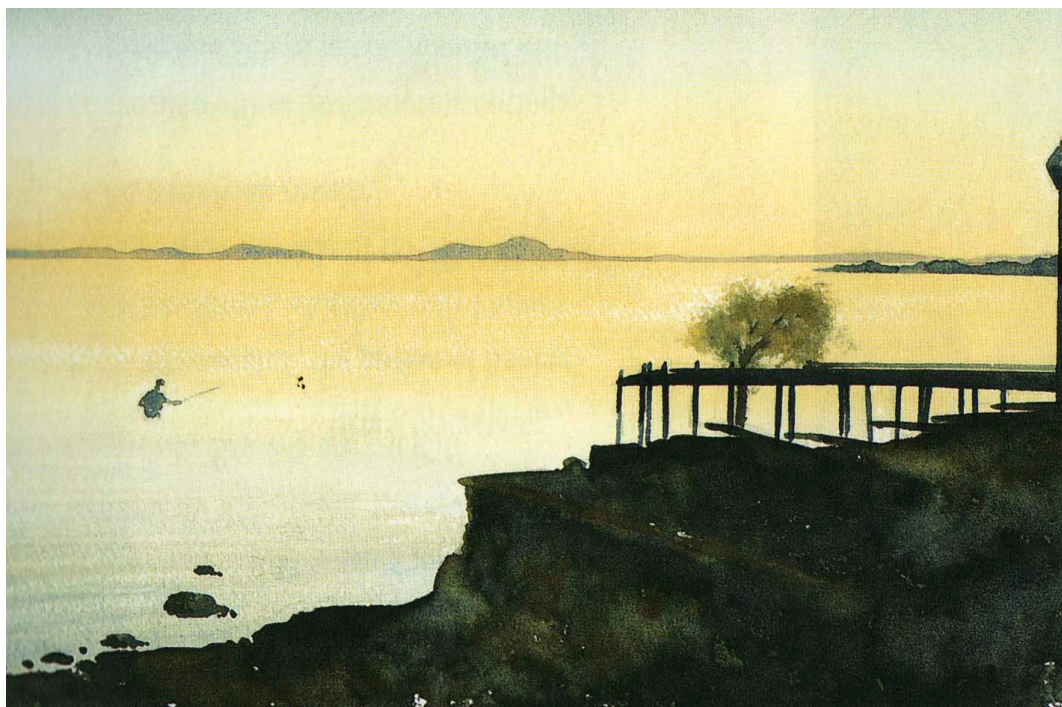




Planning Your Fishing Trip

An nzfishing.com guide to New Zealand fly fishing



Foreword

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Validity of information

To the best of our knowledge and efforts, the information contained in this publication is valid as at the date of publication. However, we cannot take responsibility for subsequent changes, inaccuracies, or their consequences. In particular, note that each year some changes are made to the fishing regulations. Always check the latest regulations on nzfishing.com and in the booklet that comes with your fishing licence.

Free planning guide

nzfishing.com also offers a free guide to planning a New Zealand fishing trip which we strongly recommend you read in conjunction with this itinerary. The planning guide covers when to come, what to bring, making the most of your time, fishing regulations and safety.

Other online publications from nzfishing.com

nzfishing.com also publishes a series of detailed travel plans and a selection of short guides to individual fishing waters that you can print and carry with you.

Itineraries

nzfishing.com's detailed travel guides include suggested itineraries with travel plans with routes details and travel times, where to fish, where to stay and more. Each is around 40 pages in length and includes a map showing the route and the location of the recommended fishing waters. There is an itinerary for each of the following areas:

- Central North Island
- Eastern North Island
- The Lower North
- Top of the South
- Coast to Coast
- Central South Island
- Bottom of the South

Fishing waters

These are a series of professionally laid out documents ready for printing that bring together information from the nzfishing.com website about fishing a specific lake or river, as well as one or more access maps. They are typically 3-5 pages long.

For more information

For more information, see the website www.nzfishing.com which is a comprehensive easy-to-use source of information about freshwater fishing in New Zealand.

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1. Facts about New Zealand

Overview

Population density

New Zealand is a developed country of 4 million people in a land area larger than the United Kingdom. Over one third of the population live in the largest city, Auckland (and in fact over 50% of the population live within 100 km of Auckland). This means there is a lot of empty or near empty country.

Geography

The country is divided into two main islands and runs from the sub-tropical northern tip to the much cooler and mountainous south. Through most of the country, high hills and mountain ranges divide the land into distinct regions. This is most evident in the South Island where the west coast is wetter and has a myriad of small clear mountain rivers while the drier east coast features large braided river systems. A good (though not excessive) rainfall ensures there are many hundreds of lakes, streams and rivers suitable for trout and salmon. Add to this an excellent road network and you have an ample trout habitat that is generally easy to access.

Climate

New Zealand's climate is dominated by the mountain ranges that run through much of the country and the fact that it is an island nation. Temperatures are generally mild, rainfall is moderate (though can be high in places such as southern Westland) and sunshine hours are good with most places experiencing over 2000 hours sunshine annually.

In general the West Coast is wetter than the Eastern regions as the mountain ranges and hills act as a barrier to the prevailing westerly winds and the north is warmer than the south..

Weather

New Zealand's weather, while mostly temperate, can change quickly. Always check the weather forecast prior to any fishing trip and be aware of the possibility of rapid increases in river flow and river levels, and sudden drops in temperature. Be especially careful when fishing any backcountry areas as these rivers can rise very rapidly if there is heavy rain in the headwaters and take warm waterproof clothing with you.

Daylight saving

In New Zealand clocks are changed to take advantage of the summer weather. New Zealand Daylight Time. At 2am on the first Sunday in October, clocks are put forward one hour and then put back an hour on the first Sunday of April each year. New Zealand Standard Time (NZST) is 12 hours ahead of Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) and Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), while New Zealand Daylight Time (NZDT) is one hour ahead of NZST and thus 13 hours ahead of UTC and GMT.

To remember which way to adjust your watch think of the following ditty: "Clocks spring forward in Spring and fall back in Fall" (or Autumn).

Money matters

Payment methods

The currency is the New Zealand dollar. The exchange rate with the American dollar typically varies around .60-.80 cents to the NZ dollar (i.e. US\$0.65 = \$NZ1.00) . Website where you can view current exchange rates include www.asbbank.co.nz or www.kiwibank.co.nz

Only New Zealand currency is accepted in most places though major hotels may accept foreign currency. Money is easy to change at most banks.

EFT-POS machines are widely available, but note there is usually a charge for other bank transactions. Credit cards (Visa and MasterCard) and EFT-POS are widely accepted, but when travelling into more remote areas it is advisable to have a reasonable amount of cash (in New Zealand currency) with you.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

GST of 15% is charged on all goods and services bought in New Zealand. Shops are required to display prices with GST included in the price. Most accommodation providers also quote prices with GST included but some up-market accommodation prices are quoted exclusive of GST (which is added to the final bill).

There is no provision for travellers to obtain a refund of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on their purchases when they leave New Zealand. In order to buy goods without payment of GST, travellers must purchase from a duty free shop or arrange for the retailer/supplier to export the goods. (See www.customs.govt.nz/travellers/)

Business and banking hours

Banks

Banks are open from Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 4.30 pm except on public holidays.

EFT-POS machines are widely available and can be accessed at any time of day or night.

Offices

Typical office hours in New Zealand are from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Shops

Most shopping centres open seven days a week, typically closing at 5.30pm Monday to Friday. During the weekend closing times vary, with 4pm on Saturday being typical, while on Sunday some shops close at 12pm and other not opening at all on Sundays.

Supermarkets in most town and cities are open into the evenings seven days a week, except on a few specific public holidays (Christmas Day, Good Friday, and the morning of Anzac Day),

Cafes and restaurants

Many restaurants open six nights a week (typically no earlier than 6pm) and are closed on Mondays.

Currently, on public holidays, some cafes close and others add a surcharge of up to 15% to recoup the additional cost of employing staff on these days.

New Zealand holidays

School holidays

The four main school holiday periods for 2019 - 2020 are:

Season	Starts	Ends	What to expect
Spring 2019	Sept 28	13 Oct	Generally a quieter holiday for travel
Summer	December 17	January 30	Main holiday season. Many businesses closed until Jan 5 th . Schools closed; family holidays at lakes and beaches. Need to make bookings well in advance (6 months or more) Heavy traffic on Boxing Day and Jan 4 th .

6. Flyfishing Rules and Regulations

Autumn/Easter	10 April	April 27	Family holidays Practically all shops and businesses closed on Good Friday
Winter	4 July	July 19	Not a popular holiday time except for the mountain areas
Spring	September 26	October 11	Also a quieter holiday period
Summer	17 Dec		

Public holidays

Holiday	Date	Reason	What to expect
Waitangi Day	February 6th	Celebrates the signing of the treaty between the indigenous Maori and the British settlers in 1840	Families head for the beach
Easter	10 April – 13 April	Christian religious holiday	Practically all businesses and shops are closed on Good Friday. Schools and other educational institutes extend the break to include Tuesday.
Anzac Day	25 th April	Remembers New Zealand soldiers who died during the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915 and in later campaigns.	Shops are shut in the morning with many remaining closed all day
Queens Birthday	First Monday in June	Official celebration of the Queen's birthday	Ski fields popular
Labour Day/ Labour Weekend	Fourth Monday of October.	Marks the beginning of the 40 hour working week	

Anniversary Days

Each region in New Zealand has a public holiday called Anniversary Day. These vary around the country and are as follows for 2012:

Northland	Monday 27 January
Auckland	Monday 27 January
Taranaki	Monday 9 March
Hawke's Bay	Friday 23 October
Wellington	Monday 20 January
Marlborough	Monday 29 October
Nelson	Monday 3 February
Canterbury	Friday 13 November
Canterbury (South)	Monday 28 September
Westland	Monday 30 Nov
Otago	Monday 23 March
Southland	Tuesday 14 April

2. About New Zealand Freshwater Fishing

Overview

Trout stocks

Trout are not native to New Zealand but were introduced in the mid to late 19th century. After a few unsuccessful attempts, some brown trout from the United Kingdom and some rainbow trout from California survived the arduous boat journey from their native lands and were introduced into New Zealand. What these trout found was ideal conditions. The water was the right temperature, the rivers were clean and stable, and most importantly, there was an abundant and reliable food source. They thrived to such an extent that they are now self-sustaining throughout most of the country. Therefore, most fish caught today are wild stock with juvenile fish being released in only a few areas. The stocked and released fish tend to grow and mature at much the same rate as their wild brethren but are sometimes differentiated by a fin clipping made at the time of their release.

Ease of access

Great fishing is easily available to anyone with a rod and a licence in New Zealand. Good roads, four-wheel-drive vehicles, easily available helicopters, numerous wilderness tracks and huts means that access to many rivers is relatively easy and the itinerant angler is spoilt for choice when deciding where to fish.

The majority of rivers and lakes can be accessed at some point by road and then it is up to the energy levels of each angler as to how far they wish to walk. There is no doubt that a little effort spent walking even a short distance from one's transport will greatly improve the fishing experience but the great thing about New Zealand is that there is something for everyone. Sit in a luxurious boat and troll for fish on a lake or trek for several days into the headwaters of a pristine mountain stream to stalk wild and wily brown trout. The choice is yours.

Catch and release

Catch and release is encouraged and widely practiced. This is especially important in the backcountry and wilderness areas in order to protect the fishery from over-harvesting.

Fishing expectations

Many anglers dream of fishing in New Zealand; but you need to be aware that you are unlikely to catch large numbers of fish on most rivers or lakes. Especially in the South island, the emphasis is on sight fishing in crystal clear water, and on catching a few, large fish. River and stream fishing in New Zealand can be physically challenging, often involving periods of strenuous walking.

Fishing in New Zealand can be frustrating as you pit yourself against cunning wily fish – especially the browns. Those big trout did not get to be big by being stupid. Local anglers have often spent many hours in a trial and error process learning to successfully fish their local waters. If you really want to catch trout, then employing the services of a guide who can provide local knowledge and experience is highly recommended. But once you know how, where and when to fish, there can be no better place than New Zealand to be found anywhere to test your skills.

When to visit

Considerations

In deciding when to visit you may want to take the following into consideration:

- The main fishing season when most waters are open for fishing is from 1st October to 30 April (from spring through to autumn). Some areas in the North Island extend the season until the end of June. The best fishing tends to be either side of the hottest summer months which are January and February.
- Some South Island high country waters do not open until the first Saturday in November and a few as late as December.
- Some fishing is open in all regions all year
- During the winter months from May to September, the fishing around the central North Island and the Rotorua and Taupo regions in particular is at its best. The fishing in Northland is also best during the winter.
- The summer school holidays are busy with accommodation heavily booked
- The busiest time for international visitors is December–February (summer)

Key dates

The dates shown here are generalizations. Please check the regulations for the specific waters you plan to fish (see www.nzfishing.com)

Dates	Description
Fish & Game regions	
1 October-30 September	Annual Fish & Game licence period
1 October - 30 April	Open season for many fishing waters
First Saturday in November to the end of April	Open season for South Island high country waters
Taupo fishery	
July 1-30 June	Annual Taupo licence period
All year	Open season for Lake Taupo and many rivers.
1 Oct-31 May	Open season for specified Taupo fishery waters including Lake Otamangakau
1 December-31 May	Open season in the upper reaches of most rivers flowing into Lake Taupo and for the western tributaries of Lake Taupo.

How long to stay

For those who only have one day to those planning a trip of a year or longer, the range of fishing in New Zealand will provide plenty for everyone. Close to many towns and cities there is reasonable fishing though it is generally better to travel some distance into the country to experience the best of what New Zealand can offer. It is therefore recommended that visiting anglers spend at least one full week in New Zealand so that they can get onto some of those special rivers and lakes that offer the angler the chance to experience the true magic of Kiwi fishing. Travelling can be time consuming so if time is limited you are best to focus on fishing one or two areas rather than try to traverse the whole country.

If you have time to explore, then this is country where you can experience fishing a pristine mountain stream with only native birds as company; catch a large feisty brown trout cruising a lake shoreline or a stocky acrobatic rainbow which explodes out of a deep forest pool to take a well presented dry fly. Take the time and find your own piece of magic.

Where to fish

With its abundance of trout fishing and salmon fishing waters, New Zealand is a fishing paradise. From small crystal-clear spring-fed creeks holding huge numbers of wily fish to large wilderness waters where fishing is only part of the adventure, the variety of fishing in New Zealand is huge. It is true to say that as New Zealand has over 2000 fishing waters stretching from the Waipawa in Northland to the Maitai in Southland, there is a huge variety of water to discover.

But with the huge diversity of waters available that number in the thousands, finding the right river or lake can be a daunting task. A river may look good on a map but turn out to be a poor fishery. Yet this same river may have fantastic tributaries and have great fishing in the middle or upper reaches. And a river that may fish well during the early season may not be a good fishery during the summer.

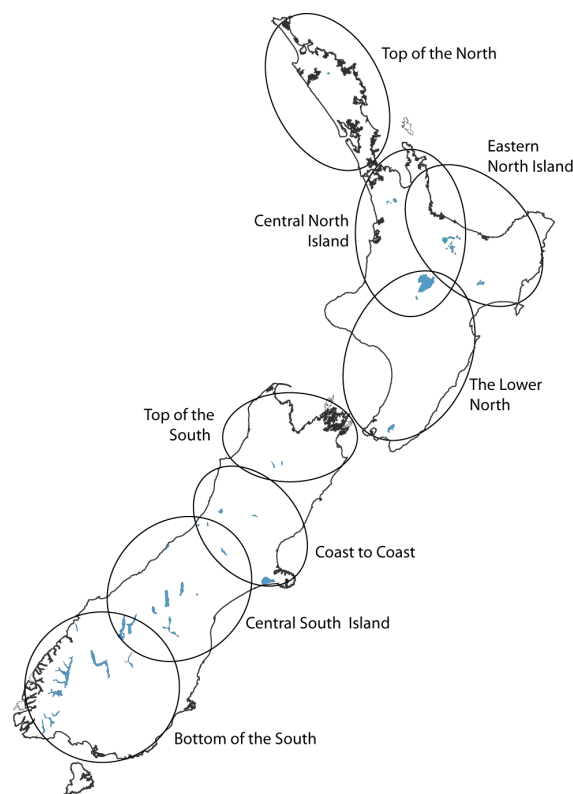
Winter fishing

The central and eastern areas of the North Island offer the best and most popular winter fisheries at Lake Taupo and its inflowing and some of the Rotorua lakes.

The warmer climate of Northland means that a number of waters fish particularly well in the cooler months and for those who enjoy lake fishing, the Kai Iwi lakes are hard to beat.

Spinning

Most spin fishing is done in the lower reaches of the rivers (which are often open all year) where there is usually a little colour in the water. When the whitebait are running in the lower reaches from September to December, spin fishing can be a very productive method in the tidal and lower reaches of many of the larger rivers.



The Top of the North Island

Northland is better known for the superb salt water and big game fishing. There are a number of great waters that fish particularly well in the cooler months however and for those who enjoy lake fishing, the Kai Iwi lakes are hard to beat.

The Central North Island

The Central North Island is primarily a rainbow fishery and dominated by New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo. This lake and its large tributaries are rightly famous as one of the world's premier fisheries attracting thousands of visitors who target the huge numbers of large fish. Yet there are also a number of other wonderful fisheries in the area, many of them that seldom see an angler.

These include crystal clear spring creeks where up to 900 fish per kilometre have been counted; large rocky rivers where fish regularly reach 10lbs or more and a huge number of smaller rain-fed rivers and streams which hold impressive numbers of feisty rainbow trout.

The central North Island was the area chosen for the 2008 World Fly Fishing Championships.

Fish the central North Island if you want...

- Great rainbow trout fishing on beautiful easy access rivers, streams and lakes
- Fishing for huge numbers of fish on small spring creeks
- The best winter fishing when fish leave Lake Taupo for the spawning runs up the tributaries. (The town of Turangi is the self-proclaimed trout fishing capital of the world.)
- Remote fishing on lakes or rivers close to main centres

The Eastern North Island

This huge fishing region has an abundance of waters to fish. From the many and diverse lakes of the Rotorua district through to the fabulous rivers and lakes of the remote and mysterious Te Urewera National Park with its pristine forests, to the man made hydro lakes along the upper Waikato River, this is an anglers dream. With a mixture of brown and rainbow trout, many rivers and lakes can be regarded as trophy waters producing fish over the magic 10lb (4.5kg) mark.

A number of rivers reach very large sizes by New Zealand standards and it is their tributaries and headwaters that offer the best fishing.

Fish the eastern North Island if you want...

- Some remote backcountry and wilderness fishing for trophy sized rainbow trout
- Lakes that fish well all year including Lake Rotoiti which consistently produces trophy sized fish
- To experience the madness of opening day (October 1) on the Ohau Chanel where anglers arrive before 5am to claim their spot and where huge fish are regularly caught
- To fish the Ngongotaha Stream that one angler from the World Fly Fishing Competition claimed was 20 % water and 80% fish

The Lower North Island

The Lower North Island has some of New Zealand's most under fished waters. Many large rivers and tributaries offer hundreds of kilometres of top quality fishing waters. Rivers are mostly rain fed and rise in the hill country and often flow for over 100 kms before entering the sea. Most provide their best fishing in the middle and upper reaches and in their many tributaries.

There are the large remote rivers of the Hawkes Bay plus many smaller waters where your only companions are large fish and the wonderful birdlife. And as well as a number of highly productive easily accessed rivers, it also includes the Hutt River and a number of wilderness streams that are only a short drive from Wellington City.

Fish lower North Island if you want to...

- Fish some of the largest and under-fished waters in the country
- Fish on wilderness rivers and streams less than an hours drive from the capital city, Wellington
- Target huge trout in the headwaters of the pristine Rangitikei headwaters
- Experience the wonderful dry fly fishing on a warm summers evening on the Manawatu or Ruamahanga (or any other river in the area).

The Top of the South Island

Many anglers regard the top of the South Island as having the best brown trout fishing in the world. You'll find staggeringly beautiful remote mountain streams where fish average 3kgs or an easily accessed and crystal-clear river where the numbers of fish are around 350 per kilometre. The waters vary from small dry fly streams meandering over open land through to large boisterous mountain rivers and deep mysterious mountain lakes.

Fish the top of the South Island if you want...

- To experience the best brown trout fishing anywhere
- To be frustrated by seeing the huge trout that can average over 3kgs on some rivers and yet fail to entice them
- To fish in some of the most beautiful areas of New Zealand where three national parks have many kilometres of remote but accessible wilderness fishing
- The serenity and beauty of the Nelson Lakes with their stunningly beautiful feeder streams and rivers draining the surrounding mountain ranges

Coast-to-Coast

From east to west the landscape moves from the braided rivers of the Canterbury plains, to magnificent remote lakes and tarns and pristine mountain streams, across to the rugged and wildly beautiful landscape of the West Coast where trout are many and anglers few.

Fish this part of the South Island if you want...

- New Zealand's best salmon fishing on some of the East Coast braided rivers
- To fish the remote headwaters of rivers of the great stations such as Molesworth, Ryton and Mesopotamia
- To fish small tributaries of large rivers which hold huge fish
- To fish the wonderful Lake Brunner for its large population of wild brown trout
- To fish to large fish in the solitude only found in mountains

The Central South Island

The central South Island offers fantastic fishing amidst stunning scenery in a hugely diverse region. Set against the stunning Southern Alps, are small mountain lakes or tarns, huge rivers that flow through primeval forest clad mountain forests and small sedate spring creeks where huge fish can be observed in crystal clear water.

Fish the central South Island if you want...

- Fishing amidst stunning scenery with the Southern Alps as your backdrop
- Fishing under the big sky country of the MacKenzie Basin where rivers flow through desolately beautiful tussock country
- Fishing the remote headwaters of rivers that flow through ancient beech forested mountain valleys with only birds as company
- The serene majesty of the rivers such as the Taieri that meander over the Maniototo
- The wonderful Deans bank on the upper Clutha said to have the highest number of fish for volume of water in the country
- To experience night fishing on the Clutha

The Bottom of the South Island

From deep glacial formed lakes feed by rivers that flow through ancient rainforest clad valleys to rivers that drain huge areas of lowlands, the lower South Island has a myriad of fishing opportunities from stalking large trout in a pristine mountain stream headwaters to fishing the hundreds of kilometres of world-famous dry fly rivers that flow over open farmland, the choice is yours.

Fish the bottom of the South Island if you want...

- Great wilderness fishing around the untamed and remote Fiordland National Park
- Some of the best brown trout fishing anywhere to be found on the well stocked Mataura River. The Mataura runs through the town of Gore which has christened itself the "brown trout capital of the world"
- The challenge of the large brown trout that inhabit the upper reaches of the Oreti
- To fish amidst the natural beauty of the deep lakes such as Te Anau and Manapouri.
- To fish on rivers running through ancient forest valleys amongst breathtaking scenery against a backdrop of high snow covered mountains

For more information

For detailed information about fishing in different parts of the country , see the nzfishing.com website and its series of online travel guides.

The seasons

While mostly mild, New Zealand weather can be very changeable. Cold fronts and rain can move onto the country quickly and so visitors should be prepared for sudden changes in conditions and temperature when out on the water.

Spring

Spring months are September, October and November. New Zealand's spring weather can be very changeable with there being cool frosty mornings followed by warm days. Rainfall is reasonably high and it can be quite windy. This is also the time when melting snow in the mountain areas can raise river levels and make the water from mountain streams quite discoloured with silt. Fish are generally actively feeding during these months to put weight on after the cooler winter months and from spawning. As the days warm through October and November the fishing generally improves markedly with some anglers regarding November as the top fishing month of the year. This is also the time that the small whitebait swarm into the rivers from the sea attracting the large fish to move into the estuarine areas to gorge on them.

Summer

New Zealand's summer months are December, January and, February. Temperatures are highest during these months and daylight hours longest. From mid January the weather is often very settled with rainfall at its lowest. Rivers and lake levels can drop as summer progresses and during the hottest weather, fish will often go deep in pools or take shelter under overhanging vegetation. Insect life is prolific and at change of light fish will often rise to feed on the myriad of insects on the water.

Autumn

New Zealand's autumn months are March, April and May. Temperatures are cooler than summer but the weather tends to be settled. The days are generally still warm and fish are actively feeding to put on condition prior to the winter spawning season. Fish will often rise throughout the day and can feed aggressively. Evenings can become cool and the evening rises seen in the summer months decline markedly as the season progresses.

Winter

New Zealand's winter months are June, July and August. These are the coldest and wettest months of the year. Mountain ranges in both islands become snow-covered and snow can lower to sea level at times in the central and lower South Island. These are the spawning months for trout and so many rivers are closed to allow the fish to regenerate undisturbed. There is very good fishing around the lower reaches of some rivers and in the lakes and rivers of the central North Island.

The fishing year

Fishing conditions vary in different parts of the country, but the following is a brief guide as to what to expect at different times.

October

October 1st is known as the beginning of the fishing season as it is when most waters reopen for trout and salmon fishing. In October the weather can still be cool, particularly in the evenings and nights. Fish are starting to become more active however and are beginning to feed voraciously as they attempt to put on weight after the winter months. Rivers may be high at this time and spin fishing is often the best method. If using flies it is best to try larger sizes at this time of the year. There can be good fishing around river mouths and estuaries as fish move downstream to feed on the small migrating whitebait that enter the rivers in large shoals to spawn.

November

November sees the beginning of the warmer weather and insect life proliferates with a corresponding increase in feeding activity by the fish. This month can see some great rises throughout the day and particularly on warm evenings as trout seem ready to grab at anything that resembles a food source. The waters of the South Island High Country open for the new season this month. Fishing around the river mouths and estuaries is at its peak.

December

December has the longest day and longest twilight hours. Fish may go deeper during the hot and brightest times of the day but emerge when the cooler evenings come. Mornings and evenings are often best times to ensure success. This is the time for smaller flies and a more stealthy approach as the water tends to be clearer and with the abundant insect life around the fish can afford to be choosy.

January

January is a hot month and the main holiday time for New Zealanders. During the hottest parts of the days, fish will often retreat to deep water or under vegetation such as overhanging trees. They can be hard to catch during the day but feed voraciously as the evening approaches. Small flies and lures are generally recommended. A spinner flick under overhanging vegetation can often lure a rainbow trout to grab at it.

February

February is also a hot month and often provides deep blue cloudless skies and settled weather. As with January, trout tend to be less active during hot bright days but will make up for this as the sun starts to do down, giving the angler several hours of great fishing before dark. This is a great time with the dry fly as trout feed on the large terrestrial insects that fall on the water especially early morning and evenings into dark. This is also a good time to target areas where small streams enter lakes or larger rivers as trout will often settle in this sections to take advantage of the cooler water.

March

March is a great fishing month. The weather is cooling down and is generally very settled. The trout are starting to get ready for the leaner winter months and will feed throughout the day. Another great dry fly month but any method will work well on the feeding fish as they try to gain weight prior to the winter spawning season. Fish start to move to the spawning streams from lakes and larger waters.

April

April sees the beginning of the cool autumnal weather and fishing can be great throughout the day. With the sun being lower in the horizon, fish are less wary of being out in the open water even during sunny days. Lake fishing starts to pick up, especially around river mouths as fish begin to move in from the deeper water in preparation for spawning. The weather tends to be settled providing excellent fishing conditions. April 30th sees the end of the fishing season for many waters.

May

May sees the start of the cold season with many rivers and lakes closed to anglers. Throughout the country however there are many places that remain open. Trout in New Zealand spawn during the winter months and this is the beginning of the large runs of fish up the rivers to spawn. To many anglers this is the beginning of the prime fishing time as large fish are targeted as they enter the rivers from the lakes particularly around the central North Island lakes such as Taupo. Lakes can provide very good fishing at this time as well.

June

June can be cold and wet, but after a good fall of rain trout tend to enter the spawning rivers in large numbers. On some of the large rivers in the central North Island, anglers line the pools and can catch good numbers of fish as they move upstream to the spawning beds. Good fishing can also be had when fishing the lakes especially where any river or stream enter the lake.

July

July is one of the coldest months with limited fishing in the south of the country but excellent fishing in and around the lakes in the central North Island. As in previous months, fish move up the rivers to spawn after a good fresh (fall of rain) and the lakes themselves offer excellent fishing for the shoreline angler and those in boats. The season for Taupo opens July 1st requiring a new licence from this date when fishing this region.

August

August sees the first warming of the weather though as with previous months, fishing is restricted to a number of rivers and lakes. The same methods apply as for the previous months. Fishing around the rivers entering Lake Taupo is at its peak.

September

September is warmer with many clear calm days though still provides challenging fishing conditions. The large spawning runs are still continuing (especially in Taupo) and there is still very good boat and shoreline fishing on the lakes. As trout finish spawning and return to the lakes they are often "spent" and in poor condition. They are also very hungry and easy to catch however.

3. Getting Here / Getting Around

Getting to New Zealand

Most people arrive in New Zealand by air though an increasing number of cruise ships are visiting New Zealand during the summer months. Most international flights arrive at Auckland or Christchurch International Airports though you can also fly direct to Dunedin from Sydney and Brisbane and from Sydney to Queenstown.

Entry requirements

Visitors from a number of countries do not need a visa to enter New Zealand if visiting for less than three months. To check, visit the Immigration New Zealand website at www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/visit/.

All visitors are required to provide travel tickets or evidence of onward travel arrangements, and evidence of sufficient funds to support yourself during your visit (and of course your passport).

Customs and duty-free

New Zealand's liberal duty-free policies allow visitors to bring in 200 cigarettes (or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco) plus 4.5 litres of wine or beer plus a 1 litre bottle of spirits. If you do not bring in any other alcohol or any tobacco you are allowed a total of three separate litre bottles of spirits such as whisky or brandy. (You are also allowed to bring in \$700 of items free of duty. Personal effects such as fishing gear that you will be using while in NZ do not count towards this allowance).

One of the best places to buy duty free alcohol and tobacco is at the international airport as you arrive in New Zealand. Not only are prices cheaper in New Zealand than in a lot of overseas duty-free stores it also avoids the problem of having to struggle on to a crowded aircraft with your purchases and then trying to find a place to put them on the journey.

Items to declare

Be very careful about trying to bring into New Zealand any item that it could be deemed a threat to New Zealand's biosecurity. Prohibitions include fresh produce (e.g. fruit, vegetables and other unprocessed foods), seeds, animal products including fur and feathers, so be sure to declare these if you're carrying fly tying materials. Failure to do so can result in a lengthy delay for your holiday and a considerable fine. It pays to be very careful as New Zealand Customs are very vigilant in this area. Note that felt soled boots are now banned from use when fishing.

Getting around New Zealand

Between main centres you can travel by air, bus or, in some cases, train. Otherwise, New Zealand is not well served by public transport. Taxis and airport shuttles will transport you to accommodation within towns and cities. But it is often difficult or even impossible to get to your desired fishing destination via public transport. It is therefore best to either hire a guide who will transport you to the best fishing spots, or to hire a car or campervan and drive yourself.



Domestic air travel

Air New Zealand is the principal domestic airline and is the only airline flying between some provincial centres. Qantas and Pacific Blue fly some major domestic routes. The House of Travel website enables you find and compare flights of all airlines.

Public transport

- Two Inter-island ferry lines, Interislander and BlueBridge, sail between Wellington in the North Island and Picton in the South Island, taking vehicles and foot passengers.
- The most extensive national bus networks are run by Intercity Coachlines and Newmans.
- Rail New Zealand offers three long-distance rail routes: Auckland to Wellington, Picton to Christchurch, and Christchurch to Greymouth.

Helicopter charters

An alternative means of transport to your accommodation or fishing spot is to charter a helicopter.

Boat charters

On lakes such as Taupo, Wakitipu, Wanaka and Manapouri, boats can be chartered to take you fishing or hired as water taxis to transport you to remote locations.

By road

Although by European, Asian and North American standards, New Zealand is a sparsely populated country, it is well served by a well maintained network of roads. Visitors can drive between main centres with ease and the provision of well-marked passing lanes on single lane roads make overtaking slower traffic safe and easy.

Minor roads may be narrower than you are used to and one-way bridges are relatively common, while many of the rural roads leading to fishing access points are unsealed gravel roads. Care and a slow speed is required while driving on them.

Hiring a vehicle

Car hire

A car will get you to all the main centres and to much of the fishing and is ideal for those intending to stay in lodges, motels or bed & breakfasts. Once you've reached your accommodation you can unload the car and then use it to move around exploring the fishing in the area. For most New Zealand roads, a normal car is adequate but a four wheel drive (4WD vehicle) is needed in more remote regions where roads are not in good repair and for off-road driving. The terms and conditions of car hire usually restrict their use to sealed or well-maintained roads.

The major car hire firms can be found at airports though it is wise to book your vehicle prior to arrival. Popular models can become in short supply, especially during the peak holiday months. And it is advisable to book from a reputable established company such as Maui, Britz or Backpacker which have a good support network throughout the country to provide assistance if required.

4 wheel drive rental

A 4 wheel drive vehicle is recommended for accessing the more remote fishing that requires driving over rough gravel roads and tracks. The Adventurer 4 wheel drive (from Britz Rentals) allows you to access some of the most remote fishing areas as well as providing you with a mobile accommodation, so you can stay on the river or lake and experience the best of the evening fishing. These vehicles are very well set up with everything the angler needs (except your tackle, food etc), are modern, well serviced and reliable.

Campervans / Motorhomes

Campervans provide you with a good standard of comfort and accommodation in most areas where you are wishing to fish. Their disadvantage is that should you wish to travel to a river even a short distance away from where you are staying it means taking the van with you. We recommend Maui motorhomes, and Britz or Backpacker campervans. These three cover a range of pricing options from luxury to budget.

Drivers licences

You can legally drive in New Zealand for up to 12 months if you have either a current driver's licence from your home country or an International Driving Permit (IDP). After 12 months you are required to convert to a New Zealand licence. This applies to each visit to New Zealand.

In New Zealand all drivers, including visitors from other countries, must carry their licence or permit at all times when driving. You can drive only the same types of vehicles you are licensed to drive in your home country. The usual age requirement for renting a car in New Zealand is 21 years but several companies hire to 18 year olds with a clean full licence.

Special road rules

The LTSA website has an overview of New Zealand road rules for visitors in several languages, which is essential reading. In addition, we advise all visitors to study the New Zealand road code prior to arriving. As well as being available on the LTSA website and public libraries, copies of the road code can be purchased from most bookshops.

The following are some of the major important points that drivers should be aware of.

- New Zealanders drive on the left-hand side of the road.
- All occupants within a vehicle must wear a safety belt while the vehicle is moving.
- Signs along the roads use the standard international symbols and all distances are measured in kilometres (km).
- The standard speed limits are 100km/h on the open road and 50km/h in urban areas, though special speed restrictions are often marked in different areas. New Zealand has a vigilant speed enforcement system complete with speed cameras. Be warned. Fines can ruin a holiday.
- At some intersections, despite a green traffic light, turning vehicles must give way to pedestrians
- At uncontrolled intersections (intersections that do not have GIVE WAY or STOP signs or traffic lights with arrows to govern turning) the general rules are:
 - If you're turning, give way to all vehicles that are not turning
 - In all other situations, give way to vehicles crossing or coming from your right
(This "right-hand rule" can be confusing and needs to be clearly understood).
- When turning right on rural roads, unless a centre turning lane is marked, pull over onto the left shoulder and wait until it the road is clear in both directions before turning right.

Filling up the tank

New Zealand is well served by a good network of petrol stations (often known as service stations) selling both diesel and high and low octane petrol. When traveling into more remote areas it is strongly advised to fill the tank prior to leaving. It can be a long walk back to get more gas for your vehicle.

4. Making the Most of your Time

It is often said that one of the most enjoyable parts of a holiday is in the anticipation; and this is particularly true for anyone planning an angling adventure to an area they have not previously fished. The thrill at the prospect of exploring new waters and the challenge of pitting ones skills against an unknown adversary are emotions experienced by most anglers prior to setting out to conquer a new region. Yet the very aspects that make the idea of the fishing adventure so appealing while planning can also be what can make the reality disappointing. An angler may know that a region offers the possibility of fantastic fishing but on arrival they can be faced with a bewildering array of unknowns. What worked well on their home waters is often unsuited to their destination.

New Zealand has a deserved reputation as an angling paradise. Zane Grey the American author called it the "angler's eldorado" when he visited in the 1920's. So what does an angler, who has paid a small fortune to travel half way round the world to fish New Zealand waters, need to do to maximise their chances of success? Because lets face it, the angling tourist rarely has the luxury of spending endless hours discovering the nuances of any water. Time is one thing that will usually be in very short supply.

For those coming to New Zealand to fish for the first time and for those wishing to explore new regions, planning is very important to ensure your limited time is used as best as you can. When faced with unfamiliar territory, a look at a map can be daunting. Which rivers and lakes fish well and which don't; where is the best place to gain access to the best areas and how should each water be fished are all questions needing to be asked to ensure time is not wasted. Many rivers that do not fish well for a variety of reasons often have fantastic sections in their headwaters and a number of tributaries offering superb fishing.

Our recommendations

- Plan your itinerary and book ahead of time
- Stay in accommodation close to the fishing
- Use a guide to make the most of a short time and avoid disappointment
- Visit local tackle shops for current local knowledge and tackle
- Go along to a local fishing club meeting if you can
- Keep yourself safe

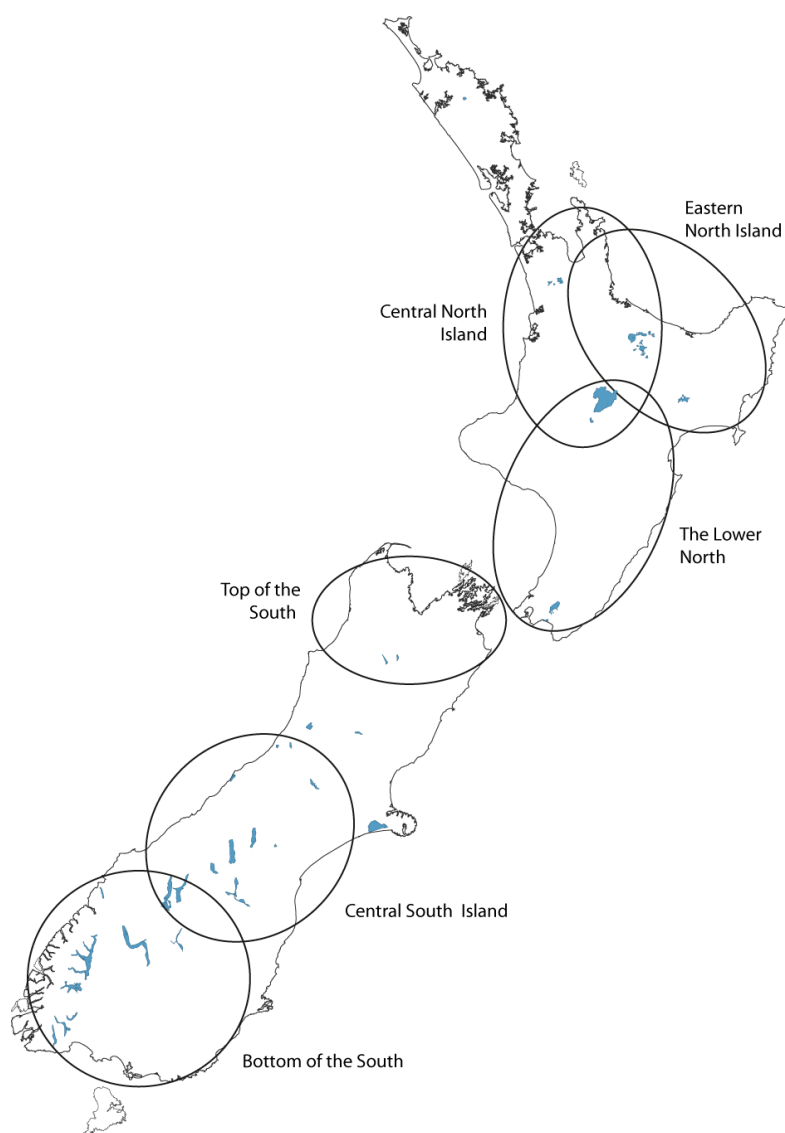
Plan your itinerary

We recommend using the website, www.nzfishing.com to help with planning all aspects of your trip. The site is a comprehensive guide to fly fishing in New Zealand with detailed lake and river info, maps and photos plus links to accommodation, fly fishing guides and tackle shops. And while it may not be possible to always consult the internet when travelling, nzfishing.com also offers publications that you can print and carry with you.

nzfishing travel guides

nzfishing.com travel guides detail the best places to fish in each of the areas shown below. You can purchase and print one or more guides online, and use them to easily plan your travel and maximise your fishing. The travel guides cover the major fishing rivers and lakes and include a suggested itinerary. They are around 40 pages in length and cover:

- Recommended waters to fish
- Travel plans with a map, travel times, distances and points of interest en route
- Where to stay, where to eat, drink and even have your catch cooked
- Local fishing guides



Stay close to the fishing

Time spent traveling is time spent not fishing. Choosing accommodation that is close to the water and particularly if it caters specially for the angler will add greatly to your fishing experience and enjoyment. There is nothing better than to be able to pick up your fishing rod, stroll to the river and have an hour or two fishing before returning for a hearty breakfast; or to catch the evening rise just before or after dinner.

Your hosts are also likely to know a lot about the fishing in the local area. If they have fished the waters themselves, they will know what works and what doesn't and what the trout are likely to be feeding on. If you are very lucky (and very nice) they may also reveal the location of those "secret places" that only an overseas visitor can safely be told about.

And by staying in a small lodge, farm stay or bed and breakfast you will experience the New Zealand way of life. You will stay with Kiwis (the colloquial name for all New Zealanders), make friendships, eat local produce and gain a richer appreciation of the local way of life. What is more, it is likely to be much cheaper than accommodation you will find in a town or city.

We therefore strongly recommend that you choose accommodation that is listed on www.nzfishing.com or in the nzfishing.com itinerary e-books (listed at the end of this book) as these have been chosen because they meet the needs of the visiting angler.

Use a fishing guide

One of the first steps towards success in fishing new waters is knowledge. Most of us gain the knowledge we have of the waters we fish through trial, error and experimentation over time. A visiting angler seldom has this luxury of time to explore and experiment however. Consequently, one of the best ways to ensure you maximise your chances of success and enjoyment is to employ the skills of a local guide who will take you to the best fishing in the region as well as outlining the best methods to use.

Professional fishing guides are glad to impart the knowledge they have gleaned over many years of fishing. Let them know that you are wishing to learn the local techniques suitable for the waters in the area and they will be glad to oblige. Ask the guide to show you different methods and above all else, question, question, question. All the guides listed on nzfishing.com or in the nzfishing.com itineraries have three things in common, they are passionate about fishing, they know where and how to catch fish and they love sharing their knowledge and skills.

Visit tackle shops

As well as supplying fishing gear and licences, sports and specialist tackle shops are often another good source of advice and information about local conditions. But if there is a queue of customers, the time the staff can spend with you may be limited.

Go along to a local fishing club

A way to meet local anglers is to contact the fishing club in the area you are planning to fish. These are listed on www.nzfishing.com and will usually welcome visiting anglers to meetings and be only too happy to impart some local knowledge. This is often a good way to find someone who is prepared to go fishing with you – local knowledge for the price of a beer at the end of the day, a bargain in anyone's language.

Keep yourself safe

There is no doubt that generally New Zealand is a very safe country. But it is still important that sensible precautions are taken to ensure an accident, theft or assault does not spoil your angling adventure.

Driving

Driving is on the left hand side of the road.

In the major cities traffic can be as congested and frustrating as anywhere else in the world.

On single-lane highways between towns and cities, be patient and don't take risks overtaking – instead wait and use the passing lanes that are provided at intervals on most main roads.

When you're traveling on more isolated rural roads, take it slowly and carefully. Narrow windy roads, one-way bridges and sometimes minimal markings can be quite nerve racking especially when you're used to driving on the right-hand side. For those unfamiliar with driving on the left-hand side, always remember the rule – make sure that when you are the driver, your bum should be closest to the centre of the road. By keeping this simple rule in mind, you can drive confidently and easily negotiate intersections even when the road markings are nonexistent.

Personal safety

Even in the most remote areas of New Zealand there are no dangerous animals or insects (New Zealand only has one poisonous spider which is very rarely found). However, New Zealand does have areas of poverty, problems with drugs and alcohol, and gangs practising organized crime. Consequently, don't flaunt valuables or cash, do lock vehicles and rooms, be sensibly vigilant and take normal precautions to ensure your personal safety, especially late at night in city centres.

Your belongings

Parking in remote areas is usually fine though in some areas, if you are going to be absent from your vehicle for any length of time it can be at risk. Some tourist area car parks are particularly prone to theft from vehicles. Areas where vehicle are left while visitors go tramping, hunting or fishing can also become a target for thieves and care should be taken to minimize your risks. Belongings such as cameras and other valuables left in vehicles should be hidden from view to minimize temptation. Taking out good insurance is highly recommended prior to your travelling.

Sleeping

Booking ahead

It is essential to book ahead to ensure you get the accommodation you want. This is particularly true of the months from December to March when accommodation can be at a premium. But even in the quieter months, you should book early to avoid disappointment.

Qualmark ratings

Qualmark is New Zealand tourism's official mark of quality and is a partnership between Tourism New Zealand and New Zealand Automobile Association. The Qualmark system independently assesses and awards star gradings to accommodation, visitor activities, transport and services. Accommodation ratings are given in categories including Exclusive, Guest and hosted, Self-contained and Serviced, Holiday Park and Holiday Home and Backpacker. Qualmark ratings range from one star (acceptable) to five star (exceptional).

Accommodation options

New Zealand is well served with a range of accommodation options. The following are the categories used by www.nzfishing.com.

Fishing lodges

Located in some of the best fishing areas of New Zealand are a number of exclusive fishing lodges. These high-end fishing lodges are dedicated to the needs of the visiting angler with luxury accommodation, resident guides, gourmet meals and a well stocked wine cellar and bar. They also cater for the non-fishing partner.

The term fishing lodge is by no means reserved for exclusive accommodation, but always denotes a location near fishing waters and hosts with an interest in visiting anglers.

Hotels

Hotels in New Zealand range from basic to luxurious with a choice of characterful local pubs with (sometimes dated) accommodation, standard chain hotels as found around the world, and small boutique hotels.

Motels

Motels are found in practically every town and are probably the most common type of accommodation available. They provide self-contained accommodation for the traveller and generally represent good value. The quality and style vary from the tired and dated to contemporary up-market.

Bed and breakfasts (B&B)

Throughout New Zealand there is a large range of bed and breakfast accommodation. A B&B provides a bedroom (usually with ensuite) in someone's home as well as a breakfast in the morning. Dinner is sometimes also on offer if booked in advance. Staying in bed and breakfast accommodation is a great way to meet New Zealanders.

Homestays and farmstays

Homestays (in a town) or farmstays (on a farm) offer accommodation and meals in a New Zealand home. Choosing a farmstay is a great way to observe rural New Zealand life and as many farms also have rivers, you can often experience wonderful fishing on sections of water that can only be accessed across the farm.

Backpackers and hostels

To cater for the growing number of budget travelers (usually young), most major holiday areas have cheap accommodation generally with dormitory-style sleeping arrangements. This is generally quite basic and you will be sharing bathroom and kitchen facilities with others.

Cottages, baches and cribs

Many New Zealand families have a basic holiday cottage, often in a wonderful location, which they let out during the times that the family does not want to use it. In the North island these small basic cottages are called a "bach" (pronounced batch) and in a South Island they are often called a "crib". These self-catering cottages are great for groups of anglers especially if they are wanting to stay within a particular area for a length of time as they are often only rented out by the week or longer.

Holiday homes, holiday houses

Holiday homes or holiday houses range from very modest houses to luxury homes and are also let out by the families that own them when not in use.

Campervans

A growing trend has been to use campervans or motorhomes while exploring New Zealand's fishing waters. They range from two-berth to six berth motorhomes through to spacious four-wheel drive vehicles that come with all the camping equipment required (one such vehicle, the Adventurer, has a tent that is pitched on the roof of the vehicle). Camping grounds and holiday parks around the country are well set up to accommodate the needs of campervans.

Holiday parks

Holiday parks can be found in a range of locations and offer camp sites through to park motels. They typically provide services for motorhomes and campervans and facilities for family activities and entertainment.

Camping grounds and cabins

New Zealand prides itself on being an outdoor nation and consequently has an extensive range of camping sites. Some in the most remote areas are very basic providing little more than a flat space, a cold water tap and a "long-drop" (i.e. a non-flushing toilet). Most camping grounds however have good shared kitchen and bathroom facilities, sites for tents, caravans and campervans, as well as cabins (a small room with beds) and/or motel units (usually self-contained with a small kitchen and own bathroom). Camping grounds are great for those who love camping and / or are travelling on a budget.

DOC huts

The Department of Conservation has several hundred basic huts throughout the backcountry and wilderness regions of New Zealand. These are very cheap (often only \$10 per night per person) and are often located near the very best back country fishing waters. They are very basic and the visitor needs to provide all their bedding and cooking equipment. During the height of the season (mid December through to the end of April), the huts can become quite full and it is wise when visiting remote areas that you carry an alternative form of shelter i.e. a tent. The Department of Conservation website has full details.

Eating and drinking

The quality and variety of cafes, restaurants and fast-food outlets in New Zealand, particularly in the major centres, is excellent. However in some more isolated areas the hours they are open can be limited.

For those interested in self catering, most towns of any size have at least one supermarket and you can find small grocery outlets in a most small towns and villages. Petrol stations also often have a limited stock of food items.

Eating trout

It is strictly illegal to sell trout or wild salmon in New Zealand, though farmed salmon is readily available. So for a taste of New Zealand trout you will need to catch it. Some cafes and restaurants will "cook your catch" if given enough notice and are presented with a cleaned fish.

Cafes

Excellent coffee is available at cafes almost anywhere. A list of recommended cafes is included on nzfishing.com and in the nzfishing.com travel itineraries. These are also good places to get a packed lunch for the day out on the river. If you take a thermos in to some places, they will be happy to provide you with good hot coffee and/or tea to take away.

Restaurants

Restaurants can be found around the country. Many are licensed though some are known as BYO or Bring Your Own. This means that if you want to drink alcohol with a meal you should buy it elsewhere and bring it with you to the restaurant. There is often a small corkage fee to cover the cost of the use of the glasses etc. Note that some restaurants are closed on Mondays.

Take-aways

Possibly the most common type of food outlet around the country is the take-away. From the usual McDonald's or Burger King hamburger restaurant, through to the small Chinese take-away, the fish and chip shop and the pizzeria, there is usually something available in most towns. Again, small town eateries may not remain open late and trying to find something to eat after fishing the evening rise may see anglers go hungry.

Self catering

In remote areas there is unlikely to be a restaurant or even a take-away so buying and cooking for your self may be the order of the day. There are supermarkets in almost all towns and even the smallest town usually has a 7-day dairy or a petrol station with a small range of basic groceries. Most accommodation will also provide meals though you should check and make arrangements in advance.

Wine, spirits and beer

Most supermarkets sell wine and beer though you have to go to a dedicated liquor store if you wish to purchase spirits or fortified wine such as sherry or port. Even quite small grocery outlets often have a limited range of wine and beer available though usually at a higher price than larger outlets.

New Zealand has a growing reputation for producing excellent wines, especially Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Pinot Noir. Dotted around the country are many micro breweries that are also producing a range of exotic beers that are perfect as an end of day lubricant for when the stories flow.

5. Fishing Tackle, Clothing and Equipment

What to bring

Waders

During the summer it is common on many waters to wade wet. i.e. without waders, but this is purely a personal preference. If waders are being used, Gore-Tex style waders are best during the warmer months as the neoprene type can get very hot when moving around. In the winter months, particularly if fishing around the Taupo region, either type of wader is fine as long as you also have plenty of warm clothing as well. When fishing small streams, often a pair of thigh waders is all that is required.

Clothing

Many fish in shorts and t-shirts during the warmer summer months (but do have insect repellent as some areas have ferocious sand flies and mosquitoes). Keep colours muted as the water can be very clear and the trout's vision acute. During the cooler months, it is necessary to also carry warm clothing as it can get very cold in the mornings and evenings. And in winter it can be cold all day so dress appropriately.

Wet weather gear

New Zealand has a changeable climate and it is always advisable to carry some wet weather gear such as a waterproof jacket.

Footwear

If not wearing waders anglers will need sturdy footwear. Wading boots are ideal. Felt-soled boots are illegal to use when fishing in New Zealand (as of October 1st 2008).

Hats

A good hat with a peak is essential to ensure glare from the bright sun is kept to a minimum. A hat can also help avoid a painful fly in the ear or back of your neck on those days when fishing in a swirling wind or when you are casting a heavily weighted nymph.

Polarised glasses

Another essential item is polarized glasses which are not only better for your eyes when out on a bright day fishing but they will also take the glare of the water allowing good vision below the surface. They also provide good protection for your eyes from errant hooks when the wind is blowing.

Sunscreen and insect repellent

Always carry sunscreen and insect repellent.

Fishing tackle

There is no need to bring any fishing tackle to New Zealand as you can use the equipment supplied by guides or buy what you require here. Many anglers however wish to bring their favourite rods and lines.

Fly fishing

Rods

Rods around 9 feet in length and capable of casting lines in the weight range 5–7 will cover almost all the conditions required. Exceptions are when salmon fishing or fishing the winter spawning runs at Taupo when a heavier rod weight may be an advantage.

Reels and lines

It is recommended that a reel capable of holding the fly line plus around 100 metres of backing is used. The type of line depends on the angler's preference but any floating or intermediate lines are best in dull to neutral colours, especially if fishing backcountry rivers and streams.

Leaders and tippet

The length of leader required varies from water to water but 9–12 foot (2.5–3.5 metres) would be suitable for many waters while a much longer length of up to even 18-20 feet (5- 6 metres) may be necessary on some of the crystal clear back country waters.

Landing nets

Landing nets are always advisable as they are invaluable when landing fish in difficult situations as well as reducing the handling of the fish when catch and release is being practised. Nets that clip on the back of a fly vest are very popular though make sure they are big enough for the fish you are targeting.

Flies and lures

We recommend that you buy flies and lures once you get to New Zealand as this will avoid problems with disease and pest transfer. It is legal to bring tied flies into the country but be careful to declare any feathers or fur at customs on arrival. The type of fly is dependent on the fishing method, time of the year and location of the fishing water.

Spin fishing

Rods and reels

The type of rod required to spin fishing is to a large extent dependent on the type of fishing being carried out. However, for the average trout fishing a rolled off 6 to 7 feet with reel holding monofilament line of around six pounds (2.5 kg) breaking strain will suit most conditions. Most lures are in the seven to 10 g range though there has been a move to fish with ultra-light equipment over the past decade or so.

For those chasing salmon, rods of around 7 to 9 feet with reels holding around 200 m of 5 to 8 kg breaking strain monofilament are recommended. Salmon fishing lures are usually around the 28 g weight to allow for a good casting distance as well as being heavy enough to get down through the powerful currents.

Spinners

The spinners used in New Zealand are very similar to those found overseas. Just a note however that some regions do not allow more than a single hook on the spinner.

What else you'll need

Road map

When hiring a vehicle you will be given road maps which are suitable for travelling between main centres and the maps on nzfishing.com show access to fishing waters. But if you're traveling off the beaten track, a more detailed map of the area may be useful. Tourist information centres (i-sites), service stations, bookshops and AA offices all stock maps.

Topographical maps

If you're intending to tramp into more remote backcountry and wilderness fishing regions, it is recommended you obtain the relevant topographical map for the area. To find out which map is required, refer to the relevant rivers or lakes topic on nzfishing.com.

Fish and Game pamphlets

The statutory group responsible for all trout and salmon fishing in New Zealand, Fish and Game, also produce pamphlets about the major fishing waters around the country. Most of these also show maps and access points for the angler. If a Fish and Game pamphlet is available for a particular water it is referred to in the relevant section of nzfishing.com.

nzfishing.com itineraries

A range of fishing downloadable itineraries are available from nzfishing.com that give information, regulations and access maps to all the major lakes and rivers in a specified region. These are very useful when planning a trip around the country as they show roads, distances, travel times between waters as well as access points, places to camp or find accommodation and a guide to maximise your time on the water.

What to take home

The average New Zealander (or Kiwi as they are colloquially known) loves the outdoors. New Zealand companies design and develop excellent high-quality outdoor clothing and equipment. Any visiting angler will therefore find plenty of quality goods that they can take back to remind them of their fishing trip down under.

Some examples are:

NZ flies

While many flies are similar to those found overseas, some flies have been developed specifically for New Zealand. Perusing any tackle shops fly selection can be a good way to take back home an inexpensive memento of New Zealand. Many shops also have framed selections of flies that will look good in any fishing den.

Other fishing paraphernalia

In New Zealand you will find there is a range of fishing related products that are specific to New Zealand. These include such things as wooden fly boxes made with native timber and landing nets also made with a range of native timbers.

DVDs

There are now many DVDs about fishing in New Zealand that are available through most tackle shops. (Several can also be ordered direct through www.nzfishing.com)

Magazines

New Zealand's fly fishing magazines have very high quality photographs as well as stories about fishing throughout New Zealand. They are also available by subscription anywhere in the world.

Books

There are a range of books about fishing in New Zealand that range from glossy coffee table books with a number of beautiful photographs showcasing New Zealand's wonderful scenery from an angler's perspective through to the "where to go and how to fish it" type book.

Taxidermy

Should you catch that fish of a lifetime that you just have to keep, the only way to take it home is to have it stuffed by a taxidermist. There are several around the country and the difficulty of course will be getting your fish to them in a condition that they can work with.

Paintings

An alternative to having a fish mounted is to have its likeness painted. By taking a photograph when the fish is caught (preferably from several angles) and then sending this to a competent artist, you can have an enduring memento. This way you have a permanent memento of your trophy as well as still being able to release the fish for another angler to target (and have painted!)

Photographs

Probably the most important memento you can have however is the photographs that you and your companions take. Whenever you go fishing make sure you take a camera (preferably waterproof) as you are never sure as to what you will encounter that day.

6. Flyfishing Rules and Regulations

Fishing licences

Whether fishing independently or with a guide, you must have a licence to fish for trout, salmon and coarse fish in New Zealand and you must carry it with you at all times when fishing.

- A Fish & Game licence covers all of New Zealand except the Taupo fishery area
- An additional back-country licence is required for a few specified rivers.
- A licence issued by the Department of Conservation (DOC) is required for the Taupo area
- Those wishing to fish Lake Rotoaira near Taupo also need a special permit as this lake is on private Maori land.

These licences permit you to fish according to the current regulations for the region. The regional regulations define where, when and how you can fish specific waters. They also limit the number of fish you can take and the specify the minimum size of fish.

New Zealand Sports Fishing Regions

managed by Fish & Game New Zealand
(except Taupo which is managed by DOC)



Fish & Game fishing licences

A Fish & Game licence covers all of New Zealand except the Taupo fishery area. Note that non-residents of New Zealand will need a Non-residents licence. Some licence categories such as the Winter fishing licence are not available to non-residents. Non-resident is defined as "A person who is neither a New Zealand citizen nor a permanent resident" as defined in [section 4 of the Immigration Act 2009](#)

Fishing licence fees for the 2019 - 2020 season

Season

Whole season: 1 Oct to 30 Sept

Winter: 1 April to 30 Sept

Categories

Family: 2 adults and up to 4 juniors and/or children

Adult: 18+ years on 1/10/2019

Junior: 12-17 years on 1/10/2019

Child: Under 12 on 1/10/2019

Whole season licences

Family - NZ resident only: \$173

Adult - NZ resident: \$133

Adult - Non-resident (NRL): \$165

Junior - NZ resident and non-resident: \$27

Child - NZ resident and non-resident: Free

Local Area Licence

For NZ resident anglers who only wish to fish one region in New Zealand.

\$106

Loyal senior licence

For the long-time NZ anglers only over 65 who've held a licence for five consecutive years or more.

\$113

Short break licence

For NZ anglers only who want three consecutive days fishing (User selects the start time)

Adult \$48

Long break licence

For NZ anglers only who want to fish nine consecutive days such as two weekends and the days in between. (User selects the start time)

Adult \$93

One day licence

Adult: \$20 (NZ residents)

Junior: \$5

Child: Free

One day licence

Adult: \$34 (Non- residents)

Junior and child: \$20

Winter licence

(NZ residents only)

Adult \$80

Junior: \$15

Child: Free

Additional licences for specific waters

Backcountry licence: Free (see below)

Controlled-period licence: Free (see below)

Where to buy a Fish & Game licence

You can buy a Fish & Game licence:

- Online via the website www.fishandgame.org.nz or at any local Fish and Game office
- At most fishing and sports shops, some service stations, bookshops and general stores

Online licenses

1. If you are renewing your licence, have your existing licence handy.
2. Go to www.fishandgame.org.nz
3. Click the red and orange button, and enter your details.
4. Pay by credit card.

Your licence will be posted to you anywhere in New Zealand within 3 days but you can use it immediately (provided the season has started).

Back-country licences

Because of high use, a back country licence, at no extra cost, must also be obtained from Fish & Game for some waters. The following waters require a back-country licence:

- Caples River (Otago)
- Greenstone River (a controlled fishery licence is also needed) (Otago)
- Dingle Burn catchment (Otago)
- Upper Lochy catchment (Otago)
- Rangitikei River headwaters (Wellington)

Taupo fishing licenses

The Taupo fishery area is managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) and a special licence is required to fish in the Taupo region. They are available from the Department of Conservation website, www.doc.govt.nz, and from licence agents in many North Island New Zealand towns and cities (see www.doc.govt.nz for a list of agents). To fish Lake Rotoaira you need a special permit as well as the Taupo licence.

Taupo fishing licence fees for the 2019 - 2020 season

- **24 hour (day) licences** for both NZ residents and International anglers:
 - NZ\$20 for and adult and
 - NZ\$4.50 for a child (under 16 or still attending school as of July 1)
- **Weekly licences**
 - NZ\$42 for a NZ adult and
 - NZ\$65 for an international angler
- **Whole season licences** (July 1 2017 to June 30 2018)
 - NZ\$99 for an adult

- NZ\$90 for a senior
- NZ\$129 for non-New Zealand residents
- NZ\$149 for a family (NZ residents only)
- NZ\$12.50 for a child under the age of 16 or still attending school as of July 1

Department of Conservation concessions

Fishing guides who take clients into an area managed by DOC must have a concession for the conservancy or else be covered by the NZPFGA bulk concession.

Helicopter operators who land in an area managed by DOC must have a DOC concession to do so.

Holding a DOC concession is the responsibility of the guide or operator; they alone risk prosecution if operating a commercial activity without one. The DOC website has more information and DOC also provides a map of conservation land.

Didymo and biosecurity

Anglers are asked to help prevent the spread of didymo (rock snot) and other organisms in New Zealand fishing waters by always checking, cleaning and drying their equipment when moving items between waterways, including those where didymo has not been detected.

In addition, all used freshwater fishing equipment brought into New Zealand must be clean and completely dry. Felt-soled footwear is banned.

Penalties

Note that it is an offence to knowingly spread didymo. Penalties of a 5 year prison sentence or fine of up to \$100,000 apply.

Bringing in fishing gear

MAF controls on entry into New Zealand

To slow the spread of the invasive alga didymo, in New Zealand waterways, MAF Biosecurity New Zealand requires all used freshwater fishing equipment brought into New Zealand to be clean and dry.

You must declare any used fishing equipment on the arrival card that you are required to hand to NZ Customs on your arrival in New Zealand. As you are going through Customs, your fishing equipment will be inspected and if MAF inspectors are not satisfied that the gear is clean and dry, they will arrange for the equipment to be treated (which takes time and is likely to be inconvenient) before giving it biosecurity clearance.

MAFBNZ staff are required to treat all used freshwater fishing equipment they determine or suspect is not *completely* dry inside and out, regardless of whether it has been cleaned before coming to New Zealand.

Felt soled boots

All felt soled wading boots are banned on all New Zealand waters. Anglers coming to New Zealand should therefore bring rubber-soled footwear instead of felt-soled. You can of course purchase appropriate footwear while in New Zealand

The ban was implemented because recent research has revealed that felt-soled waders and boots pose a particularly high risk of spreading didymo. They are likely to come into direct physical contact with didymo cells (e.g. stepping on or brushing against algal mats) and the thick, absorbent and slow-drying nature of the material encourages cell survival increasing the risk of spread between waterways.

Please see the Biosecurity New Zealand web site for more details of regulatory controls and more information for visiting anglers.

Fishing etiquette

The accepted rules of behaviour when accessing and fishing New Zealand waters are based on consideration for other anglers and for the land owners who permit access through or to their land. Observing these rules will also ensure you stay within the law, avoid conflict, and help maintain the good reputation of anglers generally. It is especially important that you are aware of good angling manners when fishing heavily-fished rivers such as the Tongariro.

Rights of access

Most rivers cross private land and the rights of the land-owner must be respected. Do ask the owner permission before crossing their land (and use this opportunity to check if there are any dangers to be aware of e.g. large bulls). Very rarely is permission denied when asked for. Respect the landowners property. Leave everything as you found it. If a gate is open leave it that way. Likewise if it is closed. Our ability to continue to have free access to cross land and fish on private land is dependent on farmers and other landowners being able to trust that we, as anglers and guests on their land, will behave responsibly.

Fish disturbance

Any fisherman on a back country river will not appreciate having the trout being scared off by a disturbance. Especially on a small stream, give other anglers 3 km of undisturbed river. If someone is fishing ahead of you when you arrive, it is sometimes better to find another stream.

If you need to approach someone who is fishing, do so quietly, keeping well back from the water, and signal your intentions. Even your reflection on the water may spook the trout. Fish disturbance is not such an issue when fishing for fish on a spawning run in Taupo rivers and pools.

While you are likely to fish waters and rarely see another angler, it is very important that everyone obeys some simple rules of etiquette whether other anglers are present or not.

Good manners on river and streams

- - Respect other anglers already on the water.
- - Enquire politely about their plans.
- - At stream mouths, join a line of anglers at the end unless there is a large gap.
- - Ask if it's okay to join an already occupied pool.
- - If a pool is full, wait on the bank or move somewhere else.
- - If you join others fishing a pool, don't fish the water someone is just about to fish.
- - Do not monopolise a stretch of water, even if you're catching fish there.
- - Move upstream or downstream with every few casts unless you are alone.
- - When sharing a pool, the accepted practice is to take a step every time you cast.
- - Leave plenty of room for your neighbour to cast, and to play and reel in a hooked fish.
- - Do not fill a gap left by an angler landing a fish - let them return.
- - If other anglers offend through inexperience, have a gentle word with them.

Upstream and downstream fishing

Always enter a pool so as to cause the least disturbance to any angler already there.

- - If a pool is being fished downstream by wetfly anglers, start upstream of them.
- - If a pool is being fished upstream by nymph anglers, start downstream of them.
- - Don't start fishing a pool downstream when someone else is fishing it upstream
- - Don't start fishing a pool upstream when someone else is fishing it downstream
- - If in doubt, ask where to fish so as not to cause a disturbance.

Good manners on lakes

- - Give plenty of room to anglers who are trolling or harling to avoid cutting their lines
- - Try to "go with the flow" which is usually to troll parallel to the shore.
- - When you meet another boat head on, leave them plenty of room to maneuver.
- - When parking your boat for jigging or fly fishing, give other boats room to cast & fish.
- - Avoid parking in popular trolling runs.
- - Allow other anglers peace and quiet; avoid fishing on top of other boats.
- - Avoid making a lot of noise unless you are well away on your own somewhere.

Access etiquette

These rules apply to accessing fishing waters via private land.

- - No dogs
- - No guns
- - No camping unless permission from the landowner has been given
- - Request permission to cross private land
- - Offer thanks on leaving
- - Leave gates as you find them (open or shut)
- - Stay within the river margins
- - Do not litter
- - Be aware of fire risk
- - Respect private property
- - Avoid disturbing stock or damaging crops
- - Do not park vehicles in gateways
- - Be courteous to local landowners and others

Fish refuse and litter

Please take all litter away with you and note that it is an offence to leave any fish refuse on lake or river banks. The Freshwater Fisheries Regulations state that no person shall leave any fish or any cleanings or offal from fish lying unburied on the bank or margin of any waters.

7. Other Information Sources

nzfishing.com website

www.nzfishing.com which has information, maps and photos about numerous rivers, lakes and streams as well as details of accommodation, fishing guides, tackle shops, charters, cafes, clubs and more.

nzfishing.com also provides links to many related websites including:

- Tourism New Zealand (the official New Zealand tourism website)
- Fish & Game New Zealand
- Department of Conservation (DOC)
- MetService (for weather forecasts)
- Sites showing current river and lake levels

Fish & Game New Zealand pamphlets

Fish and Game produce a number of pamphlets describing the fishing in some of the most popular waters in New Zealand. Most are freely available online. They are also available free from many tackle shops or can be ordered direct from Fish and Game.

Tackle shops

Local tackle shops are usually great information sources for what is happening at the time in the region, provided the shop staff are not too busy. Anglers often come into the shop and report on where the fishing is hot at any particular time and this information is readily available if you ask. Do not however expect to be told about those really secret places that all self-respecting anglers guard ferociously!

i-sites

Most towns and cities around New Zealand have an i-site (a tourist information centre) in a central location. These are good sources of maps, brochures and rack cards, and information about attractions and activities in the district. They will book accommodation etc for you, but note that they take a commission from the accommodation supplier when doing so. We recommend therefore that you book accommodation and guides directly from those listed by nzfishing.com, as this way no commission is charged and the accommodation provider benefits.

Maps

Road maps are available from petrol stations, bookshops, AA Information Centres as well as tourism offices (i-sites). Online street maps can found at:

- www.mapsaa.co.nz
- www.maps.google.co.nz
- www.zoomin.co.nz

Travel guides

General travel guide to New Zealand include those published by:

- Lonely Planet New Zealand
- Frommers
- Fodors
- Rough Guide

8. Glossary

Term	Description
back-country streams	<i>Remote fishing areas that require some effort to get to. May be accessible by 4-wheel drive vehicle or by a few hours walk.</i>
bait	<i>A natural insect or fish used as a lure (as opposed to an artificial fly)</i>
blind fishing	<i>Fishing over likely lies, although not being able to see the fish in the water.</i>
catch and release	<i>Releasing fish alive back into the waters from which they were caught, with minimal harm done.</i>
coarse fishing	<i>Fishing for perch, tench (all New Zealand) and rudd (Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region only) which have large scales compared to trout.</i>
confluence	<i>The meeting of two rivers, or the meeting of a river and a lake.</i>
delta	<i>River mouth</i>
didymo	<i>Didymosphenia geminata commonly known as didymo or rock snot is a freshwater algae that is a biosecurity risk to New Zealand waters It can form dense colonies called algal blooms.</i>
DOC	<i>The Department of Conservation. Responsible for the Taupo trout fishery area.</i>
DOC concession	<i>A DOC concession is an official authorization to operate in an area managed by the Department of Conservation. Fishing guides who take paying clients on to DOC land to fish must have a concession.</i>
DOC hut	<i>A basic hut maintained by the Department of Conservation (DOC) that can be used by those walking, fishing or hunting in remote regions of New Zealand.</i>
downstream	<i>Away from the source of the river; the direction in which the river flows.</i>
dry fly	<i>A floating artificial fly that resembles an insect that has landed on the water or one that has just hatched.</i>
emerger	<i>A nymph on the point of emerging as a winged adult that is struggling to penetrate the water's surface tension.</i>
falls	<i>An abbreviation for waterfalls</i>
Fish & Game	<i>The organisation responsible for sports fishing in all areas of New Zealand except Taupo. It is made up of 12 regional councils with offices in each region. (You may also see it spelt Fish&Game or Fish and Game).</i>
Fly fishing	<i>Fishing for sports fish with a fly rod, fly reel, fly line and artificial fly</i>
foul hooking	<i>To hook a sports fish other than from within the mouth. Foul-hooked fish must be returned to the water immediately with as little injury as possible.</i>
fresh, a	<i>A rise in the river water level due to a fall of rain, after which the fishing can usually be expected to be good.</i>
gaff	<i>A stick with a sharp iron hook for landing large fish. Gaffs are not permitted when fishing for freshwater sports fish, except to secure or land salmon in the Otago region.</i>
GST	<i>Goods and Service Tax (12.5%)</i>

Term	Description
gut	<i>the section of water where a river narrows prior to entering the sea</i>
ha	<i>hectares</i>
harling	<i>A method of boat fishing in which a large wet fly (or lure) is towed slowly behind the boat and not allowed to sink far below the surface of the water.</i>
headwaters	<i>The source of a river.</i>
hydro lake	<i>An artificial lake formed by the construction of a Dam to produce hydro-electricity.</i>
jigging	<i>A method of boat-fishing in which a lure is sunk to the depth in a lake where fish are expected to be and jigged up and down.</i>
kokanee	<i>Landlocked sockeye salmon</i>
legal lure/bait	<i>Any bait or lure that can be used to legally catch sports fish - artificial fly, spinner and/or bait depending on the regulations for the specific fishing water.</i>
license	<i>A licence is required to fish for trout, salmon and coarse fish in New Zealand.</i>
lie	<i>Any place in the water where the fish lie waiting for food or resting.</i>
LLO	<i>Local Launch Operator certificate</i>
lure	<i>Confusingly, this term is used variously to mean either spinners and all types of fly, or just spinners, or just wet flies/streamers.</i>
lure fishing	<i>Sometimes used to mean fly fishing using a wet fly or streamer.</i>
midge	<i>A non-biting, non-disease carrying insect, superficially resembling a mosquito, that flies in swarms at dusk on calm nights. It is commonly found at lakes and rivers throughout New Zealand.</i>
MSA	<i>Maritime Safety Authority</i>
nymph	<i>A small fly that imitates an emerging or hatching insect which is fished below the surface of the water.</i>
palmered fly	<i>A wet or dry fly with a thick body and a few or no tail fibres. It is best identified by the thick hackle collar. It has no wings.</i>
permitted	<i>Allowed, legal, OK</i>
prohibited	<i>Forbidden, illegal, not allowed, not permitted, not OK</i>
Rd	<i>Road (use in road and street names)</i>
riparian reserve	<i>A margin of land approximately 20 meters wide along the banks of many rivers and lakes that is reserved for public access. Also known as the Queens Chain (see below).</i>
Riverline	<i>A service provided by the Wellington Fish & Game Council that advises whether waters in the regions are clear or dirty and able to be fished or not .</i>
rock snot	<i>Didymosphenia geminata, commonly known as didymo, is a freshwater algae that is a biosecurity risk to New Zealand waters It can form dense colonies called algal blooms.</i>
run fish	<i>Fish on a spawning run upstream</i>

Term	Description
Queen's Chain	<i>A term commonly used to refer to a margin of land 20 metres wide along the banks of many rivers, lakes and sea that is owned by the Crown or a local authority and usually available for public access. See also a description of the Queen's Chain at the DOC website.</i>
sea-run fish	<i>Fish on a spawning run upstream from the sea</i>
SH	<i>State Highway, e.g. SH1 is the main highway between Auckland and Wellington, and between Picton and Invercargill.</i>
sight fishing	<i>Being able to see or spot the fish in the water and fish to it.</i>
sink tip	<i>A floating line where the last portion is designed to sink below the surface in order to present flies deep in the water.</i>
smelt	<i>A small fish which is a food source for large trout</i>
spinner	<i>An artificial lure other than an artificial fly which is cast with a threadline rod and reel.</i>
sports fishing	<i>Typically fishing for trout and salmon but also includes coarse fishing for tench, perch and rudd.</i>
St	<i>Street (use in street names)</i>
streamer	<i>A type of wet fly designed to resemble a small fish.</i>
tackle	<i>The equipment used for fishing</i>
tippet	<i>The thin nylon attaching the fly to the fly line.</i>
topographic map	<i>A map that shows the contours of the land and a variety of important features. Essential for those wishing to fish in backcountry or wilderness areas.</i>
trolling	<i>A method of boat fishing in which a spinner-type lure or large fly is towed behind a moving boat with the aim of getting the lure down deep, using for example a lead-core line.</i>
true left	<i>The true left bank is the left bank when looking downstream</i>
true right	<i>The true right bank is the right bank when looking downstream</i>
upstream	<i>Towards the source of the river; the direction opposite to that in which the river flows.</i>
wet fly	<i>A fly that is fished with a sinking line and usually represents a small hatching insect. (See also "streamer".)</i>
wet lining	<i>Fishing a sinking line, usually downstream</i>
wilderness fishing	<i>A very remote fishing region that can only be accessed by walking a considerable distance (usually at least a days full walking) or by helicopter.</i>