

Angling in Assynt A Guide for Visitors

www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk



Produced by Assynt Angling Research project

Funded by the Big lottery Fund.

www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk

substance.

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Introduction An Angler's Paradise

This leaflet provides you with the basic information about where to fish, where to find out more information and where to buy permits, hire boats and buy tackle in Assynt.

Assynt is a goldmine for anglers and there is something for everyone – beginner, experienced, trout, salmon or sea fishing. There is fishing that you will need to climb a mountain to access and fishing you can jump out of your car to do. You can catch everything from small beauties to much larger wild brown trout, haul in some mackerel or pollack or try for the elusive king of fish, salmon.

All of this information and more is also available at www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk

Assynt Angling Research

The leaflet is produced by Assynt Angling Research, part of a national research project called the Social and Community Benefits of Angling, funded by the Big Lottery Fund and run by Substance. The purpose of the research is to identify ways in which angling can be of benefit to local communities. Angling in Assynt is a three-year project from 2009-2011 to:

- Help inform local groups about who is fishing there, what they are spending and what they are catching
- Provide anglers with new and up to date information
- Help inform sustainable angling development and community benefit.

This research is being carried out by a social research cooperative, Substance (www.substance.coop) and it runs from 2009-2011.

The Assynt research has undertaken surveys of anglers and visitors as well as producing a website to generate angler feedback and information. The website includes all research reports as well as detailed online OS maps of the area with fishing locations marked, providing access to all relevant information.

Please Contribute

We need anglers to feedback information on where they have fished, what they have caught and what their experience has been like. Please go to www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk and contribute!



Wild Brown Trout Fishing in Assynt

There is an abundance of trout angling available in Assynt of a huge variety, suiting all angling and physical abilities. It is genuinely a treasure trove for anglers.

There are over 300 lochs in the area, ranging from small, remote mountain corries to large roadside lochs. This can be a bit daunting for uninitiated but you can find out more information on the Assynt Angling Information and Research website which has plotted over 80 of these, with full details, location, comments and feedback from anglers.

Go to: www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk and please leave your own comments!

Trout can vary greatly from loch to loch – in size, pattern and colour. Although you will find that most trout are in the 2-or-3-to-the-pound range, many lochs have much larger fish – it is just that they are harder to catch! There are also both ferox and char in some of the larger lochs.

.The wild nature of the fish mean that they are very hard fighting – often putting in an effort equivalent to twice their weight, which can produce extremely exciting angling, especially on light tackle. Most of the waters are peaty and acidic although there are a number of limestone lochs, particularly in the hills above Inchnadamph.

The best trout angling period is from late May to July, although good fishing can be had at other times and the season stretches from March 15th-October 5th. The area is fly fishing only, although some spinning is allowed on a 4 mile stretch of bank on Loch Assynt.

Permits

Trout fishing is provided by two different organisations each covering a different area of Assynt:

- The Assynt Crofters Trust own the angling in the North Assynt estate
- The Assynt Angling Association the areas in the south and east of Assynt.

Permits for both organisations are incredibly good value at just £5 a day given the quality and quantity of wild brown trout in the area and the huge variety of fishing locations.

Assynt Angling Association

The Assynt Angling Association is a collection of local landowners who have put all their trout fishing together under one umbrella. This includes the Assynt Foundation, Culag Community Woodland Trust, Assynt Angling Club and Assynt Estate waters.

The AAA area stretches from Ardroe just north of Lochinver, east past Loch Assynt to the limestone hills behind Inchnadamph and south to include Lochs Cam, Veyatie and Fionn. It includes some fabulous fishing of an enormous variety: huge lochs such as Assynt and Veyatie, limestone corrie lochs and small, remote mountain lochans.

Zones

The fishing is split into 3 'zones' - East, South and West – although you can buy a 'roving' weekly or season permit to cover the whole area.

Permits

Permits are extremely good value given the quality of fishing available:

- Day: £5 Single Zone only
- Weekly: £25 Single Zone Only
- Weekly: £30 Roving, All Zones
- Season (Bank only): £50 (All Zones)
- Season(Bank and Boat): £100 (All Zones)

Permits for AAA waters are available from:

- The Cottage Culag Square, Lochinver (01571 844076)
- Lochinver Tourist Information Centre
- Inchnadamph Hotel, Inchnadamph
- Polcraig Guest House, Lochinver
- Achins Bookshop, Inverkirkaig
- Chandlers Lochinver
- Lochinver Post Office
- Sheiling Guest House Ullapool
- Assynt Foundation, Glencanisip

Boats

Permit sales have enabled the AAA to maintain and extend the provision of boats and boats are now available on 20 lochs:

Cam Loch	Loch Bad na Murichinn
Fionn Loch	Loch Bad nan Aighean (grilse loch)
Loch a Choin (The Dog Loch)	Loch Beannach
Loch a Ghlinnean	Loch Culag (The School Loch)
Loch Ailsh	Loch Druim Suardalain (The Glen Loch)
Loch an Arbhair	Loch Feith an Leothaid
Loch an Leothaid	Loch Leitir Easidh
Loch an Ruigheinn	Loch na h-Innse Fraoich
Loch Assynt	Loch Veyatie
Loch Awe	
Loch Bad an Sluic	
Loch Lurgainn	

Boat permits are available from Peter Hendrich, The Cottage, Culag Square (01571 844076) for the South and West Zones and the Inchnadamph Hotel for East Zone.

Contact

Assynt Angling Association:
www.assyantangling.co.uk;
Peter Hendrich 01571 844076

Trout Fishing in Assynt Expert local angler, Cathel Macleod, has written a hugely informative guide to 30 of the AA's lochs. This invaluable resource is available from Achins Bookshop Inverkirkaig priced £10 and all proceeds go to support local angling provision.



Assynt Crofters' Trust

The Assynt Crofters Trust made history in 1993 when they won the right to buy the land that they worked. The North Assynt estate stretches from Achmelvich in the south west of Assynt round to Nedd on Assynt's northern coast and includes hundreds of lochs and lochans. In some places there is almost more water than land so pitted with lochans is the landscape. It is a real trout angler's paradise.

Permits

The sale of permits are an important source of income for the Trust and they are very reasonably priced:

- Day - £5
- Week - £25
- Season - £45

Permits are available from:

- Drumbeg Stores
- Drumbeg Hotel
- Lochinver Visitor Centre
- Achins Book Shop
- Mrs Macleod, The Rowans

Boats

There are boats on 9 lochs and boat tickets are available from the Drumbeg Hotel (01571 833 236) priced £10.

Loch a'Bhraighe

Loch an Tuirc

Loch Crocach

Loch Cul Fraoich

Loch Drumbeg

Loch Leathed a'Bhaile
Fhoghair (Lexy's Loch)

The Manse Loch

Loch Poll

Gorm Loch Mor



Contact

Assynt Crofters Trust:

www.assyntcrofters.co.uk

01571 855298

admin@assyntcrofters.co.uk

Map showing trout angling permit areas

To see a more detailed, online version of this map which you can zoom in, go to www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk



Salmon and Sea Trout Fishing

Salmon and sea trout fishing is available on rivers as well as several lochs in the area.

Rivers Inver and Kirkaig

Assynt has two of Scotland's most renowned spate rivers in the Inver and the Kirkaig. Easily accessible, they are available to all anglers on a day permit basis. The fishing is owned by the Assynt Estate but is run by CKD Galbraith's sporting lets department.

River Inver

The River Inver flows from Loch Assynt to Lochinver. There are five beats each of 2 rods.

Prices:

- Lower and Middle beats:
 - June £75 per rod/day
 - July/August/Sept/Oct 15th £100 per rod per day
- Upper Beat
 - June £35 per rod/day
 - July/August/Sept/Oct 15th £50 per rod/day

River Kirkaig

The River Kirkaig lies in a gorge to the south of Lochinver with a series of rocky pools and runs. Prices:

- 3 beats each of 2 rods
 - June - £75 per rod/day
 - July/August/Sept/15th October - £100 per rod/day

Fishing is fly only, using single or double hooks.

Booking

To book, please contact CKD Galbraith Sporting Lets department:

- Email: sporting@ckdgalbraith.co.uk
- Tel: +44 (0)1738 451600

Loch Fishing

A number of lochs also contain runs of salmon and sea trout and are available from the Assynt angling Association and the Assynt Crofters Trust.

Assynt Angling Association

5 of the Assynt Angling Association lochs have runs of salmon and sea trout. These are:

- Loch Assynt
- Loch Ailsh
- Loch Awe
- Loch Culag
- Loch Druim Suardalain

These can be fished for on the same permits as for trout fishing.

Assynt Crofters Trust

The Assynt Crofters Trust has two lochs that get runs of sea trout, both on the Manse system, namely the Manse Loch and Loch an Tuirc. These are available on normal permits as described in the trout fishing section. Boats are available and advisable on both lochs.



River Kirkaig, Lower Beat

Sea Fishing

Although probably best known for its game fishing, Assynt is also a hotspot for sea anglers and there are lots of opportunities for the beginner and expert alike.

Sea fishing is possible from the beaches, rocks, pier and from boats. Tackle is sold at the Newsagents on right on your way into Lochinver and at the chandlery stores near the harbour.

As with all sea fishing real care must be taken, especially when fishing from the rocks.

Shore and Rock Fishing

You can fish from the beach and rocks at Achmelvich, Clachtoll, Stoer Bay and peninsular, Culkein, Clashnessie and round to Drumbeg, Nedd and Kylesku.

To see some useful marks, go to http://assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk/sea_fishing

Species

There are lots of Pollack and Coley and, in July and August particularly, Mackerel. However, you can also catch flat fish such as Plaice and recently there have been reports of Sea Bass caught from some of the beaches.

Sea Angling Boat Trips

There are no regular sea angling trips from Lochinver harbour. However a local boat owner, Willie Macleod, can take parties of up to 6 out on the Dorothy Anne. The cost is around £150 for 4 hours and is of course weather dependent. For bookings, phone 01571 844 250.





Other Information

Accessible Angling

Although some fishing in Assynt is strictly for the very fit, there are some very good opportunities for the less able.

All Abilities Path

The Culag Community Woodland Trust have built an All Abilities Path at the Little Assynt Estate, leaving from the Leitir Easaidh Car Park near Loch Assynt Lodge (NC 174264). This not only allows you to access the estate where there is a shelter, toilet, and pier, but also fishing on the lochs on it.

- At Loch Leitir Easaidh, the specially adapted boat has an adjustable seat at its centre.
- The boat at Loch Innse Fraoich has the seat at the stern.
- Both boats are accessible via the all abilities path.
- To obtain a permit and a key to access the boats, contact Peter Hendrich of the Assynt Angling Association on 01571 844 076.
- Disabled fishers have priority over other anglers in using these boats so please mention this when booking the boats.

There are also a number of lochs that are easier to access than others. These include roadside lochs: Loch Drumbeg, Loch An Aigeil, Loch Assynt, Loch Awe and Cam Loch.

Tuition and Guiding

There are two providers of tuition and guiding in Assynt:

- The Highland Fly Fishing School, contact Stephen Smith on 01854-666-334 / info@flyfishing-scotland.net or go to www.flyfishing-scotland.net
- Callum Miller provides guidance on the Assynt Crofters estate: 01571 833 364



Fish Responsibly

The fish stocks in Assynt are wild and as such care must be taken to ensure the area's sustainability. Although there are many lochs teeming with trout, others are more sensitive and anglers must be responsible. A local code of conduct is:

- No fish taken if under 9 inches in length – this is a rule of the ACT and AAA.
- Do not take more fish than you need. Our survey work suggests over 90% of trout caught are returned.
- If possible, return all larger trout.

Practice catch and release at remoter, hill lochs and especially those where breeding will be harder.

Tackle

There are two main outlets for fishing tackle.

- The Chandlers next to the Culag Hotel at Lochinver pier has an excellent selection of fishing flies for both trout and salmon fishing at very reasonable prices. It also stocks other tackle for both sea and freshwater fishing.
- The Newsagents, Lochinver also sells a range of tackle for all kinds of fishing.

Tourist Information

All tourist information is available from the Tourist Information Centre in Lochinver where you will also find displays about the local area, a dedicated PC for angling information, information on wildlife and publications.

Rangers Service Guided Walks

The Highland Rangers Service put on Guided Walks for visitors throughout the season. Visit the Tourist Information Centre at Lochinver for more information or go to: www.assynt.info

Assynt Tourism and Community

Assynt Tourism
www.assynt.info

Assynt Foundation
www.assyntfoundation.org

Culag Community Woodland Trust
www.culagwoods.org.uk

Lochinver Mission Community Project
www.lochinvermission.org.uk

Historic Assynt
www.historicassynt.co.uk

Assynt Leisure and IT Access
www.assyntleisure.org

John Muir Trust
www.jmt.org/cuineag-quinag-estate.asp

Achins Bookshop and Coffee Shop
alex@scotbooks.freeuk.com

Drumbeg Stores
www.drumbegstores.co.uk

North West Sea Kayaking
www.norwestseakayaking.com

More local links are provided on our website or on www.assynt.info

Assynt Angling Information and Research Website

We have established an Assynt Angling Information and Research Website at www.assynt.anglingresearch.org.uk.

On this site are unique interactive maps of angling in Assynt that:

- Provide information on dozens of lochs as well as rivers and sea fishing
- Give up to date information on where to fish, how to buy permits, where the boats are located
- Allow anglers to feed back information and comments
- Allow anglers to add lochs and sea fishing locations

You can also read all the reports and findings from the research project.

Free PC at Tourist Information Centre

Visit Scotland have provided a dedicated PC at the Tourist Information Centre at which you can access the Assynt Angling Information website as well as other local links. (This is not for general use – got to the Leisure Centre or newsagents for your other web/PC needs).

Comment and Contribute!

We really need anglers to contribute information for the research – where you have fished, what you have caught and your views. Please use it and add YOUR comments and information!



Contact

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