

JANUARY 2023

FRESHWATER INFORMER

No. 308



FREE

*New Year
- new beginnings!*

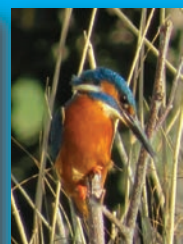
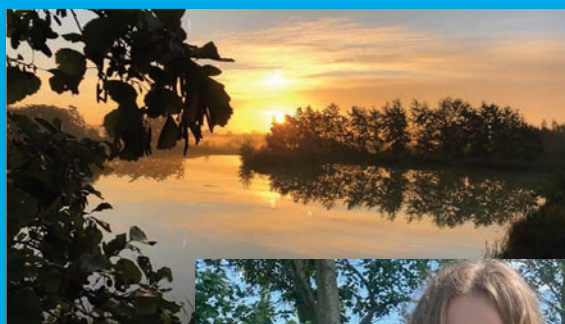


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email: enquiries@sandwichlakes.co.uk

www.sandwichlakes.co.uk

Sandwich Ash Road (A257), Near Canterbury CT3 2DA



*Hello and welcome
to the January issue of
the Freshwater Informer!*

*Firstly, we hope you had a
wonderful Christmas and we
wish you all a very Happy New Year!*

You may be aware (!!!) that we had a 'bit of weather' leading up to Christmas week! That is a bit of an understatement as the cold snap, which lasted for about a week, saw us plunged in to deep freeze bringing fishing pretty much to a standstill throughout the region. The rivers remained fishable, but with the daytime temperatures barely reaching zero most sane anglers stayed at home in the warm. The consequences are that catch reports are a little thin on the ground this month which is understandable! Wylands cancelled their Christmas Open and published a photo of a lump of ice from one of the lakes that was around 4" thick! Not many of us carry an icebreaker in the tackle box big enough to break and clear that bad boy! As I write this just before the January deadline date, the forecast is indicating a major change in the weather. The temperature is due to rise in to double figures within the next couple of days and we are expecting some heavy rain. With lots of snow still lying throughout much of Kent and Sussex, the rain, coupled with the melt water, is going to raise the river levels considerably and probably deem them to be unfishable until after Christmas. You have to love a bit of weather moaning!!!

Very sadly this will be my last issue! In last month's magazine I told you that my wife and I are going to retire and move away to Lincolnshire to enjoy our 'Golden Years'. Not having the Informer to care for will leave a massive void in my life as it has become a big part of my everyday activities whether that be from writing and preparing articles and reports, doing the admin work or the 1001 other tasks needed to ensure that all aspects of the magazine run smoothly. I will also miss annoying everyone with endless fishing posts on the Facebook page! Your newsfeeds will be a lot quieter! However, I am delighted that interest in the magazine from prospective new owners has been considerable so I am indeed very hopeful that 'new management' will be in post very soon! Due to the deadline for this magazine being in mid December nothing has been confirmed so I will update the magazine's Facebook page as and when there is some news! I will continue to run the Facebook page until a handover is complete.

I would sincerely like to thank everyone for all their wonderful, kind messages wishing my wife and I a happy and healthy retirement. Furthermore, I would also like to thank all the amazing advertisers who have loyally supported me over the years, without that support the Freshwater Informer would not have been possible! Many of you may not know Linda Lacey. Linda has been the amazing lady who puts the magazine together every month with such amazing results! Her work and constant support has helped the magazine go from strength to strength and I sincerely thank her for her unstinting commitment despite the daunting workload each month!

Whoever is next at the helm of the Freshwater Informer, I would ask that you kindly support them as much as you have supported me over the years and I hope that their 'term in office' will be as enjoyable as mine has been!

Cheerio and enjoy your fishing! **Barry Reed**

The Freshwater Informer

6 Meadow Way | Wouldham | Rochester ME1 3GR

e: barnic@btinternet.com

01634 869317
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River Rother at Fittleworth by Jamie Fielding



A UNIQUE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY!



My wife and I are now at an age where we would like to begin to take things a little easier and enjoy more time together. Our house is up for sale and we plan to move to Lincolnshire to spend our 'Golden Years'! It is a major move as we have both always lived and worked in Kent, but feel that a move to Lincolnshire will offer us a slower and quieter pace of life. I have looked into operating the Freshwater Informer from a base away from the South East, but the logistics do not realistically work for me to continue to provide the same high level of service to my advertisers, stockists and the loyal readership.

"After many years at the helm of this beloved publication, I have decided to take my retirement and enjoy some fishing myself!"

Barry Reed

I am therefore looking for someone who shares my level of passion, not just for angling in the South East, but for the long established Freshwater Informer brand to take it forward in to a new era. The new owner will have full ownership of the title along with the popular website and huge following on the social media platform as well as access to a network of magazine stockists throughout the region.

If you feel that this rare opportunity is for you please get in touch by email to barnic@btinternet.com or call 01634 869317 or 07722 025449

Serious enquiries only please and price will be by negotiation

Elphicks Fisheries Horsmonden, Kent



Paul Holland - 56lbs 15ozs Pullens Lake



Callum Brown - Pullens Lake



Clay Johnson - 36lbs 8ozs Pullens Lake



Dan Luckhurst - 46lbs PB Westend Lake



Mr Coveney - 19lbs 8ozs Prairie

A catch report from Lee!

Lee Nicoll managed a couple of sessions before the Ice Age descended upon us and halted fishing:

Lee had several sessions in East Sussex fishing at Ardingly, Furnace Brook and Wallers Haven on the Pevensey Marshes. Not all the sessions produced fish, but he did manage some nice pictures of his endeavours.



PRICES

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 DAY TICKET X3 RODS - £20
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LAKE RULES

1. A TICKET MUST BE PURCHASED BEFORE FISHING
2. ALL NETS, UNHOOKING MATS AND WEIGH SLINGS MUST BE DRY BEFORE DIPPING IN THE DISINFECTANT BATHS
3. NO NUTS OR PARTICLE
4. BOILIE AND PELLET ONLY FOR SPECIMEN AND BACK LAKE - ALL BAIT WILL BE INSPECTED
5. ALL FISH MUST BE RETURNED TO THE WATER AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE FOLLOWING CAPTURE. NO STANDING. FISH MUST BE HELD LOW OVER A MAT/CRADLE FOR PHOTOGRAPHS
6. MINIMUM 15LB LINE AND NO BRAIDED MAIN LINE
7. NO SACKING OR RETAINING OF FISH IS PERMITTED. THE REMOVAL OF FISH FROM THIS VENUE WILL BE VIEWED AS A CRIMINAL ACT
8. EACH ANGLER MUST HAVE A MINIMUM OF 42 INCH LANDING NET AND A LARGE PADDED UNHOOKING MAT/CRADLE REGARDLESS OF TARGET SPECIES ON SPECIMEN AND BACK LAKE
9. BARBLESS HOOKS ONLY
10. NO LEAD CORE, NO FUSED LEADERS OF ANY KIND INCLUDING SAFEZONE
11. NO FIXED LEAD RIGS. ALL LEADS MUST PASS FREELY OVER LEADER KNOTS. RIG CHECKS WILL BE CARRIED OUT
12. RECREATIONAL DRUGS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED - IMMEDIATE BAN FOLLOWS
13. PLEASE INFORM FISHERY MANAGEMENT OF ANY SNAGGED TACKLE OR FISH
14. ANY FISH OVER 28LB MUST BE REPORTED TO BAILIFF
15. NO DOGS ALLOWED
16. BARBECUES ALLOWED IF OFF THE GROUND
17. NO BAIT BOATS
18. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THE RULES WILL RESULT IN BEING ASKED TO LEAVE AND/OR BANS WHERE APPROPRIATE AND NO REFUND WILL BE OFFERED
19. TRICKLEBROOK IS NOW OPERATING A ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY TO ANY ACTS OF AGGRESSION OR ABUSE TOWARDS ITS BAILIFFS AND STAFF
20. ALL RUBBISH TO BE TAKEN HOME

**CCTV IN OPERATION
OVER WHOLE SITE**

OPENING TIMES
 SUMMER 7AM - 7PM WINTER 7AM TO DUSK



Letters to the editor

Ralph Saunders wrote in to tell us about his return to fishing after a very long break of 50 years. It is safe to say that he is now enjoying his fishing more than ever!

"Hi Barry, After a 50 year break from fishing due to work commitments that kept me on the move here, there and everywhere, I have, in my retirement, started again this year 2022. I joined two Kent clubs and fished several waters, lakes and rivers, but did not have much luck at all catching only small stuff fishing the old fashioned way which I enjoyed many years ago, float fishing! I thought it was me not quite doing it right as I had all the gear, but no idea! I was then invited to have a look at Majors Lakes on the Ashford Road at Bearsted by Mark Whyatt, the bailiff. After my visit I decided to join and started fishing there in August using the same method as on the other waters and I have since enjoyed great success every visit. My best ever was a varied catch of 31 during a 3 hour session in August and I am very pleased to say that I have caught my first ever carp at Majors after listening to advice from Mark Whyatt and Colin Chapman on where to fish, what depth and baits and I am enjoying great fishing once again.



Here's some photos of my best fish this year from the Silvers lake, my best mirror out of the five that I have caught so far on different visits." **Kind regards, Ralph.**

Historic Carp Fishing Show comes to Kent!

If you fancy a night of carping nostalgia in the company of top carp historian, writer and long-time carp angler Chris Ball, then his 'Historic Carp Fishing Show' is for you.



John McLeod with a new record brace of carp from Redmire Pool in 1972.

The event will take place on **WEDNESDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2023 AT THE ALEXANDRA SUITE, ST. MARY'S ROAD, SWANLEY KENT BR8 7BU** and will feature both Redmire Pool and Ashlea Pool plus early Kent carp fishing. Tickets can be purchased and found here: **Chrisballswanley.eventbrite.co.uk**
BETTER BE QUICK AS TICKETS ARE LIMITED

Stewart Allum kindly put pen to paper and sent in these very kind words:

"Dear Barry,

I was very sorry to learn of your impending 'retirement', but having taken that step myself some years ago, I'm sure it will just be the start of a new and equally fulfilling phase in your lives.... plus of course you'll have more time to actually go fishing yourself and to enjoy your favourite pastime, as opposed to writing up everyone else's catches!

I wanted to thank you too, not only for producing this superb magazine for so long, but also for improving it's quality over time. You now have a well established team of excellent writers, all of whom have committed themselves, in some cases over several years to supporting the 'Informer' on an unpaid basis; which is no mean feat and again illustrates the esteem and affection in which this publication (not to mention your good self) is held throughout the angling community. As those of us who've worked within the 'trade' are aware, you don't just produce the magazine, you also drive countless miles back and forth across the region, personally delivering it to many various outlets.

I also wanted to formally thank you for furnishing me with all of Jim Smith's old articles and for allowing me to reproduce them in my forthcoming book on Jim's life. I hope the new owner(s) will continue your legacy and that the Informer will thrive and prosper in the years ahead."

Very Best Wishes

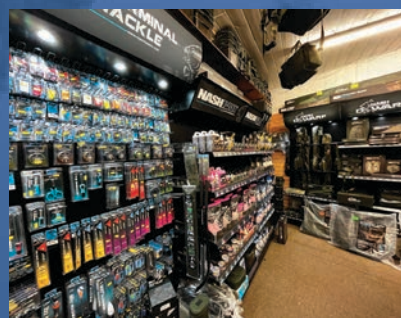
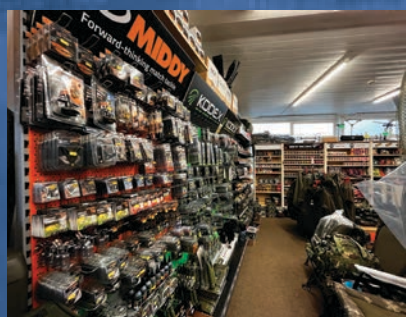
Your sincerely, Stewart Allum



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Beaver Fishery

Lingfield, Surrey

Ben and I are excited to announce that we will again be offering our yearly membership. Please have a look on our Facebook page for all of the details. *Before we get started on this report, myself, Ben and all at the fishery would like to thank Barry for all his hard work over the years and we would like to wish him and his wife health and happiness for their well deserved retirement.* Hopefully, the new owners of this fine magazine will be as invested as you were.

Well, where do we start with this month's report? Sitting in the fishery office with a heater and no running water while I write this report it has gone from the floods of a few weeks ago to minus temperatures and frozen lakes. Mother Nature really is showing us who's in charge that's for sure! Even with our paddle wheel aerators running the lakes are still frozen so we had to make the difficult decision to close the fishery for a few days. Sadly, the maintenance works that we were carrying out and work that was scheduled had to be stopped due to the ice making it unsafe to continue which has knocked us back a bit time wise. However, as of writing this we have rain forecast for the following week so that should see off this unwanted ice and snow. Amazingly there were a few catches before it got too cold:

Westlake continued to produce cats with **Martin Smith** banking 5 to 35lbs on one session and then 3 to 34lbs 8ozs on another session, while his mate **Colin Stone** banked his first ever cat at 24lbs, **Tammy Morris** banked her first ever cat at 35lbs 2ozs while her dad **Bob** had one at 31lbs 6ozs and **Nick Beevis** had his first ever cat at a decent 41lbs 15ozs, **Phil Parsons** carried on his good form with another one at 52lbs, **Alan Teakle** again got into the cats on his day session landing 3 to 38lbs 12ozs and **Ryan Hickling** banked 3 cats to 37lbs.



Martin Smith - 35lbs



Nick Beevis - 41lbs 15ozs PB Westlake



Bob Morris - 31lbs 6ozs Westlake



Colin Stone - 24lbs first ever cat!

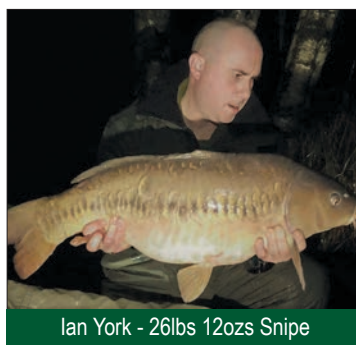
Snipe Lake saw **Ian York** bank the Big Lin at 26lbs 12ozs and **Lucas Tricker** banked a well deserved first ever Snipe Lake carp when he netted the Angry Mirror at 23lbs 14ozs.



Phil Parsons - 52lbs Westlake



Tammy Morris - PB 35lbs 2ozs Westlake



Ian York - 26lbs 12ozs Snipe



Lucas Tricker - 23lbs 14ozs Snipe



WANTSUM ANGLING ASSOCIATION

Marshside Lakes - River Wantsum - River Stour

Our folio of delightful waters include:

River Wantsum CT7 0QN / a section of the River Stour CT3 1JB
Marshside Fishery: Homersham Lake & Scroggins Lake CT3 4EB

Day Tickets available at all venues:

RIVERS: Adult £5 (Juniors to 16 years FOC)

LAKES: Adult £10 with loyalty card £7

Junior (aged 14-16 years inc.) £5

Night Fishing 5pm to 7am: Adult £15 with loyalty card £12

Night Fishing 24 hours:

Adult £25 with loyalty card £20 / Junior as for Day Tickets

Night fishing:
Only by prior booking.

Note: Juniors up to 13 years
to be with an adult - FOC

Contact Wantsum Angling Association on 01227 678063

or visit us at

www.wantsumaa.co.uk

We can also be contacted via the
Contact Us message service on the website

Daughters Lake hasn't seen many anglers on so **Alex Shepherd** was chuffed when he banked a mirror of 14lbs 2ozs.

Jeff's Lake fished well with **John Howe** banking 9 F1s and 1 bream, **Lawrence Marden** banked 27 bream and 4 F1s and plenty of other day anglers getting amongst the silvers too.

Ben and I hope that you all had a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year and we both look forward to seeing you all on the banks very soon.



Alex Shepherd - 14lbs 2ozs Daughters

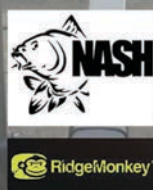


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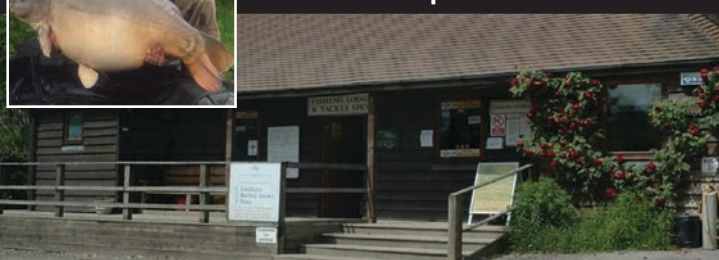
Elphicks has been designed and built with the modern angler in mind. We have 7 lakes available for day ticket and session fishing. Each lake has it's own parking within easy reach of the swims and all swims are 'all weather' - either built of Astroturf, stone or bark. Please contact the fishery for further information on any of our lakes.



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We are a commercial day ticket fishery and have 2 Specimen Lakes, 3 Coarse Lakes and 3 Ponds.

Open 7am - 7pm Summer time and 7am - 6pm Winter time. Day ticket, overnight and long stays welcome.

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Sandwich
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Visit Sandwich Lakes in 2022

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Sandwich Lakes is a delightful day ticket fishery in East Kent situated near to the Royal Cinque Port town of Sandwich. Set in a beautiful countryside location, the venue caters for all anglers from the specialist carp angler to beginners.

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A waterside cafe serving hot and cold food and drinks
Ladies and gents toilets • Plenty of free parking
On site tackle shop for bait and tackle • Rod hire

We can offer our visitors six coarse fishing lakes containing a variety of fish from silver fish to specimen carp. Matches and fishing lessons can be arranged by contacting our Fishery Manager Kevin Killeen.

The lakes:

VICTORY LAKE a specimen water of two acres with interesting island features and lily pads in the margins. Stocked with commons and mirrors to 35lbs along with ghost carp, tench, roach, rudd and specimen perch. Night fishing by prior booking available.

KINGFISHER LAKE this pond is 0.6 acres in size and is heavily stocked with commons and mirrors to 12lbs and is ideal for bagging up! All eight swims are wheelchair friendly with excellent access direct from the car park. A bridge from Kingfisher allows easy access to Victory Lake.

Victory Lake



Berry Lake



Damson Match Lake



Meadow Lake

MATCH LAKES - DAMSON AND VICTORIA one acre in size, each of these lakes are designed for the match angler having shallow margins with reeds for summer fishing and a deep drop off for light feeder work and winter fishing. They are stocked with a great variety of fish including carp to 16lbs and we believe these are the most uniquely designed match lakes in Kent!

MEADOW LAKE one acre in size with eight marked pegs and traditional grass bank fishing, Meadow is stocked with scaley mirrors and commons to 14 lbs. This lake also holds large perch and roach so you will be sure to catch!

BERRY LAKE is one acre in size and stocked with 3000 F1s, commons, mirrors, roach, rudd, perch and some large bream. Float and pellet tactics work well on this lake. IN the summer months, surface sport with mixers produces huge bags of fish.

Day Ticket Prices:

1 rod - £8 2 rods - £10 Family Ticket (2 adults and 2 children) - £25 Under 16s - £6 Sundowner (3pm to 7pm) - £6
Rod hire (includes seat hire & landing net) - £5 Night fishing 24 hours (by prior arrangement) - £20

Holidays at Sandwich Lakes

All bookings



on Sandwich Lakes

30 touring pitches with 16 amp EHU, new toilet and shower block with disabled wetroom.

Caravans & trailer tents £15 per night

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Greenacres Farm Fishery

Biddenden, Kent

Happy New Year from all at Greenacres!!!

Speci 1 Fishing is steady going now its getting colder, water levels are on the rise with fish showing over small baited areas using your chosen choice of hook bait. Preferred hookbaits seem to be sticky krill or Mainline Cell boilie.

Speci 2 Robin red halibut pellets and luncheon meat seem to be the best baits at the minute for catfish which are mainly getting caught late afternoons and through the night to early mornings. Catfishing has slowed up now that the colder weather has moved in but this only means that the pike are waking up. Carp can be caught on small baited areas close to the islands or margins.

Heron Still fishing really well on float or quiver tactics for a mixed bag of fish. Preferred hookbaits seem to be maggots and luncheon meat over a bed of pellet or groundbait.

Kingfisher This is a brilliant lake if you are starting up fishing for the first time as it is full of fish and keeps you busy all day. This lake can also be booked out for matches if you give us a call on 07933 934942

Bluebell A very unique lake tucked out the way, this lake holds some lovely tench to 6lbs and carp to 10lbs and is very peaceful.

Rules

- Dip all nets, slings, unhooking mats and cradles before entering any lakes or you will be asked to leave.
- No takeaways after 6pm
- No bins on site, so take all rubbish home including your fag butts
- Please read all the rules for each lake www.greenacresfarmfishery.co.uk
- No keep nets unless authorised by a member of staff
- Single hooks when pike fishing 'No Trebles'

Hawkhurst Fish Farm

Hastings Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4RT

Happy New Year to all our visitors -

Wishing you tight lines and great new PB's!

Ample Parking – Shower & Toilets - Tackle Shop & Café on site!

MAIN LAKE, DOVE LAKE AND ALL PLEASURE LAKES

will reopen 10th February!

SPECIMEN LAKE Remains open to Members only

JUNIOR LAKES reopen February half term (weather permitting)

Now also available to book on Swimbooker!

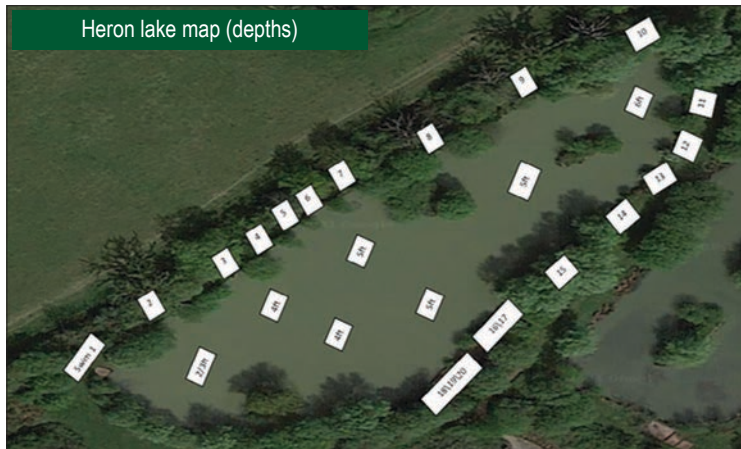
Remember to follow us on Facebook and Instagram to keep up to date with all our latest news!



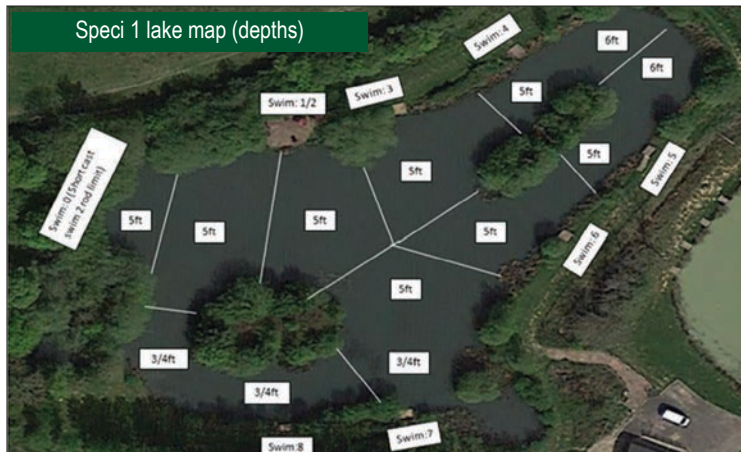
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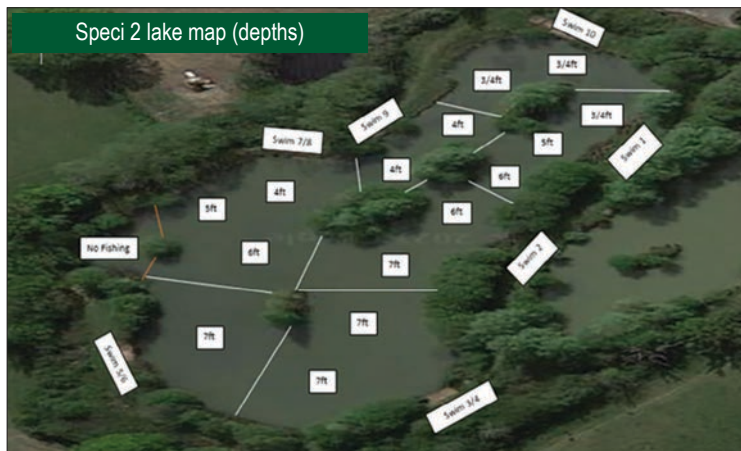
Heron lake map (depths)



Speci 1 lake map (depths)



Speci 2 lake map (depths)



Nice perch for Alex!



Alex Coutts had a great session just before the snow and ice arrived which resulted in some fine winter perch:

Hi Barry,

I had these fine fish which I caught on prawn tails with the bigger one going 2lbs 4ozs and were part of a six fish catch with 5 over 2lbs."

Kind regards, Alex.



GREENACRES FARM FISHERY



Sissinghurst Road | Biddenden | Kent | TN27 8EH

Located on the Weald of Kent in Biddenden we offer syndicate quality lakes for all. There is one specimen lake for carp up to 30lbs+, one specimen predator lake for carp to 27lbs+, catfish to 60lbs+ and pike, one match lake with twenty-two purpose built swims, one coarse lake and finally a tench/family pond. Facilities include a club house with toilets, shower, wet room and kitchen facilities.

This beautiful setting needs to be visited and enjoyed!

Prices start at £10 per session on the coarse lakes, £15 for the specimen lakes rising to £25 for a 24 hour ticket (£5 extra for a third rod).

Gates open at 7am and close at 7pm

SENIOR DAY TICKETS ON OUR COARSE LAKES HERON AND BLUEBELL ARE AVAILABLE FOR £5 MONDAY TO WEDNESDAY

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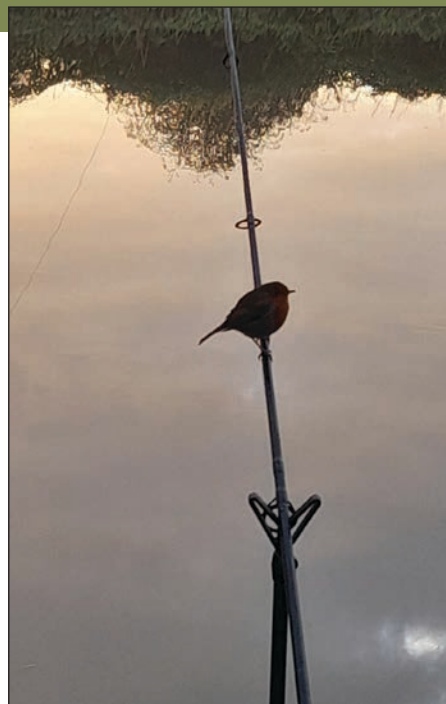


No fish, but a nice morning out for Mark!

Mark Day sent in this report recently. Normally at this time of year Mark is busy catching pike from the Stour, but the cold snap has rather slowed things down! However, Mark has not been disappointed:



"I have been doing a few early mornings on the river before work and the summer seems a distant past with this cold snap we are now in! No pike to report, but had a Robin which has been keeping me company on these cold mornings and the beaver seems to be hard at work, always something to see when mad enough to fish in these conditions!"
Kind regards, Mark

**The Health Benefits of Angling!**

Alison Edser and Dave Burleigh, who run the Reflections Angling project from their base at Henfold Bait and Tackle near Dorking, received this great feedback from one of their clients who wanted to pass on their thanks and tell how angling has been a remarkable positive in their lives:



"My partner and I both have mental health issues and to help us in our recovery we both decided to take up fishing. When researching places to go, I found Henfold Lakes and my partner contacted the Henfold Bait and Tackle shop. He enquired about possible coaching lessons and fishing equipment. Within minutes, we were invited down to discuss coaching and what to buy. The friendly environment made us feel like we were at home and as we discussed gear options, nothing was up sold or forced onto us. Advice was given fairly and we had the feeling of someone selling us something out of pure enjoyment and not as a business. A few days later we were out on the lakes catching our first fish with plenty to follow all thanks to the great coaching we received.

My partner landed his first mirror carp and I managed to land 19 silver fish, which all varied in types. This immediately got us hooked and with only two sessions with the coaches, we successfully gained enough base knowledge and confidence to go out on our own. As my partner has EUPD and ADHD, he struggles with learning and retaining information. The coaches were very understanding and made reasonable adjustments to support him in his learning and made sure to go at a pace he felt comfortable with. We also both have anxiety, depression and PTSD and carp fishing has given us a reason to get out of bed in the morning and enter a place that feels safe and calming. It's like entering another world where you don't have to worry or think about anything else but fishing. I want to say a huge thank you to the coaches and staff at Henfold Bait and Tackle shop for supporting us in our journey and welcoming us into the angling community."

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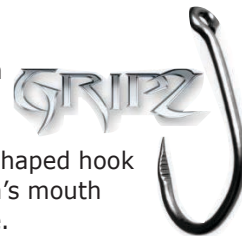
32" Tench
36" Carp Stalker
42" & 50" Carp Nets
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Phil Andrews
Set Up

Gripz Fishing Hooks

After extensive research, where the limitations of both barbed and barbless were scrutinised, there has been an obvious need for improvement thus resulting in this radical design that crosses the boundaries between what we have had and what we now have. Made from high grade Japanese wire, the key improvement has been the introduction of a series of minute horizontal grooves on the inside of the specially designed arrow shaped hook point, where historically the barb would have been. These grooves allow the hook to hold securely in the fish's mouth when pressure is applied, as the flesh presses into the grooves resulting in a firm hook hold with no slippage.



WINNER
of the
PALLATRAX GRIPZ
Hooks Set
for
DECEMBER is...
RICHARD STEEL



Mark Day - River Stour



Joe Glanville - 31lbs 8ozs Frant Lakes



Oscar Green - 23lbs 5ozs Hawkhurst



Andy Bungay



Stewart Mendez - 48lbs Charlies Lakes



Luke Ripley - 14lbs 10ozs Wallers Haven



Jon Pratt - 20lbs Club water



Robin Piper - Claygate Lakes

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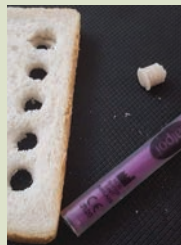
PALLATRAX
Catch more fish

Make your own Punch!

Anthony Wood came up with this brilliant idea for making your own punch tool at home. For those of you with young children, I daresay you may have a number of these plungers at home in that 'universal drawer' in the kitchen! Anthony originally put his 'invention' on the Home Made Boilies Facebook page and I shared it on the magazine's page as I thought it may be of interest, especially at this time of year when the fish can be lethargic and 'normal' baits don't produce a take. Anthony said: "As much as I love making my own boilies, sometimes I enjoy making other things as well."

The photos below illustrate how to make and use Anthony's great idea and here are the steps to follow to make your own punch tool:

- Take a Calpol plunger and carefully remove the bottom of the clear section with a sharp knife, but mind those fingers
- Punch yourself 4-5 discs of bread at a time, put your finger or thumb over the end and push the plunger down to compress the discs into a nice compact bread pellet
- Move your finger out of the way and push the pellet out
- On the hair I like to use the Korum quickstops for ease of use, but you can just use a normal hair rig if you prefer
- The bread pellet will expand as it gets wet so make sure there is enough room on the hair for it to expand



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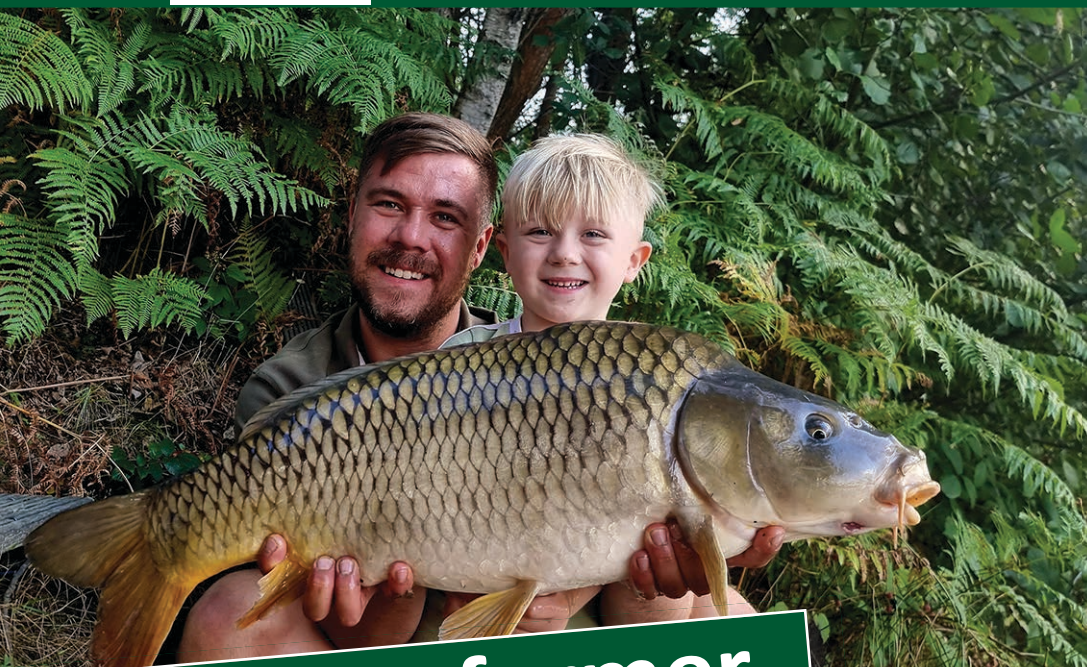
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Junior Informer

Young People and Fishing

As this is my last magazine, I felt I should write about something that was very close to my heart. The Freshwater Informer has become a very big part of me and my life over the years and I have worked tirelessly to ensure that it remained a 'must have' for the region's anglers every month. I would like to think that I succeeded in my quest and I am able to hand over a wonderful, well respected publication to the new owners. I must say that thanks to the unwavering support of the loyal readership and advertisers I have been able to promote fishing in the region which is the most important aspect of the Informer.

A subject that I have always been passionate about is getting children fishing and one of the first things I set about doing after becoming editor was to introduce the Junior Informer section of the magazine. Without doubt, this has been the most important element of the work that has been accomplished and I know the joy it has brought to so many young anglers and their families. I came across one of the first articles I wrote in the magazine and it seems as relevant now as it did almost ten years ago!

"A common theme that seemed to be prevalent during conversations with the tackle shops and fishery owners in our region, where have our young anglers gone? Due to the wonderful summer we have enjoyed this year, businesses have enjoyed a good trading period, which was most welcome after the prolonged wet winter we suffered. However, do we see enough young fishermen in the tackle shops and out on the banks? This is not a new phenomenon, but, it is certainly a common topic within the trade.

So how do we encourage children to go fishing? I am sure that we could come up with many suggestions, but, we really need to find a cure to preserve and protect the future of our beloved sport. I, like many others of a certain age, grew up during the sixties and seventies, when life seemed to be very much different for children than it is today. During the long Easter and Summer breaks, when the sun always seemed to shine, I would be outside from breakfast time to teatime and could normally be found on the banks of the Stour trying to catch gudgeon on a piece of breadpaste. However, from the age of about twelve, my mates and I would get on the train at Ashford and go to Dover to fish from the Admiralty pier. We had a standing order for lug at

Bills Bait and Tackle in Snargate Street and we never failed to go and collect our worms! Only the very worst of weather would postpone a trip!



I do appreciate that we live in very different times to life fifty years ago. Life back then appeared to be less complicated and stressful, and as teenagers, we did not seem to have the 'pressure' on us that there appears to be on today's young people. Competition for young peoples' attention and money seems to be acute these days. The Playstations and associated computer activities tend to grab the headlines as young peoples' prime interests. You only have to walk along the street to see the impact of technology on, not just young people, but society in general, as everyone is glued to a smart phone. Every part of life seems to be linked to these instruments! As kids and long before this leap in technology, we did not have any computerised distraction. If I wanted to talk to my mates I would either have to walk round to their house or ask mum very nicely if I could use the house phone! Myself and my friends did not have wealthy parents as most of our dads were railwaymen, but, our mums and dads always made sure we had money every Saturday for our train fare and three score of lugworm, we asked for nothing more.



As regulars on Dover's famous pier every weekend we would meet up with the same bunch of adult anglers and these anglers would later become role models and mentors to us. They taught us how to tie different rigs, make weights that would hold in the fierce tide run, how to cast better and we would watch in awe as one of our mentors would drop a net down the wall to land a large cod in the fierce tide that zips along the pier. As time went on, we would be asked to net a fish for our 'tutors'. You cannot imagine how proud we would feel after successfully netting a good fish and being congratulated on a job well done by it's captor. One would walk away feeling ten feet tall!! Although these are very fond memories of mine, I still believe there is a desire within today's young people to go fishing, just as we did and that there are still mentors on the beaches and lakesides keen to impart their knowledge and wisdom. However, due to media reports, would today's parents be happy to let their children fish with adults they do not know? It always helps if boys and girls have mums and dads who fish themselves, but, we must accept that there are an awful lot of adults who do not fish or want to fish.



Perhaps, education can play a part here?

I certainly believe that being an angler from a very early age, assisted by my dad who was a keen fisherman, helped to make me the person I am today. It helped me understand the many complex parts of nature that can only be learnt from being 'out there' and at one with the natural world. It taught me to understand tides, the weather, the stages of the moon, the time of year, but, most of all it taught me about the environment and the very fish that I wanted to catch, an outside classroom by any other name! Even now, I like to wander along an unknown beach and identify areas that fish could be attracted to once the water returns and covers the sand. I am sure this passion only comes once a holistic approach is made, understood and accepted.



During a recent conversation with a good friend of mine, who is a prominent match angler, we spoke about the very subject of young people going fishing. He too had noted that there is a marked change in the age of anglers competing in matches, they are getting older. Younger anglers do not seem to be entering angling competitions. About thirty years ago, I was the match secretary for a small club in Ashford and we enjoyed fortnightly matches on our water throughout the year. They were well attended, even during the winter months, by members. I do remember that as time went on, our younger members who were either already teenagers or approaching that age, asked to be able to fish with the adults in the adult matches, instead of just fishing in the junior league. The reason was that they wanted to fish with the men as they felt they learnt far more and appreciated the encouragement and knowledge that they received. This was much the same experience for me and my mates many years earlier fishing at Dover. Young males certainly enjoy



the company of being with adult males, perhaps it encourages confidence, self worth and self esteem. I know that many of our young club anglers went on to become very successful match anglers themselves, which I believe stemmed from their early days fishing with the men at the club.



As mentioned earlier, this topic has received acres of press coverage already, so I am not trying to reinvent the wheel, just merely trying to dig a little deeper hoping to have a 'eureka' moment! There are many successful initiatives already taking place throughout the country and the Countryside Alliance through their Fishing for Schools project are playing an active part in this area. If you find time, please take a look at their website, which is a most interesting read. It was hoped that following the successful Olympics held here some years ago, more young people would get involved with sport generally. Unfortunately, this does not seem to have been the case, which potentially makes our task of getting children to go fishing even tougher. I would certainly like to see angling being a part of the educational curriculum, however, being a realist, I understand the pressures on school budgets and the complications of taking a group of children fishing. Perhaps angling clubs and schools could work more in partnership to achieve these aims?

But, as I mentioned before, fishing is far more than just catching a fish, it is a life shaping means of understanding yourself and the very world we all live in, so is potentially a very viable part of any educational system."

Although the above was written nearly ten years ago it all still seems very relevant now. However, more recently we have featured both in the magazine and on the Facebook page much of the work that Warren White has achieved locally and the amazing successes he has seen from his students. Warren is not alone as he is one of many professional coaches throughout the country who work tirelessly every week providing this alternative to mainstream education. Does it work? I think one look of the students' faces shows it does!

I am off now to enjoy a few well earned 'days off' and perhaps do a bit of fishing myself!

Enjoy your fishing and very best wishes to you all! Barry Reed



Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society



After the recent flood conditions and now the cold snap, fishing has been slow with limited notable catches reported from most of our waters. The Pike fishing has been good though with a few specimens recorded from the river and our stillwaters. Andy Bungay had a good double from the Old Ballast Pit while several reports of multiple catches with individual fish to mid double figure have come from Barden Lake. Tony Cooper had a fine 15lbs 4ozs Pike from the river. Neal Rogers had a low double from the Hartlake section. The Old Ballast Pit has produced a

few nice Carp to around 20lbs and a few Bream to the 6lbs mark. The Society has taken delivery of some new stock recently with 150 small Tench going into Pippins Farm. We have also stocked Roach and Rudd to 1lb 8ozs into the Old Ballast Pit and New Lagoon. 300lbs of large Tench to 5lbs+ were introduced to the Old Ballast Pit and Longfield Lake.

A very Happy New Year from all of us at Tonbridge & District AFPS!



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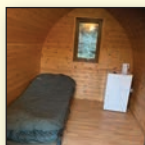


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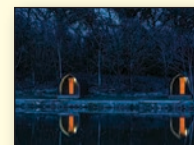
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If you're already taking bookings online - GREAT! Would you be interested in increasing the number of bookings you get? Or, switching to a custom-built platform that anglers enjoy, and can use with ease? We're the preferred technology partner of fisheries that want a system that just works.

We're even scrapping the first year's fishery software fee for readers of the Freshwater Informer - call Alfie on 07713 099 838 to setup a meeting.

Feature List

swimbooker

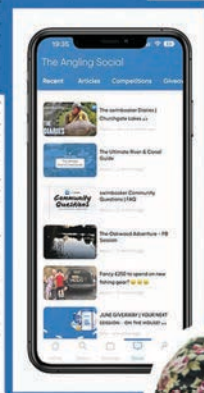
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FRIDAY 16TH - SUNDAY 18TH JUNE 2023

Across both Kingfisher & Kestrel lakes

Entry details:

£250 per person, this includes breakfasts and dinners of your choice from our canteen from Friday morning - Sunday morning (Delivered directly to your swim upon request)

An initial booking deposit of £50 is required to secure your entry in the competition, with the remaining balance due by 16th May 2023.

(There will be a total of 20 swims in use, these will be allocated fairly to participating anglers by a random draw on the morning of the competition)

*Competition Rules:

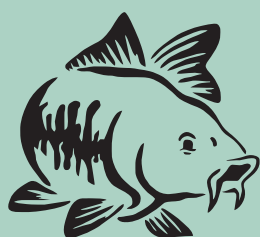
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- ✗ Baiting Spoons
- ✗ Surface Fishing
- ✗ Baiting outside of your swim

Timings:

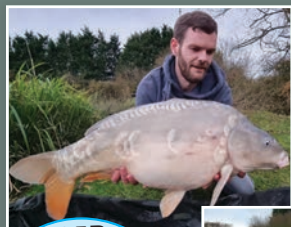
Swim allocation draw - 9:30am 16/06
Competition start - 12pm 16/06
Competition end - 12pm 18/06
Prize ceremony - 12:30pm 18/06



*Full competition rule list will be released closer to the time of the event, please contact Joanne on 07725 783405 for further details



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Langley's Lake

A 3-acre specimen carp lake with hard fighting fish up to 30lbs. We only allow a maximum of 8 anglers at time on to this water which has a variety of features to fish to. Langley's is the largest lake at the venue and there are a number of additional fishery rules in place on this water. The average depth is around 5'. Get your tactics right and you can expect a great session!
£15 / 12 hours - £30 / 24 hours
No concessions.



The Stream

Approx 1/3 mile long with an average width of 30', this canalised section of water offers anglers the opportunity to fish with a pole or rod for a variety of fish including crucians, roach, rudd, bream, perch and tench. A very popular water for those who enjoy a more traditional style of fishing. The average depth is 4' and there are 60 pegs available.
£10 / 12 hours - £20 / 24 hours
Concessions available.
Match bookings available.



The Pan Lake

A more intimate water than Langley's with carp to 20lbs along with a selection of silver fish including roach, tench, barbel and perch. With an average depth of 5' and lots of features, this pretty water offers all anglers a great day out.
£10 / 12 hours - £20 / 24 hours
No concessions.



Farm Lake

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With innovation comes a need for explanation!

As I write this piece I am mindful of a saturated market that pushes a narrative that I personally don't agree with. If we sit here accepting promoted trends are we not in danger of never moving forward and, therefore, accept that we can't improve on what we have? In writing this copy, I can understand that some may take the view of; here we go again, more product placement, and I can understand such a mindset! What I would say is that I am in a 'Catch 22' situation. How do you highlight products without appearing contrived? What I can promise you is that I believe 100% in the following paragraphs and they are based on my 'fight' to explain, not some flag waving exercise to sell!



Innovation is defined as a new method, idea or product and when it comes to product development within Pallatrax that is what I set as my first goal. I don't want to replicate, I want to innovate with products that push boundaries, go against the grain and disrupt trends. I want to do this for several reasons, especially to improve on the 'old', to help us to catch more fish alongside being environmentally sustainable. With my fishery ownership hat on, and my moral obligation in a world challenged by environmental bad practices, I don't want products or practices that may harm, but ones that are a positive.

Pallatrax's corner stone, excuse the pun, are my Stonze natural fishing weights range, which I have to admit have, sadly, faced an uphill battle to be accepted with an industry focused on lead weights and method feeders. I say "sadly" as I see them to be a huge, and proven advantage, over the man-made, and it has frustrated me that sometimes it seems like pushing water uphill to get the truth out there! Stonze have their own identity as a unique angling tactical approach with benefits that more and more anglers, thankfully, are now realising!



They are not to be confused with a lead or method feeder, those two products sit on their own and do a job. But what if there is a natural product that has its own characteristics whilst also being able to be used as both a weight and a feeder? Surely, if that exists, that has to be a better option, especially if it is non-toxic and better value for money – which is what the hand made Stonze are! Other benefits include the fact you can flavour a Stonze with a water based flavour for extra attraction, they settle on silt and are truly genuine natural colours. Whilst some have tried to mimick the Stonze they should really see that the modern lead is actually the gimmick, covered in coloured plastic that resembles nothing in nature whilst also missing the point that fish sense alien objects within their environment and can, therefore, become suspicious of them. Getting rid of the largest piece of your terminal tackle and swapping for Stonze has so many advantages including helping you to catch more fish – it really does make common sense once you have made that leap of faith and embraced.

Gripz - It really is the whole point!



With my quest to invent, do we really have to accept that there are only two hook designs for us to use? When I say that, historically we have had only barbed and barbless, which then have hundreds of hook patterns within these two hook designs. Alongside Stonze, I am genuinely proud of introducing what is a third hook design, an award winning hook design that has huge benefits over both barbed and barbless - Gripz. A massive statement, but when you look at the facts to support and then use Gripz it has already revolutionised the way thousands of anglers view hook design both at home and abroad.

The Gripz grooves are the key to the hooks' unique performance. These tiny grooves hold firm during the fight with no slippage and then are easily, and safely, removed once the pressure is off. This alleviates mouth damage concerns alongside giving the angler so much more confidence that they won't lose the fish. Gripz also have a cutting point, which is incredibly sharp whilst also exceptionally durable, one angler contacted me recently from Canada telling me had 'retired' a Gripz hook after landing 27 hard fighting carp!

No angler, including myself, likes to lose fish so if you can up your odds of landing a fish safely with Gripz then it becomes a 'no brainer'. For me, as a fishery owner,

knowing that my anglers have a better performing hook design that lessens slippage and the resulting damage is negligible are two huge positives. I now have the vast majority of the most popular hook patterns, from Carp to Predators, available and soon we will see the launch of the Gripz match range. Exciting times ahead and more patterns in development, Gripz have firmly cemented themselves within the hook market!

There will never be anything from Pallatrax other than drawing my fellow anglers to the conclusions I have made from the evidence and pursuit to innovate. As mentioned, if we don't question and take the assumed narrative as gospel then we



won't improve and I do believe that if we keep on doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result, well it is said it is the first sign of madness!

Last, but not least, what is fantastic to see is more and more fisheries appreciating these products as they have been truly designed to also be fishery management tools alongside beneficial for anglers. I love assisting fisheries in such a fashion and these two ranges, Gripz hooks and Stonze weights, sit nicely alongside my bait ranges that especially focus on healthy weight gains of fish, whilst catering from the increasing concerns over water quality.

I would like to wish you all the best for 2023, I hope you stay safe and smash those personal bests whilst enjoying the incredible benefits that angling offers!

Simon 'Pom' Pomeroy



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The Golden Years of Coarse Fishing

by Bob Rolph

The day Steve Edwards son and grandson taught me a lesson!

One day during the long school holidays of 1964 a 14-year old boy approached me whilst I was carp fishing at Keston Ponds asking all about the fishing and how he could catch a carp!

He'd heard that I had caught a few fish and must have thought that I was some sort of expert. I was only 19 myself! Expert I was not, nor ever have been, but we talked for hours that memorable morning and I showed him my methods, freelined lob worms between the lillies and we caught tench. So things haven't changed for 58 years or have they???

That young lad was Steve Edwards and on a Saturday in September, just 2 days after the Queens death, Steve's son Warren and grandson Jude showed me how to catch carp in the 21st century, and HOW they showed me in no uncertain terms!

Steve was 60 when he sadly died 12 years ago, one of Kent's greatest carp anglers. We had arranged to meet on Prairie Lake at Elphicks fishery near Goudhurst. They had been there since the Thursday and were planning to stay for 3 days and nights, until Sunday afternoon. Warren and grandson Jude had booked me in for Saturday and this was my first serious carp fishing trip for over 40 years, even though I had caught hundreds of small commons to 17lbs from Chilham Castle Lake in recent years, but that was fun float fishing!

I confess that I had little knowledge of the modern methods that we were to use

and had never used a pop up

bait, pod or digital bite alarms on a tripod stand. Oh to have had them on the hard gravel banks of Keston 60 years ago! My old rod rests were deemed useless so they set me up with remote controlled roller buzzers and proceeded to show me the ropes. Things were looking promising as during the night both Warren and Jude had taken 20lbs fish and Warren a fine 32lbs Ghost carp and Jake some beautiful fully scaled commons.



Bob, Warren and Jude



Jeff Lightfoot - 29lbs Common

Their friend, Jeff Lightfoot from Blackheath, was with them and although new to carp fishing he had already achieved more in two years than I had in 50, and was to break his PB twice during our stay at the waterside with fish of 27 and 29lbs.

I had taken along worms, maggots and mussels with me, mistakenly thinking that these would do the business more than all their new fangled pop up baits enclosed in dissolving PVA bags, how wrong I was proved to be! Most of my old hand made tackle is now housed in the Carp Society's Museum at Horseshoe Lake at Lechlade, but I still had my more modern carbon tench rods and Shimano reels, and a brand new 46 inch landing net, never used in micro mesh as my old catfishing net is now illegal! Warren set me up with this huge PVA bag of groundbait enclosing a size 6 barbless hook and some sort of pop up bait which looked more like a ball of plastic to me! My 11ft tench rod was straining to cast this out towards the island in a pre baited area as I settled down to await events. The 20zs weight was an anathema to me as I wanted to use freelined mussels so this was more like beachcasting I thought to myself, but needs be, and Warren assured me that I would catch a carp!

True to his word, after just 15 minutes I had a run, fishing over the far bank in the margins and I landed a fine mirror carp of 10lbs, the best mirror I had caught for many a long year. Jude continued to bait up areas around my swim with buckets full of round boilies and I recalled the days in 1971 when Fred Wilton fished with us all at Keston developing his baits which revolutionised carp fishing.

Things slowed by lunch time and I was getting restless. I was more used to fly fishing or float fishing and holding my rod and recasting continually, and I wanted to check my baits every 5 minutes, so I mistakenly changed over to mussels, which I had previously had so much more faith in during my youth. This was a great mistake as I just kept catching small fun sized mirrors of 1-2 lbs in weight, and even small perch. Warren, Jude and Jeff persevered with their proven methods and began to hit the jackpot with so many 20lbs plus fish that I could hardly believe it. Fish of 29lbs 12ozs, 29lbs, 28lbs, 27lbs and numerous 20 - 22lbs commons mainly. The most beautiful fully scaled commons graced their nets, and I was left far behind!



Bob Rolph - 10lbs



Warren Edwards - 29lbs 12ozs



Jude Edwards - 28lbs 5ozs

One fish, a 29lbs common, lying there in the cradle reminded me of Dick Walker's 44, and I wondered what he would have made of it all today, modern day carp fishing, so far removed from the events of Sept 13th 1952 at Redmire Pool, when bread, worms or potatoes were the order of the day. I had seen at first hand 8 carp larger than I had ever caught, and I am now even more determined to fish again until I break the 30lbs mark, perhaps next summer with Warren, Jude and Jeff again. We have a winter date for perch, and I intend to fish for tench again soon with float and maggot, or even cockles, which were so successful for me in years gone by.

I fished with Bob Reynolds off his small island at Billing in 1965, with Dick Walker at Grafham for Trout in 1970 and with Bob Church many times, but my day out in the heart of Kent with the son and grandson of one of my oldest fishing mates is a highlight of a long and eventful fishing life spanning 65 years which I hope to be able to repeat again soon.

Thanks to them all for the invite. Bob Rolph



How things have changed!

Medway Man

Bob Morris

It is unusual these days to get a lengthy cold snap before Christmas but, as I write this piece, that is exactly what we have and with morning temperatures below minus 5 for the fourth consecutive day it is unlikely that I will get up to much on the fishing front any time soon. Several local lakes are iced over and a generous coating of snow fell a few days ago. With no immediate signs of a change predicted, I am expecting more to follow. There will be a few large waters still free of ice along with one or two stretches of the river so I might still have a chance!

As you will have seen from Barry's editorial bit last month, he is going to retire and sell the Freshwater Informer shortly and I understand that this issue will be his last. I am also told that he is now in negotiations with interested parties and no doubt more info on this will be available soon. I think that all of our readers would join with me in wishing him all the very best for the future and thank him for the last seven or eight years of his stewardship on the mag - which has seen it develop and increase in popularity along with the Facebook page and website. Thank you for this Barry and of course, Best Fishes and Wishes for the future to you and your wife - it has been great working with you!

In the last issue of the Informer I advertised the launch of my second book 'Tales of a Medway Man'.

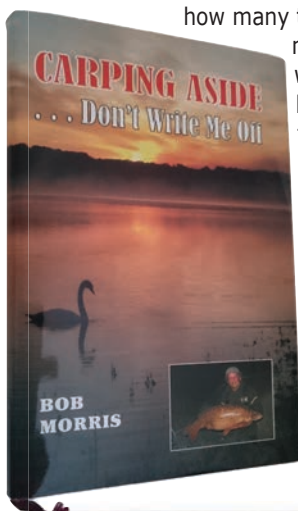
The launch was very successfully held at the 'Chequers' pub locally here at Darenth, in spite of a horrendous gridlock of traffic on the evening in question - one guy took two and a half hours to get there from mid Kent while a number of others were forced to turn back! Thank you to all the staff at the pub, I am sure that I will be seeing you again very shortly. I would also like to thank my friends/contributors, Cliff, John and Pete for signing copies and also entertaining the anglers at the 'do'. As readers of this column will know there was a substantial hold up in releasing this book, mainly due to illness and a couple of other issues, but at least it did show itself in time for Christmas - albeit at the mercy of the first postal strikes for yonks!! With the economic squeeze that we are all facing at the moment, it was hardly the best time to release a book and also, as I was publishing it and taking the risk myself, it was a bit of a dilemma when it came to deciding

how many to print on the first run. I eventually decided to put my money where my mouth, or pen, was you might say, and I am delighted to reveal that within four days of the launch evening I was having to order the second batch. The first 50 from the first batch were numbered and while most of these are now gone, I did hold a few back for the collectors. I have also been asked for leather-bound copies and I have not ruled this out, although I have told any collectors that this would be to 'special order' paid up front and even then only if I get sufficient orders. This would be a very limited number by the sound of it, but of course that is what collectors really want!

As you can see from this month's ad, I have a few copies of my previous book 'Carping Aside' left in stock and I will be doing a 'special offer' of the two books together for a limited period. I should perhaps now just mention that I have not given up on the rod building front but I am trying to cut down a bit in order to give me a bit more time to squeeze it all in.



From Bob's Book 'Tales of a Medway Man'



Just as an update to the first paragraph I was right about the temperatures and we have now had a week of freezing weather with a minus 10c this morning and a thaw is not predicted to begin for at least another a couple of days or more! All very pretty though.

And now as I have little to report on the fishing front ... It's 'University of Esox' time..

What do you do when you are out pike fishing, but find that you have left your wire traces at home? Well, this happened to me a couple of years back and as I was at least an hour's drive from home it was 'scratch your head' time. I had been experimenting with alternative trace materials in the form of 50lbs Quicksilver and had found this to be 95% effective but, of course, I had none of this with me either! I had not only driven to the venue, but had walked about a mile along the river to this favoured spot and so was determined not to waste the session. It was an icy morning similar to the current conditions and I was racking my brain to think of a solution. The long walk had loosened one of my boots and as I bent down to tie the laces it occurred to me that probably a pike would not be able to bite through one of these.

I removed one, which was of the cord type (round in section) and then wondered how to attach my single barbless hook and hair. The solution quickly came to me as I had used this system before. A large strong clip of the type normally used on spinning traces was tied to the boot lace which I had cut in half to make 2 traces. It was then a simple matter of putting a size 2 or 4 hook onto the clip along with a short looped hair rig made from braid. I was then up and running with two rods on the go!



*From 'Tales of a Medway Man'
illustrations by Pete Curtess*



Bob is still Rod building







Bob's double single rig from 4 years ago shows the Clip & Hair



A winter's morning

Did it work? Yes, it did, and I landed two pike that afternoon, both 8 - 10lb and I spent some time trying to cut the boot lace/cord on their teeth - it was almost impossible! I have not switched over to 'boot lace traces', but it proved that once again, you only need a material that is resistant to the pike's teeth. This is most effective with the hair and single barbless hook system because, as I have said before, the vast majority of pike are hooked in the scissors (corner of the mouth) and for this reason the trace is very often not in contact with the teeth anyway. One disadvantage of using any soft material for traces however, is that it is prone to tangling and this is something that I will talk about in a future issue, Incidentally, the spring clip method of attaching the hook is now something that I frequently use on my pike rigs these days!

Best Fishes & New Year's Wishes
Bob Morris

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Hello and welcome to the January edition of Junior Informer!

Firstly I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and I hope you all had a great Christmas! I trust Santa brought you all lots of fishing tackle when he made his visit on Christmas Eve! Hopefully the weather will improve to enable you to get out and try your new 'fishing toys' very soon.

The weather leading up to Christmas was very cold and we saw lots of snow and ice. Due to the very low temperatures both day and night, the ice remained for some time making fishing on lakes impossible. However, the rivers were still fishing reasonably well once the levels had dropped and much of the water had cleared. This time of year is always very unpredictable in terms of weather, however, the past couple of years have seen very mild winters which enabled fishing to continue right through the coldest part of the year. This year has been rather more difficult as we had lots of rain through the late part of Autumn and then the cold spell which froze everything!

As you may be aware, this is my last issue of the Freshwater Informer! My wife and I are retiring and moving to Lincolnshire to spend our 'Golden Years'! However, this is NOT the end of the magazine, far from it. The Informer will have new owners who are keen to continue the magazine much as it has been and you have enjoyed. Keep an eye out for updates on the Facebook page and remember to send in your catch photos to whoever takes on the wonderful job of looking after the Freshwater Informer.

Remember to keep going and enjoying your fishing! It is a fantastic hobby and one that will stay with you forever!

Best wishes to you all, Barry Reed

Fishing to stop at The Moat in Park Farm, Ashford!

Paul Cooper alerted the Freshwater Informer to this sad story he read at Kent Online:

"Anglers will be unable to use a popular fishing lake from next year after council bosses decided to shut the site. The Moat on Park Farm, Ashford, has been enjoyed by enthusiasts for decades but has become overgrown in recent years. Ashford Borough Council (ABC) has now confirmed fishing will no longer be allowed from April, sparking sadness among residents. Tom Halpin, a bailiff at Stanhope Angling Society, which has had the licence for the lake since 1996, says the authority "could have done much more". Tom said: "The members are up in arms about it as it's still a popular site - we had 50 to 60 members this year. The council just isn't doing anything about it which is sad. We've tried and tried and tried but when I went fishing over there earlier this year there was just a foot of water." Ashford Borough Council recently spent £400,000 upgrading the adjacent play park, but club member Rob Heath says some of the money could have been spent desilting the lake, which is on the site of a former moated manor house.



"They're spending thousands on new swings and slides, which is all well and good, but they could have looked at The Moat as well," the Park Farm resident said. "They're taking away an amenity which is very sad - children can spend the day there and all the dog walkers know us. The council will have to take all the fish out of the lake - that will be the only way to stop people using it. It's sad that they'd rather do that than pay the money to desilt it. We gained lots of new members through lockdown and raised £25,000 which could have been used." Kennington resident Joanne Frazier, who owns a dog walking business, says she approached the council about revamping the spot but her efforts "fell on deaf ears". "I'm really upset about the current condition it has fallen into," she said. "To think it won't be able to be used for fishing any more is really disappointing and I want to try to turn this decision around. It gives locals - young and old, boys and girls - a chance to spend some time outdoors and

learn about fish and nature. It's keeping young people off the streets and possibly committing crimes. If they're not allowed to come here, where else are they going to go?" The 42-year-old says the site should be protected as it is one of few fishing spots in Ashford. "It's a shame, so much could be done with this area but instead it's becoming an eyesore," she said. "Lots of people have expressed the same concerns as myself on social media."

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January update

by instructor Warren White



As I write this article, after a heavy snowfall last night and this morning, my fishing session today has been cancelled as the school is closed due to the severe weather conditions. Thankfully, this is a rare occasion, but one thing you have to live with if you are coaching through the winter. Things like the bait you have bought such as maggots and worm will need to go in the fridge until the next session or they will be wasted, which comes at a cost.

Something that we have promoted more than ever this year with our students is predator fishing after some outstanding catches of perch in the Autumn at a stillwater fishery that we use which were mainly caught whip fishing with maggot or jigging.

We have recently moved on to river fishing as winter approached as most stillwaters became harder to catch. Fishing our local rivers Darent and Cray we normally trot with a rod and reel, stick float style or whip fish as our rivers are quite narrow. On both these waters if the river is spot on, water levels up after rain and not too clear, we have had some fine catches of all the traditional river fish including chub, roach, dace and perch. In all conditions you will catch, but when the river is running low and clear it becomes hard work.

To add a new experience for our students and make the most of the cold conditions in the last month or so, we have been pike fishing on the river Cray using a basic float rig with wire trace and a single no 6 hook. This can be used with deadbaits or livebaits. Before starting the practical fishing we looked at some basic river rigs and showed how to tie a wire trace, crimp style and looked at the all important tools needed, including long forceps and long wire cutters.



The business end of a pike!

We found that the last five pike caught, 4 were hooked well and were played and landed straight away and one other fish let go of the bait but was caught on the second cast. This bodes well for the single hook approach compared to using treble hooks. The stamp of fish we have caught have been between 2 - 5lbs, Jack Pike, and a good starter for young anglers. Unhooking a pike, especially for a young person, can be a daunting process, but by using a single hook approach makes unhooking a lot easier. Pike have been called the 'freshwater shark' and are no doubt a formidable predator, but on the bank they are quite delicate and must be handled with great care.

River Cray at Hall Place

We had a really good session in early December before the cold weather arrived on the river Cray at Hall Place. It was great to be out fishing on a local river with these lads, and watching them get more confident in handling pike and learning more about pike fishing.



Nice perch for Jack at Grove Farm



Terry with a Hall Place pike



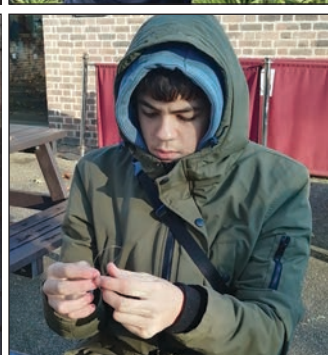
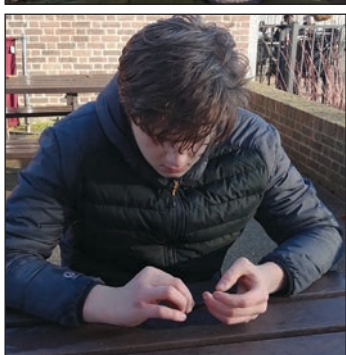
All our recent fish have been caught on a single hook wire trace. It was wonderful seeing these lads outdoors enjoying themselves.

A very cold session!

The coldest morning of the year saw a right thick frost! I met up with the lads from Rowhill School on the river Cray and the river was running clear and fishing was not easy. We did have a few silver fish on maggot. Before we started fishing we learnt a few fishing knots, but with the boys soon understandably complaining of cold hands and cold feet we had a good walk along the river and we all soon warmed up! This is what winter fishing is all about.

I would like to thank

Hadlow College, T.W.A.P.S, Monk Lakes and The Tackle Box Dartford along with The Cobtree Charity Trust for their ongoing support and from all of us at Coaching Coarse Fishing and Fishing for Schools, a very Happy New Year!



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Hastings Bexhill & District Freshwater Angling Association

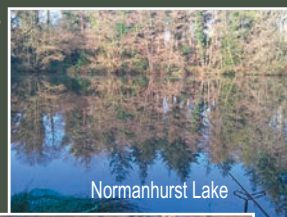
Season runs from 1st April to 31st March.

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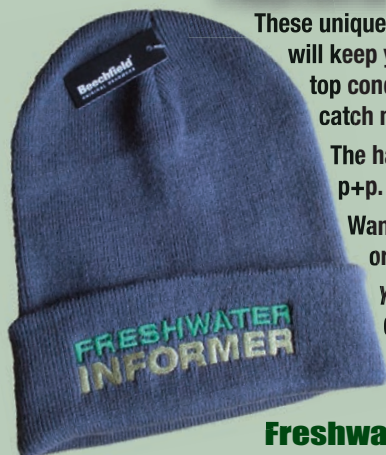
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Happy New Year! December brought one of the coldest Winters to our Fishery and we sadly had to close for a week due to frozen lakes, perhaps this was the reset that we needed after the incredibly hot Summer. Preceding this closure we had some quality Rainbows being caught between 3lbs-7lbs and Black Hopper was catching fish. We would like to think if the weather permits, Winter fishing in January and February will be good at Tenterden, we certainly have plenty of stock in the Lakes for our Anglers to enjoy and our Trout put up a great fight and the cold weather will have made them active. Our 3 Lakes (just under 5 acres of water) are fully stocked with quality Rainbows, Blues & Brownies (3lbs-14lbs) so make sure you fish them all when you are here to get the maximum out of your visit, moving every 30 mins. We do request that our Brownies are returned to the water. Our warm Lakeside Fishery Lodge is open for you to enjoy providing tea/coffee with our compliments. We have great facilities with kitchen/dining/sofa, toilet and lakeside balcony where you can relax. All this adds to a good fishing experience for friends and family at Tenterden. Please call 01580 763201 or email gaynor@coombe-farm.com to book your fishing to avoid disappointment. If we don't answer please leave a message, name and number and we will get back to you asap. We limit our numbers to 12 so there is plenty of space for our Anglers to fish.

Stay & Fish Our Shepherds Hut accommodation is open all year round for both Anglers who wish to stay and fish and for other guests who just welcome a short break away in Kent. We are delighted that it has been well received by guests in our positive reviews. We offer 20% off our permit prices if you stay in our Ghillies Hut. To discover more visit our 'Shepherds Hut' heading on our website and click on Availability and Bookings which directs you to our Airbnb listing. Fishing

Tuition is available at our Fishery £50 for 1hr 30 mins. Please enquire/book direct with Richard Stokes, our Instructor, email richard@coombe-farm.com if you are interested in learning a new skill set. Visit our Tuition Page on our website for more info. It is always fun to learn new things in life and you can purchase a lesson as a gift voucher experience for someone special. For an up-to-date fishing report please visit our website: www.tenterden-trout-waters.co.uk and click on News/Fishing Report. Please follow us on Instagram and Facebook and visit our Gallery. Our family run Fishery was established in 1975 and we are one of the Top 50 Stillwater Trout Fisheries in the British Isles and a Trout Master Water. Our Fishery is also a picturesque Wedding Venue in July, August & early September when we are closed for Summer. Discover more at www.tenterden-trout-waters.co.uk/wedding-venue

We offer Gift Vouchers for that special sporting present which can be purchased by bank transfer, cheque or cash. Call or email and we can email/send them out for you. We would like to wish Barry at the Freshwater Informer every good wish for his retirement in 2023 and we thank him for all his support over the years. We hope that a new owner will be found who will follow in his footsteps and take the magazine into the future. We look forward to welcoming you to Tenterden Trout Waters for some exciting Winter fishing. **Tight Lines – Gaynor, Richard & Audrey**

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Lure Fishing

Andy Lush - The Friendly Fisherman

Return to Lakedown Trout Fishery Burwash TN21 8UX

I returned to Lakedown for Tunbridge Wells Fly Fishing Society's Fur and Feather Christmas competition. It was pleasing to see the colour had dropped out of the top two lakes, which had been unfishable on my previous trip. Fortunately, it hadn't rained properly in the last two weeks which was a relief after the monsoon conditions we'd experienced at the beginning of November.

After the usual banter and coffee, twenty fly fishermen made a hasty getaway to fish their chosen spots. I was one of the last away, 'you can't rush a Lush', I've been told. I elected to fish the top lake which had been by-passed by all but two anglers. Russell Bell and James Gardner were already trying their luck and I joined James fishing a spot directly opposite the fishing lodge.

It was a slow start, hardly any ripple and no signs of fish. I started on a floating line with my current favourite fly, an unweighted Apps bloodworm. I made several casts exploring the water in front of me, gradually increasing the 'count down' to explore the depths. A cast towards an overhanging tree saw my line drifting sideways into the margin, as it approached the bank the line jabbed tight, 'fish on'. A lovely full finned rainbow shot out in front of me before boring down under the rod tip. Once netted and dispatched, I quickly spooned it to see what it had been feeding on. The big reveal was rather disappointing, just a few small buzzers that were almost completely digested, so they hadn't been eaten recently.

With a fish already in the bag I was now confident to continue fishing lake 1. James was a few yards along the bank from me, using an intermediate line with a small white and yellow mini lure. He was fishing below the surface drift, using the intermediate allowed him to mix up the retrieve speeds without altering the fly's depth. I heard a fish explode on the surface shortly afterwards and saw James's rod bending alarmingly. He immediately asked for help as he'd seen the fish and it was a big brownie! The fish was very strong and fought hard making several circuits of the swim in front of us. It was several minutes before James had any sort of control, while I waited nervously with the net. I was in no hurry to chase the fish with the net, I've seen too many fish lost like that, so I bided my time and waited. Finally, it tired and slowed showing its flank as it surfaced, this was my cue and I quickly scooped the monster brownie into the net.

What a truly stunning fish it was, James couldn't believe his luck at catching another of Lakedown's monster brownies! At 8lbs 14ozs it was huge, it even eclipsed the 8lbs 10z brownie he caught in last years 'Fur and Feather' at Lakedown.

After that, despite a lot of effort neither of us had any more action so it was time to move. We headed to lake 2, I opted to fish from the field side an area most anglers avoid as often there are cattle there. I believe the fish get pushed towards this quiet area when there's a lot of anglers on the fishery. I was surprised I couldn't get a take casting into the deep channel that leads into the long arm. I quickly switched rods from my floating line outfit to the "fast glass" intermediate on the other rod. I was casting into the same area, but wanted to try faster retrieves to trigger a 'reaction take', while maintaining the same depth. The problem was hardly any line could be retrieved before I felt extra resistance that indicated the line was dragging over something. I tried casting in different directions but still felt the same resistance. I gave up fishing there, I concluded there must be a snag, presumably blown off one of the surrounding trees that was causing the problem.



It's said lightning doesn't often strike twice in the same place

Another move was necessary, and I managed to get a point swim on lake 3. The water was much clearer here, and I felt confident I was in a good spot. After an hour's fishing, chopping and changing flies, depths and fly lines I was struggling. I heard Micky Priest complaining he had lost two fish right at the end of his retrieve, 'on the hang'. This gave me a clue about what I should try next. Using my intermediate line, I made a cast of fifty feet; I mark my lines every ten feet so I can repeat whatever works again, precisely. A count of twenty and I inch my FAB [foam arsed blob] along the bottom. I'd chosen this fly for its buoyancy, just enough to stop it fouling leaves and other debris on the bottom. As I reached the twenty-foot marker I knew the fly was approaching the near slope that led into my margin. Russell Bell enquired if I'd had any more success as he was passing, I stopped to answer him, and a fish took my fly! Caught by surprise I felt lucky to have hooked it and wasn't surprised when it fell off, just out of netting range!



Beautiful Lakedown

I analysed what had happened, by casting into deeper water and allowing the line to sink well down my fly was fishing just off bottom, at a very slow pace. The last part of the retrieve was when I expected to get a take, so I slowed the flies progress even more and paid even more attention at this point. By casting at different angles around the point I covered every potential spot in the hope of getting my fly close to another trout. The take, when it came, was so delicate that I wasn't sure if it was a twig or a fish, fortunately it was a fish and it stayed on! Another hour passed without a take when I saw a fish swirl in the margins of the next vacant point swim. I quickly moved and proceeded to fish in the same manner. Less than six casts later and I receive a very subtle take, I didn't react fast enough to this and a fish boiled on the surface and slipped the hook. Doh! Time had run out on this short session, so I headed back to the fishing lodge and Tap Room for lunch and the prize giving.

James had stolen the glory, again! His one fish beat all comers despite a few three fish bags, and a superb 4lbs Spartic trout caught by Neil Osmond. To cap it all James won first prize in the raffle! They say it's better to be lucky than good, but in James's case he's good and lucky!

Happy new year and tight lines in 2023, Andy Lush



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Coarse Fisheries

Beaver Farm Fishery Eastbourne Road Newchapel, Lingfield RH7 6HL	01342 324006 / 07710 656041
Charlies Lakes Steeds Lane, Kingsnorth, Ashford TN26 1NH	07857 539785
Chart Hill Lakes Chart Hill Road, Chart Sutton ME17 3EZ	07398 571337
Chequertree Trout and Coarse Fishery Bethersden, Near Ashford TN26 3JR	01233 820078
Coombewood Fishery Redbrook Street, High Halden, Near Ashford TN26 3JH	07895 679569
Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden TN12 8EL	01580 212512
Eureka Fishery Nicholas Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN25 4AG	07597 879621
Furnace Brook Fishery and Fish Farm Trolliloes, Cowbeech, near Hailsham BN27 4QR	01435 830835
Gabriels Fishery Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP	07730 066088
Greenacres Farm Fishery Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden TN27 8EH	07933 934942
Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	01580 753813
Horam Manor Fishery Horam Manor Farm, Horam TN21 0JB	01323 840889 / 07707 759364
Horsmonden Lakes Grovehurst Road, Horsmonden TN12 8BQ	01892 838576
Iden Wood Fishery Coldharbour Lane, Iden, Rye TN31 7UT	01797 280180 / 07906 232225
Knightingales Fishery Stone-In-Oxney, Near Tenterden TN30 7HA	07941 176205
Mousehole Lakes Maidstone Road Nettlestead, Near Paddock Wood ME18 5HR	07725 783405
Orchard Place Farm Fishery Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6NY	01892 838576
Pittlands Lakes Churn Lane, Horsmonden, Paddock Wood TN12 8HL	07716 065900
Sandwich Lakes Coarse Fishery Sandwich Ash Road (A257), Near Canterbury CT3 2DA	07936 409912
Shirkoak Fishery Bethersden Road, Woodchurch, Ashford TN26 3PZ	07973 410973
The Lakes at Beachborough Beachborough Park Newington, Near Folkestone CT18 8BW	07469 809877
Tricklebrook Fishery Colts Hill, Five Oak Green TN12 6SH	07743 955812
Willows Angling Centre Bax Farm, Lower Road, Teynham ME9 9BU	01795 520887
Wylands Farm Wylands Farm, Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU	01424 893394

Trout Fisheries

Brick Farm Lakes Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux BN27 4RS	01323 832615
Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from: Email: r.nathan@btinternet.com	01892 770903
Coltsford Mill Trout Fishery & Fly Tackle Shop Mill Lane, Oxted, Surrey RH8 9DG	01883 715666 / 07798 605867
Spring Hill Trout Waters Albans Farm, Romford Road, Pembury TN2 4BB	07951 304515
Tenterden Trout Waters Coombe Farm, Chennell Park Road, Tenterden TN30 6XA www.tenterden-trout-waters.co.uk	01580 763201

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Bodle Angling Cuckfield Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8RE	01444 247757
Camos Carp Cabin 11 Turner Street, Ramsgate CT11 8NJ	01843 581784
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Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from email: r.nathan@btinternet.com	01892 770903
Hastings Bexhill & District Postal enquiries to S.Corke, 2, The Sidings, Bexhill On Sea TN40 1RF Chris Pagan 07429 655237 / Steve Potter 07935 268174	
Linton Angling Society Jason Tuckey on 07983 569220 or email lassecretary@lintonangling.co.uk	
Tonbridge & District A & FPS PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB	Martyn 07802 248861
Wantsum Angling Association or contact via website www.wantsumaa.co.uk	01227 678063



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