

SUFFERING SALMON



Torment: A fish riddled with sea lice filmed by Corin Smith

By Christian Gysin

RIDDLED with sea lice and covered in lesions, this is one of the hundreds of thousands of salmon feared to be infested at just one farm.

Officials have now begun an animal cruelty probe into the site, which supplies major British supermarkets, in response to shocking footage captured by a photographer.

Having first used a drone, Corin Smith saw many salmon were dead or in distress. He then attached a camera to a pole to film underwater at Vacasay fish farm, which is run by the Scottish Salmon Company in Loch Roag.

His footage shows frayed flesh hanging off lethargic fish riddled with lice.

Sea lice can cause loss of fins, scarring, secondary infections and death. The parasites grow to the size of a pea and lay thousands of eggs.

Once a fish is infested, lice can spread quickly in crowded

'A high state of distress'

salmon pens. Vacasay, which is in a sea loch off Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, is estimated to hold 400,000 salmon.

Mr Smith, from Perthshire, believes 80 per cent had been disfigured by sea lice damage, and 40 per cent should be destroyed immediately on compassionate grounds.

He found that many fish were dead, while others were in a 'high state of distress'.

The 40-year-old claimed it would have taken weeks for such a severe infestation to

Watchdog investigates farm over claims that more than 300,000 fish are infested with lice



Cruelty inquiry: Fish pens at the salmon farm in Loch Roag

take hold, adding: 'I was utterly shocked at the high proportion of fish in poor health with mortal sea-lice infestation.'

Mr Smith acted as 'a concerned member of the public', and only filmed in one of 12 pens at the farm to prevent lice or their eggs being transferred to other pens on his camera.

He said: 'I would have liked to have filmed in other pens, but because of bio-security I didn't. The farm is a short dis-

tance from shore, less than 200 metres, where kayakers, swimmers, divers and others interact with it.'

Mr Smith was so shocked that he posted his film on The Ferret, an investigative journalism website.

As a result, the Scottish Government agency Marine Scotland is now investigating the farm. The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has also begun its

own probe into the fish farm. The Scottish Salmon Company would not say whether the infested fish would be sold to supermarkets or destroyed.

It also refused to reveal which stores it supplied.

Infected salmon can be treated with pesticides that are not harmful to consumers, but the lice appear to have become resistant to some chemicals.

Sarah Moyes, from the Scottish animal charity One Kind, said the salmon's suffering was 'wholly unacceptable', adding: 'The industry's reputation is again being damaged by another report of animal neglect.'

Don Staniford, director of Scottish Salmon Watch, said: 'These nauseating images blow

'Nauseating images'

the salmon farming industry's health claims out of the water.'

Salmon farming is Scotland's biggest food export, worth £600million a year.

The Scottish Salmon Company sells 25,000 tonnes of fresh salmon annually to more than 25 countries in Europe, North America and Asia.

Two years ago, it lost nearly £1million because so many fish were infested with lice that they could not be sold. Last year, it was said to have sent salmon riddled with lice to the Co-op.

A Scottish Salmon Company spokesman said it took fish health and welfare 'very seriously', adding: 'However, as with any farmed stock, mortalities can occur, and this has been exacerbated by the warm weather this summer.'

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September 5, 2018

ON THIS DAY

FROM THE DAILY MAIL ARCHIVE

SEPTEMBER 5, 1941

TO HAVE a child by a soldier is 'a duty outside marriage', and any girl evading it is a traitor, according to Germany's Nazi rulers. These statements are contained in an article in the Schwarze Korps, newspaper of the SS. Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler said: 'For pure-blooded German girls there exists a war duty outside marriage... this consists of becoming a mother by soldiers going to the front.'

SEPTEMBER 5, 1967

BRITAIN'S pirate disc jockeys have come ashore and captured plum jobs with their greatest rival — the BBC. Seventeen former pirate DJs, have now been given two-month contracts with the Corporation. They include John Peel, Tony Blackburn, David Cash and Kenny Everett. They will help launch Radio 1.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

RAQUEL WELCH, 78. The actress and singer, right, has always refused to take all her clothes off on screen or pose naked throughout her six-decade career, even saying no to Playboy's Hugh Hefner, who said: 'She declined to do complete nudity, and I yielded gracefully.'

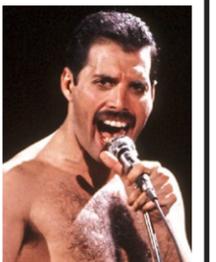
JOHNNY VEGAS, 48. The stand-up comic and star of sitcoms Benidorm and Still Open All Hours (real name: Michael Pennington) wanted to become a priest before studying for a pottery degree. He can still produce a teapot in 60 seconds, and one he knocked up on stage in less than a minute is in the permanent collection of the V&A museum.



BORN ON THIS DAY

LOUIS XIV (1638-1715). The French monarch is the longest-serving in the country's history. He ascended the throne aged four and stayed for 72 years and 110 days. The 'Sun King' was said to have terrible breath — one mistress sprayed perfume at regular intervals to deal with the smell.

FREDDIE MERCURY (1946-1991), right. The Zanzibar-born Queen frontman (originally Farrokh Bulsara) befriended Princess Diana and once dressed her as a male model in army jacket, cap and shades and took her for a night out in a London gay bar with TV stars Kenny Everett and Cleo Rocos. They got all the attention — and Diana went to the bar to get the drinks.



ON SEPTEMBER 5...

IN 1972, Black September Palestinian terrorists murdered two Israeli Olympic team members during the Munich Games and took nine more hostage. They massacred the coaches and athletes hours later after a botched rescue attempt by German police.

IN 1997, Nobel Peace Prize winner Mother Teresa died, aged 87.

WORD WIZARDRY

GUESS THE DEFINITION: Wanion (1557)

A) Waning of the moon. B) Container for wafers used in Holy Communion. C) Strong tendon in an animal's neck. Answer below

PHRASE EXPLAINED

To foot the bill: Meaning to pay a large sum; the 'foot' refers to adding up a column of figures with the total at the bottom.

QUOTE FOR TODAY

'IF YOU can't annoy somebody with what you write, I think there's little point in writing.'

Kingsley Amis, novelist (1922-1995)

JOKE OF THE DAY

WHO is the king of the pencil case? The ruler.

Guess the Definition answer: A.

Compiled by ETAN SMALLMAN and ADAM JACOT DE BOINOD

Holiday debt outstrips our Christmas bills

HOLIDAYMAKERS racked up more debt on their summer break this year than they did on their Christmas spending, according to research.

Borrowers put a total of £9.7billion on their credit cards this summer, compared to £8.5billion during the festive season last year — an extra £1.2billion.

More than half of holidaymakers used credit cards to pay for flights and accommodation and ended the summer with an average bill of £473, according to comparison site uSwitch.com. Two in five of those

By Fiona Parker
MoneyMail Reporter

with holiday debt believe it will take them at least two months to pay it off. By comparison, the average credit card debt built up over Christmas was £452, according to a survey of more than 2,000 people.

Only half of holidaymakers using cards knew how much their provider would charge them for doing so, uSwitch said.

Major banks charge an average commission of 2.85 per cent on each overseas trans-

action. Some add a £5 fee each time a credit card is used abroad.

Experts said the figures raise further concerns that an increasing number of Britons are living beyond their means. Families now owe a record £213.5billion on credit cards, car finance and short-term loans, with households borrowing £800million in the year to July alone.

A spokesman for debt charity StepChange said a record number of people are seeking its help and urged anyone who is struggling to keep up with their credit commitments to seek free debt advice as soon as possible.