

Sea Trout

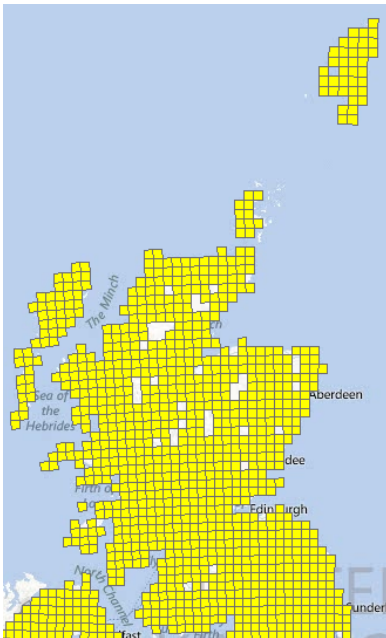
DESCRIPTION

The sea trout is not a species in its own right, but a migratory form of the brown trout. A combination of genetics and environmental factors, will mean that sea trout will go to sea to feed before returning to spawn. However, unlike Atlantic salmon, they do not migrate to far off feeding grounds but instead remain in coastal or estuarine areas, generally no further than 80km from their natal river. These areas provide sea trout with increased opportunities for feeding and growth before they return to freshwater to spawn.

Deciding if a trout is a sea trout or a brown trout can be easy if the sea trout is fresh run from the sea – sea trout are distinctively silvery in colour and may still carry sea lice. However, once they have been in freshwater for a while they return to brown trout colours. They do tend to be much bigger than resident fish due to the richer feeding at sea. Sea trout require clean, cold waters and are native to Scotland and are found widely in Scandinavia, Iceland, the Baltic.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species & Scottish Priority Marine Feature.

DISTRIBUTION MAP



THREATS

Loss of spawning river gravel habitat, physical barriers to migration, exploitation, coastal and freshwater pollution, sea-lice, temperature change, food shortages especially sandeels at sea.



ACTION REQUIRED

1. The removal of in-river obstacles such as weirs or installation of fish passes to allow free passage
2. Regulation of land use in catchment areas to reduce nutrient runoff and siltation due to soil erosion
3. Improving water quality by addressing pollution and maintaining water quantity by addressing abstraction
4. Protecting sandeels through Marine Protected Areas or fisheries regulation

FURTHER READING

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/about-scotlands-nature/species/fish/freshwater-fish/trout/>
<http://www.wildtrout.org/content/sea-trout>

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