

Red Skin Disease in wild salmon (update July 2021)

This year we have received a number of reports of wild Atlantic salmon exhibiting ventral haemorrhaging consistent with Red Skin Disease (RSD). We are monitoring the situation on all our major salmon rivers and working with partners across the UK to better understand its cause and impact.

Red Skin Disease is a condition of wild Atlantic salmon and sea trout characterised by haemorrhaging along the underside of the body. Severe cases have been associated with mortality, usually in conjunction with secondary infections. It was first reported in rivers draining into the Baltic Sea and Northern Atlantic around 2018 and has since been observed in parts of the UK. The cause of RSD is currently unknown.

We have been collating reports of skin lesions in wild salmonids from across England and have issued regular guidance to our staff, anglers and stakeholders on what to look out for, what to do if disease is suspected, and the need to report any cases to us promptly. We are also working closely with colleagues in Natural Resources Wales to monitor and collate reports.

We have had no reported cases of mortality associated with ventral haemorrhaging in wild salmonids in England, but have received reports of a small number of fish caught by anglers showing changes consistent with RSD. Our staff who operate salmon traps as part of our national index monitoring programme have also observed a small number of cases.

We are asking anglers to be vigilant but not to remove or handle any fish in distress. Also for anglers to carefully take photographs of fish exhibiting any unusual marks if safe to do so, to practice good biosecurity, and to adhere to our guidance on disinfection or to 'Clean, Check, Dry' equipment after fishing and before moving to other waters.



Ventral haemorrhaging in wild Atlantic salmon consistent with Red Skin Disease

To report dead or dying fish, please contact our incident hotline immediately: 0800 80 70 60. For further information on RSD please contact our National Fisheries Laboratory: 02084 745244 fish.health@environment-agency.gov.uk

customer service line 03708 506 506

floodline 03459 88 11 88

incident hotline 0800 80 70 60

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