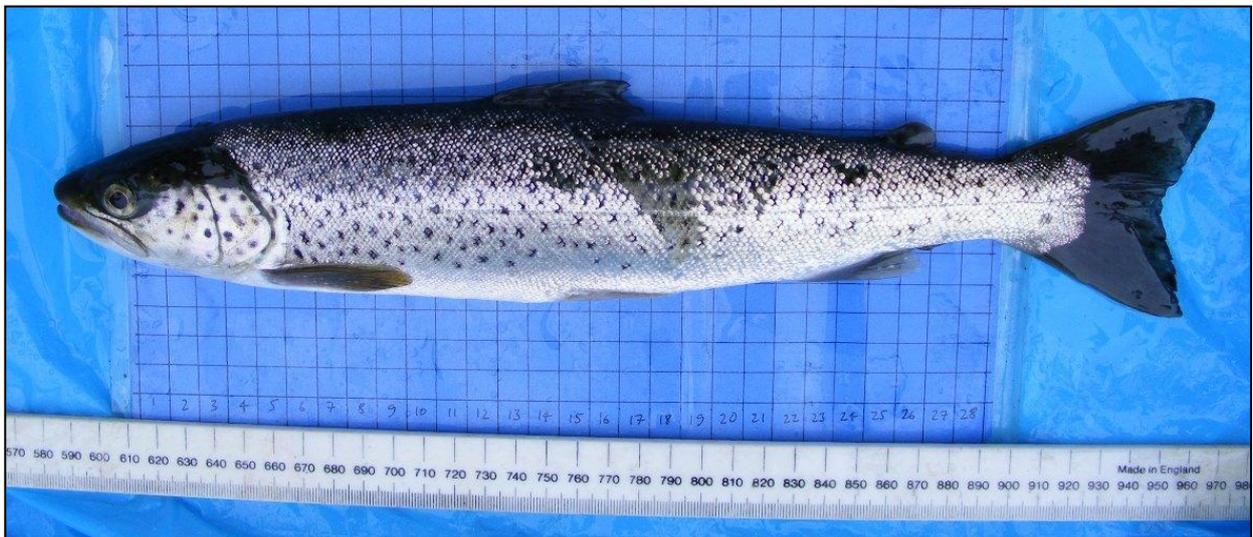


**Growth of 'Squaretail', a male sea trout caught 5 times by the WRFT sweep netting team in Loch Gairloch, from March 2011 to September 2012**

The following pictures are of a wild sea trout that was caught five times with the WRFT sweep net in Loch Gairloch. Each time the fish was caught, it was anaesthetised, a scale sample was taken, a photograph was taken, and the fish was returned to the water following recovery. The fish has been recognised by its spot pattern. When first caught in April 2011, the fish had a damaged pectoral fin and other predator damage ('beak' mark), and dorsal fin damage associated with earlier sea lice infection. The trout survived for at least another 16 months following its initial capture, growing from less than 1lb (455g) in weight to over 3lb (1365g) during this period. The fish suffered further predator damage to its tail between September 2011 and April 2012. Note the changes in colouration from silvery during the spring and early summer to bronze (spawning colouration) by September in both years.

**18 Mar 2011:** 355mm, 380g; deformed right pectoral fin; note scale loss attributed to beak damage. *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* lice counts: 3 copepodid & chalimus, 5 preadult & adult, 3 ovigerous female; dorsal fin slightly eroded. The scale reading suggests that the trout had already spawned twice (see last page).



**27 Sept 2011:** 455mm, 933g; *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* 0 c&c, 2 pa&a, 0 of.



11 Apr 2012: 465mm, 948g; *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* 2 c&c, 0 pa&a, 0 of



22 June 2012: 487mm, 1154g; *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* 10c&c, 3 pa&a, 4 of; 4 *Caligus*



17 Sept 2012: 520mm, 1512g; *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* 0 c&c, 4 pa&a, 6 of.



## Scale reading

Scale samples from the trout were taken on each of the occasions the fish was caught. However, all of the scales are 'replacements'. Only three samples have produced a scale from which life history following an initially migration to sea can be deduced; and none of the samples have circuli dating back to when the trout was a fry. I think two spawning marks can be seen on the scale for 18<sup>th</sup> March, following one good summer at sea (or possibly two summers at sea). If the trout was a three year old smolt when it went to sea for the first time, I suggest it hatched from an egg during the winter of 2006, went to the sea for the first time in 2009 and spawned in the autumn of that year, and again in 2010 and 2011.

Zoom to 400% and let me (Peter Cunningham) know what you think at [info@wrft.org.uk](mailto:info@wrft.org.uk).

18 March 2011



22 June 2012



17<sup>th</sup> September 2012



The trout recovering in the sea following its fifth capture on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

