

# Minding our Watercourses





# Freshwater Fish Species of Ireland

29 species found in Irish freshwater

14 native species – present since last Ice Age



Brown Trout



Roach



Atlantic Salmon



Ten Spined Stickleback



Juvenile Lamprey

## Watercourse habitat for fish

– different places for different species and life stages:

- Salmon and trout spawn on gravels in winter – lamprey spawn on gravels in late spring/summer
- Coarse fish lay their eggs in weedy parts of the channel in spring/early summer
- Salmon and trout use riffles in the first year and move to deeper water as they grow larger
- Minnow and stickleback like slow flowing habitat in rivers big and small
- Coarse fish and larger trout and pike will be found in deeper pool areas
- Juvenile lamprey live buried in silty margins of watercourses

## Three habitat types in watercourses:



**Riffle** - Spawning area and major source of food for fish



**Glide** - Smooth flow, over-hang of grasses gives cover to fish



**Pool** - Deeper slow flow, resting areas for adult trout, pike

## Buffer Zones between the water and the land



### Fencing and providing alternative source of water

- Avoids damage to the river bank and bed
- Reduces siltation
- Prevents fouling with pathogens
- Prevents escape of N and P



### Native trees along watercourses

- Stabilise the bank
- Natural buffer zone
- Important habitat for birds
- Control instream temperature and weed growth
- Shading/shelter for livestock



### Buffer Strips

- Intercept silt, nutrients and improve bank stability



### Invasive plant species

- Smother out smaller native species
- Leave large bare areas in winter-soil erosion
- Longterm seed bank in the soil



Report infestations of invasive species [www.fisheriesireland.ie](http://www.fisheriesireland.ie) or 1890 243474 / 1890 24FISH.

## River Crossings

River crossings by bridge or box-culvert are preferred fisheries solutions. Pipe culverts and fords can block fish passage. Machinery in the channel can damage eggs of salmon, trout and lamprey.



## Working in Watercourses - consult Inland Fisheries Ireland first

Fish and their spawning grounds are protected under the Fisheries Acts (1959 – 2010). In-stream works should not be carried out without prior consultation and approval of IFI

- Do not disturb the non-working bank slope
- Do retain vegetation at water's edge
- Do leave working bank slope intact
- Do remove vegetation and silt material from the open channel only
- Do not remove stone or gravel
- Do place spoil along the bank outside the bank-full line, spreading thinly
- Do leave a buffer of 20m at the downstream end of a drain to act as a silt trap



### Contact:

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