Fish in Rivers Factsheet

The Dargle River catchment is located within the Eastern River Basin District and covers an area of approximately 128km^2. The Dargle River rises in the Wicklow mountains and flows in a north-easterly direction through a series of rapids and waterfalls before entering the sea at Bray, Co. Wicklow. This catchment's geology is mixed between granite, slate, shale and schist, with the land used mainly for agriculture. Significant urban activity is present towards the mouth at Bray. Portions of this catchment's most southern and western headwaters are situated within the Wicklow Mountains Special Area of Conservation. The river is one of Ireland's best sea trout rivers and also gets a small run of salmon (grilse).

Seven sites were surveyed on the Dargle Catchment between the 7th and 10th of September 2018.

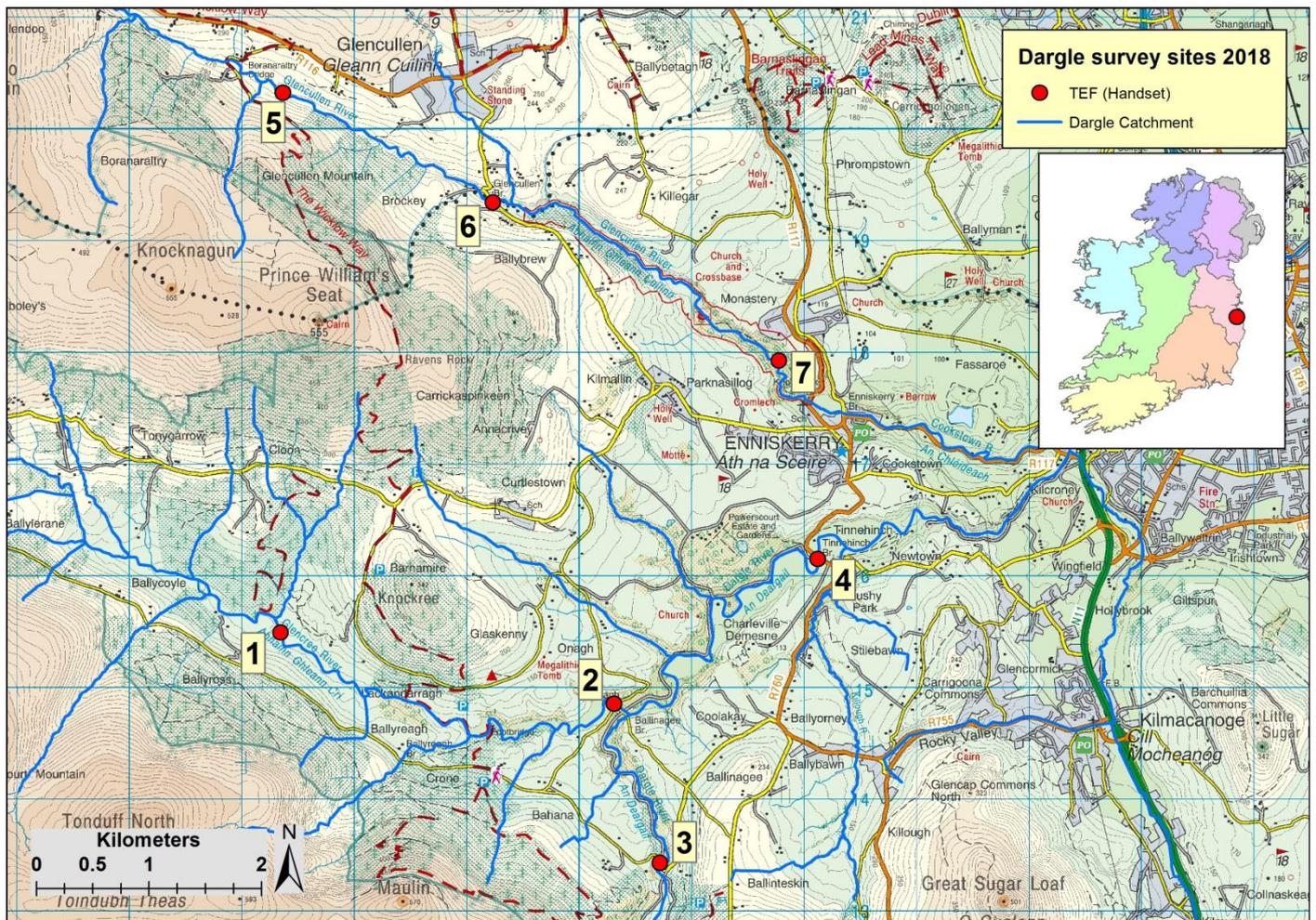**The Dargle River at Bahana Br., Co. Wicklow (site 3)**

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Fig 1. Map of Dargle Catchment survey sites, 2018

Site survey details, Dargle Catchment, 2018

No.	River	Site	Method	WFD	Date
1	Glencree River	Ballyross NE_A	TEF (Handset)	-	10/09/2018
2	Glencree River	Br. u/s Dargle R confl_A	TEF (Handset)	Yes	10/09/2018
3	Dargle River	Bahana_B	TEF (Handset)	-	07/09/2018
4	Dargle River	Tinnnahinch_A	TEF (Handset)	-	07/08/2018
5	Glencullen River	d/s of Boranaraltry Br._A	TEF (Handset)	-	10/09/2018
6	Glencullen River	Glencullen Br._A	TEF (Handset)	-	10/09/2018
7	Glencullen River	Knocksink Woods_A	TEF (Handset)	-	07/09/2018
TEF (Ten-minute electrofishing)					

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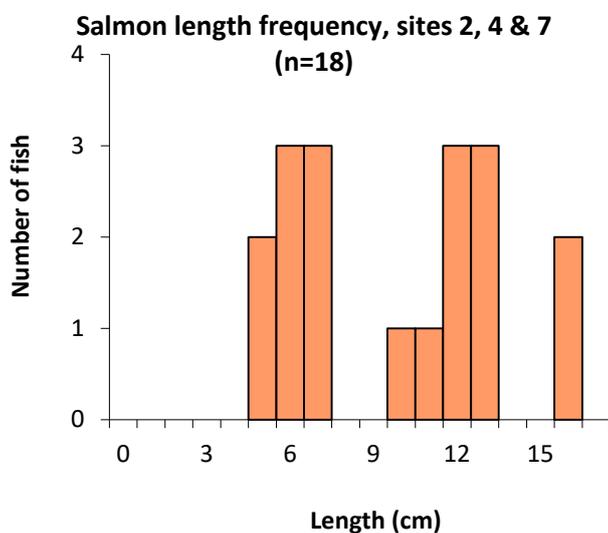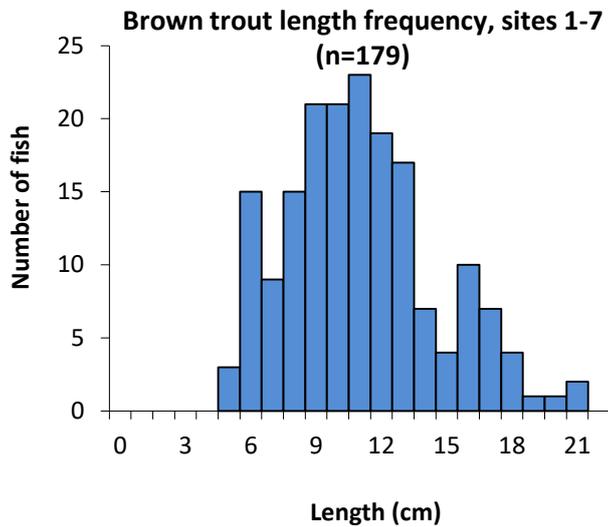**Minimum density estimates (no. fish/m^2), Dargle catchment 2018 (previous results are shown where applicable)**

Site no.	1	2				3
Species	2018	2009	2012	2017	2018	2018
Brown trout	0.333	0.094	0.092	0.106	0.235	0.313
0+ Brown trout	0.051	0.064	0.035	0.053	0.063	0.111
1+ & older Brown trout	0.282	0.029	0.057	0.053	0.172	0.202
European eel	-	0.003	0.002	-	-	-
Salmon	-	0.061	0.020	0.021	0.031	-
0+ Salmon	-	0.035	0.005	0.000	0.019	-
1+ & older Salmon	-	0.026	0.015	0.021	0.013	-
Stone loach	-	0.003	-	0.007	0.006	-
All Fish	**0.333**	**0.161**	**0.115**	**0.134**	**0.273**	**0.313**

Site no.	4	5	6	7	
Species	2018	2018	2018	2017	2018
Brown trout	0.227	0.107	0.243	0.439	0.217
0+ Brown trout	0.021	0.031	0.000	0.038	0.029
1+ & older Brown trout	0.206	0.076	0.243	0.401	0.188
European eel	-	-	-	-	0.012
Salmon	0.063	-	-	-	0.033
0+ Salmon	0.007	-	-	-	0.033
1+ & older Salmon	0.056	-	-	-	-
Stone loach	-	-	-	-	-
All Fish	**0.290**	**0.107**	**0.243**	**0.439**	**0.261**

Salmonid age class structure Dargle Catchment 2018

Species	Site No.	% of catch			
		0+	1+	2+	3+
Brown trout	1	19	58	23	-
	2	30	32	27	11
	3	37	43	20	-
	4	10	10	58	23
	5	33	50	17	-
	6	-	59	18	24
	7	15	42	35	8
Salmon	2	60	40	-	-
	4	11	-	67	22
	7	100	-	-	-

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Brown trout length frequency, sites 1-7 (n=179)

Fish ecological status, Dargle Catchment, 2018

Site No.	2009	2012	2014	2017	2018
1					Good
2	Good	Good		Good	Good
3	Good	Good		Good	Good
4					Good
5					Good
6					Good
7				Good	Good

Salmon length frequency, sites 2, 4 & 7 (n=18)

Summary

Four fish species were recorded at seven sites surveyed on the Dargle River Catchment in 2018. Brown trout was the most abundant species captured and ranged in length from 5.6 to 21.8cm. Salmon were recorded at three out of seven sites surveyed. Four age classes for both brown trout and salmon 0+, 1+, 2+ and 3+ were present. European eel was recorded at one site (Site 7). Stone loach were also present.

All sites were assigned a fish ecological status of Good.

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