Margaree Salmon Association

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2025

In this issue

Margaree Salmon Museum Hours
Open 5 days a week (Seasonal)
Wednesday to Sunday from 9AM to 4PM
OPERATED BY THE MARGAREE ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

Access our Newsletter and other publications directly from our website

President's Message

Pjila'si-Bienvenue-Failte - Welcome to our Summer 2025 newsletter. We are having another summer of extremely warm water and low water levels, once again we've had to close portions of the Margaree. This year for the first time, section 2 (Above Doyle's Bridge to Big Intervale) had to be closed. MSA is working with the WWP group weekly in the evaluation of conditions on the river.

Earlier this year our crew came on board anxious to take on the challenges we are facing. Michael Fabiano joined us in March replacing Aaron Allen who left us after 3 years to pursue other challenges. Michael, a recent graduate of Dalhousie's Marine Management Masters Program brings valuable education and experience with many aspects of the aquatic environment. We also decided to hire an additional science-based technician moving from 2 to 3 technicians. Dylan Yates and Stephen MacDonald-Campbell have returned from last year and are joined this year by a local recent graduate from the Natural Resources and Environmental Technology in Port Hawkesbury, Megan Hinkley.

2025 is the year MSA decided to increase our efforts on the scientific aspects of conservation. Our partnership with other groups will help us move forward in this area. Nova Scotia Salmon Association (NSSA), Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF), Dalhousie University, University of Windsor, ACAP- Cape Breton, Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Inverness County, Nova Scotia Department of Inland Fisheries and Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) have all become valuable stakeholder/rightsholder members in our fight to protect Atlantic Salmon. Climate change and invasive species are the two aspects of the challenges we face moving forward. The habitat monitoring (HSI) and eDNA work we are conducting will help us analyse these threats and focus MSA on areas requiring our efforts moving forward.

Earlier this year UINR once again hosted their Salmon Ceremony at the local Margaree fish hatchery. This event is recognized as a unique opportunity for First Nations rights holders to share their reverence for Plamu (salmon) and share with non-natives a bit of their traditional values. I encourage everyone to attend one of these ceremonies in the future.

Smudging at the UINR Salmon Ceremony

Extreme weather conditions resulted in the province-wide ban on activities in all forested areas, as a result our crews were held up from doing work in many areas. In late August we received a permit allowing us to continue our work with some restrictions.

See page 14 for upcoming MSA events this fall.

– *Yours in Conservation*
Paul MacNeil, President
The Margaree Salmon Association

Warm Water Protocol on the Margaree River *– Michael Fabiano and Dylan Yates*

For the sixth time in the past eight years, the Margaree River has experienced significant fishing closures due to elevated water temperatures and low water levels, clear indicators that these are no longer isolated events but part of a concerning trend. These closures of the river help to protect Margaree's coldwater species such as salmon and trout. When water temperatures go above 20°C, dissolved oxygen levels decrease. When salmon or trout are angled in these conditions, their ability to recover after the fight is diminished, which can lead to decreased spawning activity and mortality. The warm water protocol (WWP) aims to prevent angling during the most stressful times of year for these fish. These closures are decided upon and facilitated by the warmwater protocol committee.

History of the Warm Water Protocol in the Margaree

The WWP committee was established in 2019 to address the concern of angling during periods of warm and low water on the Margaree River. In 2018, the river had to be closed due to extremely high temperatures (greater than 30°C air temperature) for a period of 2 weeks. Concerned members of the Atlantic salmon community urged for the river to be closed, and DFO decided to close the river. Over the following winter DFO invited stakeholders and rightsholders to work on and develop a protocol for how and when to close the river, which became the warm water protocol.

The implementation of the WWP is decided by a committee of stakeholders, and rightsholders. Groups that sit on the committee include the Unima'ki Institute of Natural Resources, the Province of Nova Scotia Inland Fisheries Department, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada Gulf Region, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, and the Margaree Salmon Association. When the trigger point for water temperatures is reached (20°C or above for 48 consecutive hours), DFO calls a warm water protocol meeting. Here, committee members discuss the temperature along with secondary parameters such as water levels, and forecasted weather, to determine whether the river should be closed or remain open.

Here is a history of closures on the Margaree River since the WWP's inception:

2018 – No protocol in place; closed East Margaree Highway bridges to Forks Aug 4th to Aug 21st
2019 – Margaree WWP officially in place; no closures
2020 – Closure sections 1&3 August 7-28th
2021 – No closures
2022 – Closure sections 1&3 July 27-Sept 8th
2023 – Closure sections 1&3 July 19-August 2nd
2024 – Closure sections 1&3 July 12-Sept 10th
2025 – Closure section 2 July 17-24th, August 5th - TBD and section 1&3 July 17th – TBD

Sections

Section 1 refers to the area from the East Margaree highway bridges upstream to the Cabot Trail bridge (also known as Creamery Bridge) on the Southwest Margaree River and upstream to Doyles Bridge on the Northeast Margaree River, and the Gallant River upstream from its confluence with the Margaree River to the highway bridge on the East Margaree Road.

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Warm Water Protocol on the Margaree River – *Michael Fabiano and Dylan Yates*

Section 2 refers to the area on the Northeast Margaree from Doyle's bridge upstream to the Big Intervale Bridge.

Section 3 refers to the area from the Southwest Margaree upstream from the Cabot Trail Bridge (Creamery Bridge) to the Scottsville Bridge.

2025 River Closures

In 2025, the river was first closed on July 16th at 4:00 p.m. and applied to the entire river system—Sections 1, 2, and 3. This unprecedented action of closing all sections including section 2 followed days of sustained high river temperatures well above 20°C, with some areas of the river reaching as high as 26°C.

Section 2, which includes many cold-water tributaries fed by mountain springs from the Cape Breton Highlands, plays a vital role in maintaining the river's thermal balance. Historically, this section has remained open during warm spells, acting as a refuge for migrating salmon. The fact that it required closure this year underscores the intensifying environmental pressures on the river. In response, MSA has increased our monitoring efforts in remote areas of the watershed to better understand and protect these critical cold-water habitats.

Due to a drop in temperatures, Section 2 was re-opened on July 24, with Sections 1 and 3 remaining closed to angling. However, this opening was short lived as Section 2 was closed again on August 5th due to increasingly low water levels coupled with rising temperatures.

Next Steps

The WWP committee is also exploring alternative measures to better protect the salmon such as morning only fishing, using water levels as a primary metric for river closures, or changing the temperature threshold for a WWP meeting to take place. At the end of each fishing season the WWP committee comes together to discuss the past year and plan for the future. Proposed changes as described above will be discussed as well as any other option that would be presented.

As climate change leads to more frequent and intense warm and dry spells, conservation efforts, monitoring, habitat restoration, and long-term adaptation strategies will be increasingly essential to safeguard the Margaree River and its iconic salmon and trout populations.

Best Practices

Even when the river is fully or partially open, we urge all anglers to exercise discretion when targeting coldwater species like salmon and trout. Always check daily river temperatures and current conditions before fishing and consider postponing trips during prolonged hot and dry spells. While July and August continue to pose challenges, we remain hopeful that fall will bring better conditions on the Margaree.

CBC Radio interview with President Paul McNeil:
https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-24-information-morning-cape-breton/clip/16159203-margaree-river-closure

CTV interview with Paul McNeil
https://youtu.be/TG1XPDRa0P0?si=u-EGTMJOfY1NHY1p

Kelt Fishing *– Bill Haley*

In recent years, MSA has partnered with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Nova Scotia Department of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture (DIFA) to recapture tagged Atlantic salmon kelts — post-spawn fish exiting the river. Because no physical trap operates during winter and spring months (December–May), angling remains the only viable recapture method to monitor salmon populations during this time of year.

In 2024, DFO piloted a new technique for their population monitoring involving downstream transport of tagged fish for recapture at the DFO trap net. Because MSA saw the importance of the kelt recapture program, MSA independently applied for — and was granted — a permit to continue the angling-based research. This proactive step ensured continuity of data collection, despite shifting agency approaches.

MSA ensures this research is conducted with the safety of the salmon at the forefront of our mind. All angling is conducted by experienced anglers, many of whom are salmon guides, using single barbless hooks.

Spring 2024

During the 2024 season, six MSA members fished a total of 58.4 hours. Their efforts yielded 73 salmon and 3 grilse. Of those fish caught, 61 were females and 16 were males, and 70 of the fish were wild and 6 were hatchery-origin. This resulted in a catch rate of 1.3 salmon per hour fished.

Spring 2025

This year, the weather didn't cooperate. High water early in the season reduced fishing windows, and MSA was only able to fish 52.5 hours total.

The numbers of salmon caught reflect the tougher conditions. This year 37 salmon were captured, of which 34 were females, and 3 were males. Of the 37 salmon, 32 were wild origin and 5 were hatchery origin. This resulted in a catch rate of 0.70 salmon per hour fished.

High waters on the Margaree river – Spring 2025

Despite the drop in recapture rates compared to 2024, the continued collection of even limited data is invaluable for year-over-year comparisons, trend tracking, and collaborative analysis with DFO and DIFA.

Building a Better Future for Atlantic Salmon

All data collected during these angling sessions — including tag numbers, fish origin, sex ratios, recapture locations, and angler observations — are being compiled into a long-term MSA research database. This resource is made available annually to DFO, DIFA, and other stakeholders upon request.

While the challenges posed by climate variability and river conditions are real, so too is MSA's commitment to protecting and understanding the Atlantic salmon population of the Margaree River. By stepping up where needed and adapting to shifting circumstances, MSA continues to show that local, hands-on conservation efforts matter.

Eric Kaye: Painting the Margaree – *Dylan Yates*

We're thrilled to share that Eric Kaye's paintings will once again be featured in our annual dinner auction in October as well as in our new online auction, launching in the weeks leading up to the event.

A retired designer turned watercolor artist, Eric draws inspiration from his love of salmon fishing and the natural world. Though he lives far away, the Margaree River will always be the place he calls home.

Eric's deep love for salmon fishing and the outdoors inspires him to capture those moments on the river when we feel most connected to ourselves and the natural world. That could mean portraying the moment you launch a perfect cast, hold on to a leaping fish or release of a beautiful salmon. Or it might be the sense of stillness, companionship, or possibility you feel in the flow of a salmon river.

Eric's first sporadic (and mostly unproductive) salmon fishing tips were in the 1970s to Maine's Penobscot River. Eric fished the Margaree (mostly productively) since the mid 1980s and returned at least once every year (barring Covid) since then. Over the years he's spent many weeks in Québec on Gaspé, North Shore and Anticosti rivers as well as the West coast of Newfoundland and the Upsalquitch. Though he lives far away, the Margaree remains the river he calls home.

Salmon Fishing at Dollar Pool – Watercolour by Eric Kaye

Doyles Bridge – Watercolour by Eric Kaye

Why paint the Margaree River in particular?

"From an artist's perspective the Margaree valley is a perfect subject. It is an agrarian, open landscape enclosed by hills that give it a unique sense of place. Pools are well defined and recognizable. The sky is always an important element here. Often there are low, maritime clouds which set the mood for the action unfolding on stream. At other times, towering cumulus dominate the landscape.

On the river, dedicated and knowledgeable anglers move slowly through the most productive water. That's where I focus my paintings and of course my own fishing efforts. This year there are paintings of Dollar, Skye, Snag, and two of Seal. And maybe a bonus or two at the in-person auction". - Eric Kaye

Tech Spotlight

Stevie MacDonald-Campbell

Hello! My name is Stevie MacDonald-Campbell and this is my second summer working with the Margaree Salmon Association as a field technician.

I grew up in Sydney and graduated from Cape Breton University (CBU) in the spring of 2024 with my Bsc, majoring in biology and minoring in geology. I have always been drawn to conservation and biology and got connected to the MSA through a professor during my last year at CBU. I had never really thought about a career in fish conservation but working with the association over these past two years has really opened my eyes to the good work that is being done in salmon conservation and has helped me develop a better appreciation of how salmon and rivers work.

Bill Haley (L) and Stevie MacDonald-Campbell (R)

I've always enjoyed spending time in the woods hiking and fishing but getting to do it to try and help better the salmon populations for future generations makes it a whole lot sweeter. I have met so many great people through working with the association from all over the maritimes and have made friendships that will stay with me for life. With so many good people working and caring about the river and the fish, I'm excited to see what the future holds.

Megan Hinkley

My name is Megan Hinkley. I've been working with the Margaree Salmon Association for the 2025 field season. Being raised in Margaree, I have a connection to the area that inspired me to work with MSA to help protect the river and its salmon population for future generations. I hope that someday I'll have kids and they'll get to enjoy the river just like I did. Outside of my role with MSA, I am a lobster fisherman and work alongside my brother.

Megan Hinkley (L) and Luke Burton (R)

I received a diploma from the Natural Resources and Environmental Technology program at Strait Area Nova Scotia Community College. During my time with MSA, I have been involved in several research projects in the watershed including working with Margaree Aquatic Research Team from the University of Windsor, and the Lennox Lab from Dalhousie University. I have also been involved in deploying temperature monitors, conducting habitat suitability analysis, and installing fish habitat improvement structures as part of my job with the MSA.

With a career goal of becoming a fisheries officer, I view my experience at MSA as a big step toward that path. I have gained important skills and knowledge on different technologies, and built strong professional relationships that will support my future in fisheries management and conservation. I am excited to continue working in protecting aquatic resources and contributing to sustaining the Margaree River and its salmon population.

eDNA in the Margaree – *Michael Fabiano*

For the 3rd year in a row, the Margaree Salmon Association will be conducting eDNA studies on the Margaree River and its watershed. eDNA stands for environmental DNA. When organisms interact with and enter water bodies, they shed DNA through hair, mucus, scales, etc. eDNA studies allow us to collect samples of water and isolate the DNA that is found in the water, giving us a picture of what species are residing in the watershed.

This technique is particularly useful in detecting invasive species in the watershed. It can be used to detect invasives early into their invasion so that preventative measures can be taken, or used to understand the spatial extent of already established invasive species. In the Margaree, the primary invasive species invasion concerns are Chain Pickerel, Zebra Mussels, and the Chinese Mystery Snail. We are also concerned about the expansion of invasive Smallmouth Bass into the mainstem and Northeast branches of the Margaree.

Results from 2024

In September of 2024, MSA did eDNA surveys at 24 sites throughout the Margaree River watershed (see figure A.). Atlantic salmon were detected almost uniformly across the watershed with exception for a number of the sites around Lake Ainsley, and a site located at the first Lake O'Law drainage. Brook Trout were similarly detected uniformly across the watershed. Smallmouth bass were detected in the majority of the sites around Lake Ainsley and the Southwest Margaree, as well as the Margaree Harbour wharf. Brown trout were detected predominantly around the Northeast Margaree and its tributaries. American eels were detected throughout the watershed, and Sea lamprey were found in a few select tributaries off Lake Ainsley and at Doyles Bridge.

Apart from fish, numerous other species were identified including common bird species like loons, mergansers, crows/jays, wood ducks, and mallards, as well as cows, pigs, humans, beavers, and muskrats. It's amazing how one sample can identify so many species using the watershed!

Results from our 2024 study tell us a lot of things we already knew about what species are using the river. When dealing with the problem of invasive species, no news is good news!

Figure A. – 2024 eDNA Sites

Plans for 2025

The MSA plans to continue on this vital work in 2025 in order to be the first line of defense against invasive species in the Margaree. We will be conducting eDNA surveys in September of 2025, and plan to survey additional sites around Lake Ainley to better understand the movements of invasive species. We hope that those results continue to show the status quo in the Margaree!

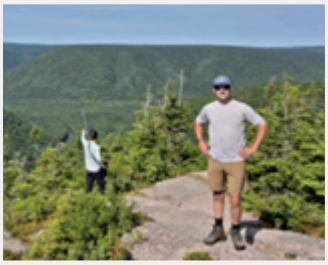
Research Update - Lennox Lab *– Josh Roland*

Our team from Dalhousie University, led by Dr. Robert Lennox and MSc candidate Josh Roland, is continuing the radio tagging initiative to better understand the movement of Atlantic salmon throughout the Margaree River. This year, another Dalhousie University student, Madelyn Richardson, has joined the project. She is leading a complementary study on brown trout, aiming to better understand their interactions with salmon in spawning habitats as well as their undocumented movement in Maritime rivers.

As of late August, ten Atlantic salmon and five brown trout have been tagged with radio transmitters. Tagging efforts were limited during the summer due to high water temperatures in the Margaree River since early July. Tagging efforts are set to continue this fall once water temperatures cool and restrictions are lifted.

Tracking has already produced several interesting results. A large portion of the tagged salmon have seemingly disappeared from the watershed, suggesting that many moved back into the estuary and salt water, where radio signals from the transmitters cannot be detected. Others are demonstrating prespawning holding behaviours, similar to tracked salmon observed in 2024, with individuals residing in pools in the lower river as well as the North East Margaree. The tagged brown trout have provided interesting insights into their behavior. While the salmon have shown a coordinated, gradual movement upstream, the trout have dispersed over a wide area. Some sought cold-water refuges, with several holding in Gallant Brook, while others pushed up the North East Margaree into Hatchery Pool. One particularly large brown trout traveled the length of the lower river and the North East Margaree in only a few days before settling in Upper Mackenzies Pool within the sanctuary, where it has remained for several months.

In recent weeks, Josh and Andrew Haley tracked in the far reaches of the sanctuary, from Cape Clear to Three Brook Pool. During this work, they detected a tag ID from 2024 in the upper reaches. The tag has not yet been recovered due to time constraints, but its presence suggests several possibilities: the fish may have expired after spawning, the tag may have come free, or the fish could be a consecutive spawner that returned to the sanctuary once again to reproduce. Once the woods ban is lifted, efforts will be made to determine the fate of the tag. No other fish were found above Cape Clear. Snorkeling surveys confirmed these results. Five pools were snorkeled in the upper reaches of the sanctuary resulting in 1 salmon and 65 brown trout found.



Josh Roland and Andrew Haley at Cape Clear to track fish that may have migrated into the Highlands Sanctuary.

Although poor conditions over the past two summers limited tagging efforts, we are eager to increase the number of tagged fish this fall. The team looks forward to gaining further insights into the behavior and movements of both salmon and brown trout in the Margaree River. We extend special thanks to the crew at MSA for their immense support in tracking efforts, as well as to Aaron Krick (MSc candidate at the University of New Brunswick) and DFO for their assistance with tag deployment. This work would not be possible without their invaluable contributions.

First tagged Atlantic salmon of 2025.

Margaree Aquatic Research Team (MART) Program Update – *Kristen Cyr, Izzy Tormasi, Holly Mosco, Frankeisha Wright*

With summer well underway, your friendly aquatic researchers at MART have been busy splashing around in the water. But it's not all fun and games. We are in our third year of field sampling in the Southwest Margaree River, blending science with collaboration from local rightsholders and stakeholders to develop meaningful research that can help us understand how rising river temperatures and the expansion of introduced species, i.e., smallmouth bass and brown trout, are affecting Atlantic salmon and their habitat.

MART team (right to left: Frankiesha Wright, Kristen Cyr, Holly Mosco, Isabelle Tormasi)

With so much support from our partnerships with local rightsholders and stakeholders, our research program and questions are growing so here's a brief summary of what the MART team is up to. Kristen Cyr, PhD candidate, is exploring how introduced smallmouth bass and brown trout are affecting cold-water refugia use by Atlantic salmon parr. Izzy Tormasi, Masters student, is investigating the environmental and behavioral drivers of smallmouth bass movement throughout the river. Holly Mosco, Masters student, is non-invasively sampling salmon parr mucus and tissue to identify early warning signs of stress using genomics (You can see past newsletters or social media posts for more information on these projects). With all these projects on the go, this summer is our busiest yet, so settle in, perhaps alongside the river, because we have lots of updates.

MART Co-production

Launching the season off, we hosted our third annual workshop at the Margaree Salmon Association office, bringing together local rightsholders and stakeholders to engage in discussions, helping to build meaningful research valued by those who live along, and care for the river. This year we welcomed partners from the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, Margaree Salmon Association, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Nova Scotia Salmon Association, Chéticamp River Salmon Association, ACAP, Inland Fisheries, as well as local anglers and guides. We also sparked a new partnership with Eskasoni High School, Saint Allison Bernard Memorial, developing a class lesson plan to introduce students to the research tools and methods used in aquatic biology. Welcoming 16 students and their teachers for a day in the Margaree River, we shared knowledge and experiences. Students had the chance to test acoustic telemetry equipment, learn safe fish handling techniques, fish identification, swabbing techniques, and take habitat measurements. In

return, students shared their knowledge of traditional salmon harvesting and taught us some Mi'kmaw language, and slang.

Of course, building relationships is always rewarding, but we've also been busy in the field. Thanks to all the conversations and collaborations we've had, each of our projects has some exciting new additions. Here's a quick update on what's new:

Kristen Cyr: Exploring cold-water refugia use

This year, Kristen has some preliminary results from her acoustic telemetry and underwater video data, revealing that brown trout are frequent visitors to the cold-water refugia during warm-water events. The footage has also captured some interesting competitive interactions: brown trout with brook trout, and brown trout with salmon parr. Surprisingly there have been no signs yet of fish attempting to eat juvenile salmon within the cold-water refugia, but we still have lots of video footage to go through before we can say anything definitively. Kristen also loaned four additional acoustic receivers from the Ocean Tracking Network, which we have anchored up and downstream of the refugia. In total, Kristen has successfully tagged 30 Atlantic salmon parr, 8 brown trout, and 22 smallmouth bass which will be detected by Kristen receivers to identify fine-scale positions within the refugia, and the direction of movement when they leave the refugia.

Izzy Tormasi – Environmental and behavioral drivers of smallmouth bass movement

With over 20 receivers in the water listening for our 2024 tagged smallmouth bass, we were eager this summer to retrieve and offload the data. In the end, we recovered all but two, which had been washed away over the winter. Preliminary results revealed that of the 30 smallmouth bass tagged, 24 remained near the mouth of Lake Ainslie between July and September last year. This season, we expanded our monitoring network by deploying seven additional receivers, bringing the total to 29 across the watershed. These sites, chosen with input from our partners, not only filled key monitoring gaps in the Southwest but also allowed us to extend coverage into the Northeast stem. New this year, Izzy is running behavioral trials before tagging, placing each bass in a mesh arena. Izzy is filming bass so she can observe how they are adapting to a new environment and how they respond when faced with a simulated predator (a stuffed bald eagle that Izzy sewed herself; see figure B.).

When reviewing the footage, Izzy will be recording traits such as time spent in shelter and overall swimming activity to determine whether each tagged fish is exploratory, shy, or bold. This is valuable information, as bolder or more exploratory individuals often drive invasive populations to spread. In total, Izzy has successfully trialed and tagged 25 bass this summer.

Figure B. – Izzy Tormasi flying her mock predator over an arena during a behavioural trial of her smallmouth bass

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Margaree Aquatic Research Team (MART) Program Update – *Kristen Cyr, Izzy Tormasi, Holly Mosco, Frankeisha Wright*

Holly Mosco –Influence of gaspereau migrations on Atlantic salmon parr stress

As the newest addition to our team, Holly has plenty of exciting updates to share. In discussions with gaspereau trappers, she is setting out to understand how gaspereau migrations influence the stress Atlantic salmon face from warming waters and the arrival of smallmouth bass, using the same sampling methods as last year. With so many juvenile gaspereau moving downstream at once, her project is testing two possibilities: do these migrations act as a "prey buffer" that distracts bass from salmon, or do they instead draw more bass into the river, increasing stress for salmon? To answer this, Holly is sampling Atlantic salmon during three key windows of the summer: 1) before adult gaspereau spawn, 2) during the peak juvenile migration, and 3) after most juveniles have left. So far, she has completed the first two periods with invaluable support from the Margaree Salmon Association, the Cheticamp River Salmon Association, and the Atlantic Salmon Federation. Some key additions to her project this year are 1.) Environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling to confirm abundance of gaspereau and smallmouth bass across her sites and 2.) behavioral trials of salmon parr. For behavioral trials, Holly is placing parr in totes and filming them to observe their activity levels and reactions to a "mock kingfisher" that she flies overhead. By reviewing these videos, Holly will be able to see whether salmon become more active, a pattern often linked to warmer water, or whether they hide more, a typical response to predators, especially invasive ones. So far, she has collected eDNA from five sites across the Southwest watershed in June and July and sampled a total of 56 parr.

Summer isn't over, and the MART team still has a few weeks left in the field season. Kristen is busy collecting information on salmon fitness (i.e., scales for growth, plus weight and length measurements), Izzy still needs to catch 5 more smallmouth bass for behavioral trials and tagging, and Holly has one more sampling period to complete. So, if you see us out there splashing around in the river, don't be shy, come say hi! And if you want more information on why this work is important or to learn more about these projects follow us on Instagram or Facebook @margareeaquaticresearchteam.

Fly Talk – Fly Comparison: Old vs. New *– Bill Haley*

The upper fly is a modern Bug that has never been fished. Bright, buoyant and should surely take a fish.

The lower fly, a Bomber, was tied in 1982. It has caught many salmon. The wings & hackle have been replaced several times. It's dark from fish slime and is now retired.

Which design is more attractive to the salmon? We all have opinions, but I found the lower pattern more effective. Difficult to beat a cigar shaped body.

ASF's Wild Salmon Watershed Program *– Jordan Condon and Deirdre Green*

As the 2025 summer field season winds down, the Wild Salmon Watershed program has made significant progress in partnership with the Margaree Salmon Association (MSA). Thanks to the hard work of their dedicated field crew, important information is being collected that will play a vital role in developing integrated management plans.

Ahead of the 2025 season, ASF and MSA held a planning session to identify priority sites for water quality monitoring, habitat assessments, and salmon productivity surveys. Over the summer, the MSA field crew took on these ambitious assessments and achieved remarkable progress despite challenging conditions.

Water quality monitoring began in the spring, with crews routinely visiting 104 sites for YSI measurements and maintaining 47 sites equipped with temperature loggers. This data will be combined with habitat surveys to provide a clearer picture of the quality of habitat available for salmon. Electrofishing and redd surveys will further assess how salmon are using this habitat, adding another layer of understanding.

By collecting these comprehensive datasets, we can begin to identify the factors driving—or limiting—salmon productivity in the Margaree River. This knowledge is essential for guiding future restoration and management actions, ensuring that salmon can reach their full potential and continue to thrive in the watershed.

Summer Fieldwork Photos – *The Magaree Salmon Association*

1. Techs from the Margaree Salmon Association and Chéticamp River Salmon Association participating in swiftwater training.
2. Stevie conducting habitat suitability index work with Jordan Condon from ASF.
3. Megan identifies freshwater insects with the help of Luke Burton from NSSA.
4. Michael helping transport a bass for Izzy's study.
5. (left to right) Tommy, Emmitt, and Donald with their newly built walkway at Tent Pool.
6. Michael and Dylan at the MADA Canada Day event, giving out trees and swag.

MSA's Events Calendar

FALL 2025

September 21st
WORLD RIVERS DAY CELEBRATION
MSA & MARGAREE SALMON MUSEUM
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
HELD AT THE MARGAREE SALMON MUSEUM
60 EAST BIG INTERVALE ROAD, NORTH EAST MARGAREE

October 10th
MSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
HELD AT ST. PATRICK'S PARISH HALL
6541 CABOT TRAIL, NORTH EAST MARGAREE

October 11th
MSA ANNUAL DINNER AUCTION
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM
HELD AT ST. PATRICK'S PARISH HALL
6541 CABOT TRAIL, NORTH EAST MARGAREE

October 15th
MSA LEARN TO FLY FISH EVENT DURING CELTIC COLOURS
2:00 PM
HELD AT THE OLD MILLER TROUT FARM
408 DOYLES ROAD, MARGAREE FORKS

Support the Margaree Salmon Association

BECOME A MEMBER

Print and send the completed form to:
The Margaree Salmon Association
P.O. Box 108, Margaree Centre
Nova Scotia, Canada. B0E1Z0

You may also become a member, or renew your current membership by visiting us online at:
www.margareesalmon.ca/membership/

– PLEASE PRINT –

NAME: _____ TEL.: _____

EMAIL: _____ **SELECT ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TYPE:**

ADDRESS: _____ ☐ $30 REGULAR ☐ $10 JUNIOR (UNDER 14)

_____ ☐ $50 FAMILY ☐ $300 INDIVIDUAL LIFETIME

PAYMENT: ☐ **PLEASE SEE ENCLOSED CHEQUE** –OR– ☐ **CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD (SEE BELOW)**

NAME ON CARD: _____ EXP. YR.: _____ EXP. MONTH: _____

CARD NO.: _____ CVC NO.: _____ CARD TYPE: _____

/margareesalmonassociation www.margareesalmon.ca

Margaree Salmon Association

Established in 1982, the Margaree Salmon Association is a volunteer, non-profit organization, dedicated to the conservation, protection and enhancement of Atlantic salmon, trout and their habitat.

ORGANIZATION DIRECTORS

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President – Paul MacNeil
First VP – Paddy Poirier
Second VP – Julie Marie Campbell
Secretary – Peter Mancini
Treasurer – John Stinson

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COVER PHOTO: UPSTREAM VIEW OF FIRST FORK BROOK – MARGAREE, NOVA SCOTIA.