

## Environmental information for Canoeing Ireland Clubs

### Biosecurity for Paddling in Ireland

Assume all waterbodies are infested.

1. Inspect boat and remove any mud, plant material or creepy crawlers
2. Drain water from boat
3. Wash and dry gear between trips
4. If moving from one waterbody to another make sure to wash and dry all equipment to help prevent the spread of invasive species and help maintain your gear

### Biosecurity when returning from abroad

1. Normal procedure as above
2. Follow the full guidelines <http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/invasive-species-1/438-invasive-species-disinfection-guidelines-for-paddle-sports>
3. Many areas around Europe and further abroad have species which are highly invasive as such it our responsibility to insure our sport does not impact the Irish environment

### Fish Spawning

River paddlers should be aware of fish spawning; in particular what it is, where and when it happens and how we can avoid interfering with it. Female fish lay their eggs and male fish fertilise those eggs in the gravel beds of rivers throughout Ireland. Fish seek out gravel river beds for spawning, so this is not an issue in muddy rivers. The reason for this is that the eggs rest in the gaps between the pieces of gravel and stay there until the young fish hatch. The movement of water over the gravel provides them with the necessary flow of oxygen to help them through the early stages of their life cycle. Salmon and sea trout generally spawn between the months of October to early January in both the main river and in the tributaries of almost all Irish rivers, although earlier and later instances are sometimes reported.

When paddling in the autumn and early winter you should be particularly on the look out for gravel river beds, especially when you are getting in or out of your boat. You can avoid causing any problems in the spawning season by:

- Not standing in the water when there is a gravel river bed
- Being aware of the increased risk of making contact with the gravel river bed in times of low water
- Avoiding contact between your paddle and the gravel river bed, especially when getting in and out of your boat
- Avoiding contact with your boat and the gravel river bed, especially by not dipping the stern or cartwheeling when there is insufficient depth of water

- The use of a pole to propel an open canoe should be done with caution at this time of year reverting to a paddle on sections of river with a gravel bed
- Following any local guidance in terms of preferred places to launch or climb out
- Remembering the sensitive time of year for fish spawning, other fish have different spawning times so local knowledge is useful

### **Paddler's code taken from Scottish Canoe Association**

The following is taken from the Scottish canoe association; it outlines what we can do as paddlers both on and off the water to improve our relationship with land owners and other water users.

#### **On land**

- Drive and park considerately, not obstructing gates, lanes or passing places
- Avoid damaging fences, gates or river banks
- Use recognised access points where possible
- Keep noise to a minimum
- Be discreet - don't cause offence by changing or urinating publicly
- Respect private property - if in doubt seek advice from the owner or resident
- Take your litter away with you and pick up litter left by others

#### **On the water**

- Follow the general rules of navigation and local byelaws
- Respect all other water users
- Co-operate with anglers to avoid lines - friendly communication can reduce potential conflict
- Do not linger in pools already occupied by other river users
- Keep the numbers in your party consistent with safety, the nature of the stretch of river and the impact on your surroundings

At all times we should aim to minimise the effect our sport has on the environment and other water users.

In coming months there will be more information available through the website

Here are a few useful sites for environmental information

<http://www.leavenotraceireland.org/>

<http://canoescotland.org/where-go/protecting-environment>

<http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/Invasive-species-news/launch-of-invasive-species-disinfection-guidelines-for-paddle-sports-enthusiasts.html>

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/index.cfm>

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/>

