

WILD BROWN TROUT FISHING IN THE NORTH ASSYNT ESTATE



Explore the Unknown Lochs

The Assynt Crofters made History in 1993, by buying the North Assynt Estate. Over 100 Crofters set out on the first ever Crofting Community Buy-Out of their land, and with enormous popular support, donations, and grant aid, they succeeded. The Estate, which extends to some 22,000 acres of hill and croft land, has around 200 Freshwater Lochs all containing natural wild Brown Trout: some of which also have Salmon and Seatrout runs.

The North Assynt Estate is still a working estate: you will see a variety of sheep and also magnificent Highland cattle on the crofts and grazings. Inland you will encounter sheilings and plenty of evidence of land tended and cultivated in the distant past. There are varied birch and hazel woodlands again with many signs of past management, now often a refuge for Red Deer as well as many other animals, plants and birds. The whole area is truly a paradise for the outdoor enthusiast, whatever his or her pursuit. For the less energetic, it is a fine place to stay, relax, and sample the local hospitality, in a tranquil area of diverse scenic beauty.

The Wildlife

Assynt offers the angler superb fishing set amidst some of the finest scenery in Scotland. In the North Assynt Estate you are surrounded by the oldest rocks found anywhere in Europe, which gives you a timeless feeling. In



the peace and quiet of North Assynt you may share the loch with an occasional Otter or maybe a Red-throated Diver feeding her chicks. You are likely to be interrupted only by the piping trill of the Common Sandpiper or the whistling song of the Greenshank, and don't be surprised if a Raven, Buzzard or Golden Eagle passes overhead preying on a rabbit or hare. You may even glimpse a White-tailed Sea Eagle.



North Assynt Estate is a paradise waiting to be discovered. From its' beautiful, quiet sandy beaches to the towering sandstone cliffs at Stoer, from the crofts full of lambs to the vast stretches of empty wet moorland, it is a special place. Red Deer roam the Estate and Pine Martens and Badgers can be found in some of the ancient relict woodlands. There is much to explore.

The Fishings

The Loch Fishings are a very valuable resource to the Crofters' Trust, and all of the income from Angling is used to assist with the further development of the Fishings and the Estate in general. Since the purchase of the land, we have carried out a restocking Programme, under guidance from the West of Sutherland Fisheries Trust, of the Manse/Tuirc Loch Water System. Two Hundred Thousand Seatrout Fry have been released into the feeder streams and lochs in this network, over a four year period.

We welcome Anglers to the area, and offer you some of the finest and most interesting Wild Brown Trout fishing in the Highlands of Scotland. All we ask of you is to purchase a permit as a gesture of goodwill, before you fish. By so doing you will be contributing to the long term development of the North Assynt Estate, which will make it a better place for you and for the people who live here, alike. Our permits are not expensive, and can be purchased from several different outlets in the area. Children fish FREE of charge.

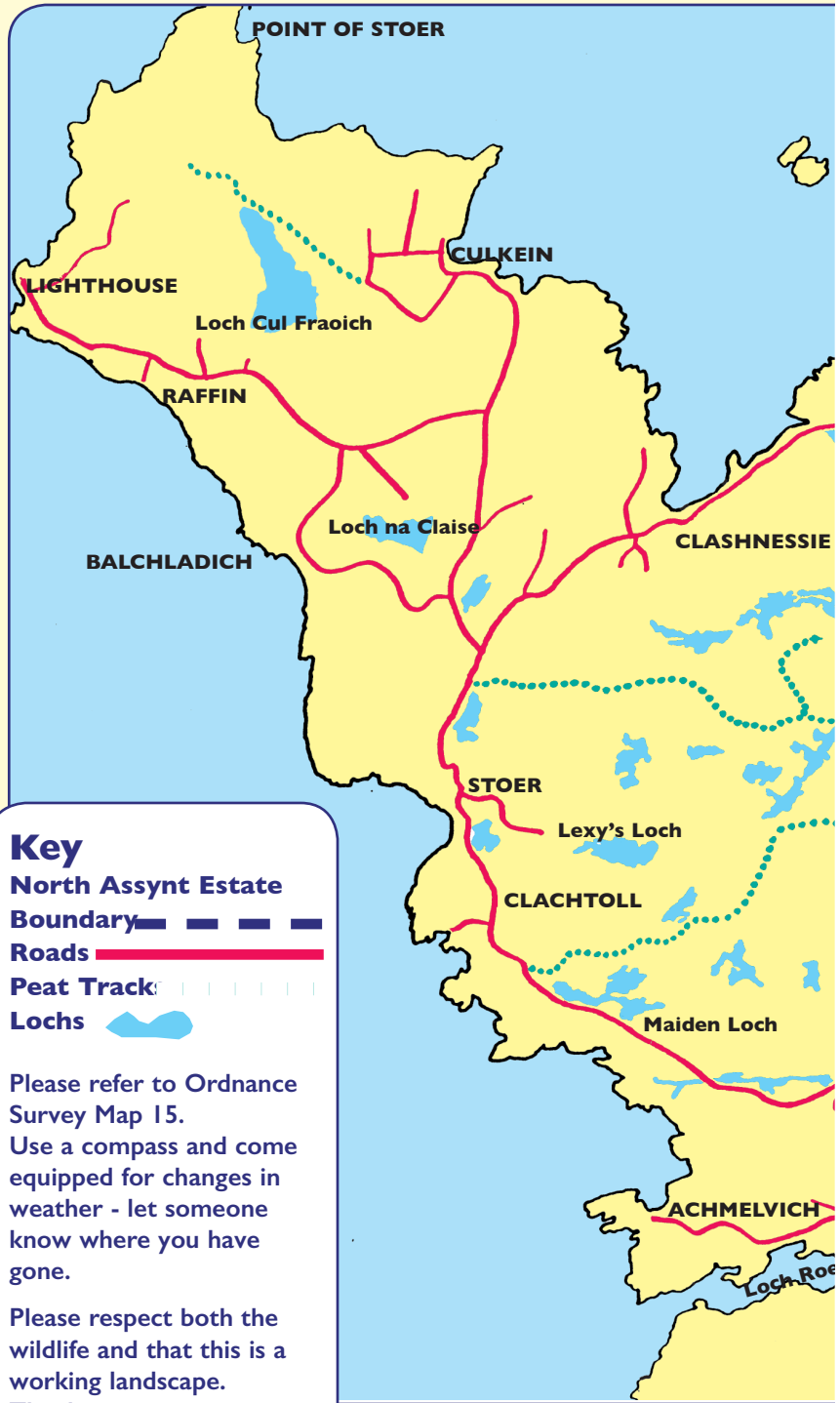
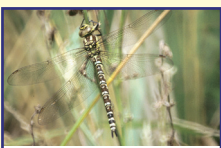
The Lochs

Two hundred or so; some of which have Salmon & Seatrout runs, all containing natural wild Brown Trout, and some with the occasional Char. The fish vary in size from very small to very large, but on average they weigh in around 3 to the pound. The great fun and challenge of fishing here is that you have to find the lochs where the big fish are. Fish one loch, go over the hillock and fish the next one, there are lochs around every corner, and behind every mound,

it is truly a Fisherman's Paradise.

Fishing on the North Assynt Estate cannot be compared with fishing the Rainbow Fisheries of Central and Southern Scotland, where large stocked fish are the norm. If your expectations are not of large fish all of the time, then we can assure you that you will not leave here disappointed. There are plenty of big fish lurking in the depths, in many of our waters, but they are not easy to catch. Apply patience, stealth and skill, and you may be rewarded by landing, one or two, or maybe more of those elusive, Leviathan fish.





Key

North Assynt Estate

Boundary — — — — —

Roads —————

Peat Track | | | | |

Lochs 

Please refer to Ordnance Survey Map 15.

Use a compass and come equipped for changes in weather - let someone know where you have gone.

Please respect both the wildlife and that this is a working landscape.

Thank you.



Some of the best lochs to fish

Loch Crocach - Grid Ref:- 693264/15
(Boat Location)

A particularly beautiful, large loch, with lots of islands covered in vegetation. This is a water with an abundance of golden, speckled, hard fighting Trout eager to take the fly. They are not of large proportions but you can expect to catch lots of them. With the occasional pouter to enhance your 'bag' this is a place well worth visiting. By boat, fish the small bays and inlets amongst the islands and it is here that you will find lots of freely rising Trout. For the bank fisherman, walk that little bit further along the southern shoreline to the area adjacent to the islands for the best sport. (Tip:- Do not ignore the small lochans immediately to the south and east of Loch Crocach - If you have time !! ??)

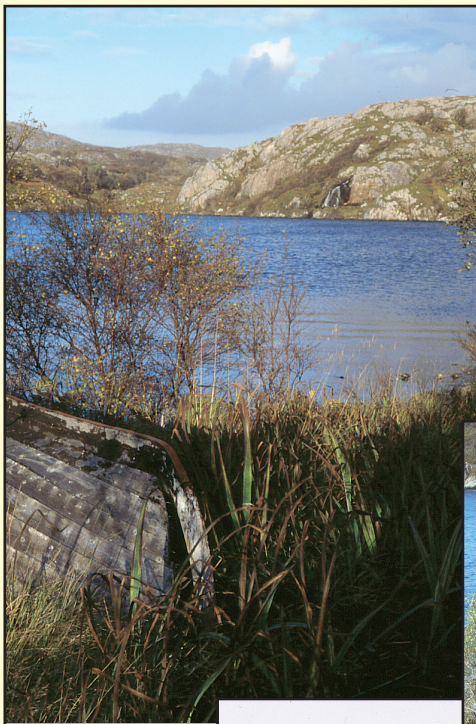
Loch Cul Fraoich -
Grid Ref:- 022336/15
(Boat Location)

A maddening loch. It can yield the very highest quality of trout up to three pounds or more in weight. Deep pink fleshed, they are of such a delicious flavour that despite blank days, Fishermen are driven back, time and again, to try their luck. Persistence and skill is required, but when those fish are on the take look out; your Angling Arts will be tested to their limits before your prey is safely in the net.

Loch Drumbeg: Grid Ref:- 121327/15
(Boat location) There is also a disabled access boat available here

A very well known loch, set amongst spectacular scenery, with long records of prolific fishing of high quality. With less angling pressure in recent years, trout numbers have increased with a subsequent reduction in their overall average size. Despite this, you can still expect to catch several 'good' fish on any day, and in particular on a warm, balmy, summer evening when there is a big hatch of

Sedges. Loch Drumbeg is always a superb place to fish by boat or from the bank. Callum Millar is based at the Old School-house, Drumbeg, and will also provide you with Angling Tuition should you so desire it.



Lexy's Loch - (Loch Leathad a'Bhaile Fhoghair) Grid Ref:- 050281/15 (Boat Location)

A loch holding beautiful trout of all sizes. It can be 'dour' at times, but it is well worth a visit. Every season a number of trout weighing several pounds are taken from this water, and you never know, you may be the lucky one!!

Loch na Loinne - Grid Ref:- 123294/15 (Boat Location)

This large loch is not for the faint hearted, with a walk of some three miles into the hills of North Assynt. Set in an area of magnificent scenic beauty, the peace and tranquillity you will find here is unsurpassed. With a recently artificially raised water level, you will be provided with superb sport. It contains an abundance of beautiful, fat, red and black spotted, wild Brown Trout, in the size range 'tiddlers' to 'large'. (Tip:- For bank fishers; fish close in to the edge as the increased food supply there attracts the fish close inshore. Cover all of the bays on the north and south side of the loch, but ignore the steeply, wooded western end of the southern shoreline. **DANGER - AVOID WADING AS THE INCREASED WATER LEVEL HAS CREATED STEEP DROPS UNDER THE SURFACE RIGHT AT THE EDGE, ALL AROUND THE LOCH.**

The same warning applies to **Loch Torr nan Uidhean** (Grid Ref:- 123303/15) and **Loch a Bhrraighe** (Grid Ref 135307, also a Boat Location).

Upper Loch Roe: Grid Ref:- 077248/15) **The Manse Loch** : 092248/15 (Boat Location) **Loch an Tuirc** : 107258/15 (Boat Location)

Lochs Roe, The Manse and Tuirc, given the right water levels, can produce some excellent runs of Seatrout and the occasional Salmon. With our Re-stocking Programme (50,000 indigenous West Coast Seatrout fry introduced each year, for a full four years) the prospect of early enhancement to this fishery is a truly exciting one. A boat is available on The Manse Loch and the Tuirc Loch. Anglers are required to make accurate returns of all migratory fish caught from the three lochs concerned, to assist with the ongoing close monitoring of this Fishery by the Crofters' Trust, who are investing considerable sums of money on the project. We have tagged large numbers of Seatrout and Salmon Smolts by injecting

a coloured dye into the membrane behind the left eye of each fish, so if you catch one of those fish it is essential to record that catch and the colour of the dye, with the Boat/Permit vendor.



Other Lochs are too numerous to mention, but all with trout; get out there and try as many of them as you can.

Tackle and Flies

Fly rods in the 9' to 11'6" length range, combined with a suitable Fly Line weight, in either 'Floating' or 'Medium Sinking' format, are recommended. Remember, a longer fishing rod will enable you to work the Fly better, especially on windy days. Leaders, depending on where you are fishing, should usually be in the 4-6lb breaking strain range. Occasionally, on weedy lochs, and especially those lochs with bigger fish, 8lb breaking strain is advised.

Popular flies in sizes 8/10/12/14 such as Invicta, Greenwell's Glory, Dunkeld, Kingfisher Butcher, Peter Ross, and similar Sedge type winged flies; any bushy Black or Brown hackled flies, e.g. Black Pennell, Soldier Palmer, Black/Blue Zulu, Kate Maclaren, Loch Ordie, Claret Bumble are all good ones to try. The Muddler range is excellent. Fish the Muddler on your top dropper; it works wonders dabbled along the surface on windy days.

Boats

All of our boats are 13 feet long, constructed of double skinned polypropylene with inbuilt bouyancy tanks. Properly used, they are excellent craft for Angling, and can carry three people, complete with their fishing tackle, safely.

A wheelyboat, fitted with an outboard motor, is available at Loch Drumbeg. This purpose built craft enables those in a wheelchair to fish safely and in comfort.

**BOATS CAN ONLY BE BOOKED
FROM THE TRUST OFFICE**

IN STOER

Tel: 01571 855 298

Bank permits available from:

Trust Office
Mackay's Hardware, Lochinver
Drumbeg Hotel
Flossie's Clachtoll
Clachtoll Campsite



Midges

The Highland Midges:- This very small flying insect with the 'big bite' is a menace to the outdoor sportsman in the Highlands. Its bite is harmless, but it is extremely irritating. Ensure that you have an adequate supply of insect repellent, or better still, head nets should be used to keep those flying pests at bay, and to enable you to enjoy your outing. There are thousands of them. You have been warned!!



Accommodation

Visit DISCOVER ASSYNT where you will find a wide range of places to stay, from B&Bs and self catering to Hotels.

www.discoverassynt.co.uk



Safety

Many lochs are off the beaten track and hard to find: it is very easy to get lost. Please always carry OS map Landranger 15, and a compass. Let someone know where you are going and your expected return time. Please ensure that you always carry waterproofs and spare food and clothing: outdoor conditions can change very quickly.



Text and fish photo by Cathel MacLeod, other photos and map by Andy Summers.

Miscellaneous

Please be considerate about parking your car and close gates behind you. Take all litter home with you. Do not deface our beautiful countryside.



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