

RIVERS TAY AND TUMMEL FIELD EXCURSION

28th April 2006

9.30am – 4.00pm

Tour leaders: Dr David Gilvear and Dr Nigel Willby, Centre for River Restoration Science, School of Biological and Environmental Science, University of Stirling.

This fieldtrip will introduce you to an example of natural river restoration. The river Tummel for its lower 10 kilometres before entering the River Tay prior to 1903 was effectively “straight-jacketed” by agricultural embankments and bank protection. However after the flood-rich period of the 1890s and following a flood in 1903 the landowner the Duke of Atholl decided not to repair the embankment breaches. Since then the river has, for the most part been free to erode its banks and migrate across the floodplain. As such a range of river and floodplain habitats characteristic of a “mobile” gravel bed river have developed and the reach contains two SSSIs and these are contained within the Scottish Wildlife Trust Shingle Islands Reserve. The river together with the larger River Tay is also a Special Area of Conservation based on the Atlantic Salmon, freshwater pearl mussel and river lamprey.

The first site to be visited will be the River Tay just to the north of Dunkeld. Here the river is constrained by embankments although where these are set back a little from the river strips of riparian woodland with SSSI status exist. However for the most part the river and floodplain are highly managed and this site represents a useful contrast with that of the River Tummel.

At the River Tummel the plan is to visit two sites (Ballinluig and Tomdachoil) that will allow the full range of habitats from exposed gravels through to mature woodland and open water to disconnected backwaters to be observed. This history of channel change and botanical importance will also be described on site but much of the background and detail will also be gleaned by the talk of Drs Gilvear and Willby at the conference on Thursday 27th.

If time permits the fieldtrip will also visit one of either (i) the Falls of Braan which are situated on a picturesque upland bedrock reach of the River Braan near Dunkeld or (ii) the Pitlochry Dam and fish ladder; a popular tourist attraction due to the possibility of seeing Atlantic Salmon through an observation window.

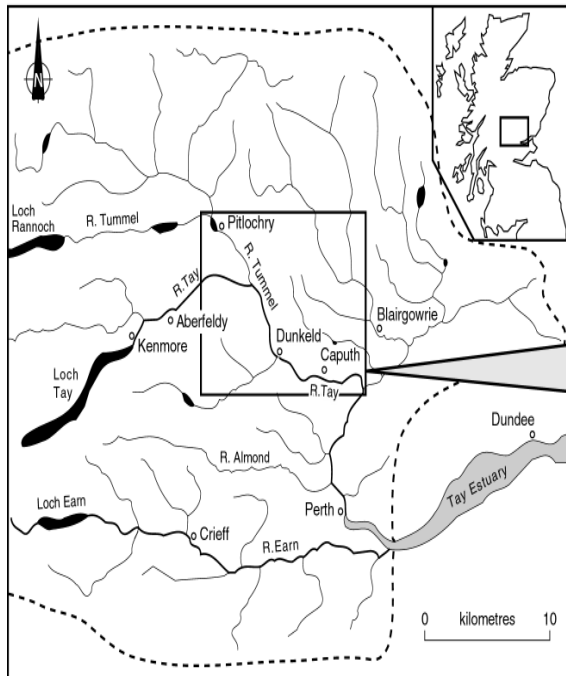
Views of the River Tummel





Location of the Rivers Tay and Tummel

A



B

