

Environment Agency enforces annual close season for salmon and sea trout fishing

The byelaws prohibit fishing for salmon and sea trout this autumn, with fishing due to resume in early 2023.

In the North East, the close season for salmon runs 1 November to 31 January. The close season for sea trout also begins on 1 November and runs until 2 April. In Yorkshire, the close season for salmon runs 1st November to 5th April. The close season for sea trout begins on 1st November and runs until 2nd April.

Anglers must check local information and byelaws to ensure they are up to date on local restrictions. More information and specific advice can be found [here](#).

Licence holders who fish for salmon and sea trout are also encouraged to submit their annual catch return. This can be completed online or by sending in a paper catch return, the information is vital to help inform national salmon and sea trout stock assessments.

Wild Atlantic salmon and sea trout are experiencing decline, with stocks now categorised as being 'at risk' or 'probably at risk'. Reducing disturbances on fish when they are spawning and at their most vulnerable helps to protect stocks for the future.

The Environment Agency recognises that fishing is not the sole cause of stock decline but by observing the close season anglers are playing their part in boosting the long-term resilience of iconic fish species.

David Shears, Environment Agency Senior Fisheries Enforcement Officer, said:

Taking steps to limit the pressures on vital fish stocks will help support healthy, thriving populations in our rivers long into the future.

The annual close season is an important time of year. It improves the resilience and sustainability of our native species, which is important for the wider ecosystem.

Anglers who wish to fish during the winter months are permitted to catch coarse fish, such as grayling, barbel and chub, for which a valid fishing licence is required.

During the close season, enforcement officers from the Environment Agency patrol riverbanks to prevent illegal fishing and protect fisheries. The maximum fine for byelaw offences is £50,000 upon conviction.

Those who suspect illegal fishing should report it to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

[Angler gets penalty that could have bought 19 rod licences](#)

The 25-year-old pleaded guilty of fishing without a licence on 15 April 2022 at Pride Lakes in Hemington, Leicestershire.

The case was brought by the Environment Agency to Northampton Magistrates Court on Monday 24 October.

Sims also pleaded guilty of leaving his fishing rod unattended with bait or hook in the water at the same location on the same date.

He was ordered to pay a total penalty of £575, including a fine of £400, costs of £135 and a victim surcharge of £40. An annual fishing licence currently costs just £30.

Following the verdict, Lee Watts, Fisheries Enforcement Officer for the Environment Agency in the East Midlands, said:

We're pleased how seriously the courts take these offences. Ryan Sims has been rightly punished for fishing without a licence, and for leaving his fishing rod in the water unattended, which meant he was unable to exercise sufficient control over it.

We hope the case acts as a reminder to anglers of the importance of having a rod licence before they go fishing and deters them from fishing illegally.

All of the money raised from rod licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries for the benefit of anglers. For those caught cheating the system, we will always prosecute.

Every year across the country, thousands of anglers are prosecuted for not having a fishing licence. As well as cheating other anglers, fishing illegally can carry a hefty penalty. Getting caught without a licence could land a fine of up to £2,500.

Income from rod licence sales is used to fund [Environment Agency](#) work to

protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, including improving habitats for fish and facilities for anglers, tackling illegal fishing and working with partners to encourage people to give fishing a go.

Any angler aged 13 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence to fish. A 1-day licence costs from just £6, and an annual licence currently costs from just £30 (concessions available). Junior licences are free for 13 – 16-year-olds. Licences are available from www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police and the Angling Trust. Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency incident hotline 24/7 on 0800 807060 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Background

Ryan Sims was charged with the following offences:

On 15 April 2022 at Pride Lakes, Hemington Leicestershire, in a place where fishing is regulated for freshwater fish or eels by means of an unlicensed fishing instrument, namely rod and line. Contrary to Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.

On 15 April 2022 at Pride Lakes, Hemington, left a rod and line with its bait or hook in the water unattended or so that the person shall be unable at any time to take or exercise sufficient control over said rod and line. Contrary to Byelaw 10 of the Environment Agency National Byelaws which came in to force on 27 May 2001 made pursuant to Section 210 and Schedule 25 of the Water Resources Act 1991 and Contrary to Section 211 of the said Act.

Rotherham angler catches £400 penalty

Ian Brian, 41, was proved guilty in his absence of fishing without a licence on 17 April 2022 at Stainforth and Keadby canal, Crowle, Lincolnshire.

He was ordered to pay a total penalty of £389, including a fine of £220, costs of £135 and a victim surcharge of £34. An annual fishing licence currently costs just £30.

Following the verdict, Lee Watts, Fisheries Enforcement Officer for the Environment Agency in the East Midlands, said:

Ian Brian has been rightly punished for fishing illegally. The case shows how seriously the courts take these offences and serves as a reminder to anglers of the importance of having a rod licence before they go fishing. We hope it will act as a deterrent to any angler who is thinking of fishing illegally.

All of the money raised from rod licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries for the benefit of anglers. For those caught cheating the system, we will always prosecute.

Every year across the country, thousands of anglers are prosecuted for not having a fishing licence. As well as cheating other anglers, fishing illegally can carry a hefty penalty. Getting caught without a licence could land a fine of up to £2,500.

Income from rod licence sales is used to fund [Environment Agency](#) work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, including improving habitats for fish and facilities for anglers, tackling illegal fishing and working with partners to encourage people to give fishing a go.

Any angler aged 13 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence to fish. A 1-day licence costs from just £6, and an annual licence currently costs from just £30 (concessions available). Junior licences are free for 13 – 16-year-olds. Licences are available from www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police and the Angling Trust. Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency incident hotline 24/7 on 0800 807060 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Background

Ian Brian was charged with the following offence:

On 17 April 2022 at Stainforth and Keadby canal, Crowle, in a place where fishing is regulated for freshwater fish or eels by means of an unlicensed fishing instrument, namely rod and line. Contrary to Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.

International Paint spills banned chemical into conservation area

International Paint Ltd, owned by multi-national AkzoNobel, appeared before Plymouth Crown Court on Thursday 27 October 2022, where, at the end of a nine-day hearing, it was found guilty on two charges.

The company denied both offences relating to the discharge of hazardous waste from a tank located on the quay at its Newton Ferrers paint testing facility.

The case is adjourned until January for sentencing.

The court heard that the Environment Agency launched an investigation after the company tried to sell the premises in 2015 and possible pollution was reported by Simon Friend of Red Earth Developments.

International Paint Ltd manufactured paints, including anti-fouling paints for ships, and had run a testing facility on the River Yealm at Newton Creek near Newton Ferrers since 1928. The estuary is a Special Area of Conservation due to its rich flora and fauna.

Since the 1970s, formulations containing tributyltin (TBT) had been used as a coating to prevent the build-up of organisms and plants on ships' hulls. But it proved to be so toxic to the wider marine environment that it was banned from use on small vessels in the UK in the late 1980s and was banned completely worldwide during the 2000s.

One drop of TBT in an Olympic-sized swimming pool equals one part per trillion (PPT). The safe level of TBT is 0.2 PPT or a fifth of a drop.

The Environment Agency's investigation found evidence that the chemical, along with copper, arsenic and mercury, had been present in sediment in the tank at the site and some of the sediment had escaped out into the estuary.

A bung on another tank was found to have come out leaving it open to the estuary, before it was eventually permanently sealed with concrete. The company denied having caused the discharge of the sediment into the estuary but did not answer what had happened to it.

Leading expert, Dr Michael Waldock, whose work led to the banning of TBT, carried out a review of sample analysis results from sediment from the tank and from the adjacent estuary for the Environment Agency. He found that nine out of 11 samples exceeded the safe limit for TBT and that, close to the site, one sample contained 80,000 times the safe level. He concluded that the TBT levels in the estuary were sufficient to have had a major toxic effect on marine life there.

James Wimpress of the Environment Agency said:

The company owned by a multi-national firm, and with a turnover of £134m in 2020, failed in its duty of care to the environment. The company denied any wrongdoing during the investigation and throughout the trial.

We are extremely pleased with the outcome and hope this serves as a warning to other companies that we will not hesitate to pursue those that act without regard to their responsibilities.

Background

- Between 2 September 2015 and 27 October 2016, International Paint Ltd caused a water discharge activity otherwise than as authorised by an environmental permit, namely the discharge of hazardous waste sediments into the river Yealm estuary from the Quay Tank at 101 Yealm Road, Newton Ferrers. The said sediments being hazardous waste due to the presence of elevated levels of tributyltin (TBT), copper, mercury and arsenic, contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and 38 (1) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.
- Between 2 September 2015 and 27 October 2016, at 101 Yealm Road, Newton Ferrers, being a person who produces controlled waste, International Paint Ltd failed in its duty to take all such measures applicable to them in that capacity as were reasonable in the circumstances in that they failed to prevent the escape of waste, namely sediment containing elevated levels of tributyltin (TBT), copper, mercury and arsenic from their control, namely the Quay Tank at the above premises, contrary to sections 34(1)(b) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, contrary to s.34(6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

[Bovine TB: authorisation for badger control in 2022](#)

Natural England has licensed and authorised 11 new badger control areas to begin operations in 2022. It has also authorised the licence holders to resume operations in 29 existing badger control areas in 2022. Licence holders met all the criteria specified in Defra's [guidance to Natural England](#), dated May 2021.

Natural England has reissued the Annex A for 10 licences due to a change to their control areas as licensed in 2020/2021. These areas were: 46 – Gloucestershire, 50 – Shropshire, 51 – Somerset, 53 – Wiltshire, 55 – Shropshire, 56 – Hampshire, 57 – Berkshire, 58 – Staffordshire, 60 –

Shropshire, 61- Oxfordshire.

It has also reissued the Annex B for all existing licences from area 33 to area 62 (inclusive). This follows a review of the conditions relating to licensed actions on or around protected sites.

Table 1: Badger control areas authorised in 2022

Area number and county	Minimum number	Maximum number	Authorisation date	Year of operations
Area 33 – Avon	360	993	26 August	Year 4
Area 34 – Cheshire	845	1685	26 August	Year 4
Area 35 – Cornwall	529	2163	26 August	Year 4
Area 36 – Staffordshire	47	594	26 August	Year 4
Area 37 – Devon	0	770	26 August	Year 4
Area 38 – Devon	0	963	26 August	Year 4
Area 39 – Dorset	40	473	26 August	Year 4
Area 40 – Herefordshire	0	691	26 August	Year 4
Area 41 – Staffordshire	0	144	26 August	Year 4
Area 42 – Wiltshire	0	2437	26 August	Year 4
Area 43 – Wiltshire	383	1324	26 August	Year 4
Area 44 – Avon	676	1700	26 August	Year 3
Area 45 – Derbyshire	171	1421	26 August	Year 3
Area 46 – Gloucestershire	201	427	26 August	Year 3
Area 47 – Herefordshire	349	1150	26 August	Year 3
Area 48 – Leicestershire	247	596	26 August	Year 3
Area 49 – Oxfordshire	242	735	26 August	Year 3
Area 50 – Shropshire	2675	4766	26 August	Year 3
Area 51 – Somerset	259	1887	26 August	Year 3
Area 52 – Warwickshire	644	1487	26 August	Year 3
Area 53 – Wiltshire	195	447	26 August	Year 3
Area 54 – Lincolnshire	N/A	N/A	26 August	Year 3
Area 55 – Shropshire	335	493	26 August	Year 2
Area 56 – Hampshire	651	1026	26 August	Year 2
Area 57 – Berkshire	312	457	26 August	Year 2
Area 58 – Staffordshire	464	861	26 August	Year 2
Area 59 – Worcestershire	142	362	26 August	Year 2
Area 60 – Shropshire	1137	1940	26 August	Year 2
Area 61 – Oxfordshire	497	882	26 August	Year 2
Area 62 – Buckinghamshire	680	922	26 August	Year 1
Area 63 – Cornwall	278	377	26 August	Year 1
Area 64 – Cornwall	281	381	26 August	Year 1
Area 65 – Derbyshire	697	944	26 August	Year 1
Area 66 – Devon	408	553	26 August	Year 1
Area 67- Hampshire	413	560	26 August	Year 1

Area number and county	Minimum number	Maximum number	Authorisation date	Year of operations
Area 68 – Northamptonshire	1353	1834	26 August	Year 1
Area 69 – Oxfordshire	570	772	26 August	Year 1
Area 70 – Somerset	270	366	26 August	Year 1
Area 71 – Warwickshire	680	922	26 August	Year 1
Area 72 – Warwickshire	1442	1954	26 August	Year 1

Licence holders carry out operations under a 4-year licence. This allows badger control to take place in the licensed control area every year between 1 June and 31 January inclusive.

The licence holder will decide the start date for control operations within this period.

Natural England has confirmed to the licence holders the minimum and maximum numbers of badgers they can remove.

Protected sites listed in the Annex Bs are not necessarily part of any active operations. These can and will only occur on protected sites where the landowner or occupier has granted permission.

The licences only permit badger control to take place outside these closed seasons:

- controlled shooting – 1 February to 31 May
- cage-trapping and shooting – 1 December to 31 May