



ANGLING DRIFTS

Good wet fly drifts are dictated by reasonably consistent wind direction. Sheelin fishes best with wet flies in a moderate wind with a small wave. Dry fly fishing is best in light winds, fish along slicks, especially behind islands. Look for calm spots, sit and wait, observe and approach with caution to avoid disturbing the fish. Fish dry with very light gear, 4lb-6lb line and small flies 14 to 18 are best.

Here are some of the best drifts on Sheelin. Give them a go when you next visit.

DRIFT 1:

Long Rock to Curry Rocks

This 700m drift fishes best with a westerly wind, but also in an easterly. Drift from both sides of Long Rock and cover four areas of shallow water down to Curry Point.

DRIFT 2:

Inchacup Island to Upper Inny Mouth

This is an 800m drift that fishes best in a westerly, or north-westerly wind, but also an easterly. Start 100 metres west of Inchacup, drifting outside of the stakes along the shoreline at Ross Castle. Drift to the stakes outside the mouth of the Upper Inny River, a good area for a big fish.

DRIFT 3:

Coyle's Point into Gaffney's Bay

For this 1km drift you will need a wind from the south. Start 100 metres south of Coyle's and head towards Gaffney's, crossing towards Rabbit Point.

DRIFT 4:

Rabbit Point to Stony Islands

A southerly wind is required for this 600m drift, but it can be fished in a northerly. Drift between the islands, staying close to shore.

DRIFT 5:

Sailor's Garden to Derrahorn

The best wind for this 800m drift is a westerly. Start 200m west of Sailor's Garden at the shallows marked with a stake. Drift past Sally Island and left of the small island at Derrahorn.

DRIFT 6:

Plunkett's Point along Sandy Bar

This is a long drift of more than 1km that is best fished on a southerly. Start 200 metres south of Plunkett's Point. Drift past and around the reed beds on the shoreline and look for the drop-off into deeper water 100 metres out from the Point. Drift along the drop-off into deeper water.

DRIFT 7:

Hollywell House to Merry Point

Another 1km drift that's great on a westerly wind. Start at the end of the reeds and drift 30 metres out from the shore, nudging your boat out around Merry Point.

DRIFT 8:

Walkers Bay to Arley Point

Another great drift on a westerly. Start in the middle of Walkers Bay at the stake. Head for the stakes below Arley Point, watching out for large boulders. This drift is about 900 metres in total.

DRIFT 9:

Church Island

You can fish this drift in a westerly or southerly. Drift from the stakes on the west side of Church Island. Have another drift with the islands on your left. The stakes on the west side of the island are worth a drift in a southerly breeze.

DRIFT 10:

Corru Bay along Derrysheridan

This long drift is perfect for a southerly. Start in Corru with the end of the reed bed behind you. Push your boat (on the back oar) along Derrysheridan. This is a rocky shore with shallows and stakes.

DRIFT 11:

Bog Bay to Lynch's Point

When the wind is in the south, try this drift. Go in as far as the reed bed and drift outside the two clumps of visible rocks.

DRIFT 12:

Carrick Reeds to Sporting Rock

A due southerly is perfect for this 900m drift. Start 200 metres south of Watty's Rock and drift north outside the rocks and stakes.

ANGLER SAFETY

Anglers, please think safety and be safe while on the water. Wear your life jacket at all times and remember it's the law. Always tell someone where you are going and what time to expect you home. Carry a mobile phone that is charged.

If in difficulty ring the emergency services on **999** or **112** and seek help.



LIST OF USEFUL CONTACTS

For Angling Information contact IFI local office at Mullaghboy, Kilnaleck, Co. Cavan, at Lough Sheelin.

Tel: +353 (0) 49 433 6144

For angling support and regular angling updates visit the website or contact the Angling Section

Tel: +353 (0) 61 300 238

Fax: +353 (0) 61 300 308

Email: shrbd@fishinginireland.info

Web: www.fishinginireland.info

ACCOMMODATION & BOAT HIRE

Crover House Hotel, Mountnugent

Tel: +353 (0) 49 854 0206

Innyside B&B, Finea

Tel: +353 (0) 43 668 1124

Ross House, Mountnugent

Tel: +353 (0) 49 854 0218

Island View House B&B, Mountnugent

Tel: +353 (0) 86 600 0608

For full up to date listings visit the website at www.fishinginireland.info

ANGLING CLUB

Lough Sheelin Trout Protection Association

L.S.T.P.A. Club Secretary Mr Eamonn Ross

Tel: +353 (0) 86 661 9834

Website: www.loughsheelinanglers.ie

GHILLIES

For a list of local Ghillies visit the IFI website or Email: shrbd@fishinginireland.info

TOURIST INFORMATION

Discover Ireland Centre, Market Sq., Mullingar. Tel: +353 (0) 44 9348650

Email: mullingar@failteinireland.ie

Website: www.discoverireland.ie/westmeath

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This pocket guide was produced by Brian Mc Manus, Inland Fisheries Ireland, with valued input from L.S.T.P.A. members Damien Willis, Michael Kelly and John Murphy. Thanks to IFI staff members Ken O'Neill, Brenda Montgomery and Lorraine O'Donnell for their assistance.



LOUGH SHEELIN

Lough Sheelin is situated in the North Midlands on the borders of Cavan, Meath and Westmeath and is part of the River Inny system. It is 8 km long (5 miles), over 1.6 km wide (1 mile) covering an area of approx 1880 Hectares (4500 acres). This is a rich limestone lough with a capacity to produce and maintain a good stock of large wild brown trout. The high pH factor of the water, combined with its low average depth profile gives it excellent trout-producing potential. Fishery scientists have calculated that it has a capacity to carry a bigger stock of brown trout than any lough in Ireland.

Frequently anglers report catching fish in the range 3lbs - 7lbs. The average weight based on catch statistics in recent years is about 2lbs to 3lbs. The lake is managed by Inland Fisheries Ireland who work with the local anglers, the Lough Sheelin Trout Protection Association, to protect and develop the lake.

Inland Fisheries Ireland maintains a regularly updated web site www.fishinginireland.info on all angling opportunities in Ireland.

NB: The following Angling Regulations may be subject to review and change by IFI in the future. For updates, please enquire.



ANGLING REGULATIONS

OPEN SEASON: 1st March to 12th October.

SPECIES: Wild Brown Trout, Pike, Perch. Wild Brown Trout averaging about 2lbs to 3lbs with fish to 10lbs and larger possible. Pike angling is allowed in open season subject to the lake regulations and national Bye-laws.

SIZE LIMIT: TROUT: 35.5cm (14 inches).



DAILY BAG LIMIT: 3 trout.

PERMISSION TO FISH: Lough Sheelin is an IFI managed wild brown trout fishery; a fishing permit is required for all angling. A permit can be purchased at the local outlets around the lake or can be purchased and printed online at www.fishinginireland.info

LOCAL OUTLETS

- **Ian Jameson, Aim & Swing, Killfassey, Mountnugent, Co Cavan** Tel: +353 (0) 49 854 0131.
- **Eamon Donohue, Donohoe's Garage and Fishing tackle** Dublin Road, Cavan Tel: +353 (0) 86 877 9058.
- **Crover House Hotel, Lough Sheelin.** Tel: +353 (0) 49 854 0206
- **Clarks Filling Station, Finea Village, Lough Sheelin** Tel: +353 (0) 43 668 1158.
- **Brian Webber, Sports World, 11 Town Hall, Cavan Town** Tel: +353 (0) 49 433 1812.
- **Finea Post Office,** Tel: +353 (0) 43 668 1101.
- **Mr John Gilsenan, The Flying Sportsman, Carrick Street, Kells, Co Meath** Tel +353 (0) 46 924 1743.
- **Inland Fisheries Ireland** Lough Sheelin Office, Mullaghboy, Kilnaleck Tel: +353 (0) 49 433 6144.

ANGLING RULES

- Fly fishing and Spinning Artificial lure are the only angling methods permitted.
- Anglers can only fish with one rod per angler.

Trolling Bye Law

- Trolling **is not permitted** from the 1st March to the 30th April, inclusive.
- Trolling **is permitted** from 1st May to 15th June between 06.00hrs and 19.00hrs, under oars only (or electric engine), but not with a motor engine.
- Trolling **is not permitted** from 1st May to 15th June between 19.00hrs and 06.00hrs the following day.
- Trolling **is permitted** from 16th June to 12th October between 06.00hrs and 19.00hrs, with a motor engine.
- Trolling **is permitted** from 16th June to 12th October between 19.00hrs and 06.00hrs the following day, under oars only (or electric engine), but not using a motor engine.

- **Pike Angling:** Fly fishing and Spinning Artificial lure only, subject to the national Bye Laws.

- It is the policy of IFI to seek a voluntary return of all Wild Brown Trout all season but particularly between the 30th September and the 12th October as a conservation measure.

- Rods must not be left unattended.

- All undersize fish must be returned to the water with as little injury as possible.

- Fish hooked on the outside of the mouth must be returned.

- Anglers who are found to have acted in an "unsporting manner" may have their permit revoked.



Lough Sheelin

ANGLING ETIQUETTE

Always show respect for other anglers, lake users, and the environment you fish in. Please observe the following code of angling etiquette and abide by the rules of the fishery. Enjoy your fishing!

- **Life Jackets are required to be worn by law.**

- **A head lamp or torch is required while fishing late on the lake.**

- **Please keep speed to 5 knots, use the oars and conserve the use of outboard motors whenever possible.**

- **Do not operate on full throttle in shallow areas, boat piers or close to other boats on the lake.**

- **Do not cut in front of another drifting boat. A distance of at least 100 metres should be maintained from the nearest boat. Please show other anglers respect while fishing.**

- **When moving from one drift to another be aware of other anglers in the vicinity.**

- **Please bring all litter home. Do not discard fishing line into the lake or onto the shoreline.**

ACCESS TO THE LAKE

Good public access to the lake is available at both sides of Inny bridge in Finea village, Kilnahard Quay, Crover Pier, Tonagh Pier, and Sailor's Garden. Private berthage and access by permission only is available at Crover House Hotel, Captains Bay, Rusheen Bay (Coillte via IFI Sheelin), Ross House and Chambers Bay at Mullaghboy House. Please ensure that when parking car or trailers that you do not block the slipway.

ANGLING INFORMATION

EARLY SEASON (March-April)

The season begins in March at which time the trout are feeding mainly on freshwater shrimp and freshwater louse. Fishing a team of wet flies along rocky shores can take a fish or two, especially if the day is fairly mild. Useful fly patterns are Hares Ear, Claret & Mallard, Sooty Olive, Dunkeld: even a large black lure e.g. Sweeney Todd, fished on the point on a sink tip line.

Areas worth trying, depending on wind direction, are Sailor's Garden, Merry Point, Gaffney's Bay, Inchacup, the south shore of Derrsherridan, Ross Bay and all of the north shore of the lough from Chambers Bay to Crover.

The Duck fly - a large chironomid - gives the first major fly hatch of the season and this generally commences around April 15th, peaks around April 25th and continues into early May. This hatch of flies is mainly confined to that part of the lake east of a line from Merry Point to Inchacup Island. The biggest hatches are usually around Goreport and Bog Bay and the hatch begins around 11a.m. and may continue into early afternoon.

The feeding habits of the trout are very unpredictable at this time and seem to be governed by weather conditions and water clarity. Under conditions of mild weather and poor water clarity, the trout feed on pupae at the surface. In cold weather and clear water, they feed deep and are difficult to locate. By far the best fishing at this time of year takes place at dusk. The conditions must be right with a gentle ripple or calm waters and the evening must not turn cold. Even the hint of a cold breeze can put the trout down for the night. Surface-feeding fish will take Duck Fly pupae, or Sooty Olive (Size 12).

A small Claret & Mallard, Fiery Brown or Dunkeld may also take fish. For the evening rise, the angler must determine if the trout are feeding on adult flies as they return to the water to lay their eggs, or if they are taking a pupa as it emerges.

For fish feeding on adult flies returning to the water, fish a Sooty Olive size 12 on the bob, a Duck fly in the middle and an Olive Variant on the point. For those fish feeding on pupae as they emerge, fish a Sooty Olive and a couple of dry buzzer. In either case, the flies are fished on a float line and cast in the path of a feeding trout.



The line is not stripped back. All that is required is an occasional twitch of the rod tip to give the flies life.

Lake Olives - The Lough gets two hatches of Lake Olives each season and occasionally the trout feed on them. The first hatch occurs in early May and the second in late August and September. The body colour of the Autumn insect is a lighter shade of green than that of the May time hatch. Trout feeding on Lake Olives are difficult to catch, though some anglers have a measure of success with an Olive nymph pattern. The area of the lough producing Lake Olives stretches crescent - like from Rusheen Bay via Derrahorn to Watty's Rock. Chambers Bay gets a small hatch in the south west corner. Bog Bay is a good spot.

THE MID SEASON (May - July)

The Mayfly Season:

The middle of May usually sees the start of the Mayfly season with the first flies between May 12th and 15th, depending on weather. Sheelin brown trout can be caught on the dun with patterns such as fan wing mayfly or green drake mayfly fished dry. Trout will also feed on the ascending nymphs; try a wet mayfly or golden olive. Success is all about careful covering of a fish after watching for surface movement.

The best of the Mayfly fishing is with the spent gnat which begins when the mayfly hatch is in full swing a few days or a week after the first mayflies appear.

The smaller male spinners dance over the islands, sometimes from early afternoon. To mate, the larger females fly up into the swarm of males. Some time after, the females fly with the wind over the water and proceed to lay their eggs, dipping and touching the water. They will lie in places before dying. The dead mayfly is known as the spent gnat. During the Mayfly hatch,

most fishing boats sit on the lee side of the shore where the flies are dancing, and wait. When the flies start moving out onto the lake, the boats follow wind lanes or slicks, carrying huge numbers of spent gnats from behind the islands. On a reasonably calm night, the slicks may stretch out far into the lake. They might even cross it. Experienced Sheelin anglers do more watching and waiting than casting and fishing. Electric motors are popular but very careful approach is critically important not to spook the fish and put them down. Many anglers are on the move trying to spot a feeding fish moving up the wind lanes.

Lake Chironomids - The two major chironomid hatches occur during day time this time of year. The species concerned are Campto chironomids and the Blagdon Green Midge - called the 'Apple Green Midge' locally. Trout feeding on the Apple Green Midge can be taken on a green nymph (size 12 or 14) or a small Greenwells Glory dressed with a pale olive body and a very pale Greenwells hackle. The trout will also occasionally take a dry pattern dressed on a size 16 hook. The body of this dry fly can be of pale olive floss silk or pale insect green seals fur and a hackle is a cream cock hackle tied full circle.

The other major chironomid hatch - the Campto Chironomid and other related, mostly olive coloured species are present at this time. The Campto is recognized by its distinctly yellow head with black markings and olive body. The trout take them as pupae, as adults after hatching and as females when they return to lay their eggs, (which can occur sometimes during the day but mainly at dusk). Nymph tactics with olive, claret and black and red nymphs will work sometimes.



Youth Angling Training - Fisheries Awareness Week

Alternatively, it will be found that small wet flies score well and the Sooty Olive, Olive Variant and Greenwells Glory are most popular. When the trout take the adult or egg-laying Campto, a dry Buzzer or Grey Duster, size 12 or 14 can get a response. If the Campto roll into clumps, then a balling buzzer fished dry can take a very big fish. The main areas for this activity are from the Long Rock through Church Island, Derry Point, Goreport and Corru Bays, also Chambers Bay and sometimes from Derrahorn to Watty's Rock.

Reed Smut - can be so prolific on the lake that trout often go into a frenzy of feeding in quiet corners on hot sultry June days. They will take any small Black Gnat imitations, providing it is small enough, preferably size 14 or 16 and is presented delicately on a very fine leader. This is very exciting fishing, stalking big trout on such fine tackle.

The Murrough - the Great Red Sedge - hatches at dusk from late May well into June. The hatch can last for up to six weeks. Some anglers only fish a single Murrough dry while others use the Murrough and a balling buzzer on the dropper. It is claimed that the balling buzzer takes most trout. Some of the largest fish of the season are taken on the Murrough and the most likely places are behind the Stony Islands, Gaffney's Bay, Ross Bay, Rusheen and the bottom of Goreport Bay and Bog Bay.

Alder - Small hatches of Alder take place and they are especially visible as they sit motionless on the water near the shore on calm sunny days in May and June. Occasionally a trout may be seen to take one and it may just be possible to tempt a fish with a Natural Artificial fished dry.

Caenis - June and July bring big hatches of Caenis, often referred to as the fisherman's curse. When conditions are right, the trout feed extensively on these hatches and are difficult to catch at these times. The best time to fish the Caenis is in the early morning 5a.m. - 7.30a.m. Fishing conditions must be calm and mild and the angler should seek out quiet sheltered corners with a patch of calm water close to the shore. Goreport Bay, Sailor's Garden and around the islands in Chambers Bay are particularly good locations. A small nymph will sometimes work, but most success is achieved with an imitation fished dry on a fine leader.

Perch fry - make their appearance around mid June and can become an important food item on a trout's menu. The trout appear to feed exclusively on the shoals of small fry and the anglers attention is generally attracted to the scene of the action by a succession of noisy, splashy rises, as the trout lash the fry with their tails in an apparent effort to stun the tiny fish. They then feed on the dead fry lying on the surface. This activity usually occurs early in the morning about 8a.m. and again in the early afternoon. The areas noted for it are from Plunkett's Point to Kilnahard Point, and along the Derrysheridan Shore and into Goreport Bay. Silver and gold bodied flies or white lures fished very slowly or even stationary can get results.

END OF SEASON (August to October 12th)

Sedge Season - Sedge fishing is said to be the cream of the season on Sheelin and this commences in full swing from about mid June and continues right through to the end of the season in October 12th. Small brown sedge hatches become prolific as the season advances. Best methods are fishing dry in a small size from 12 to 16's. Anglers fishing sedges this time of year are advised to look for calm spots on the lake, sit and wait for rises. Anglers will also catch fish fishing blind, so vary tactics. The lough gets hatches of Silverhorn sedges and small dark sedges in August and early September. A size 12 or 14 fished dry close to the shore especially towards dusk can often take a good trout. Useful fly patterns are Green Peter, Murrough (Great Red Sedge) and smaller brown sedges.

DAPPING

The dapping season begins in early August and a Grasshopper or Daddy dapped during the day can often take a few good trout, right through to the end of season on October 12th. While dapping the Mayfly is not traditionally practiced on Sheelin, it is worth trying during the height of the Mayfly hatch.

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