

Sea lice monitoring report for Kanaird estuary sampling, 2nd June 2026

Peter Cunningham, Biologist, WRFT. 10th June 2026 info@wrft.org.uk

Sea trout data

Location:		Kanaird estuary																				
Date:	02-Jun-26			Time:	14:00hrs; started about 4 hours after high tide																	
*Counts:	Peter Cunningham and Nicky Middleton-Jones																					
Team:	Peter C plus 9 helpers including three from Ardmair salmon farm																					
Weather:	overcast, cool. River at medium low flow - up a bit after recent rain.																					
Other notes:	All fish caught in first sweep; about 60 fish caught (mostly post-smolt sea trout); random 30 processed																					
	New SEPA protocol used																					
	weights +/- about 5g																					

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Summary

total lice	100
number of fish	30
number infested	14
prevalence	47%
total lice	100
abundance	3.33
intensity	7.14
fish with >0.3 lice per g	3
fish with >0.3 lice per g	10%

Mortality / early returned estimates for sea trout in sample based on method from Taranger et al 2015, Risk assessment for the environmental impact of Norwegian salmon farming ([PDF](#)) [Risk assessment of the environmental impact of Norwegian Atlantic salmon farming \(researchgate.net\)](#)

Other fish in sample

No.	Location	Date	Method	Riv/Est/B each	Fish	length (mm)
31	Kanaird	02-Jun-26	Sweep Net	est	15sp stbk	149
32	Kanaird	02-Jun-26	Sweep Net	est	15sp stbk	120
33	Kanaird	02-Jun-26	Sweep Net	est	3sp stbk	53
34	Kanaird	02-Jun-26	Sweep Net	est	seascorp	112

Fish no.	≥13 lice/fish?	Lice/g fish weight	Range	Mortality category	Number of fish in category	Total number of fish in sample	% of sample in category	projected mortality for category %	projected mortality of fish in sample %
1	No	0.010	>0.3	100%	0	30	0.00	0.00	
2	No	0.007	0.2-0.3	50%	2		6.67	3.33	
3	Yes	0.241	0.1-0.2	20%	0		0.00	0.00	
4	No	0.011	<0.1	0%	28		93.33	0.00	3.33
5	No	0.008							
6	No	0.018							
7	No	0.000							
8	No	0.000							
9	No	0.000							
10	No	0.229							
11	No	0.008							
12	No	0.000							
13	No	0.018							
14	No	0.000							
15	No	0.000							
16	No	0.000							
17	No	0.046							
18	No	0.000							
19	No	0.000							
20	No	0.000							
21	No	0.000							
22	No	0.000							
23	No	0.032							
24	No	0.000							
25	No	0.030							
26	No	0.000							
27	No	0.020							
28	No	0.029							
29	No	0.000							
30	No	0.000							

Notes:

based on the assumption that small salmonid post-smolts (<150g body weight) will suffer 100% lice-related marine mortality, or return prematurely to freshwater for sea trout in the wild if the are infected with >0.3 lice per g of fish weight. Furthermore, the lice related marine mortality is estimated to 50%, if the infection is between 0.2 and 0.3 lice per g fish weight, 20% if the infection rate is between 0.1 and 0.2 lice per g fish weight, and finally 0% if the salmon lice infection is <0.1 g fish weight. 0.05 and 0.1 lice per g fish weight, 20% for lice infections between 0.05 and 0.01 lice per g fish weight, and finally 0% if the salmon lice infection is <0.01 lice g fish weight.

colour code

Taranger, G. L., Karlsen, Ø., Bannister, R. J., Glover, K. A., Husa, V., Karlsbakk, E., Kvamme, B. O., Boxaspen, K. K., Bjørn, P. A., Finstad, B., Madhun, A. S., Morton, H. C., and Svaasand, T. (2014) Risk assessment of the environmental impact of Norwegian Atlantic salmon farming. – ICES Journal of Marine Science, doi: 10.1093/icesjms/fsu132.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266672998_Risk_assessment_of_the_environmental_impact_of_Norwegian_Atlantic_salmon_farming

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Notes: magnifying glasses used to be able to see copepodid lice and chalimus lice more clearly; also a higher definition camera.

Acknowledgements

Monitoring to inform the MOWI Ardmair salmon farm EMP. Thank you to Keanchulish estate for permission and support to sample sea trout. Thank you to Ardmair salmon farm for providing hands-on support.

Photos: all ©WRFT unless otherwise indicated. All fish in photos were lightly sedated for inspection then returned to the sea after recovery.

Sea trout 300mm, Kanaird 2nd June 2026, 69 sea lice



Sea trout 300mm Kanaird, 2nd June 26 – dorsal fin and pelvic fins



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Sea trout 286mm Kanaird, 2nd June 26, 2 sea lice; dorsal fin damage 0; recovering from past predator damage (note regrowing scales)

