures/soft plastics or even a dead minnow can work very well and can be more practical than fly fishing where rivers have heavy bankside vegetation/tree growth. Worm fishing, where allowed, is also very effective. Care should be taken to prevent damage to fish by multiple/deep hooking when using either of the above methods and anglers should always consider using barbless hooks.



GUIDING

There are a relatively small number of guides specialising in river trout fishing in Ireland and, if possible, it is advisable for an angler visiting a venue for the first time to hire a guide for at least a day or two. Fishing with a guide will take a lot of the guesswork out of your fishing trip as the local knowledge will help you to catch more fish. You will need to contact and make your own arrangements with guides and to help with this, there is a list of angling guides available at:

www.fishinginireland.info/guides/index.htm

FURTHER INFORMATION

Angling Information

This guide provides a basic introduction to river trout angling in Ireland and gives a summary of some of the key angling hotspots you can visit. However, there are a number of additional resources where you can find more detailed and up-to-date angling information. Firstly, there is a dedicated angling website which has more detailed information on individual fisheries and service providers at: www.fishinginireland.info

If you are planning on fishing in Northern Ireland or on the Foyle and Carlingford area on either side of the border you should consult:

www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/outdoor-recreation-and-sport/angling

and

www.ufishireland.org/

IFI also produces a weekly Angling Update which provides up-to-date reports on what anglers are catching and where. You can sign up to be emailed the weekly Angling Update by emailing contact@fisheriesireland.ie

General Tourism

Ireland also has a general tourism website www.ireland.com that will help you plan your trip to Ireland, providing a wealth of information on travel and accommodation as well as information on things to do and see while visiting the island.



Leave No Trace

Please adhere to the seven principles of Leave No Trace Ireland:

Plan ahead and prepare; Travel and camp on durable surfaces; Dispose of waste properly; Leave what you find; Minimise campfire impacts (be careful with fire); Respect wildlife;

Be considerate of other visitors.

Vehicles should be parked in designated areas and in such a manner that they do not cause obstruction.



Anglers should fish responsibly and sustainably – where possible use single barbless hooks and practice no-weight, “in the water” catch and release.

www.leavenotraceireland.org

Biosecurity

Aquatic Invasive Species and fish pathogens are readily transferred from one water-course to another on angling tackle, boats and protective clothing. These can be very damaging to resident fish stocks, the aquatic habitat and the general environment. We would ask that all anglers inspect and clean their gear prior to travelling to Ireland to fish.

Full information on prevention of invasive species is available on our website at:

www.fisheriesireland.ie/Research/invasive-species.html

Or via Invasive Species Ireland at

<http://invasivespeciesireland.com/cops/water-users/anglers/>

Disclaimer

Every effort has been taken to ensure accuracy in the compilation of this publication and associated maps and web pages. Inland Fisheries Ireland cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions therein. Some sporting activities may by their nature be hazardous and involve risk. It is recommended in such cases to take out personal accident insurance. While many operators would have public liability insurance it is always advisable to check with the establishment or operator concerned as to the level of cover carried.

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Top Pick Fisheries

1) **The River Suir** rises on the Devil's Bit mountain in Co. Tipperary and drains a large catchment before flowing into the sea near Waterford. It is a long river (185km) by Irish standards, with plenty of salmon rivers, and is regarded by many as Ireland's finest trout stream. It fishes well along most of its length with the towns of Thurles, Hollycross, Golden, Cahir, Ardfeinan, Clonmel and Carrick on Suir all suitable bases from which to explore the river. It gets all the fly hatches you would expect from a river flowing over limestone and it fishes well throughout the season. There are a number of tributaries on the lower reaches of the Suir, including the Drish, Nire, Tar and Anner which all hold good stocks of small wild brown trout so the angler is really spoilt for choice when visiting this part of Ireland.

2) **The Boyne Valley** is one of Ireland's most historically significant and scenic areas and the River Boyne, from which the valley gets its name, is also one of Ireland's top trout rivers. This makes the area a perfect base for those wishing to combine fishing with other family/tourism based activities. At over 100km in length and with numerous tributaries, each worth fishing in its own right, the River Boyne should be high on the list for any trout angler visiting Ireland. The river runs over limestone a good base for exploring the area.

3) **Upper Blackwater:** Heading north from Macroom, Co. Cork, one soon encounters a number of small streams that form part of the Upper Blackwater system. The Blackwater is one of Ireland's best-known salmon rivers, but what is less well known is that the Upper Blackwater system has some small trout streams that are well worth exploring for the adventurous fly angler. Using the towns of Millstreet or Kanturk as a base, there are a number of small streams within easy reach, including the Allow, Dalua, Finnaw, Aubonne and Araglin rivers. All contain stocks of small, but hard fighting wild Irish brownies that rise freely to a fly.

4) **The River Nore,** a sister river of the Suir, is primarily known as a salmon river but it has good stocks of wild brownies that are often overlooked when the salmon are running. Key angling areas on the river are at the towns of Millstreet, Bennettsbridge and Thomastown as well as the stretch that runs through Mount Juliet park which is very accessible for the visiting angler. There are a number of tributaries of the Nore that are nice little trout streams in their own right including the King's River, Dinan, Erkina, Ouveg and Goul.

5) **The River Liffey,** which flows through Dublin, is an excellent trout stream once you get outside the capital city. The best of the trout fishing is upstream of the town of Celbridge through the towns of Straffan, Clonsilla, Newbridge and Ballymore Eustace. There is a large reservoir & hydro-electric power station above Ballymore Eustace and the flow of the river is controlled artificially as a result so the river is subject to unnatural rises and falls in water levels. It gets good hatches of various upwings and sedges and can fish well throughout the season, with May, June and September being good for daytime fishing and July for the evening rise.

6) **Dea, Glyde & Fane:** These three rivers drain into the Irish sea to the south of Dundalk town on the east coast of Ireland. They are relatively small rivers but they all contain good stocks of trout and they are well worth fishing if you are visiting the area. The Fane is probably the most accessible of the three rivers and it fishes best upstream of Knock Bridge as far as Cullinville Bridge.

7) **The River Sullane** rises on the Cork/Kerry border before flowing in a southeasterly direction through the towns of Ballyvourney and Macroom and joining the River Lee at Carrigrohilly Reservoir. The best of the fishing is downstream of Ballyvourney and access is found around the bridges which cross the river at intervals along its route. The river fishes well throughout the season with trout averaging half a pound rising freely to the regular fly hatches. Trout in the lower reaches of the river can be bigger as there are seasonal movements of larger lake trout into the river from the reservoir. The Sullane is within easy reach of the ever popular town of Killarney and so should be on the list for any fly angler planning to visit the area.

8) **The River Bandon,** which enters the sea at Kinshilla, is within easy reach of anybody visiting Cork City and its environs or those travelling the Wild Atlantic Way. The Bandon is a great game fishery, providing good fishing for salmon, sea trout and brown trout in a very scenic river, flowing through a lush valley and with good access from the roads that follow its course between the towns of Bandon and Durnamway. The trout average half a pound but trout to 5lbs have been taken in recent years. It gets good hatches of fly and the best of the fishing is in the April-June period and again in September.

9) **The Little Brosna** rises near the town of Rosscarra in Co. Tipperary and flows north-westwards via the town of Birr onto its confluence with the River Shannon near Meelick. It is a relatively small river but has good stocks of free rising brown trout along its length. Its main tributary, the River Camcor, joins the Brosna at Birr and also contains good stocks of trout. Both these rivers are probably more renowned for the larger trout that migrate up into the rivers from Lough Derg towards the tail end of the season. These trout, known locally as "Croneen" average about 1lb and are generally fishing for at dusk using wet fly on sink tip lines to fish the deeper pools.

10) **The River Robe** flows into Lough Mask close to the town of Ballinrobe in Co. Mayo. It is a river with good access throughout and the fishing is free with no permit required. The average size of resident trout is quite large and they are generally free rising. Towards the end of the season, the numbers of trout in the Robe are bolstered by a run of trout from Lough Mask on their way to their spawning beds. There is good fly water along the river, particularly around Crossboyne and Hollymount and both nymph fishing and dry fly fishing produce results, with the dry fly proving particularly good on summer evenings.

11) **The River Annalee** is part of the Erne system and flows westwards from Shercock to Butlersbridge in Co. Cavan. It has good hatches of blue-winged olive and midge and also has a good spawning of mayfly. Bankside access can be difficult but the river has a number of shallow stretches which are easily waded. The best of the fishing is upstream of Ballykiste as far as Tullyvin and the easiest access points are found around the bridges.

IRELAND/NORTHERN IRELAND

The island of Ireland consists of two separate countries: the Republic of Ireland (also known as Eire or Southern Ireland) and Northern Ireland, which is part of the UK. As a result of this, there are three separate agencies that control fishing on the island of Ireland: Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) which controls the majority of the fishing in the Republic of Ireland, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) which controls most of the fishing in Northern Ireland, and the Loughs Agency, which controls the fishing on the Foyle and Corrib systems that span the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. These areas are marked on the adjacent map. This brochure only provides information on fishing in IFI controlled waters in Ireland. Anglers wishing to fish in Loughs Agency or DAERA controlled waters should check the relevant website for information before fishing.

DAERA: www.wildirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/outdoor-recreation-and-sport/angling
Loughs Agency: www.wafishireland.org



For a Google map, scan the QR code or use the following web link: <https://goo.gl/RPjVtS>



● Trout Angling Centre



For up to date information on fishing in Ireland log onto: www.fishinginireland.info or send an email to contact@fisheriesireland.ie

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A green four-leaf clover is positioned to the left of the word "Ireland". A thin, curved green line arches from the bottom of the clover towards the right, passing under the word "Ireland".