



LIGHT LINES

FALL 1996

Volume 7, Number 4

BIG FALL STEELHEAD RUN IN ERINDALE

September has proven to be a big surprise for anglers who frequent Erindale Park. As early as Labour Day weekend there were half a dozen steelhead hooked in Erindale. Now, at the end of the month all I can say is wow! Over the past month there were at least 40 steelhead landings reported to CRAA, with more than that being hooked and lost. The majority of the steelhead that were landed weighed between 2 lbs and 7 lbs, with a couple big fish weighing 15lbs.

So, why the **excitement**? There has never been more than a couple steelhead hooked in Erindale Park until late October, and usually not until late November once the Chinook Salmon have died. Between 1988 and 1995 I have only seen a dozen steelhead landed from Erindale during the month of September. Therefore, in September, 1996 the steelhead run in the Credit River jumped in size by 25 times.

WHAT'S THIS MEAN? For the first time ever, the Credit River has had a fishable run of steelhead in September. Also, the majority of the steelhead were under seven pounds. Therefore, the majority of the steelhead were born between the years of 1992 and 1994 (see note below).

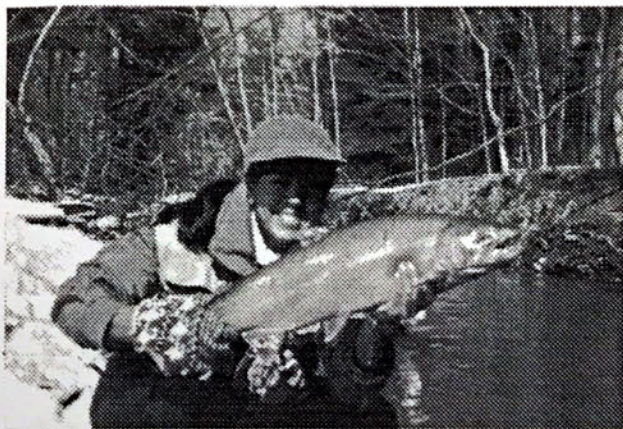
CRAA'S HARD WORK IS PAYING OFF. The fact that most of the steelhead this past month were born after 1992 strongly suggests that CRAA's fish ladder operation is paying off!

CRAA began to operate the fish ladder in 1992, lifting 350 steelhead. Between 1993 and 1996 CRAA has lifted a total of 3200 steelhead. Over the last two years we have also transferred 552 steelhead past the Norval Dam so they could spawn in the best water the Credit River has to offer (which is some of the best water in Ontario). Therefore CRAA is having a very beneficial impact on the fishery.

ALL WILD FISH! Every steelhead that has been reported to CRAA this fall has been **wild**. Further proof that our hard work is paying off.

Please report any steelhead you catch, or see caught this fall to the CRAA hotline so we have as much data on the Credit River steelhead as possible.

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Credit River Anglers Association LIGHT LINES

Contributions are welcome from
members and non-members alike.
Send your articles, comments and suggestions to:

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Or call the CRAA 24-hr Hotline

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1/16 page - \$15, 1/8 page - \$30, 1/4 page - \$50
Maximum size 1/4 page.

Newsletter production: 200 copies per issue
Printed on recycled paper.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

2 RE-OPEN FISH LADDER

Once repairs are completed at the fish ladder by CRAA we will lift the beams to allow water to flow through the fish ladder.

Be at the fish ladder for 11:00 am to help. Bring your waders and an extra change of clothes incase you get wet. We set the start time later so people could fish Erindale before helping at the fish ladder. If anyone has some heavy duty rope please bring it with you. Sailing rope would be great.

TBA FISH LADDER OPERATION

If weather and time permits the fish ladder will be operated in the hopes of tagging some fall run steelhead. Listen to the CRAA hotline for updates on whether we will lift the ladder or not. Keep in mind that ladder operations on the fall are dependant on warm weather so it is up to mother nature.

JANUARY

15 WINTER LIGHT LINES

The winter Light Lines will be our big issue of the year with 2000 copies being printed to hand out at the fishing show in February. If you would like to write an article please send it to CRAA's address marked "Light Lines Article".

FEBRUARY

15-17 SPRING FISHING SHOW

CRAA will need lots of volunteers to help run the spring fishing show, including the fish identification and CRAA's information booth.

TBA WILLOW CUTTING COLLECTION

On a nice day in February CRAA will collect tree cuttings for our new nursery.

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EARLY FALL STEELHEAD IN ERINDALE

Note: The following information describes the average size of Credit River steelhead based on their age. Remember, steelhead spend there first 18 to 30 months on the river as parr before becoming smolts to leave the river system. When they leave the river they average 6 to 8 inches in size and weight approximately 1/25 of a pound.

Birth Date	River Age	Lake Age	Average weight
1990	2	4.5	14 lbs
1991	2	3.5	10 lbs
1992	2	2.5	7.5 lbs
1993	2	1.5	5 lbs
1994	2	.5	2 lbs
1995	1.5	0	1/25 lb

EARLY OCTOBER! October is shaping up to be a fantastic month for steelheading in Erindale Park. On October 22nd and 25th two runs of steelhead moved through the park. Anglers that stayed on top of the school of steelhead hooked anywhere from ten to twenty steelhead on these two days. On the 25th there were an estimated 75 steelhead hooked from the park. **WOW!!!!!!!**

Since Thanksgiving there have been steelhead caught on a daily basis, but the best fishing is the few days following a heavy rain.

Good luck fishing, and please remember to report any tagged steelhead you catch or see caught. And please release the steelhead so they may spawn!

On October 25th CRAA member Aaron Bodiam landed a 12 lb female with a red tag (#4450). The steelhead was lifted and transferred by trailer to Norval on April 17th, 1996.

ROE CURES

1. At the river, rinse the eggs clean of blood and debris to prevent rapid spoilage. Place in a nylon stocking or plastic bag and wash several times. The water naturally hardens the egg shell so the eggs will not fall apart when you tie them into roe bags.

After rinsing several times at the river side (10 to 20 minutes) drain the eggs and place them in a zip lock bag. Place the bag of eggs on ice as soon as you can to prevent spoilage. When you arrive home place the eggs into portions that will last you a days fishing. Then freeze all the packages of eggs for use when you need them.

Eggs cured in this manner only last a few days after being thawed, so don't waste them. The eggs do not re-freeze well either, only thaw what you need!

2. For the salt and brown sugar cure you will need a large container, cold tap water, lots of salt and a half cup of brown sugar. Place enough tap water into a container to hold all your eggs. Then add enough salt to make the eggs float (mix the salt and water first, and then add a couple of eggs to see if there is enough salt to make the eggs float). Now add the brown sugar. Once all is dissolved (5 minutes of mixing) you can add all your eggs.

Leave the container in the fridge for 12 hours, then drain and freeze into portions you require. By using this cure the eggs will last more then a month in the fridge.

3. If you want to spend a few dollars (about \$10.00) and get a great cure then head to the tackle shop and buy a retailed bait cure. Pro-cure is one of the better brands. It allows you to dye the eggs as well as cure them. Using this means eggs will last for months in the fridge, maybe longer.

CRAA PHOTO CONTEST

There will be over \$200.00 in prizes for CRAA's first photo contest. Members are encouraged to send in some of their favorite photos for judging. This is your chance to show off that big fish you caught to all the members. We are looking for photos of steelhead, brown trout, Atlantic salmon and Pacific salmon. You may enter photos of fish caught anywhere in the world, but some big fish from the Credit would be nice to see.

Photos will be judged on clarity, use of scenery, and the size of the fish.

Send your photos to CRAA at the club address listed on page 2.



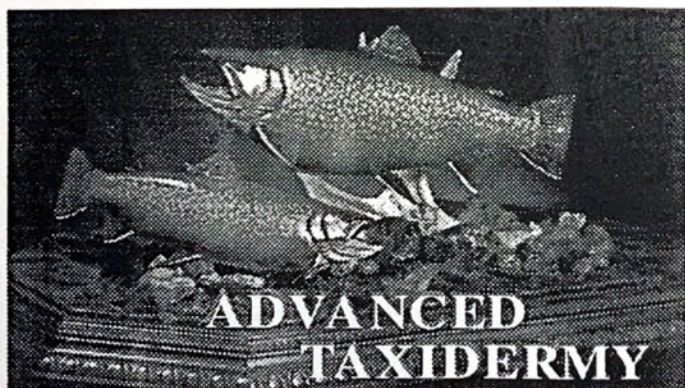
BIG JUMP IN JUVENILE STEELHEAD

There is more good news! In many sections of the middle and upper Credit River there has been a big jump in the number of wild steelhead juveniles in the past two years.

During the summer of 1995 the number of steelhead parr and smolts tripled between Inglewood and Glen Williams. Between Norval and Georgetown the numbers quadrupled. Finally, in Silver Creek the number of steelhead parr increased seven to eight times.

This past summer, 1996 there was a further increase in the number of steelhead juveniles. The upper sections of the Credit River had an average of five times the number of parr and smolts compared to the 1994 year. However, Silver Creek is where the big gain has come from. In Silver and Black creeks the number of juvenile steelhead jumped thirty times.

This is solid proof that CRAA's steelhead transfer is working, and in a big way!



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FISH LADDER - FALL 1996

The MNR finally finished the work to improve the ladder at the Streetsville Dam this past summer. Although there is some work that we feel needs to be completed (digging out the entrance to the fish ladder), overall it appears to be successful. For those of you familiar with the site, the river channel has been changed substantially in the hopes of diverting all the fish towards the fish ladder.

At this point the MNR has not completed the welding repair work on the fish ladder cage. CRAA is looking at ways to do the repair work ourselves. Once new screening is put on the cage we should not have any of the disappointing mortalities we have had over the past few years. This past spring we had nine small steelhead (1.5 lbs to 3 lbs) get caught in the cage and die.

The MNR closed the fish ladder at the end of August, but they will allow CRAA to reopen the ladder before Halloween, once the salmon have finished spawning. We are anxious to open the ladder due to the number of steelhead that have run the Credit River this fall.

If time and weather permit CRAA will operate the fish ladder in early November to tag some fall steelhead.

CRAA HOTLINE

The CRAA hotline has been very popular this year. During the spring and fall when fishing was at its peak the hotline received an average of 50 calls a week. The most popular time was the middle of September when we received 60 calls in 48 hours.

Since January, 1996 we estimate the hotline has had over 1200 calls. The hotline is proving to be one of the most successful ways of reaching our members and other anglers on a consistent basis.

CRAA NURSERY

Unfortunately due to a busy spring at the fish ladder we were unable to collect many trees for the CRAA nursery. Also, due to funding cutbacks at the Credit Valley Conservation we have had to make other arrangements for the storage of plants. We have now worked out a location for our nursery and have set a schedule for collecting plants.

In February we will take a day to collect willow and poplar cuttings. According to experts this is the best time of year for collecting these two species. During the month of April we will complete our collection of cedars, pines and maples. These work days will be done on weekends during the fish ladder operation.

RAFFLE WINNERS - 1996

1st	Jason D'Andrea	Mississauga	Golf woods	\$500.00 value
2nd	Jim Veltman	Sharron	Talon 13'6" rod	\$350.00 value
3rd	Debbie Smythe	Toronto	Talon fly rod	\$300.00 value
4th	Robert Pool	Etobicoke	Kodiak duck boots	\$100.00 value
5th	Kieth Burrows	Mississauga	Asst flies	\$50.00 value

Congratulations to all our winners!

RELEASING STEELHEAD CORRECTLY

By John Kendall

THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF RELEASING A STEELHEAD IS DOING IT PROPERLY. These fish are on their spawning run and are using all there stored energy to fight the current and spawn. When we hook them they provide us with a thrill of a lifetime, but in the process the fish expend a great deal of energy.

When you land any fish after a long fight it is tired and out of breath. If you hold that fish out of the water it cannot breath and this causes severe stress. The fish may be able to swim away when you release it, but it could die a day or week later due to the stress. Also, if you touch the eyes or get mud on them the fish could go blind. If you injure the gills by putting you fingers in them, the fish could be starved of oxygen and die in a few days. A severe skin infection could result if you wipe the slime of. There are even more perils that could kill the fish.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT RELEASING FISH IS BAD, only that improper handling of them is.

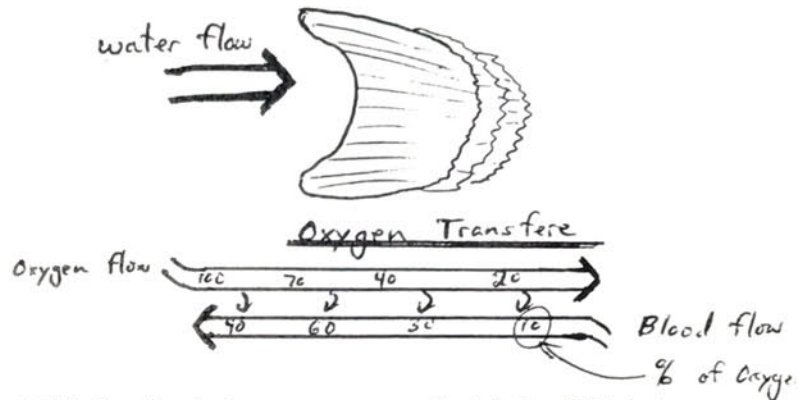
I, along with some friends have caught the same Steelhead four times in one day in different pools. I have also caught a Steelhead 15 minutes after releasing it on a different bait. These fish had very specific marks such as a pair of lamprey scars which allowed for our positive identification. However, these cases are not uncommon. Most Steelheaders who fish a lot have probably caught a fish that they had released earlier that day, year, or decade. This proves that catch and release works.

RELEASING A STEELHEAD PROPERLY
After fighting the fish to a point where it is tired, tail it with a glove. Set your rod down carefully and cradle the fish by putting your

seconds for a photo (if desired), and then let it pull out of your hands while you are cradling it with its head pointed into the current.

WHY ARE THESE PRECAUTIONS NECESSARY

A fish's gills are structured so oxygen can only be taken from the water coming into its mouth. The diagram below illustrates the way the gills take in oxygen and remove carbon dioxide.



This is why it is necessary to hold the fish into the current; if you hold them backwards, then the gas transfer in the gills cannot work and the fish cannot breath. Also, after a fight with an angler the fish is exhausted and it needs a lot of oxygen. If you hold the fish out of the water for more than 15 seconds you increase the chance of mortality by 28%. However, in very cold water this time is a few seconds longer. The very cold water causes the fish to have a slower metabolism.

To fully understand the importance of keeping a fishes head and gills under water at all times so it can breath, consider the following: Pretend a fish hooked and fought you out. After landing you the fish holds your head under water for a photograph while your gasping for air after such a long fight. You would suffocate! The same thing happens to a fish when you hold it out of the water!

I hope all anglers learn to release Steelhead properly so we can all get the maximum benefit from Catch and Release.