

APRIL 2024

# FRESHWATER INFORMER f

No. 322

**FREE**

**PAUL CLARK**  
**62lbs MIRROR**  
**ELPHICKS**  
**FISHERY**



Sandwich  
Coarse Fishery

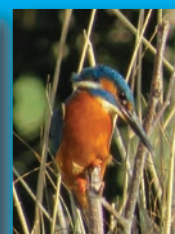
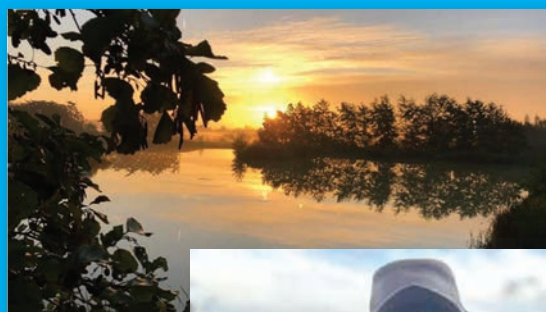


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## ORCHARD PLACE FARM FISHING

13 FISHING LAKES in the KENT COUNTRYSIDE

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At Orchard Place Farm you can surround yourself in the natural beauty of the Kent countryside, located just outside of the picturesque town of Paddock Wood, and only 8 miles from Maidstone. The fishery boasts 13 lakes - 10 carp and catfish lakes and 3 match/pleasure lakes.

### SPECIMEN LAKES

DAY TICKETS  
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48HR - £55  
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for 3rd rod)

### FULLY FUNCTIONING LAKE 13 - CARP & CATFISH WATER

Many swims have disabled access • All-weather pathways leading all around the lakes and up to each individual swim • Purpose-built toilets located in the main car park (with hot shower) • Between Lake 3 and Lake 4 (toilet and sink block only) • Block constructed by Lake 7 also contains a microwave, fridge and washing up facilities.

### MATCH/ PLEASURE LAKES

DAY TICKETS  
2 RODS - £10  
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1 ROD - £8

**FOOD IS AVAILABLE ON SITE FROM MID-MARCH TO OCTOBER**

[www.orchardplacefarmfishing.co.uk](http://www.orchardplacefarmfishing.co.uk)

Tackle/bait/shop situated in the main car park, stocking all top bait brands including worms maggots etc. Everything you need at VERY competitive prices.



## NEW TO ORCHARD PLACE FARM! HORSMONDEN FISHING LAKES



Carp  
to 38lbs

Top Lake  
Catfish to 85lbs

Bottom Lake  
Catfish to 75lbs

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All enquiries and bookings to Orchard Place Farm Fishery on 01892 838576



Hello and welcome to the April edition of the Freshwater Informer



Over the last couple of weeks I've seen snowdrops, daffodils and frogspawn, which all point to the fact that spring is well on the way. The other indicator that warmer weather is just around the corner is the fact that the river season has once again come to an end. Whilst I've always been a staunch supporter of the close season, the fact that most of our local rivers have been unfishable since the Autumn is making me start question that position. Quite what the answer is, I'm not sure but there is certainly a growing amount of anglers who feel the same way



and feel that things should change. Although originally instigated by coarse anglers, the introduction of a close season known as The Mundella Act of 1878, was largely advised on by game anglers of the time and as a result has often been accused of protecting their interests rather than those of coarse fish or anglers. Either way, things have changed a great deal in the last 150 years and a review must certainly be due.



Still, as one door closes another opens and Easter weekend should see anglers from all over the region flocking to the multitude of fantastic stillwater fisheries that we have in our area, with new renewed vigour and enthusiasm, ready to do battle with specimen Carp, Tench and Bream. If you are one of them, Good Luck and remember to send your catches in to us.

ENJOY, THE FWI TEAM.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY  2024	JUNE publication	OCTOBER publication
	CONTENT DEADLINE 20th May	CONTENT DEADLINE 16th September
	JULY publication	NOVEMBER publication
	CONTENT DEADLINE 17th June	CONTENT DEADLINE 21st October
	AUGUST publication	DECEMBER publication
	CONTENT DEADLINE 22nd July	CONTENT DEADLINE 18th November
	SEPTEMBER publication	JANUARY 2025 publication
	CONTENT DEADLINE 19th August	CONTENT DEADLINE 16th December

The Freshwater Informer

email: thefreshwaterinformer@gmail.com



Beaver Fishery Lingfield, Surrey

**PLEASE NOTE :- To fish Snipe Lake, Westlake (formerly Tuscany Lake) Daughters Lake and Majors Lake there are certain tackle requirements in force. Please call or look on our website at beaverfarmfishery.co.uk All anglers on Westlake will be required to have a dedicated Catfish mat and you are now required to have a large un-hooking mat and minimum 36 inch net to fish Majors Lake. There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

Well, let's start with some more exciting news. We have continued our yearly fish stocking program again, this time we welcomed four new C6 mirror carp weighing between 20lbs 6ozs and 22lbs 10ozs which were introduced into Snipe Lake. This latest delivery means that we have now introduced new stock into Snipe Lake, Jeff's Lake, Maze Lake and Majors Lake over the last few months.

**Snipe Lake** has seen anglers banking carp to 28lbs 8ozs. **Westlake** has been quiet for anglers due to the weather but the few that have braved it have banked catfish to 54lbs. **Jeff's Lake** has fished amazing over the last few weeks with the majority all reporting multiple catches, with the new mirrors, commons to over 10lbs, lots of F1's and bream being banked. **Daughters Lake** has seen a good mix of mirrors and commons being banked to 18lbs 2ozs and a couple of grass carp out to 28lbs 10ozs. **Eden Pond** has seen only a handful of anglers but those who have ventured on there have banked carp to over 8lbs, bream and F1's and the tench seem to slowly be waking up with them being banked to 5lbs. **Maze Lake** has, like Jeff's Lake been fishing really well with anglers reporting multiple catches of the new mirrors, commons and F1's as well as bream and silvers.



Sam Hopkins - 19lbs Daughters



Craig Shirley - 19lbs Majors



Martin Smith - 50lbs

**Majors Lake** has seen the carp waking up with anglers banking ghost mirrors to 18lbs 5ozs, fully scaled mirrors to 19lbs, mirrors to 18lbs 6ozs, commons to mid doubles and bream to over 6lbs.

We issue a catch and fishery report on Facebook every Thursday and Sunday afternoons to go into further details of the anglers, their catches and all up to date news regarding what is going on with maintenance around the fishery



Ellis - Jeffs



Richard Lock - 18lbs 3ozs - Snipe



Ian Thomsett - Jeffs



Bart Gre - 12lbs - Majors



Steven Gallagher - Maze



Sonny Col - 18lbs 5ozs - Majors



Darren Giffen - 20lbs 6ozs - Snipe



Ian York - 28lbs 8ozs - Snipe



Snipe stocking





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TACKLE NEEDS



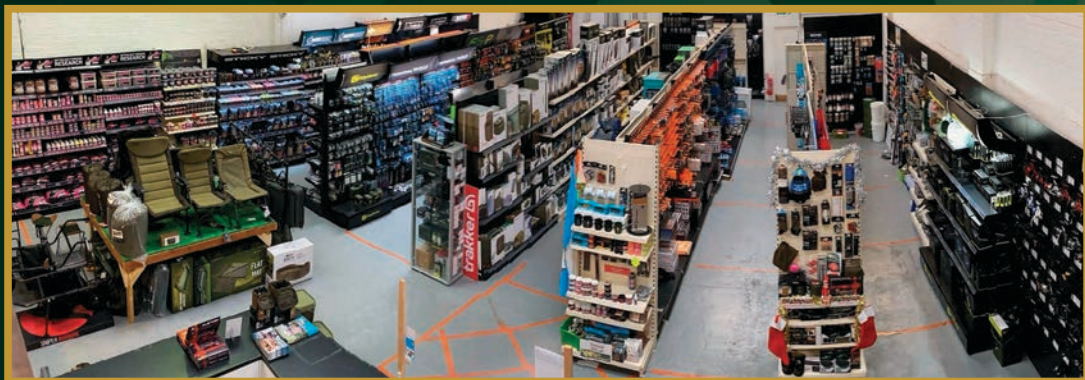
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Email:

[beaverfarmfishery@live.co.uk](mailto:beaverfarmfishery@live.co.uk)

Facebook: beaverfishery



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.

**Facilities include:**

- On Site Tackle Shop
- 9 Car Parks including Disabled Friendly Parking
- Shower/Wetroom
- Disabled Friendly Toilets
- Seasonal Snack Bar with Hot and Cold Food
- 1 hut available for hire



- Concessionary Tickets for Junior, Disabled and OAPs
- No pre-bookings taken for swims
- Win a FREE SESSION with our Fish of the Month Competition
- Automatic Security Gates that close at 7pm (Summer) 6pm (Winter)
- 24-hour CCTV



*Brothers in arms*

On a recent trip to Chequertree Fishery Steve (right) landed this stunning 32lbs 5ozs mirror carp, whilst Darren chipped in with a nice chunky common.



Army veterans, **Darren Elgar** and **Steve Wheeler** have a friendship that stretches back almost forty years. Not only do they fish together, but the pair also served together, in both the Queens Regiment and the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment. On top of that, they even share the same birthday (April 30th).

## Hawkhurst Fish Farm

Hastings Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4RT  
T: 01580 753813 E: [info@hawkhurstfishfarm.co.uk](mailto:info@hawkhurstfishfarm.co.uk)



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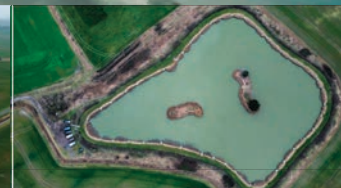


Check [www.hawkhurstfishfarm.co.uk](http://www.hawkhurstfishfarm.co.uk) for more info!



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[wantsum\\_angling@outlook.com](mailto:wantsum_angling@outlook.com)



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- DAY TICKET X3 RODS - £20
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- 24 HOUR TICKET X3 RODS - £35
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- 48 HOUR TICKET X2 / X3 RODS - £60 / £70



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Tricklebrook Fishery | Colts Hill | Five Oak Green | TN12 6SH

Telephone bookings are to be paid in advance and are non-refundable • Credit and Debit cards now accepted

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





*Mirror Carp  
29lbs 10ozs  
Temple Lake*



# ***Carp sessions are limited but enjoyable***

*I consider myself a mixed species specimen angler now days so that means that my out and out Carp sessions are limited to just three to five sessions per season, spread out over the course of the year. But when I do fish for the Carp by design then I enjoy those sessions very much, especially when I return to an old friend of mine, Bury Hill*

*Fishery near Dorking where I managed the onsite tackle shop between 2006 to 2012. What great and busy times they were. Although fishing has stopped on the Old Lake, I do return to have a Carp session on the lovely Temple Lake and not that long ago caught a new PB just under the 30lbs mark, a fish I have called three scales (you can see why in the photo.)*

*Far from massive by many Carp anglers standards, I reckon my success rate of catching twenty pounders comes at a pretty good strike rate being as my sessions are very limited, mainly because I like to target many other species.*

I caught three scales in the month of September on a very wet day that saw lots of torrential rain and there were some big puddles outside of my bivvy which made for uncomfortable times as I hate treading mud back into the bivvy groundsheet. I arrived midday and just managed to get my shelter up before heavy rain had me quickly chucking my bedchair and luggage etc undercover. But from past knowledge of the lake I knew it was ideal conditions for a bite or two and it was within an hour that I was playing into a very good fish, when my 14mm Mirage Baits The Smell boilie was intercepted at a fast rate of knots. When I slipped the net under the Mirror I knew it was going to push my previous best Carp of 28lbs 6oz very close. On the scales it went 29lbs 10oz and a new PB was set. I was well chuffed and although the Carp go to just over 40lbs in Temple, I know there is scope from the lake to raise the bar even more in the future as I do like fishing this beautiful 15 swim near 4 acre lake set in the scenic Surrey Hills countryside.

## ***Backleads preference***

Temple lake Carp over the years have seen it all before and can be hard to catch at certain times of the season, like I guess many Carp venues can be, and even scanning the lake with your eyes can sometimes reveal very little as to where the fish are or even feeding spots. So with this in mind I feed very little opting to loose feed a few boilies around my hookbaits which is always 80% of the time, a bottom bait and the remaining time a small pink or white pop up presentation. Hook size is a wide gape 6 or 8 barbless to 20lb Korda Dark Matter rig connected to a safe zone leader which in turn is then connected to 15lbs mainline. My reels are the Shimano XTEA 10000s (a lovely smooth reel) and my rods are pretty basic 3lbs test curve Soniks Vader X range that have a nice slim blank and lovely action at a modest price of around £55 to £60 each. The Vader X just do me fine for my limited Carp sessions and are also perfect for any big gravel pit fishing as well when a long cast is needed. Lead wise I tend to prefer using 2oz leads in a flat pear shape of which I have no particular reason other than I just feel more confident using flat pear shape leads plus they seem to cast well and accurate. If I spomb any feed out then I tend to use the smallest spomb available and is used no more than twice in a 24 hour session unless the Carp are on the munch and demanding plenty of feed but I can assure you on Temple that does not occur too often. So the lack of spod use is limited not to spook any fish moving in to my target area.

The use of back leads is something I tend to favour on Temple or any other shallow lakes especially if using 2 or 3 rod set ups. First reason is the Temple Carp are very wise and seeing lots of lines cutting across the lake, remember it is a small lake, then it is pretty obvious anglers are in town and danger looms. So having the line sunk low from the rod tip to the hookbait and out of sight I feel eliminates the presence of danger and prevents liners when a shoal of big boys come through the swim. The feel of the line to a wise carp often sees it bolt in the opposite direction and all the hard work of tempting a fish into your area and baits is quickly undone. The second reason why I like to use back leads on small shallow venues is when a good fish is hooked and you are playing it hopefully to the direction of your landing net, with the mainline pinned down to the lake bottom on your other rods it is less likely that the hooked fish will swim into your other lines and trash all your other lines. There is nothing worse than in the hours of darkness to hook a big Carp that then trashes your other lines resulting in a mass tangle and complete re set up, back leads eliminate that possibility for me every time.



### Where to cast?

Right down the middle of Temple are a set of islands that are cut to allow fish to move from one side of the lake to the other plus they offer the fish some protection and cover. The Carp tend to patrol the islands as well so they are obvious areas to feed and place a hookbait, it just makes sense. All you need to do is be very near your rods when an alarm screams off as they tend to make a dash through the cutaways in the islands so if you are slow to respond then the game can be over before you are start. Also the margins, left and right are great areas to try as big Carp do like to mooch around the roots of reeds searching for natural baits so a pop up or boilie in the way will be very curious to a hungry fish. Most of my success on Temple has been by casting a bottom bait close to the far bank island in the direction of the opening between two islands, a bite or two can be had with a bit of confidence when the conditions are right. On the session of my new PB I also had a 26lbs plus Mirror as well in driving rain and wind, I got soaked as I was in my sleeping bag when my alarm went off and just ran out to my screaming rod before realising damn it is pouring down. Despite getting soaked it was worth it all the same as the Carp don't give themselves up easily.

My last session on Temple was filmed for my Fishing Tail Films YouTube channel on what was a very hot autumn session, it was very tough going but I managed on the morning of the last day to net a beautiful fully scaled Mirror of 24lbs 1oz to save my session. It was my only bite of and I was not confident that I was going to be given a chance at all as the conditions were not good and the humidity was very uncomfortable more so during the day when I just reeled my rods in to feed my chosen areas on a little and often basis before casting back out when the Sun dropped behind the trees and the rods stayed out in the night but sadly motionless. The film 'Carp Session on Temple Lake' shows the ups and down of fishing with some relief when a fish turns up.



Temple Lake - 24lbs 1oz Mirror

### Thank You very much

I would like to thank those of you that have subscribed to my Fishing Tail Films YouTube channel recently; I appreciate it very much as I am going to put plenty of time and effort into making more films during the course of the seasons ahead. I have a passion for angling, music and film making so I get to do all three passions at once in film for the channel. Your support means a lot to me so thank you.

Sadly near the time of writing this piece my Mum passed away on 26th February after a very long battle with Alzheimer's. A terrible disease that took her away from us many years before her passing, I have missed her long before she finally passed away which is the nature of this dreadful disease. My Mum along with my Dad who passed away back in 2009 were always very supportive and interested in my fishing exploits and catches, more so my Dad as it was him that first took me fishing at the age of 2 and it was him and his guidance in my early days that gave me the fishing bug for which I am ever grateful for.

By the time this column goes to print I am sure I will have been out by the water's edge doing what all us anglers like to do best. Fishing.

As I like to say there is  
"a possibility in every cast"

**Tight Lines, Russ Evans**

*fishing tail films*



**Greenacres Farm Fishery** Biddenden, Kent

*Please read our rules online before booking, for any enquiries don't hesitate to ring up and ask or drop us a text. We look forward to seeing you on the bank!!*

**Speci 1** This lake has its up and down moments because of the weather changing all the time but has rewarded people with some lovely carp which have fallen to lightly baited areas fishing a solid pva bag over the top. Now that the temperatures are rising, they have been showing themselves a bit more, so don't forget to top up your spots with bait to keep the fish in your area. Perch fishing on here has been rewarding to anglers that are willing to fish for them with some just shy of 3lbs. These fish have all been caught on float fishing tactics by using worm or maggot on the hook and constantly sprinkling maggots over the top on every cast with a catapult to keep the rudd and roach in the swim that then attracts the big perch.

**Speci 2** The carp have definitely been on the feed in this lake, with one angler having 9 bites with 8 of them being carp and 1 catfish. The biggest carp was 24lbs and the catfish was 26lbs and was all caught on cell boilies in a solid pva bag filled with particle. Now that the temperatures are rising, I want be surprised that this will change and the cats will be the more dominant fish and push the carp out to eat the angler's bait. Catfish will eat anything but to target them the best method is to use high attractant boilies or pellet like krill boilies or marine halibut pellet over a large bed of pellet that's soaked in a fishy attractant.

**Heron** People have been having a cracking time on here catching large mixed bags of silvers and carp on both float and method feeding tactics. Baits that seem to be working is maggots, castors and worms over a ball of groundbait when float fishing and feeder fishing seems to be banded 10mm pellets.

**Kingfisher** This lake is the one to be on any time of year as it always produces lovely mixed bags of fish and keeps you going all day. Fish can literally be caught on the top two sections of your pole on any bait that you wish to use.

**Bluebell** Tench and carp are still being caught out of this pond and the key is to bait up little and often with a pole pot or with a catapult and add a ball of groundbait every now and again just to keep their heads down grubbing around.

**Don't forget to dip your nets, slings and unhooking mats/cradles or you will be asked to leave. CCTV IS IN OPERATION!!**



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*This beautiful setting needs to be visited and enjoyed!*

Prices start at £10 per session on the coarse lakes. For the specimen lakes prices start at £20 for the day rising to £30 for a 24hrs ticket (up to 3 rods). Lessons now available for all ages. Gates open at 7am and close at 6.30pm (Winter hours 7am to 5pm)

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Email : [greenacresfarmfishery@gmail.com](mailto:greenacresfarmfishery@gmail.com)





# Elphicks Fisheries



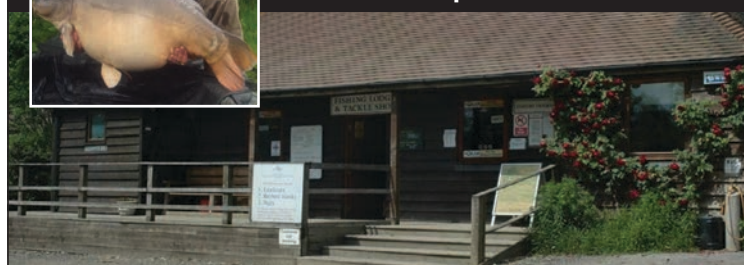
Elphicks has been designed and built with the modern angler in mind. We have 7 lakes available for day ticket and session fishing. Each lake has its own parking within easy reach of the swims and all swims are 'all weather' - either built of Astroturf, stone or bark. Please contact the fishery for further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



Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road  
Horsmonden, Kent TN12 8EL

Tel: **01580 212512**

email: [info@elphicks-fisheries.co.uk](mailto:info@elphicks-fisheries.co.uk)



[www.elphicks-fisheries.co.uk](http://www.elphicks-fisheries.co.uk)

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# My Fishing Travels by Russ Evans

Fishing Tail Films is a reflection of my Passion for Angling and catching a variety of species throughout the seasons from Perch in the cold months to Bream and Tench in the spring. Fishing large gravel pits and rivers is where I like to spend the majority of my time by the water's edge. Specimen Chub, Carp and Roach are also on my target list each season.





Elphicks Fisheries

Horsmonden, Kent



James Makepeace - 35lbs 5ozs Plantation Lake 02/24



Peter North - 20lbs 5ozs Prairie Lake 02/24



North Lake



North Lake



North Lake - Common



Craig Fitzpatrick - 40lbs North Lake



Adam Ellis - 50lbs Westend



North Lake



Tom on Pullens - 42lbs



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**Mousehole Lakes** Paddock Wood, Kent





## Paul Clark breaks the 60lbs barrier

**The specimen carp world was left stunned when the news broke that one of the regions premier big carp fisheries, Elphicks at Horsmonden, had produced a new sixty pounder from its popular Pullens Lake.**

FWI caught up with Heathfield based captor, Paul Clark, for an exclusive account of this incredible capture. A lifelong fisherman, and all round angler, Paul had this to say, "The weekend started like many other sessions at Elphicks Fishery, by meeting the lads, Paul and Tim Carter, Glen Wood and Jack Farley at the Fishery lodge.

*It's not a new venue for us as we have been fishing the complex for over 15 years. With no time to waste and keen to get fishing we headed on up to Pullens. Before the draw for swims we took a walk around to look for signs of fish.*

*I've got to be honest there was very little to go on and the lake looked completely lifeless apart from the wildfowl. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, there had only been one fish caught in the previous couple of weeks. The draw was done and I was fishing in the Bay swim, which I was*

*comfortable with as I've fished that area many times and had a decent amount of success. Whilst setting up I spotted a fish up in the layers to my left so I chose to fish a zig rig on that rod. The middle rod I decided to fish tight to the island as it was sheltered from the cold north easterly wind blowing straight into my face, over a mix of particles and naturals. A mix that I had used to good effect during our previous trip on North lake and resulted in me catching a lovely 43lbs 10ozs mirror. My right hand rod was cast to a spot that had produced for me in the past. The night passed and it was as if the lakes residents were not at home. No shows, no bubblers, absolutely nothing to go on.*



**Glen Wood equalled his PB with this stunning 46lbs 12ozs carp**

*I was up at first light watching and listening for any activity, and enjoying the first brew of the day, when the middle rod burst into life. After a slow fight to begin with the fish suddenly burst into life, with several deep surging runs. Ten minutes into the fight and it was still holding deep. A few more minutes passed and I began to make some headway and I was finally able to get her in the net. I went to get Jack, who was fishing along from me, to help with the weighing and pictures.*

*When I was playing the fish I thought that it might be a good thirty, when we lifted her out of the water we thought she might be a forty, when we saw her on the mat we realised that she could be bigger again.*

*I'm fifty years old, and had set myself the target of catching a UK 50lbs plus, carp this year. It was clear that I could have beaten my target. The rest of the group reeled in and came to help with the weighing, I couldn't believe it when the scales settled on 62lbs. A new PB and Lake Record. We got the pictures sorted and watched her swim away.*

*It's difficult to describe the emotions, but completely blown away is a good start! To catch a fish of that magnitude, in the company of great friends is a memory that will stay with me forever."*



**The 43lbs 10ozs North Lake mirror that proved Paul's baiting strategy was working**

*A new day and new hope with the Sun finally showing itself, i brought my rods in, checking for anything I'd got wrong but were all looking perfect. I went around to meet up with the lads and to see if they'd caught, as I had literally no signal on my phone. Glen had equalled his PB with a lovely 46lbs 12ozs mirror, I was over the moon for him, nice work bud. Back in my swim, I refreshed the spots and decided to change my middle rod onto a simple, but very effective, soft presentation. A 6 inch link tied KD style fished inside a stick over the baited spot, half a dozen more spombs of freebies and I was fishing again. Again, the second night was very quiet.*



**Mind blowing! Paul's incredible 62lbs carp from Pullens**



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Mark Jarrett - 26lbs Common - Club Water



Jack Holden - 27lbs 4ozs - Cotton Farm

Karen Pattison - PB 20lbs Common  
Sandwich Lakes

Ryan Lamont - 60lbs+ Catfish - Cackle Hill Lakes



Neil Smith - PB 34lbs 12ozs Mirror - Tricklebrook



Mark Jarrett - 15lbs Bream - Club Water



Freddy Joe Beaney - 5lbs Bream - Gedges



Darren Herbet - PB 33lbs 6ozs Common - Dartford Lakes

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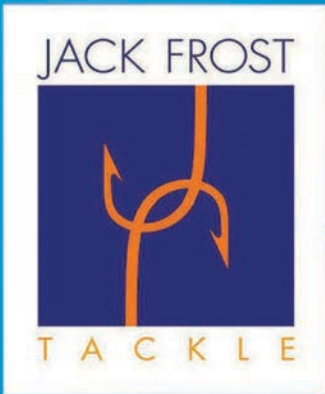


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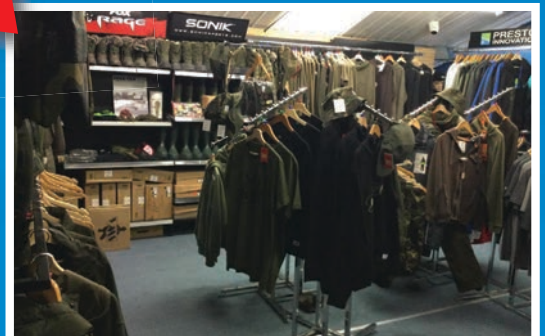


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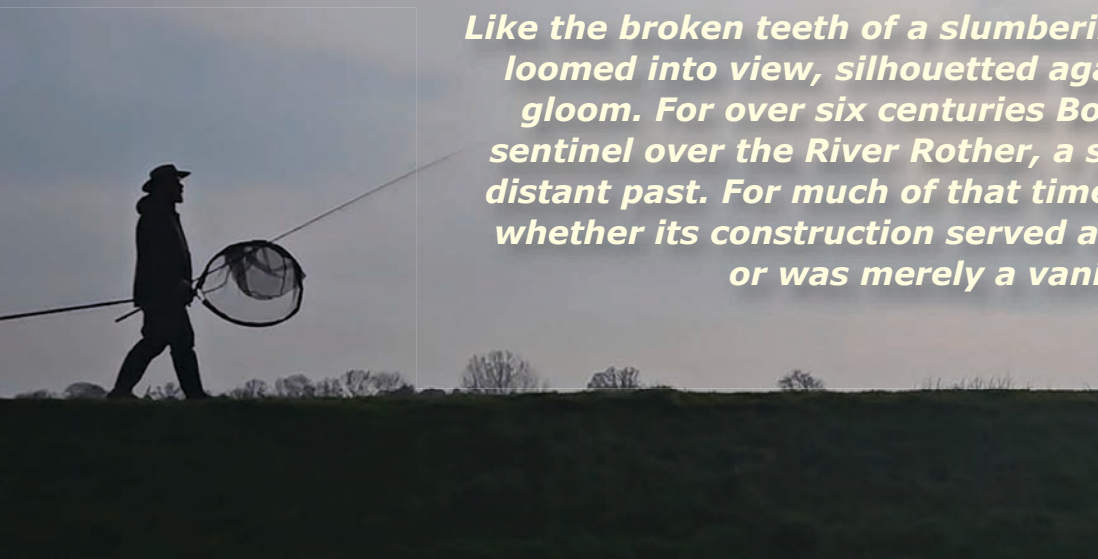
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# In the edge with Alex

*Like the broken teeth of a slumbering giant, the battlements loomed into view, silhouetted against the early morning gloom. For over six centuries Bodiam Castle has stood sentinel over the River Rother, a silent reminder of a long distant past. For much of that time debate has raged as to whether its construction served any meaningful purpose, or was merely a vanity project.*



*A tin of worms - how could I fail..*

I'd been in it's shadow for less than six minutes, and a similar argument had already played out in my head. Was I was here because I could be? because I should be? or because I had to be? The truth is that I had been meaning to get out on the river since the autumn but due to the never-ending rain, had always found a reasonable excuse to wait until tomorrow. But now I was all out of tomorrows. March 14th, the last day of the River season, before an enforced three month lay off. It was now or never.

I trudged across the sodden pasture towards the river. It was no surprise that I had the stretch to myself. I reached the banks, where watery mud mixed with muddy water to form a wretched, unfishable torrent.

The previous evening I had gathered a tin of fat worms, which had given me a false sense of confidence, as I imagined a greedy chub engulfing them, from the comfort of a warm home. Now out on the bank, a biting wind blew down the valley, chilling me to the bone and wicking that confidence away.

I hunkered down, tackled up and started searching any areas of slack water. It was impossible. The high water meant that any slacks were merely flooded reedbeds, leading to the hook snagging in their stems. Any attempt to fish outside of these saw the float disappear down river at a frightening rate of knots, before arcing around into more reeds at the end of the run. I swapped the float for a lead, but struggled to hold bottom as the weight bounced around until it found unseen snags. Unperturbed, I worked my way up and down the stretch, fishing as well as conditions would allow, before conceding defeat. I may have lost the battle in front of the castle, but I was determined not to loose the war.

I loaded up my car and set off a few miles upstream to Salehurst. I had followed the same route on the opening day of the season and it had brought me some success. I parked by the church and set off down the track to the river. The fact that I could have fished on the footpath should have been an indication of what I might find but I ploughed on regardless. Normally a mix of shallow runs and little pools, the river ran through dead straight, collecting all manner of flotsam and jetsam in its wake, giving no heed to the banks that confine it in gentler times. I found a small culvert that I thought might harbour fish, but fishing in amongst the tangle of branches and roots was neither comfortable or practical and I

was soon wearily slogging my way back up the slope towards the car.

The sun was well past its zenith and I was running out of both time and options. Caked in mud and scratches, I considered my next move. If the main river was unfishable, perhaps a tributary would be a better bet? I have access to a short stretch of one such water, maybe the floodwaters would be starting to recede further upstream?

I went through the well worn process of setting up my rod and net, checking that my pockets contained all I might need, and traipsing off towards the river. Two gates, a stile and a bridge later, I was at my destination.



*A silent reminder of a long distant past*





*Muddy water mixed with watery mud*



*All the elements were against me*

Rafts of reeds and branches littered the fields in great swathes, left as the water receded, but recede it had, and whilst the colour and pace left a lot to be desired, it was at least possible to present a bait with some degree of confidence.

I hooked on a worm and lowered it from the bridge into the stream below. It trundled along before pausing momentarily.

I thought it might be snagged but it came back easy enough. On the second run through the same thing happened, although this time I retrieved only half a worm. The third time it happened I struck and a tiny fish, not much bigger than the bait, broke the surface before falling off. More of a splish than a splash, but a sign that there were fish in the area willing to feed. I worked my way up and down the bank, the sun dropping lower and lower in the sky as I did so. It reached the treeline as I happened upon a sharp bend, where a fallen bough had created a floating raft of sticks and foam. I baited up again before sending the float on its way. It bobbed along in the current, lodged against the raft,

paused, before jaggging sideways against the flow. My brain took longer than it should to react to what my eyes were seeing. Then a moment of realisation, it had happened, it was happening! A fish had taken the bait. I struck and the rod arched over. I knew that the stretch didn't hold particularly big fish but the pressure was immense. Whether it was the flow, the disbelief or the urgency of the setting sun, I played my adversary as gingerly as I might as if I'd hooked a British record. Gradually the lunges subsided and I was able to draw the fish upstream to my waiting net.

Bigger than expected and a very good sized chub for the stretch, my relief was palpable. I snapped off a few quick shots, returned the fish from whence it came and set off across the fields as the dying embers of the season slowly faded against the horizon, reminded of the old quote "a bad day's fishing is better than a good day's work" although when the job at hand is to catch a fish, a bad day's fishing makes for a very long day.



*A pretty chub to see out the season*



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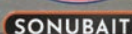
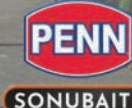
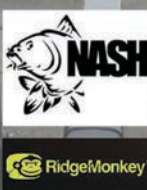


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# Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society

**Tony Cooper** continued his fine pike fishing form with a cracking 24lb fish from **Haysden Lake**.

The **Old Ballast Pit** continues to fish well, especially off of the new platforms. 30lb+ mixed bags are being caught with some lovely individual Tench to over 5lbs. Large carp are being caught with some of the known fish making an appearance.

**Barden Lake** has fished well of late with several carp to 30lb+ being caught and reports of bream to 15lb 2oz. **Neal Rogers** had a nice 20lbs 2ozs Pike. Tench are also showing on the feeder tactics.



## MATCH RESULTS

### WINTER PEG DOWN – 10 fished Swanmead

- |   |              |           |
|---|--------------|-----------|
| 1 | Lee Wakeman  | 1lb 10ozs |
| 2 | Colin Fowler | 1lb 7ozs  |
| 3 | Peter Hole   | 1lb 1oz   |

2	Colin Fowler	18lbs
	Steve Ryan	

3	Steve Twort	17lbs 1oz
---	-------------	-----------

Most Gudgeon	Austin Battell
	Roger Trask

Guess the winning weight  
Austin Battell 18lbs 6ozs (6ozs out)

**A huge congratulations to this year's MATCH CHAMPION COLIN FOWLER who has had a fantastic season with some great bags of fish.**

### PAIRS MATCH – 22 fished Sportsground

- |   |                  |             |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Peter Hole       | 18lbs 12ozs |
|   | Pete Groombridge |             |

Best Chub	John Cooper	1lb 13ozs
Best Bream	Tom Fowler	4lbs 12ozs
Best Roach	Steve Twort	1lb 2ozs
Best Perch	Ditch Howard	9ozs
Most Species	Mick Smith	5
	Austin Battell	5

### MATCH CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS:

- |   |              |             |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Colin Fowler | 192lbs 8ozs |
| 2 | Steve Parker | 135lbs 6ozs |
| 3 | Lee Wakeman  | 99lbs 5ozs  |





# River Season Review

With only a few days of the season left, and the River Eden finally looking okay, **Dick Ivinson** thought he had better take the morning off work and make the most of it! Only 2 bites. The first bite resulted in a small chub, but the second produced a powerful fish, that tried to find every snag it could. The pale, incredibly thick beauty went 5lbs 11ozs, a new PB for Richard. Needless to say, he was over the moon, and the cherry on the cake was that it fell to his own homemade cheesepaste.



Freddy Joe Beaney - Pike - River Medway



Gena McCourt - 3lbs Perch - River Bure



Some of the 37 River Stour pike caught by Mark Day this season



Levels dropped for seasonal works on the River Medway, at Tonbridge, just long enough for **Paul Waghorn** to fit in one last trip to the river where this 14lbs 2ozs Pike, along with a 5lbs 5ozs jack, grabbed his 1oz paternostered roach. Successful tackle included a vintage Winfield Spin Fisher rod and a battered Mitchell 300 reel.



Freddy  
Joe Beaney  
  
1lb 12ozs  
Roach  
  
River Medway





Harley Williams - Mirror Carp - Dartford Lakes



Charlie Young - Match Lake - Tricklebrook



Charlie Young - Match Lake - Tricklebrook



Archie Moore - PB Perch

# Angling Societies



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Pike to 31lb 6oz, Crucians to 4lb 6oz and  
Grass Carp to 29lb 6oz.

Also large Roach and Rudd to 3lbs and large eels.

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**H.B.D. F.A.A.**

**Hastings Bexhill & District Freshwater Angling Association**  
Season runs from 1st April to 31st March.

Established in 1895 the association provides its members and day ticket anglers with various lakes and rivers to fish throughout Hastings, Bexhill and the surrounding area.

We currently have seven waters that provide a mixture of species at specimen weights to suit all anglers' preferences. As well as the lakes run by the association we also offer members the ability to fish various stretches of river in the surrounding area.

The association provides waters to suit all ages, abilities and interests so there's something for everyone.

To apply to become a member please download and print the application form from our website. Complete and return to the Membership officer on the application, alternatively it is possible to purchase your membership from any of the tackle shops listed on our website.

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For further information please contact:  
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**[hastingsandbexhillangling.co.uk](http://hastingsandbexhillangling.co.uk)**

## The Linton Angling Society - Membership Vacancies

We are a small but friendly club with beautiful lake, 2 ponds, 5 reservoirs and over 8 miles of fishing on the River Medway and Beult. Our waters contain Carp to 32lb, Pike 30lb+, Tench 8lb+, Chub 7lb, Perch 4lb and Roach to 3lb, including some good Bream and Eels. All year fishing, member's guest permits, night fishing allowed. We run over 30 matches a year and have a large junior section. Concessionary rates available for OAPs, Disabled and Juniors.

For further details contact: **Jason Tuckey on 07983 569220**  
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**[www.lintonangling.co.uk](http://www.lintonangling.co.uk)**



# Method Madness

## - a fun way to fish with Glen Relf

*After a couple of very challenging sessions, I was keen to go somewhere that offered me a good chance of putting a bend in the rod, and more importantly a smile on my face.*

*After all, fishing should be fun.*

Lake 5 on the Orchard Place Farm Fishery was to be my destination and after purchasing my ticket from the on site tackle shop i made my way to the lake. At around 2.5 acres in size, lake 5 is a typical doughnut shape with a single, central island. 20 swims offer a range of options and as an added bonus, it is right next to a carpark making for very easy access.

The method was going to be my chosen approach. Originally developed through match fishing, the method is the perfect tactic for well stocked 'runs waters', and in its most basic form, it is also a great way for younger or novice anglers to fish effectively for a variety of species. It has also been the downfall of many a specimen sized fish, but on my trip today it was all about having some fun.

Knowing that I was unlikely to catch anything too big I opted to use an 8ft Darenth Quiver tip rod from the Tackle Box, paired with a 4000 sized reel loaded with 6lb line. A couple of flatbed method feeders, a pack of ready tied method hooklinks, a bag of method groundbait and a selection of hookbaits was all I needed to get fishing.

After a quick walk around the lake, I selected a swim that gave me access to both the island and the end margin. Before tackling up I introduced a couple of golf ball sized balls of method mix to each of these spots. Although I was only fishing with one rod, it can be a good idea to bait more than one spot. By getting fish feeding in more than one spot you can alternate between them and maximise your chances of catching consistently throughout your session.

A key aspect of the method is the consistency of your groundbait. Too wet and it won't stick to the feeder, too dry and it will fly off the feeder during the cast. Using a shop bought mix and following the instructions closely will give you a good starting point from which you can tweak things as you gain confidence. A good tip is to keep your groundbait covered to prevent it from drying out during the day.

Hookbaits can be anything from corn, maggots, pellets, boilies or paste. In my experience, smaller baits work better as the carp are more likely to Hoover them up without suspicion. I opted to use small, washed out wafers. Partly because that's what I had in my tackle bag, and partly because a harder, more resilient hookbait would last a few fish without having to change it. Once set up, I gently squeezed some groundbait onto the feeder and pressed the hookbait into it. Less is more when method fishing, and a smooth cast, rather than punching for the horizon, will avoid you getting showered in groundbait.

The theory behind the method is simplicity itself. The groundbait creates a lot of attraction to get fish competing, with the hookbait been the only meaningful food item for them to eat. A short hooklink means that, in most cases, the fish will hook itself against the weight of the feeder. Line bites are typical as fish nose around the feeder and there is no mistaking bites as the rod tip arches round. It is important to ensure that your banksticks are planted firmly to avoid your rod getting ripped off the rests.



**A consistent method mix is vital for success**



**A loaded method feeder with a range of hookbaits**





Young Carter and brother Danny help Glen display part of his catch

I cast out to my margin spot and had barely had time to pour a cup of coffee from my flask before the tip ripped round and I found myself attached to an angry carp. At around 4lbs, not a big fish but great fun on light tackle and the perfect anecdote to the grind of my winter fishing over the last couple of months. With the fish returned, I rebaited and cast to the island spot. The response was even quicker, and I barely had time to put the rod down before the bait was taken.

That set the tone for the rest of the day, fish after fish. It got to the point where I had to reel in to enjoy my coffee and a sandwich. In a few short hours I had well over 100lbs of fish. No monsters, but on balanced tackle they all gave a good account of themselves and provided a fantastic days sport. Most importantly it was fun, an element that sometimes gets lost in the pursuit of bigger and bigger fish.

**Method Fishing - give it a go. You might just enjoy yourself.**

### Mollie gets a boost to start her season

Regular readers will no doubt be familiar with **Mollie Gunn**, who despite facing some very impactful challenges to her childhood, still manages to raise a smile and get out on the bank whenever she can. Mollie's mum, Traci, recently ran a fund raising campaign in aid of The Childhood Tumour Trust on social media. A campaign that was very well supported by followers of our Facebook page and raised over £400.

FWI's Lee Nicoll visited them to deliver a selection of fishing tackle to kick start Mollie's season and was asked by both Mollie and Traci to convey their thanks to everybody who donated to the fundraiser.



### Carter catches carp

Whilst I was fishing for this month's article at Orchard Place Farm, I met Danny and his younger brother, 6 year old **Carter**. The pair were fishing along the bank from me on lake 5 and doing very well indeed. Despite the relatively cool weather they had managed to get fish feeding on the surface and with the aid of a controller float, young Carter was catching more than his fair share. A fact that he kept me informed of, as he would come along and tell me after every fish was landed with joyful enthusiasm. Older brother Danny was being more selective and picking out the bigger of the fish that they had in front of them. I have to admit that I was very impressed, not only by their ability to catch fish but also by their confidence when handling them on the bank. Fish Care is an important aspect of our sport and to see the confident and safe manner in which the brothers unhooked and returned their fish was a credit to them both. In my opinion this is why these types of 'runs waters' are so important to young anglers. As well as catching plenty of fish, which keeps their interest, they learn to handle, unhook, weigh and return fish. Lessons that will serve them well as they move up the angling ladder.





# TROUT INFORMER

## Brick Farm Lakes

Herstmonceux, East Sussex



## Brick Farm Lakes Catch & Cook Event Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May

Join us on a 2 fish ticket for an afternoon of fishing alongside filleting demonstrations and hot smoking. Take your fresh caught trout to expert chef and butcher *Theo Saltman from The Smoking Corpse* to be cooked with local venison over an open flame (see menu). Our licenced bar will be open for refreshments throughout.



Catch & Cook Ticket: £85  
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Limited tickets available

All tickets are non-refundable and payment must be made at time of booking to secure your ticket  
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### Catch & Cook



### Canapés

Venison Carpaccio  
Cold Smoked Trout with Horseradish

### Mains

Fire Seared Venison Steak with Pickled Blackberries & Port Sauce  
Trout Cooked Over Fire 3 ways (Planked, Seared & Hot Smoked) with Lemon & Herb Butter

### Sides

Jacket Potato  
Apple & Fennel Slaw  
Grain Mustard Potato Salad  
Charred Baby Gem Lettuce  
Smoked Beef Fat & Orange Confit Carrots

M.E.N.U

Notable catches of recent include a nice 3 fish bag for **Rob** which weighed exactly 11lbs caught on Diawl Bach and Apps Bloodworm. Generally speaking successful flies are getting smaller and more natural looking – **Len Taylor** was pleased to catch 4 fish this week on Buzzers, a fly pattern he is not used to so he was really 'buzzing' with excitement on his successful morning. Let's hope the weather is finally making it's mind up and Spring sets in.



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## Tenterden Trout Waters Tenterden, Kent

March has been a great month for fishing at Tenterden. Many anglers have been catching up to their catch limit of 10 fish and going home with smiles on their faces and their quota of Trout. The trout are feeding and the killer flies have been Cormorant and Buzzers on a slow retrieve a couple of feet under the surface. It's the Trout Fishing season and a warm welcome awaits you at Tenterden this April. 3 lakes (5 acres of water) are fully stocked with Rainbows, Browns & Blues. We have a Fishing Lodge for you to make a cuppa with our compliments which all adds to a good fishing experience here and a heated/comfortable Shepherds Hut where you can stay and fish with 20% off fishing permits this year. We are in the Top 50 Stillwater Trout Fisheries in the British Isles and a Trout Master Stillwater. Gift vouchers are available for permits, tuition and staycations. Follow us on Instagram & Facebook. Spring is the time to get the rods in the boot for trout fishing downtime before the weather warms up. **Tight Lines, Gaynor, Richard & Audrey.**

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Andy offers a guiding service for those who want to learn more about 'Lure Fishing' and 'Fly Fishing'

**LURE FISHING** Fish a variety of reservoirs for Pike, Perch and Zander. These days are suitable for beginners and improvers who wish to 'fast track' their way to success. Learn more about lure fishing, the use of boats and fish finders, or just have a FUN day with an experienced Predator angler.

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# The journey continues...

Whenever I start a new project, whether it be a new venue, species, or technique I get very excited. Some might say obsessed. The anticipation between trips is unbearable, not unlike the feeling I get before a holiday, or a long journey. I've even started waking up before my alarm sounds! The learning process has been enjoyable, it's like I'm on a journey, one that I don't want to end too soon!

So, since the new year I've been out in all weathers trying to understand and master the 'dark art' of bait fishing. A passion I've recently rediscovered since I fished with my old friend Melvyn Oakley. Looking at my diary my results have been very varied. Not only have I been using unfamiliar tackle and techniques, I've also been flitting between several different waters too. I've been hoping to discover somewhere that contains large roach or perch, or preferably both! Not knowing what to expect it's so exciting and great fun.

The mild wet weather in February saw carp 'gate crashing' my baited swims on Kettles Lake at Elphicks [TN12 8EL]. I had positioned a perch rod, baited with prawn along the near bank close to an overhanging tree. It looked the perfect perch spot, and on a previous trip had produced two fish to 2lb 8oz.

On my other rod I had cast an open ended feeder cast towards the island. I was using sweetcorn as the hook-bait in an effort as to avoid the 'mini' roach, that love maggots. On my first cast the sweetcorn was taken by a stunning common of 15lbs. Moments later the perch rod was away and I'd hooked another carp, this time a mirror of 14lbs! More were to follow, the final tally was eight carp, four doubles, but no perch! I had been warned by James Gardner that carp love prawns, apparently it has to be very cold to stop the carp getting to the bait first!

Another trip later that week saw me return to Iden Wood [TN31 7UT]. Yet another wet miserable day, so you can imagine my surprise when I saw half a dozen anglers already set up and fishing when I arrived at 8am. Apparently they were a match group having a friendly "knock up" match whatever that is? I decided to try the specimen lake instead, owner Andy Ashdown had told me there were some nice silvers in there, as well as large perch. The wind and rain made my swim choice quite easy. I opted for the shelter under a fringe of trees at the car park end. I positioned my perch/prawn combo next to a fallen branch that laid across the margin, reaching out to the 'drop off'. I then fed some chopped prawns and red maggots over my bait. Next I set about plumbing the swim for my 'waggler' rod. Once I found a spot, I fed a few soft balls of F1 ground bait to get the swim started.

I then proceeded to loose feed maggots sparingly, after each fish. The bites were very subtle, my slender insert 'waggler' would gradually submerge until just the tip was barely visible, before it finally disappeared. Each bite produced either a 'mini' roach, perch or gudgeon. Although it was fun, I was keen to avoid these nuisance fish. So what should I try next? Plan 'B' I switched methods tackling up a feeder rod, which I cast out towards the island. I'd seen fish activity there earlier in the session. I made half a dozen casts with a large swim feeder filled with groundbait, to prime the spot. Having 'clipped up' my line, I was able to cast my small open end cage feeder very close to the cover of the island. A short 4" [10cm] hook length, baited with sweetcorn, on a mini rotary helicopter rig completed my set up. This 'bolt rig' is a very effective way of catching specimen roach, or so I've been told. On this occasion it was very ineffective at attracting any bites, so back to plan 'A' and the 'waggler' rod.

I had continued feeding my original swim while I was feeder fishing. This proved worthwhile as I immediately started catching, once I resumed fishing the 'primed' swim again. As the afternoon drifted into dusk the inevitable happened. The float gradually submerged and I struck into a large carp that



Andy Lush  
- The Friendly Fisherman



Perch love prawns



First cast with a new rod, what a start!





*So close, but no cigar! Andy's 1lb 15oz roach*

was able to hold his float over his baited spot. It was interesting also to note that when he switched from maggots to 'casters' he started catching bigger roach. His single caster was attracting 4-6oz fish, as soon as he switched to double caster his fish got even bigger.

As I took a 'tea break', I watched Melvyn lift into what was obviously a better fish, signified by his pole elastic slicing through the water! Carp? No! Big roach, maybe? Then the familiar, side-to-side head nodding, so typical of a big perch. Net in hand Melvyn reached towards his prize, only for the size 18 fine wire hook to straighten under the strain. I needed to up my game, I put the 'waggler' rod to one side and cast a swim feeder rig towards the island. I had primed this area earlier in the session with a few feeders of groundbait. Sweetcorn was again my chosen hook bait. It worked! I had a sharp bite followed by a drop-back bite, I quickly reeled up the slack line and the rod took on a nice "battle curve". It wasn't a carp, not heavy enough. The sharp zig-zagging of the line sliced through the surface signified it was a roach. What a roach! I'd just caught a new PB at 1lb 15oz, so close to the magical 2lb specimen I'd hoped for. Two more carp put in a late appearance on the same presentation, making it another successful day.

## ***Still time for trout fishing***

Gary Collins and I had intended going to Farmoor reservoir in Oxford, but there were no boats available. We needed an alternative venue, where we could fish 'catch and release' as neither of us wanted to take any trout.

We eventually opted for Frensham Trout Fishery near Guildford [GU10 2JN]. This was somewhere I'd never fished and knew very little about. The fishery comprises of two lakes and four small pools. As we walked around, Gary and I were rather taken aback by how small the pools were. We were both disappointed, but decided to 'solider on'. The main lake, 'Robins' looked like our best bet so we split up to cover as many options as possible. Gary elected to fish the open bank while I decided to tackle the steep wooded bank opposite. Matt the fishery manager, had told us that angling pressure usually pushes the fish towards the wooded bank later in the day.

I could only 'roll cast' around the overhanging trees on the wooded bank. My leader was shorter than normal, around 12ft [3.6m]. I tried an assortment of small weighted flies on my first peg, before moving on fish-less. I quickly tried a couple of other spots, again fish-less before checking out the three pools above the lake. It didn't take me long to dismiss these, they were shallow, silted up and very small. I bypassed the next pool, which in fairness was much larger than the others. The bottom lake 'Heron' was smaller and narrower than 'Robins', but looked a better bet than any of the other waters I'd seen.

I have to say this fishery is not somewhere for a novice caster. All the waters require careful "backcasts" to avoid the trees and bushes, that would eagerly claim your fly! I stopped in a peg that was safe to cast in at one end of 'Heron', far enough from the other angler who was fishing the opposite end. After a few casts I suddenly saw a fish rise directly under an overhanging tree. At last something to go on! I watched intently to see if there was anything hatching? I couldn't see anything, but did spot two fish circling the area. I quickly changed from a weighted nymph to a bushy hackled wet fly. I applied some 'Gink' floatant to the throat hackles, so it appeared like an emerging fly, with its backside sitting down through the surface. The fly I'd selected had a fluorescent tail which helped me pick it out amongst the shadows and reflections of the opposite bank.

I covered a fish I could see hovering a few inches below the surface. It didn't notice my fly, or if it did it wasn't impressed? Suddenly another two fish appeared slightly deeper down, without hesitation one rose and took my fly! It's a 'funny old game' really, as I went from despair to elation with just one fish! My confidence had returned and I started to focus on every shadow trying to spot another fish. The other angler had left by now which gave me more water to explore. After an hour or two I came to the conclusion that repeated casting and retrieving would spook the fish. Having reached the same conclusion Gary switched to an intermediate line, this allowed him to mix up his retrieves, to 'trigger' a response, without disturbing the surface. Shortly after this tactical change, he hooked and lost a fish, before landing another shortly afterwards.

Time for lunch and compared notes. My plan for the afternoon was to target any cruising fish I could see, with a variety of dry flies. I'd seen enough rises to make me think this was my best option. Gary continued searching with his intermediate line approach. My afternoon was totally absorbing. I hooked and lost two more fish, pricked another and rose a few others, all on dries! Who would have thought this was going to work in the winter?



*This beautiful spartic trout restored Andy's confidence*

bolted towards some lillys. As the line melted off my spool, I knew it was going to end badly. My short hook length was only 3lb breaking strain. The carp knew what it was doing, so when the line fell slack, I knew I'd met my match, and had come off second best!

Next trip I was back at Kettles Lake with Melvyn Oakley. We fished the road bank this time. I was keen to fish my perch/prawn rod out into open water for a change. Previously I'd cast close to bank-side foliage. By changing tactics I hoped to improve my results and understanding of perch behaviour, on commercial carp waters. My 'waggler' rod was cast into the channel between our bank and the island. A couple of soft balls of ground bait were followed by loose fed sweetcorn, hoping to avoid the 'micro' and 'mini' roach. I struggled with the 'undertow' that was dragging my float out of position, away from the baited area. As Melvyn was pole fishing he



*Frensham*

As the light faded and the clock ran down, I returned to 'Robins' for one last try on the wooded bank. Although I failed again, I did notice a few fish rise in the flow from an inlet pipe. My fly was a size 14 Fulling Mill black foam ant, which I cast into the current. As it settled on the surface it was immediately taken by a feisty rainbow, result! Next cast, to the side of the inflow saw the line drag my fly back into the current. Although I couldn't see the fly, I felt the take which took me by surprise, and I missed it! Next cast, another solid take! I felt the fish for a moment, before it came off, doh! Another cast, another take, another miss? I checked the fly and the hook was broken at the bend! I tied another on, but the moment had passed, time to call it a day.

***Til' next month, tight lines,  
Andy Lush***



# Junior Informer



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## New PB for Harley



15 year old **Harley Williams** has been enjoying a fine run of success at his local Dartford Lakes. Despite the challenging conditions facing all anglers this winter, Harley managed to land an impressive run of fish, topped off by a new **PB** in the shape of this lovely deep bodied common carp weighing in at 23lbs 2ozs. Showing the determination to get out and fish, during what many consider to be the least productive months of the year, make Harley a worthy winner of this months **Sussex Bait Developments** bait package, which will help him bank plenty more fish now that the warmer weather is on the way.



Harley Williams with his stunning  
23lbs 2ozs common carp

## Hooray for Harrison

Under the tutorage of his Grandfather, 7yr old **Harrison** been learning how to fish. The thing that impressed us most at FWI is that in an age where so many young anglers start with, and only ever learn about carp, Harrison started by float fishing for roach and rudd before moving on to bigger species. His apprenticeship has obviously payed off, enabling him to land this superb looking PB ghost carp all on his own. An easy winner of this month's signed copy of **Carl Smith's** book 'The Simple Fishing Guidebook' which will undoubtedly help him develop his multi species approach.



7yr old Harrison with his PB ghost carp





## April update

by instructor Warren White



**We have certainly had a lot of rain over the last few months, February was reported to be the wettest for 250 years.**

My coaching with schools runs all through the winter and rivers are very much part of our BTEC course as we are expected to visit rivers as well as still waters to get used to the differing environments. I personally love fishing rivers and want my students to learn how to river fish and find out more about their local rivers the Darent and Cray. These rivers really have some historical significance with the Darent being known in the late 19th century as one of the finest trout chalk streams in the country, with trout in abundance. However, things have changed over the years with pollution from the industries along the river and over abstraction, but it still is a good little river with good coarse and trout fishing to be had. Because of the constant rain this winter the rivers have been running very high and the colour of pea soup. To be in with a chance of catching in the short sessions we do, its best to visit the river when the river starts dropping coinciding with the losing a bit of colour, in these conditions we have had some nice catches of roach and dace. But because of the heavy rain this winter, with conditions not good, our visits to the rivers have been curtailed, giving us no option but to do more fishing on still waters.

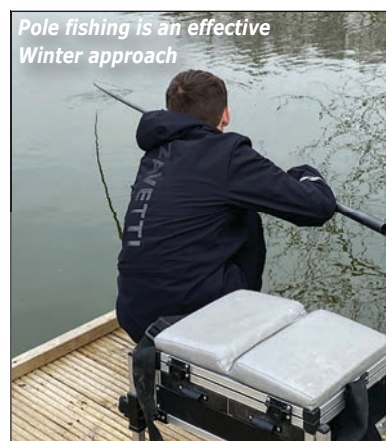
When the river close season approaches on the 15th of March, these days, anglers are really divided on whether we should have a river closed season or not. I was always for having a closed season, but with pollution and the poaching that goes on in our rivers currently, I really think it is more important that we have anglers on the bank, all through the year, being the eyes and ears of our waterways. Freshwater testing is an important part of any fisheries maintenance plan, the reason for this is because it's the best way to determine how healthy the water is. Part of the BTEC Fishery course for my school students is to imagine that you are the manager of a fishery and high up in the importance of



**Water testing is a critical part of Fishery Management**



**Water temperature can affect fish behaviour**



**Pole fishing is an effective Winter approach**

maintaining a fishery, is the health of the fish. The water testing involves testing water Temperature, PH (potential hydrogen) and dissolved oxygen. If the test found that the PH was too high or too low, the aquatic organisms living within it will die and in the case of dissolved oxygen, low levels can lead to fish kills, potential cause, pollution. The testing involves safely collecting water samples then to measure and record the results. I think for anyone doing a test like this, the enjoyable part is when you add the drops to the test vials, for the PH and dissolved oxygen and waiting to match the colour from the test vial to the colour chart to see the value and ultimately if the sample is good, meaning it is suitable for fish. From our testing, the results for the lake looked normal, which is always nice to see.

In recent weeks we have been visiting different still waters, we have found that the fishing has been hit and miss, probably because the unnatural amount of wet weather for the time of year, our winters are definitely changing. Over the last three weeks my Thursday group at school have been visiting our main still water venue Grove Farm, which is part of Hadlow college. On our last short morning session, we had an interesting outcome. Although the fishing is not easy, we normally target the Carp and the lads normally bring their own gear that comprises of carp rods, bite alarms etc. But in my view the best method in the winter is the Pole, as you cannot beat the accuracy and presentation. On this occasion the lads that were carp fishing with boilies were struggling, Reggie (the perch whisperer) decided to have a go on the pole after hearing that Amy (school teacher) had had a bite on paste. Reggie is a keen fisherman and has the gift of finding a way to catch in the hardest of conditions. He tried Paste but it wasn't happening, so decided to try corn which we know is a terrific winter fish bait. Not long after shipping out with corn I noticed Reggie was playing a nice carp which he landed, then not long afterwards he was into another one, the Perch whisperer strikes again!



**Reggie 'The Perch Whisperer' strikes again**

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## The Golden Years of Coarse Fishing

by Bob Rolph

# *The Big Game fishing meccas around the world and the legacy of Captain Cook*

*As I've just returned from the amazing Bay of Islands on the tip of the North Island of New Zealand, I thought readers would like to hear of the huge fish still caught in that area of the world and the impact Captain James Cook had on the region 250 years ago.*

The small town of Russell (population 1,000) is right in the heart of 180 small islands in this bay, and harbours a small fleet of big game boats eager to charge hundreds of dollars to go out in search of a monster Black Marlin, Sailfish, Swordfish, Tuna or Wahoo. As I was only there for the day (off a cruise ship), I could not partake in this activity or be down at the dock at dawn to board the vessel on the daily 40 mile voyage to the lucrative fishing grounds. There are no shortage of takers, mainly Americans and Aussies on fishing vacations who want a trophy photo fish, even though most is catch and release nowadays. Anyway, at nearly 80, I would am not fit enough to go on such a trip, and do battle with a 300lbs marlin from the fighting chair! I did do it 40 years ago in the Bahamas, and had some good fish which did my back no good at all. I still suffer today!



Bay of Islands - Fishing Clubhouse



Some of Zane Grey's catches

This did not stop me venturing into the club house bar and viewing the huge displays of stuffed or replica fish adorning the walls behind the bar and all round the room in fact.

The famous US writer, Zane Grey was a frequent visitor here 90 years ago and photos of some of his massive catches still adorn the walls. Huge Tuna, Black Marlin, Shark, Sailfish, Swordfish, Kingfish and many species that I had never even heard of were all killed and brought Back to port 90 years ago for the trophy photo and weighing in.

Sustainability is the byword today, and the majority of fish are tagged and returned to the water to fight another day. New Zealanders are obsessed with fishing and boating. As we arrived early on the Sunday morning, hundreds of small boats were out in the vast estuary, all fishing for smaller cookable fish. What species I know not, but whole families were out there at 6 in the morning, 4 to a boat, wives and kids, all hauling in their Sunday lunch in the vast Tauranga harbour inlet.



New Zealand, and Auckland in particular, is famous for boat and yacht ownership. Everyone seems to have one, with the vast safe harbours and inlets offering fishing and boating to die for. The slipways and parking are all free, and we watched families launching their boats with ease, into the clear waters of the Bay of Plenty, in the North Island.

Gisbourne, down south, was another big game port we visited, with the club headquarters open to visitors for a drink at the bar or in the restaurant. It's amazing that there are any fish left in the sea as they all seemed to be adorning the walls of the clubhouse. Although I must admit, mostly from times gone by.

James Cook first landed here in 1769, and his statue adorns the harbour entrance. Napier was another great town we visited, with its Art Deco theme. It was festival week when we arrived. Also Dunedin, a town so Scottish it is twinned with Edinburgh.

The influence of Captain James Cook was hard to ignore in this region of the world. Born in a small village in Yorkshire in 1728, it was he who 250 years ago became the first to accurately map the coastline of the wonderful country of New Zealand from his 366 Tonne ship HMS Endeavour and a crew of just 94 men, and becoming the first European to communicate with the native Māori.

When you consider that our ship was 200 times larger than the 1764 built collier bark from Whitby, Captain Cook's achievements were absolutely staggering. He did 3 consecutive tours of the Pacific, the latter two in command of HMS Resolution, to discover most of the East coast of Australia, New Zealand, and countless south seas islands, ending in Hawaii where he was killed by the natives on Valentine's Day in 1779. In my opinion the greatest Englishman who ever lived, ahead of the likes of Nelson, Brunel or Churchill.

On a cruise 5 years ago I met up with John Rawle from Essex who once ran a big game business from Key West in Florida. He described the fish they caught in glowing terms, and the growing number of British anglers keen to experience a marlin on the end of their line. Phil Wakeford is another experienced angler in this form of fishing and I have spoken to him several times at fishing events around the country. Ian Howcroft, from Perth, once fished off Exmouth to catch a record 1700lbs tiger shark, before F.J.T. joined him out there for a few years. Bet the fish put up a better fight than the big bream from Tring that he used to catch!

Reunion Island, South Africa, Mauritius, Bermuda, Hawaii, and the east coast of America are all still vibrant big game regions, and many a Brit ventures out there each year to do battle in the big game fighting chair! Trevor Housbys son also runs game trips from his home in the Vanuatu islands in the South Pacific, carrying on from where his father left off in Madeira and the Azores.

Captain Cook has over 45 places in the world named after him, and numerous statues, and I find it amazing that he accomplished so much in his short life of 51. He wouldn't believe the ships of today, and the fact that you can fly back from New Zealand in just 23 hours.

His first ship, HMS Endeavour, averaged 8 knots with a fair following wind and was a Whitby built former coal barks costing just £2,840 when acquired by the Admiralty, with a further £2,294 spent to convert her ready for the 'Voyage of Discovery'. The ship was originally built to carry coal down to London and timber back, and were nicknamed CATS. (that's coal and timber ships) with a flat bottom for easy beaching if no dock was available in port.

The Endeavour sailed from Plymouth in August 1768 and took 3 years to circumnavigate the world and map New Zealand. My trip could have been done in 2 days, although we actually took 4 weeks. Today the wreck of the Endeavour is to be found languishing at the bottom of Newport Harbour in Rhode Island USA where it was scuttled to avoid the French fleet, and a full size replica is to be seen moored in Darling Harbour, Sydney, which we visited during our stay over there.

Cook's astonishing seamanship, leadership and mapmaking skills paved the way for what we have today. His maps so accurate that many could be placed over the top of modern maps with no discernible difference. When you consider that all this was achieved by sail at a time before electricity, engines, cars, planes, computers, freezers, GPS, Radio, and sports like Football, Cricket, Tennis, Rugby and Golf hadn't even started, it is all just mind boggling!

Many great books are available about the life of Captain James Cook, and I for one will be researching more about his life and times. Cook had six children, where on earth did he find the time? I have been fascinated by big game boats ever since watching the 1959 film 'The Old Man and the Sea' by Ernest Hemingway. The huge Black Marlin was played for three days by Spencer Tracy in the film, and is set in Cuba.

Zane Grey had a tie up with Hardys of Pall Mall, who produced huge big game reels for him 100 years ago. The native Māori of NZ are revered in the North Island, most signs are also in their language, a far cry from how the Aborigines in Australia are treated today. The first NZ treaty with Britain was signed in 1840 in the Bay of Islands town of Waitangi, and since that date the Māori have integrated well with their British occupying 'Visitors'.

**Bob Rolph**

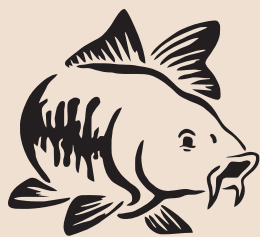


**A statue of Captain Cook at Gisborne Harbour**



**The HMS Bark Endeavour - Cook's first command**





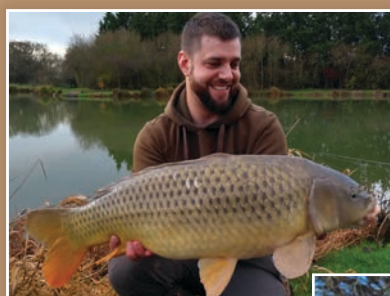
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# Medway Man

## Bob Morris

**T**he spring fishing campaign is now under way with the return of relatively decent weather with the desire to get back on the tench trail taking over. In actual fact I was rather happy to see the back of the pike fishing as it had been a rather hard old game this year and although I ended up with a couple of decent fish I felt that I had too many blanks and also suffered a good number of wettings.

An opportunist incident fueled my interest back in late February while piking during one of the few frosty spells that we have had this last winter. I had decided to go to what I considered would be a slightly easier water to pull out a few jacks and boost my confidence but by early afternoon there were still no signs of action. I decided to take a stroll and see if I could spot anything as the pike had been spawning on other waters and with extensive shallow water here I thought that I might see something. I did see something. Small swirls and vortices at one end of the lake convinced me that pike were at it, in this shallow corner. As I watched however, a mud cloud appeared and this was followed by first a tail, and then a dorsal gently breaking the surface. It was in fact Carp activity and I must say that on this blank and cool pike fishing day I felt inspired to have a go. I had also recently read Alex's story about a stalking session on an old estate lake and this looked like an opportunity to put my stalking hat on. I had only brought piking gear today but had my barbel rod and centrepin in my bag - just in case I ended up on the nearby river. No bait in the car though as I have recently cleared it all out for a run to the dump. Digging for worms seemed the only option until I found a tin of luncheon meat in a bucket at the back of the boot. Ideal bait in the shallow muddy water at the far end of the lake. I quickly set up the rod and reel and decided to freeline a small piece of meat in amongst the disturbance, with the lack of float or shot hopefully minimizing the possibility of scaring the fish. I arrived back on the scene to find the Carp still in evidence and definite signs of feeding going on. It is strange how you get out of touch with stalking and my first move was the classic error. I had chopped up about 20 bits of meat and gently lobbed them into the area - no more than two rod lengths out. I was being as stealthy as possible, even partially hiding behind a bush and was please to see that this introduction did not alarm the fish. I did however alert a group of ducks to the situation and they landed with a whoosh right in the middle of the patch with the inevitable disastrous consequences!!! Oh well, back to the piking for an hour or so.



**Grrrrrr - Ducks!!!**



**Bob's opportunist carp**

I was not sure that the carp would return or not, but after about an hour they did. This time no mistake and I pulled several coils of braid from the pin and swung the meat into the exact position first time. I squatted down and laid the rod across the landing net and watched the bow in the line. Fish activity continued but no real movement on the line except for the odd false lift. A Kingfisher then distracted me by landing in the bush to my right and yes, you've guessed it, the next thing was that the rod was pulling round to the left and the centrepin screaming. I made a ham fisted attempt at grabbing it but it was too late. Another lesson learned or should I say re-learned. Would I be lucky enough to get a second or third chance? On this day the



answer was yes, and the Carp returned to the area after about half an hour. With the bait in position again I decided to hold the rod and be at my most attentive despite distractions. Just the occasional slow lift but nothing positive until about fifteen minutes had past and there was a slight slackening of the line. As I was trying to decide whether a Carp had picked up the meat, the line suddenly tightened and cut up through the surface scum. A firm strike to the left and it was on, initially feeling like I



*Pike gear packed away for the Summer*



*Back on the trail for tench and bream*

had hooked the bottom. I was expecting fireworks in the shallow water but instead of charging away out of the corner toward the open water this fish, which felt like a good one, decided to fight it out in a slow and ponderous manner consisting of large circles right under the rod tip - albeit throwing up huge clouds of mud and once drenching my with an angry shower of spray and debris. To my surprise/relief when I put the net into the margin this Carp dived straight in.

It was a lovely looking fish and although I rarely weigh Carp these days, particularly when after other species, I made an exception here as I knew that it was a good one for the water and at 19lbs 4ozs certainly my best one from there.

I was delighted to say the least as this capture had not only rectified this otherwise blank piking day but also inspired me to start getting out my gear for the spring effort. I will let you know how I am getting on next time.

*Best Fishes & Opportunities, Bob Morris*

f BobMorrisCustomRods in Bob-Morris-93450776 Bmt1@btconnect.com 01322 866015

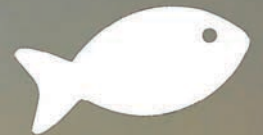
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