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Larry Killick
27lbs local lake



Photo courtesy of
Mark Baker



Colin Etherington
10lbs Sussex Ouse

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Hello and welcome to the December issue of the Freshwater Informer!

Probably like me, you cannot believe that another year has passed us by in a flash! It is often said that as you get older, time goes by so much more quickly. This is so true as it only seems like a couple of months ago I was preparing the Christmas 2018 magazine!

How has this year been for you from an angling perspective? It has been encouraging for me to receive such tremendous support from the angling community as a whole during my first year's ownership of the publication. Although, it has been a year of immense hard work, as I wanted to improve the magazine's appeal to both anglers and the trade, it has been a successful one and I plan to go even further in the future. I have been encouraged by everyone's support and the feedback that I have received has been invaluable in helping me shape the publication and its contents. The aim of the magazine has always been to provide excellent information about the fishing available here in the South East. Whatever your discipline, I hope that you find the content to be both of interest and informative.

I would like to thank the army of contributors who have provided such great articles and reports each and every month. It is a major commitment for them as no sooner do we reach one deadline, then another looms rapidly on the horizon. The process is never ending!

I think it is safe to say that we have enjoyed an excellent year's fishing in our region and some great catch reports have been sent in for us all to enjoy and get envious about! Although sea anglers have yet to enjoy a 'cod boom', the numbers of bass caught throughout the year have been encouraging and personally I believe this year has seen more bass caught than in any other. Where I live here on the Medway, the river has been alive with bass through the summer months. Not big fish, but, plenty to give a great day's sport. I have been pleased to receive so many catch reports from our junior anglers throughout the year and it would appear that angling seems to be reaching out to more and more young people. Sessions run by our Junior Informer sponsors are seeing an increase in take up, especially from schools keen to build angling in to the curriculum for a number of students. Tutors are always noting that the benefits to students provided by angling are very quickly noted!

Everything seems positive, however, the decline in the number of our local tackle shops this year has been sad. Admittedly, many of the closures have been due to the owners' retiring and non renewal of shop leases by their landlords. It has been a tough year in the retail world as a whole, not just for angling. Well known High Street names have ceased trading during the year, many of these we have all grown up with over the years. I have asked on many occasions for anglers to support their local tackle shops and that message is more important now than ever before. Without our business, they cannot survive, so it is imperative that we use them. Please help make 2020 the year that secures our independent angling retailers future. When they are gone, they are gone forever!

The Freshwater Informer sincerely wishes everyone a very Happy Christmas and a great New Year!
We will be back on the shelves in early January!

Enjoy your fishing, Barry Reed

Letter to the Editor

Regular correspondent, Robin Piper, was going through some catch photos of previous sessions and came across this picture of a fine perch and wrote to tell the story:

"Dear Barry,

I came across this photo of a fine perch that I caught a while ago at Geddes Lakes. I had received reports from other members of some big perch being caught so I thought I would have a go! As lures, plugs and spinners were banned, I would need to use a bait so chose lobworms and prawns. My confidence was high for a great session as when I arrived there was no one else fishing. With the wind dying away and no sign of a frost, I chose a swim next to a patch of lilies that had died off. The water had just a hint of colour to it, so I chose a half ounce Pallatrax Stonze and tied a 6lbs bs hook link and fished it as a running leger. The hook was a size 12 Pallatrax wide gape on an 8" length of 6lbs Maxima. I initially baited with some chopped prawns and casting was just an underarm flick about three rod lengths out. Although I had lobworms, I intended them to be a 'back up' bait if needed and persevered with the prawns and waited. I continued to wait for most of the day! With no action after several hours, I decided to call it a day. As I was packing up, I noticed my reel handle turning and picked up the rod and was met with a nice slow pull to my right. After a short fight, a lovely perch of 4lbs was slipped in to the net! This was my only fish of the day but was a new PB perch for me so it was worth the wait!" Regards, Robin Piper



MONK LAKES SILVERS OPEN - Bridges Lake, Marden, Kent 27 fished

This popular Winter series got underway with an excellent turnout.

First from form peg 20 was **Paul Hamlyn** (Preston Innovations Delcac) with 33-11-0 of big bream on method feeder and pellet. Second was **Charlie Lovell** also of Preston with 28-13-0 of bream from peg 31 on the same method.

Overall result:

1	Paul Hamlyn (Preston Innovations Delcac)	33-11-0
2	Charlie Lovell (Preston Innovations Delcac)	28-13-0
3	Kev Dyer (Preston)	23-2-0
4	Brian Nesbitt (Nu Fish)	19-6-0
5	Fred Brown (South East Match group)	18-8-0
6	Len Goodwin (Monk Lakes)	17-13-0



MAGAZINE STOCKISTS PLEASE BE AWARE!
As we head in to Winter, I will be carrying less spare magazines when out delivering each month. This is to keep wastage to a minimum. If you would like your magazine delivery increased or decreased, please let me know in good time so I can ensure I order enough from the printers. Thank you for your co-operation.

www.freshwaterinformer.com

The Freshwater Informer

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Fishery Reports

Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hawkhurst, Kent

December brings a close to our fishing from 2nd December (bar pre-booked matches on the Match Lake and sessions on Specimen Lake for members only). It also brings our Fish of the Month competition to a close, although we do still have a few winners to announce... October was a busy month for us with a lot of stunning fish coming out of all lakes, but one beautiful zip linear really stood out to us! With that in mind, well done to **Mike Miller** for winning 24 hours free fishing! He caught a few carp up to 25lb but says this 23lb Linear must be one of the best looking fish he has ever caught. For November, we are pleased to say we've picked two anglers as although the fishing had started to slow down, there were still some absolute beauties being caught. First off is **Kevin Jupp** who landed himself a mint condition 30lb'er from Dove Lake at the end of October. It's a lovely looking Common and a new **PB** for Kevin. Our second winner is **Lindsay Rapachi**, who managed to land a 26lb 8oz Zip Linear, as well as 'Casper' the ghost carp weighing in at 33lb 4oz- both in great condition! Well done to both Kevin and Lindsay, who have both been sent a voucher for 24 hours free fishing!



33lb 4oz Common Casper the ghost Specimen Lake - Lindsay Rapachi



30lb Common - Dove Lake - Kevin Jupp

MAIN LAKE - The catfish have still been fairly active considering the weather. **Richard** landed a 66lb Catfish from swim 12, caught using krill. **Aaron** managed to land an awesome 71lb Catfish from swim 2. **Mark** finished a slow day off with an impressive 65lb Catfish from swim 10. A big well done to **Brandon** for landing an impressive 64lb Catfish from peg 12. He was fishing as part of a group of 4, who managed a total of 26 banked and 13 lost; the biggest was a lovely 28lb Mirror. **Stuart Roberts** fished 36 hours and landed 4 carp, including an awesome 'knarly looking' Common weighing 23lb 14oz.



66lb Catfish - Main Lake - Richard Blundell



23lb 4oz Common - Main Lake - Stuart Roberts

DOVE LAKE - **Kevin** landed himself a new **PB** - a mint condition 30lb Common- could it be one of our newly stocked carp from earlier this year? Well done to **Nick** for a successful day session on Dove Lake, in which he landed a 21lb 6oz Common and 22lb 5oz Common. On another day session, **Nick** landed a lovely 27lb Common - looks like he knows how to work the lake! **Aaron Buckley** had a successful 24 hour session, landing himself two Commons weighing 21lb and 24lb. On another session, he landed a lovely looking 26lb 4oz Mirror. **Chris Williams** started off his 24 hour session with a 25lb 8oz Common. **Simon Evans** netted a mint condition 27lb Common. **Lee Bullock** landed a lovely looking 24lb Common. **Fred** fished for 36 hours and was rewarded with a lovely Common and a 45lb catfish.

SPECIMEN LAKE - **Tom Marshall** managed to recapture the same Common he caught exactly a month ago during a 36 hour session. Well done to **Ricky Young** for an awesome 24 hour session on Specimen Lake! He caught mirrors weighing 31lb, 29lb 14oz and 22lb as well as a 20lb common. **Lindsay Rapachi** has been lucky enough to catch what can surely be described as a couple of the best looking fish in Specimen Lake over the last two weekends! The zip linear



26lb 4oz Mirror - Dove Lake - Aaron Buckley



27lb Common - Dove Lake - Nick Nicholas

weighed in at 26lb 8oz and the ghost carp known as Casper weighed 33lb 4oz. **Steve Taylor** and **Ricky Young** managed to catch a few despite a drop in temperature, with Steve catching 2 Commons- a pristine 22lb and a 16lb. Ricky was happy to catch a 27lb original old warrior! Another session for **Steve Taylor** resulted in a 26lb common, as well as a 35lb catfish and 57lb catfish.



25lb 8oz Common - Dove Lake - Chris Williams



27lb Common - Dove Lake - Simon Evans



22lb Common - Specimen Lake - Steve Taylor



27lb Mirror - Specimen Lake - Ricky Young

Tanyard Fisheries Uckfield, East Sussex

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FISHERY CLOSES ON
1ST DECEMBER AND RE-OPENS ON 1ST FEBRUARY 2020

COARSE LAKE 2 - **Steve Smith** came for a day's session and landed three common carp and a 6lb catfish. **Steve Huxstep** had an overnight and landed a lovely catfish using mackerel. John, on a day session, landed five common carp and three bream all under 10lb, using maggots and sweetcorn. **Patrick Stripp** came for a weekend session and landed nine fish, three catfish all under 10lb and six common carp largest being 8lb. **Damien Stripp** joined Patrick, and landed nine carp, a mix of commons and mirrors all under 15lb. **Sutas** came for an overnight session and landed nine fish, a mix of common carp and mirror carp all under 10lb.



Steve - Coarse Lake 2



Steve Huxstep

COARSE LAKE 3 - **Carl Smith** came for a day's fishing and landed a common carp with a fellow angler. Ashley came for the day and landed a mirror carp shared photo using corn. Paddy came for a day with some friends and landed five bream and six common carp all



Carl & Ashley

using boilies and maggots. Nick had a nice day session landing three mirror carp and two common carp using maggots and sweetcorn.

CARP FREE LAKE - **Fiachra** came for a day stalking, landing two perch weighing 9oz and 12oz. Mike enjoyed the last of the sunshine and landed three bream and two tench using worms and sweetcorn.

Tanyard Fisheries would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We look forward to seeing you all next year!

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Fishery Reports

Hartley Lands Fishery Cranbrook, Kent

These last few weeks at Hartley Lands fishery have seen us undergo a lot of hard work with netting and stocking. We have netted **NICKS**, **BRAMLEY** and **HENNIKER** to remove unwanted silvers and small carp, all of which have then been placed throughout our match lakes to increase the stock quality and numbers. We have now stocked the specimen lakes with 2x 30s, 24x 20s, 40 x doubles. **HENNIKER** is now fully restocked with a beautiful selection of 9x 20s and 1x 30 and is due to open early 2020. Another 10 large carp will be stocked during the winter!



Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society

BARDEN LAKE has slowed up now for the carp fishing but two regular visitors were rewarded for persisting with dead weed clearing in each of their swims. Society bailiff **Phil Hollens** was first to catch with a stunning fish that was stocked less than two years ago at 19lb 8oz and now weighs 29lb 12oz. Venue regular **Warren** was next to catch, with an absolutely stonking unit known as 'The Brown Fish' at 50lb 9oz. Since these captures there have been no reports of any other fish being caught. The pike fishing should start picking up soon as there have been a few smaller fish coming out to nearly 10lb. **Jason Craven** with this smelt caught fish of 8lb 4oz.

The New Lagoon is still producing the goods in this wet and colder weather, with plenty of tench still being caught and good silvers to just over 1lb. Venue bailiff **Bill** had a good afternoon session recently, catching several tench between 4 and 6lb.

The Old Ballast Pit is still producing carp to just over 20lb and plenty of bream.

Weirwood Reservoir is now full and the water is still a bit coloured, but that didn't stop **Austin Battell**, **Jason Craven** and **Neal Rogers** from venturing out in the boat for some dropshot and jig fishing. Although bites were very hard to come by, they did catch a few predators, notably Austin's cracking 3lb 5oz Perch caught using the Westin Hypoteez.



On the Match side of things, although the River Medway has been up and coloured of late, weights have been reasonable for some, especially A. C. A Cup winner **Larry Howard**, fishing behind the Bungalows at the bottom end of the Long Reach, Larry was lucky enough to make contact with two carp, one of which went off like a train and parted with the hook and the other Larry skillfully played and landed and weighed 10lb 4oz. Larry also added a bream to his winning weight of 12lb 4oz.

HOUGHTON CUP 4 - Sportsground

1st - Tom Sawyer 7lb 4oz 2nd - Roger Trask 7lb 3oz 3rd - Colin Fowler 5lb 3oz

A.C.A CUP - Bungalows

1st - Larry Howard 12lb 4oz 2nd - Peter Hole 7lb 2oz 3rd - Stuart Cottingham 5lb 1oz

RON WILLIAMS CUP - Hartlake Up

1st - Ray Berry 15lb 12oz 2nd - Stuart Parker 11lb 15oz 3rd - Dave Lee 11lb 2oz

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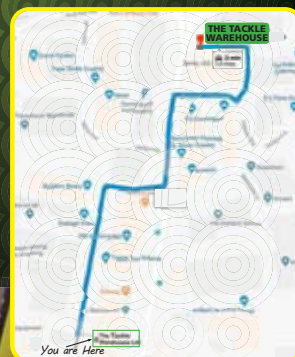
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Fishery Reports

Elphicks Fisheries Horsmonden, Kent

NORTH LAKE is still producing. **Steve Ward** had a 42lb mirror, **Gavin Love** had 3 mirrors at 27lb, 33lb, 26lb and 2 commons at 28lb, 40lb. **Neil Whittaker** had a 33lb mirror and a 37lb ghostie. **Ray White** had a 36lb mirror, **Ollly Koster** had 4 mirrors at 31lb, 33lb, 41lb, 43lb, **Tim Cosens** had a 46lb mirror, **Jeff Smith** had 2 commons at 40lb, and 44lb, **Jake Gardiner** had a 43lb 9oz mirror and **Paul Hartnut** had a 25lb 6oz mirror.



Gavin Love 40lb 2oz North Lake 10.19



Josh Cope. North Lake. 10.19



Jeff Smith 40lb North Lake 11.19



Jeff Smith 44lb North Lake. 11.19



Tim Cosens North Lake 06.19



Shaun Monk 40lb North Lake 10.19

PLANTATION LAKE is fishing well. **Des Valentine** had 3 mirrors to 27lb, and a 34lb mirror, **John Briggs** had 6 mirrors to 27lb, **Will Timson** had a 32lb mirror, **Chris Timson** had a 31lb mirror.



Chris Timson 31lb 5 oz Plantation lake 10.19



Saw Watts prairie Lake 10.19

PRAIRIE LAKE is producing. **Dave Lee** had a 25lb mirror and 2 commons at 24lb, 26lb, Jay Edwards had a 25lb mirror, **Alec Farmer** had 2 mirrors at 18lb, and 25lb.

SANDWICH LAKE is producing carp to pva bags and a small method feeder. Silvers are coming out on maggots and corn. Carp still coming off the top to bread and floaters. **Craig Swindell** had 8 carp to 9lb

KETTLES LAKE is fishing well. **Scott Nolan** had a 32lb 12 oz common and a 26lb mirror. **Jake Boyd** had a 16lb mirror. **Simon Roberts** using bread and boilies had mirrors of 19lb, 11lb, 8lb, 17lb and 22lb. He also had commons of 9lb, 14lb, 24lb and 11lb. **Tom Littlewood** had an 18lb mirror and 4 others at 10lb to 13lb. Carp still loving the bread and floaters. **Richard Cutts** and **Neil Edwards** had 32 carp between 12lb and 25lb, **Richard Cutts** had 6 carp to 19lb.



Ashley Saxton 21lb Kettles lake 10.19

PULLENS LAKE has produced large carp this month. **Gary Cusack** had a 50lb mirror, **Leigh Tester** had a 28lb mirror, **Terry Page** had a 30lb mirror, **Gary Roberts** had a common at 33lb and mirrors at 31lb, 33lb, 41lb, **Simon Farmer** had a 34lb common and mirrors at 31lb, 33lb, 37lb.



Shaun Monk 37lb 12oz Pullens Lake 10.19

WEST END LAKE has picked up a bit now. **Liam Coles** had 2 mirrors at 46lb and 49lb, **Mark Sheward** had 2 mirrors at 34lb, 35lb, **Paul Moore** had 3 mirrors at 40lb, 40lb, 32lb.



Shaun Monk 37lb 12oz Pullens Lake 10.19

Tricklebrook Fishery Five Oak Green, Kent

Ellis and **Craig** visited us at Tricklebrook. They had some lovely perch, biggest perch 3lb and caught a carp off the surface 20.15lb. **Matthew** had a nice 25lbs mirror.



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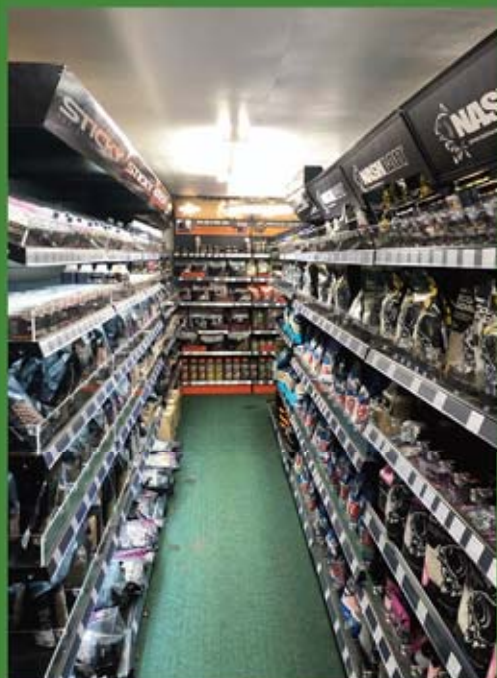


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Fishery Reports

Gabriels Fishery Edenbridge, Kent



Darren and Ellie May with an 8lbs common caught on Strawberry Sweetcorn.

It's a good time to come pike fish on the River Eden. Last week there was two fish one was 15lbs and the other 18lbs caught just above the weir. Best bait to use is currently king prawns. Lure fishing is permitted on the river but not on the lakes.

Our shop is stocked with a wide range of equipment to suit all requirements; including a handy rucksack for river fishing. If you have got dirty boots, once you have finished fishing, buy your own boot bag to contain the mud and keep your car clean. They will also keep the wife happy and you won't have the job of cleaning the interior of the car. Wildlife is present at Gabriel's all year round. It's not just a good fishing complex; it's a fantastic place to spot the wildlife that ranges from kingfishers and little Egrets to Roe deer and hedgehogs

The colder weather and rain has arrived, topping up the water levels in the ditches that have remained dry throughout the summer and now in turn the lakes have filled. The extra water gives the fish the protection that they need, not only from the overhead predators but also the frost. The ground that is exposed to the atmosphere in the summer is often soft and an easy place for insects and mice to burrow and make their home. Now this extra water has quite suddenly flooded the area and provided not only a feast for the fish but also new habitat where in the spring the fish will spawn and when they hatch, the fry will have a good supply of food.

Anglers will recognise this part of 'the cycle of life', and imitate the natural food with bait that is just that little bit sweeter, fruity and spicy. Fish the shallow water around the islands and margins and don't forget the Lilly pads where the fish can hide under the fronds and between the stem s of the reeds.

The leaves from the autumn have now fallen from the trees. These too are providing additional food for the fish. Many insects and bugs lay their eggs on the leaves when they are high up on the trees and then sail from this lofty canopy to the floor of the wood and the surface of the water in the ditches and lakes. When the leaves sink to the bottom of the lake they are absorbed into the silt. This soft oozy material is a thriving home to many tiny creatures and hatchlings as well as worms, swan mussels and leaches. This means that the angler has a lot of natural food to compete with when providing bait for the hook.

Nature has evolved to ensure that all species have the ability to reproduce at a time of plenty, so pike and perch spawn early and are there ready to feast when other fish are still slow moving from the cold water temperatures of the winter.

Carp feed all year round but tend to shoal together in the deeper water that will be a degree warmer than the shallows. Year old fingerlings swim in a tight shoal, all moving as one, simulating a much larger body, protecting themselves from the hungry pike. Sometimes the shoal breaks the surface as a single large fish swims past them.

OAK LAKE is a moderate water with fish of 10 to 25lbs caught regularly through out the winter months. Oak Lake is a hard water to target fish 24 to 32lbs where 32lbs has been the largest recorded so far this season.

ADMIRAL LAKE is a hard water for most of the year with weights recorded between the low twenties, thirties and low forty pound fish

The strong winds of August and September brought down several bank side trees and branches. These had to be cleared and this meant using the boat. In some cases the bank itself was damaged by the roots of the trees so the excavator had to not only lift the trees from the water but also reform the bank itself. De-silting and reforming the bottom and side of the lake has been quite a pleasure with remarks from people, 'we fished where the bottom has been disturbed and we caught fish all day.'

HARE LAKE has been de-silted and many of the reeds have been removed, this has doubled the water area of the pool at the end of the islands. Where the bank and trees fell into the water with the strong winds, these too have been removed. Access to the water has vastly improved so that there is now a clear choice of swim for the angler and clear sight of the water lilies that are now in full bloom. Perch in Hare Lake seem to be the number one fish to catch on maggots. Several reports of 3.5lb perch have been mentioned to the staff. Carp of 4.0lbs and 5.0lbs seem to be common.



SILVER LAKE has fished well and recently retired **Stephen Jackaman** called into the tackle shop at Gabriel's Fishery to show off his pictures in the shop.

OAK LAKE has been once again been called, 'number one for grass carp' with three fish 17.5lbs, 21.0 lbs and 25lbs have all been on the bank this month

ADMIRAL LAKE has been described as hard water where the fish are switched on to any bank movement. A good session is all about holding good fish.

With good weather forecasts expected good fishing will be the result throughout this next month. The banks are now very wet so bring some dry boots with you and be prepared for the frost. **Sam Chorley** shows how to catch big fish from Admiral Lake.



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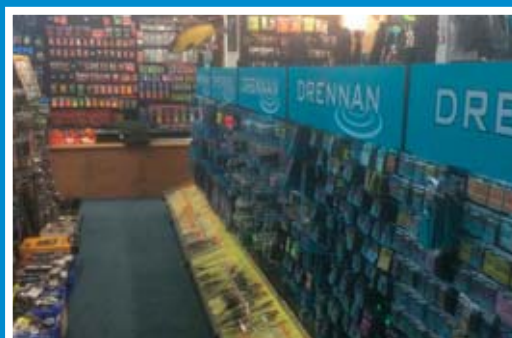
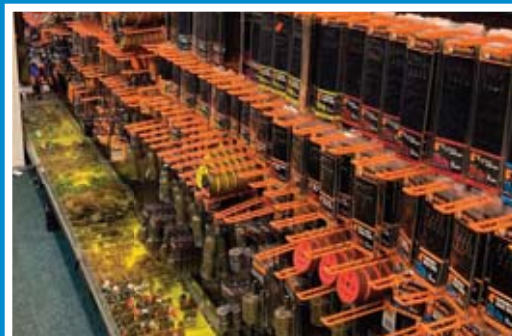
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Fishery Reports

Beaver Fishery Lingfield, Surrey

With the weather turning slowly toward Winter and the northerly winds bringing the first frosts of the year, it has certainly affected the fishing and those anglers willing to brave the colder conditions. We have however, seen a few PBs broken and even a lake record being smashed!

Ben and I are, as usual at this time of year, commencing our Winter maintenance work on the lakes and grounds. We will endeavour to keep all lakes open during this time. As of writing this report, Jeff's Lake, Moat Pond and Eden Pond have been completed with marginal growth cut back, tree work completed and all swims repaired where needed and fresh woodchip laid.

SNIFE LAKE Here are some of the catches, well done to the following anglers. **Darryl Cook** had a common of 17-12, **Kel Stevens** was back and had a lovely stockie at 18-03, **Andy** had a mirror of 18-02 and the ghostie at 28-02 while **Ben** had a common of 17-10, **Sam Wiggins** hit the fish on a couple of sessions when he banked a 19lb common, a 22lb linear and then a **PB** common of 26-05. **Daryl McLaren** banked the first stockie over 20lb when he banked one at 21-13 and then he had a common of 27-10. Last, but not least, a very well done to **Steve White** who banked a new Snipe Lake record when he landed the big mirror at 37-04 and then topped that off with a common of 30lb, what a good session that was!



Sam Wiggins 26-05 PB Snipe



Andy - 28-02 Ghostie Snipe



Daryl McLaren - 21-13 1st VS Stockie 20+



Steve White - 30lb Snipe



Steve White - 37-04 Snipe NEW LAKE RECORD

TUSCANY LAKE Well done to the following anglers. **Jeff Betts** keeps on banking the cats on his afternoon sessions up to 46lb, **Peter Ellis** had 2 cats at 30lb and 63lb, **Chaz Welch** has banked numerous cats to a **PB** of 52lb, **Graham Jewiss** had cats at 32lb, 51lb and 52-08, **Darryl Cook** had a break from the carp and banked 2 to 34-02, **Terry Pook** had cats to 35-08, **Vic Collier** had a cat at 29lb, **Craig Diamond** and



Peter Ellis - 63lb



Craig Diamond 54lb p.b



Graham Jewiss 52-05



Toni Diamond 54-00

his wife **Toni** had a mad session when they both banked personal bests, 2 separate catfish both weighing 54lb.

JEFF'S LAKE Has again been fishing ok with day anglers getting among the fish. The Jeff's Lake Open Match fished better than last month. The top 3 places were: 1st place, **Paul Barnet** with 46-02, 2nd place **Bruce Scott** with 35-06 and 3rd place **Martin Charnock** with 33-04. We have also had a couple of silver matches on here and the resulting weights were for the first match: 1st 17-04, 2nd 14lb, 3rd 13lb and the second silver match results were: 1st 18-12, 2nd 8-12 and 3rd 7-14.

MOAT POND fished ok for the beginning part of the month but, then as the temperatures dropped and we suffered the first frost, the pond slowed down. **Clive Whittington** continued to catch on the feeder, **Rob Wickenden** banked a couple of commons, **Renwick McConaghy** had 5 commons to 6lb and one crucian and **Karen Hutchings** banked a common of 8-04.

DAUGHTERS LAKE is fishing quite hard at the moment, but there have been carp banked to low doubles.

MAZE LAKE This match lake has been neglected a bit this month, with the majority of anglers preferring to fish Jeff's Lake as the fishing has been a bit easier on there. However, we have had a few bream and small F1's caught from Maze Lake.

MAJORS LAKE The carp have still been feeding on this lake with **Lee Powis** banking a 10lb common and his mate **Sam Price** landing a 20lb mirror. **Martin Andrews** had two commons to 8lb and one tench at 4lb. **Jake Warrington** had a 10lb mirror and a 10lb common while **Chaz Welch** banked 6 carp to 18lb. The pike fishing has been slow and steady with plenty of jacks out and pike caught to low doubles.

Ben and I would like to thank you all for your company this past year and we would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a happy and healthy new year!

We apologise that we cannot report every catch on every lake especially if we are not informed of the fish banked. Well done to all and please don't forget to send in or tell us about your catches or you can send pictures via Whatsapp.

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Fishery Reports

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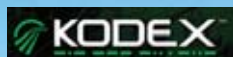
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GROUNDBAIT CLINIC

BY ANDY PHELPS

For today's session, something a little different. I was asked to fill in for a friend on a league match on Black lake at Cottington. I had not fished the lake for a while so I decided to take a trip down there and meet up with Nick Gilbert to see what the fish were behaving like. After our breakfast at the Kingfisher Café, we headed down to the lake. I thought I'd keep things simple and just go mostly down the pole route. Two rigs were set up for the session, one was a Middy carp blue series 1 and the other a series 2. Both are pretty much the same pattern of float, with the difference being that the series 1 has a 1.5mm tip and the series 2, a 2mm tip. I set up two top kits one with Middy Reactacore 4-6 (flame) and one with 8-12 (cerise). The lighter of the two is for a light rig with size 18 hook and the other is more of a bagging rig for when the bream are on the worm with a size 16 hook.



Groundbait for the day was a bag of Van den Eynde Carpmaster Big Fish, a light, dark mix with a relatively low feed content, perfect for the colder months of the year. As an additive, I just used some new bream additive that I am testing and a little worm booster in the water before mixing. As far as baits went, I had some expanders and hard 4 and 6 mm pellets with me and some dead maggots. I had plumbed up two lines at 13 meters, one to the left and one to the right and I intended to feed both lines a little differently to see which had the best results so it was one line with worm and groundbait and one with micro pellets. I cupped in two small balls of groundbait with some dead maggots and chopped worms on the left-hand swim and one small pot of micros on the right. My opening gambit was to fish 4mm expanders on the light rig over the right-hand swim, but things were really slow and after catching tiny roach, I left the swim alone for a while and concentrated on the worm line. First put in and I had a decent skimmer, then another two followed and then it went quiet.



To feed or not to feed? That was the puzzling question going around my head! I decided to use a small Middy flex pot with a little groundbait with some worm in. This did not work very well. Back to the drawing board and I over wet some of my groundbait to see if this would work. Low and behold it did the trick and I started to catch decent sized bream on a small head of worm on size 16. I kept on using the small flex pot to introduce some slop with worm every put in just to keep the fish in the swim. I then decided to pot in some of the slop on the other line to see if that would work there too, so I could have two active swims that I could plunder. It worked there also, maybe the bream did not want hard balls of groundbait falling on their heads, which is something that happens every now and then, or the other theory is, that, maybe the bream were already there and I spooked them with the initial two balls I fed at the start?

I learned something new, that actually helped me in the match the following Sunday. On the day. I drew a few pegs to the left of where I practised. I did everything the same as I had practised and managed to come second overall



with 21lbs 4oz, which was a nice little earner on the day. Don't be afraid to change the consistency of your groundbait from time to time, After all, the feeder anglers do it all the time! I am not saying mix the whole lot up in one go, just a little just to see if it works. As the saying goes, nothing ventured, nothing gained!

Tight lines, Andy.

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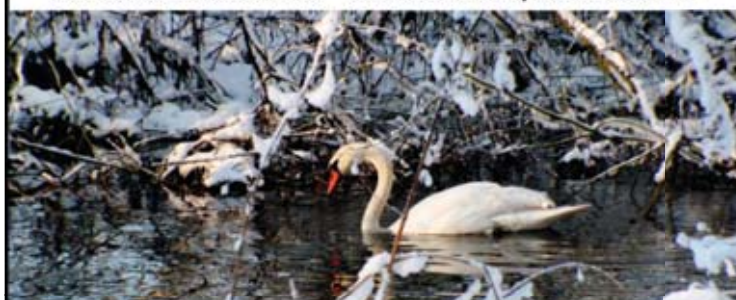
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POM'S PEG



FISH AND FISHERY SAFETY – OUR RESPONSIBILITY!

"Without doubt, one of the worst things I have ever seen, as an angler and fishery owner, was a major fish kill we suffered at a fishery I once owned in Dorset. Though this happened nearly twenty years ago, it certainly had a profound effect on me and definitely shaped the way I look at fish and fishery safety. There are lots of elements for us to consider and appreciate here as 'Ambassadors to the Environment' in which we fish, but the first for me has to be bio security. There are many unknowns within fish diseases because there is little research, unfortunately, but one disease that is recognised is Koi herpes virus (KHV) and it is deadly. Each year we see more and more cases, and its effects are devastating.

So, what as responsible anglers can we do against a viral disease that can have up to 100% mortality rate and there is currently no treatment to combat against it? KHV is highly contagious and one way it is spread is through infected fish coming into contact with certain angling paraphernalia, ironically some of this being designed for fish safety! In particular, I especially mean the following products; keepnets, weigh slings, retention slings, cradles, unhooking mats and landing nets. In essence, anything that an infected fish may come into contact with and where the transfer of the disease can then be taken to another fishery, thus spreading the disease. The only true way to ensure best practice against is to completely air dry this type of kit, preferably in sunlight, but with our weather that can sometimes be a challenge! It has been proven that this disease can live for long periods within damp kit and then be spread, so to fail to take this simple precaution would be extremely reckless. Having seen the consequences of a large fish kill, up close and personal, was a terrible thing, not just for my business but for the poor fish to have suffered so terribly, yet by simply drying out the mentioned products can be all that is needed to prevent this from happening. Proactive bio security is a key defence to the spreading of any disease, so please act responsibly here. For more information on KHV, check out the following link: <https://marinescience.blog.gov.uk/2016/07/01/khv-fishery-angler-net-equipment/>

Another area under bio security comes with illegal fish transfers and this includes taking live baits from one venue to another when predator fishing. We have seen too many cases of pathetic individuals out to make a quick buck who have stolen fish from Europe (especially large carp) who then sell them to fisheries in the UK and within weeks their illegal actions have resulted in massive fish deaths. There is no quicker way to spread disease than take a fish hosting a disease into another water. Some diseases, unlike KHV which only infects carp, can infect the whole biomass and again result in a huge



Landing net and cradle

death toll and, for the fishery, a complete loss of business. There is absolutely no winners here and anyone who is prepared to take such risks are an affront to good angling practices.

As already mentioned, there is a plethora of kit on the market that is designed to assist in the safe landing and holding of fish and we should all be prepared to invest in such to protect our quarry. Yes, there is an expense here but this type of kit is a must in the modern angling scene and does not need to cost the earth, as long as it does the job required. Two products that are a 'must' are a good strong landing net big enough for the species you are aiming to catch, as well as a decent quality unhooking mat.

Always place your unhooking mat in a safe position as close to your swim as possible so when you transfer the fish you won't have far to travel, and whilst being transferred always ensure to support the weight of the fish. Make sure that the mat is already wet and you have a bucket of water to hand to both keep the mat and fish wet. If you are taking a picture, do so as quickly as possible so that you are not keeping the fish out of the water for too long. I always have everything set up in my swim prior to casting out, so all of these eventualities are covered and I only then need to concentrate on the fish and its safety.



Look after your catch



Carp Care Kit

Though I have only scratched the surface on this hugely important topic, I will finish off with a bit more detail on Propolis as it is really interesting and, yet again, another example of nature helping nature. Propolis is a form of resinous compound produced by bees and forms an insoluble coating over a wound which then stops pathogens (micro-organisms that can cause disease) from entering the wound. Personally I use the Ulcer Swab in the first instance and then cover off with the Propolis so I am treating the wound and then protecting it, almost like putting a plaster over the area of concern. Have a read up on line about Propolis and how bees produce it and use it in their hives – incredible stuff, but isn't nature always such!

Fish and fishery safety are a must for anglers and there is a vast amount of content now written on-line, but do always check in with your fishery to ensure you are doing what is best. And last, but not least, please, please do ensure to dry those nets and mats as it really is a must!

As always, if you have any questions on this, or any other topic, always feel free to e-mail me at: simon@pallatrax.co.uk



Netsafe

Until next time, stay safe and enjoy your fishing.
Simon 'Pom' Pomeroy

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This is to keep wastage to a minimum. If you would like your magazine delivery increased or decreased, please let me know in good time so I can ensure I order enough from the printers. Thank you for your co-operation.

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 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.



Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road

Horsmonden, Kent TN12 8EL

Tel: **01580 212512**

email: info@elphicks-fisheries.co.uk



www.elphicks-fisheries.co.uk

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I am absolutely delighted to welcome Pallatrax as the new sponsors of our Catch Reports Section. This section is where you display your catch to other Freshwater Informer readers.

Each month, Pallatrax will choose from the published photos and pick their winner.

The winner will receive EIGHT packs from the innovative new GRIPZ hook range.

The lucky angler will have a packet of sizes 2,4,6,8,10, 12,14 and 16, so will be equipped for all eventualities. This fantastic prize is worth over £40 RRP!

To be in with a chance to win this fantastic set of GRIPZ hooks, all you have to do is send us your catch photo via our Facebook message page or email barnic@btinternet.com Entry is FREE and all coarse fish photos are welcome! From a carp to a roach, send us your pictures! Please make sure you tell us where it was caught and it's weight.



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.

What are you waiting for? Grab your rods and head down to your favourite water and remember to take your phone or camera!



The winner of the
PALLATRAX GRIPZ Hooks
Set for **NOVEMBER** is...

WINNER

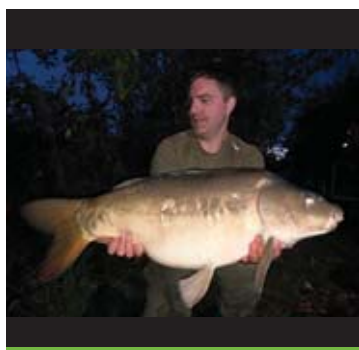
Ben Tanton
well done!



CHRIS SMITH 19LBS ELPHICKS



DANIEL COX 48LBS HAWKHURST



GRAHAM 'AMEN ANGLERS' 31LBS ELPHICKS



HUGH PICKETT 37LBS GREAT ENGEHAM POOLS WOODCHURCH



JAMES OSGOOD 31LBS WHITE VANE FISHERY



LUKE WRATTEN 28LBS ORCHARD PLACE FARM LAKE 4



MATTHEW COLEGATE AT TRICKLEBROOK



STUART ROBERTS 24LBS HAWKHURST MAIN LAKE



THOMAS LOCHRANE 38LBS STRAWBERRY FIELDS



MATTHEW GOOD 52LBS SPRING WOOD



ADAM PERKINS 21LBS DDAPS



DAVE WAYMAN 10LBS BURY HILL



DEAN CREASEY 15LBS



GAVIN LOVE 40LBS ELPHICKS



HELENA BALDOCK AT CHARLIES LAKE, ASHFORD



JACK WOOD 20LBS BARRATTS PARK



KYLE CHANDLER 29LBS MAISIES LAKE AT WYLANDS



MICHAEL CHITTENDEN AT CHARLIES LAKE, ASHFORD



STUART KENWOOD 1LB 8OZS ELIOT LAKE, COTTINGTON



WARREN HAYES 16LBS TONBRIDGE



WAYNE GATES 40LBS MALLARD AT MONK LAKES



ROSS FARNES AT ELPHICKS

Nice double for Gavin at Elphicks

Gavin Love sent in this report from a recent session at Elphicks Fishery:

"Myself and my good friend Pete were due to fish a 60 hour window on the North Lake and we arrived at 6am on Monday. The weather itself was completely wrong for the lake with clear bright and cold conditions so we both knew that the fishing was going to be hard. The deeper part of the lake had 7 anglers on so I decided to move away under the assumption that the angling pressure may push some fish up to me.



I am pleased to say that this strategy worked and I managed to bank these 2 during my session (Common 32.2lb and the Mirror 28.14lb). While they are by no way the biggest in there they were far more rewarding than the 5 fish to 40.2lb I'd had last month from the same lake due to the conditions which included heavy frosts.

Only one other fish came out during my stay between all the others so I was quite pleased with my results. I just wanted to say thank you for the great editorial work and Facebook updates which give myself and many others some great information and enjoyment, keep up the good work!

Winter Is Coming.....!" Tight Lines, Gavin Love

Catching in Patching!

Abbie Cowling sent in this report after a successful session on a local Worthing water in very difficult conditions and even achieved her new PB!

"I managed to get away and went for a 24hr session! Not only did I finally hit the 20s, but, I had 5 of them out! I had my new PB on the second catch in the middle of the night during a torrential rain and wind storm! But that's



fishing!! I've included a photo of her she's a lovely 25lb 2oz mirror carp whose known as "Big Leather". There are also a few pics of the other catches the next morning as the lake stocks some very pretty carp.

I hope these reach you and it inspires more women to fish too!"

Kind Regards
Abbie



Great start on new water for Jack Holden!

Jack Holden sent in this great report from his first visit to a new water and it was far more successful than he could ever have imagined:

"Hi Barry. I recently got a TWAPS membership one month ago and I recently done my first session on the Blue Lake at Northfleet. I wasn't expecting anything for at least six months, but I managed to get three fish out during the session! I was shocked as all three rods produced the fish. Buzzing and proud are the words to describe me at the moment!"

Well done Jack, top angling buddy!



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Pallatrax have kindly offered to support our region's Junior anglers by offering two fantastic Day Session Carp Packs to two lucky entrants picked from the Junior Catch Photos sent to the Freshwater Informer each month!

Each 'Ready, Steady, Fish' pack contains:

- 400g of shelf life Squabs
- 3 x medium swivel Stonze weights of 2 – 2.5 ozs
- 3 x Gripz hair rigs (for 14mm baits use size 8 Gripz, 18mm baits use size 6 Gripz)
- 500g of Carp Crush groundbait/method mix
- Anti-tangle foam
- Boilie stops
- Packet of Gammarus shrimp
- Packet of 15 x 10mm pop ups

The fantastic pack is worth over £20! All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning one of the 'Ready, Steady, Fish' packs is to send your Catch Photo to the Freshwater Informer by email or by message on the Facebook page!



THIS MONTH'S

WINNERS



Freddie Joe Beaney



Reuben Drake

well
done!



AJ DINEEN AGED 5 18LBS PRIVATE KENT WATER



BILLY COOPER 21 LBS CACKLE HILL



CALUM MORRIS 8LBS 40ZS SANDWICH LAKES



DALI HODGES 4LBS WYLANDS



LELAND HODGES 3LBS 80ZS WYLANDS



HENDRIX AMOS RIVER MEDWAY



FREDDIE JOE BEANEY 15 LBS AT PITTLANDS



NOAH DAWSON DARENTH COMPLEX



SPENCER MORRIS AGED 9 5LBS 20ZS AT MARSHSIDE FISHERY



Welcome to Fishon Tackle Shop!

Fishon has been established for over 9 years and has over 20 years experience in the trade. If you haven't already paid us a visit, then you really must make sure you that you check out our new Fishon Tackle Shop Superstore near Paddock Wood!

Our huge store holds massive stocks of tackle from all the leading manufacturers and we cater for all disciplines of angling. The immense display of the best fishing tackle available is spread over two floors of our new purpose built store! We really are your 'one stop' angling superstore here in the heart of Kent!



Fishon is located only 13 minutes from the A21 Pembury/Tunbridge Wells junction and 15 minutes from Junction 4 of the M20. We are ideally situated only a stone's throw away from the Hop Farm roundabout on the B2160 with ample free parking right outside the door.



We offer not only a great shopping experience, but, a wealth of knowledge and fantastic customer care. We really do pride ourselves on the level of customer service that we provide to everyone who visits Fishon. Whether you are an experienced angler or someone who wants to start fishing, you can be assured that our staff will listen to your requirements and go over and above to meet your needs.

Without doubt, we are one of the best 'Carp Shops' in the South East supplying the largest array of tackle from all the leading manufacturers including Korda, Trakker, Aqua, Fox, Nash, ESP, Thinking Anglers, Gardner, Avid Carp, Ridge Monkey, Rig Marole, Solar, MCF, Fortis, Cygnet, Wofte, Speero, Sonik, Shimano, Century and many more...



pint. As well as maggots, we sell casters and a large selection of worms.

At Fishon, we believe we have the best Predator Shop in the South, if not beyond!! We cater for the pike, perch, zander and catfish anglers. We stock predator tackle from quality manufacturers such as Westin, Fox Rage, Savage Gear, Korum Snapper, Drennan ESOX, Pike Pro, Mepps, Catfish Pro and many more! We offer the largest range of lures and you can even try

section that boasts the full range of Guru products plus Drennan, Preston Innovations, Korum, Sonu Baits, Sensas, Ringers, Van Den Eynde to name but a few. We pride ourselves on supplying the finest quality maggots from Ouse Valley for only £3 per



When you visit Fishon, you really must check out our impressive bivvy display room where we have eight bivvies fully set up along with a huge selection of bedchairs, chairs and barrows all out ready to be tried and tested. Our impressive range of luggage is all out on display for you to inspect so you can be confident of making the right purchase that exactly meets your needs.

Our Match and Coarse anglers are equally well catered for! You can check out the huge Match/Coarse fishing



You can find us at:

Fishon Tackle Shop, Forstal House

Tel: 01892 459217

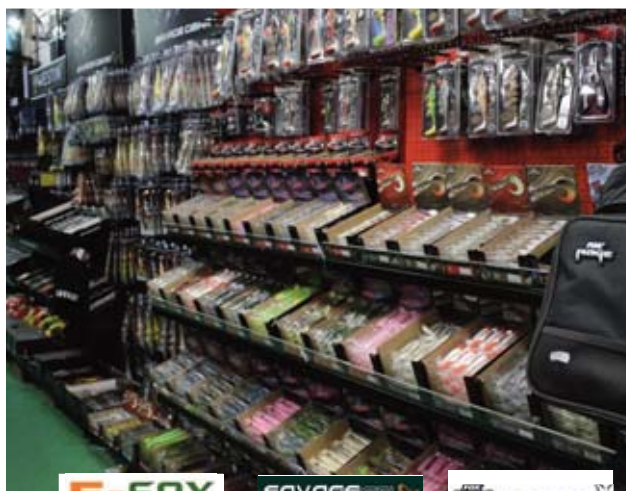


out the lures before you buy in our 'one of a kind' lure casting demo tank! Besides lures and associated snap tackle, we offer a massive selection of the freshest frozen dead baits! We really are the predator angler's dream shop!

We are proud to offer our own freshly prepared particle mix that includes hemp, tiger nuts, maize, tiger maples and more. If you haven't already used our famous Mixed Particles, then you're missing out! It is a

perfect combination of mixed seeds & pulses, cooked to our secret recipe, that has accounted for literally 1000's of carp and costs as little as £1.50 per kilo! The Particle Mix is perfect for the angler either at home or abroad and we will produce any quantity that a customer requests! Along with our own particle range, we also offer a huge range of boilies, pellets, dips etc from all the leading companies such as Sticky Baits, Nash Bait, Mainline, CC Moore, Proper Carp Baits, Urban Bait, Crafty Catcher and many more.

With Christmas fast approaching, why not pop in and write your Christmas wish list in our own "Fishmas Book of Dreams"?



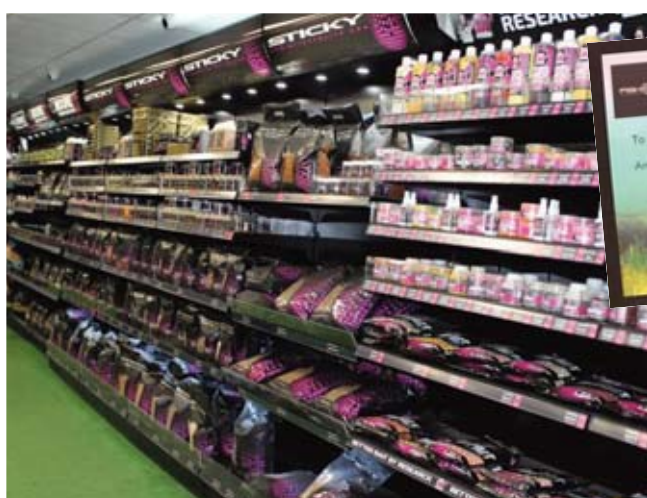
E-SOX

SAVAGE

PREDATOR

cathsh

WESTIN



Your loved ones will then know exactly what you are after this Christmas!

We also provide

Fishon Gift Vouchers in a range of denominations.

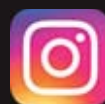
Our brand new website is coming very soon so look out for notifications on our popular Facebook and Instagram pages. Don't forget to give us a 'Like' and feel free to post your catch photos! Our social media pages will also update you on our ever increasing range of tackle and instore promotions!

Fishon is your 'One Stop' tackle shop catering for every angler in the South East:

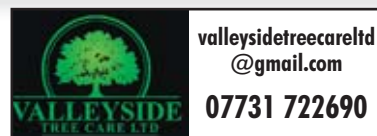
- ▶ GIFT VOUCHERS AVAILABLE
- ▶ LURE CASTING DEMO TANK
- ▶ FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM FOR THE LATEST FISHON NEWS
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- ▶ FRESH COOKED PARTICLE FROM ONLY £1.50 PER KILO
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Junior Informer



Thank you to our
Junior Informer Sponsors

Hello and welcome to the December edition of the Junior Informer!

Christmas is almost upon us once again for another year. I am sure that everyone is getting excited about the coming school holidays and the festive season! What is on your 'Wish List' to Santa this year? No doubt there are a few fishing items that you would like! Most of our tackle shops do Gift Vouchers, so if your family and friends are unsure of what to get you for Christmas this year, why not ask them to give vouchers so you can go to the shop and get the tackle you need?

With the coming holiday approaching, are you planning to do some fishing? The carp will not be quite so active as in the warmer months, but, they can still be caught. You may wish to consider using lighter tackle and targeting the silver fish like roach and perch that feed well in the cooler months of the year and can provide a great day's fishing. Simple float tactics using maggots, casters and bread can all work well. Try not to overfeed your swim, a few maggots scattered around your float each cast will be fine, don't be surprised if a carp does take your bait while roach fishing! Just take your time and make sure that the fish is able to take line if necessary. You will be surprised what you can catch on lighter tackle if you are patient and careful. The rivers can also provide a great day's sport at this time of year. However, please take great care as the banks can be muddy and slippery, especially after a frost the previous night. Once again, simple float fishing with maggots and worms can catch you roach, perch, chub, eels and who knows what else might turn up! Don't forget to send us your catch photos! If you don't send them, we can't put them in the magazine!

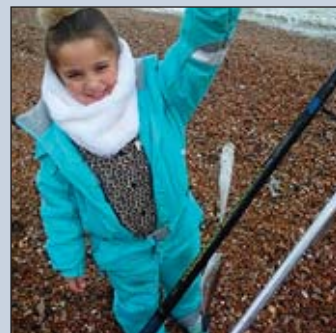
From all of us here at the Freshwater Informer, we wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and we will see you again in the New Year!

Business owners – I am always looking for sponsors for the Junior pages as it is the sponsorship that helps us provide these pages dedicated to young anglers. If you would like to get involved and show the angling community that you care about getting young people fishing, please get in touch with us by phone, email or Facebook message. All our contact details are at the front of the magazine.

DUNGENESS ANGLING SOCIETY - JUNIOR MEETING

"DAA juniors had their November meeting today (17/11/19) on a lovely morning at Littlestone. There were ten young anglers all trying to catch as many fish as they could and they all managed to catch lots of whiting and dogfish. The winner was George, who took home a turkey crown, with another George taking home a large xmas pudding! No doubt two happy mums as well! Well done to all those who fished. Our next meet is on 15th December, everyone is welcome and we will meet at 10.15 am at The Pilot car park."

Terry Carpenter



Henfold Bait & Tackle, Henfold Lakes, Henfold Lane, Newdigate RH5 4RW
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FISHING FOR SCHOOLS - A REVIEW OF 2019

"This year (2019) Fishing for Schools (F4S) changed the way that schools sign up for its fully funded angling courses, with schools now applying annually via the Countryside Alliance Foundation website. We were delighted that more than 80 schools from across the country applied for the 30 places on the F4S 2019 national programme. This shows the appetite for angling courses for young people across the UK.

Here in Kent, we had the most applications of all the regions of England and Wales and it was decided that myself (Warren White), Charlie Rayner and Rob Goble - the core Kent coaches - would be working with six schools - Broomhill Bank North, Rowhill, West Heath, Thamesview, Meadowfield and the Nexus school. Our school courses remain over-subscribed and the F4S programme in Kent seems to go from strength to strength each year.

One of the highlights of 2019 was the enthusiasm shown by a new school to the programme this year - the Nexus School from Tonbridge. Like many of the special schools we work with, the students took part in the Cast Award course. This is a structured course, combining some important values in fishing, including safety for the fish and angler and all the basic fishing skills.

The Cast Awards programme was developed by the Angling Trust and is a series of progressive steps from levels one to six. At each level, the students are presented with a certificate, which is always a proud moment, boosting confidence and self-esteem.

The Nexus School staff who were present at the fishing sessions, saw for themselves the benefits to their students, particularly to patience and concentration levels, and were so impressed they decided to carry on the classes, after our three-session course finished, at their own expense.

So, on 1 November we started a new angling qualification with the Nexus pupils, an OfQual accredited AIMS Award.



Another highlight was the annual inter-school fishing team match for Kent, that took place at Grove Farm, Hadlow College in September.

This year Thamesview School from Gravesend was triumphant! The match is great experience for the students as they learn how a fishing competition works and it is always a great spectacle to watch. The students show good teamwork and there is great excitement at the end of the match as all the young people look on at the weigh-in.



On the same day as the fishing match we held the judging for this year's art competition. It is the second year we have run this competition and we had some excellent entries again. The eventual winner was an outstanding picture of a pike attacking a lure, painted by Jasper from West Heath School, Sevenoaks. Well done to all who took part.

The work we do with our Kent and London mental health and disability groups continues to grow. Adults from Charlton Athletic Community group, Your Choice and the Trevor Gibbens Unit all enjoyed days fishing with us over the summer.

We find that these groups thrive in an outdoor environment with the health and well-being benefits of angling.

I would like to thank our fisheries at Hadlow college, The T.W.A.P.S Fishing club and Monk Lakes who have excellent facilities and cater for all our needs, also thanks to the coaches Bob Goble, Charlie Rayner and David Evans, because without their skill and guidance our courses would never happen.



Just to finish up, here's a bit of feedback from Penny Stotesbury, a community youth tutor at Thamesview School, that makes it all worthwhile! Penny said: "Can I say a really big thank you to Warren and the coaches, Fishing for Schools and Hadlow College for the CAST programme. This has once again been fantastic with the young people gaining so much from the course. It really is a fantastic project that boosts young peoples' confidence and self-esteem; increases awareness and safety of themselves and their environment and teaches them social skills alongside all the course elements that they cover to learn about fishing. The group has gained so much from this award that has been reflected back into school and their relationships with teaching staff."

A very Happy Christmas from all of us at Fishing for Schools!

GREAT SESSION FOR THE KIRBY - GRAY SISTERS!

Kirsty Gray sent in this report after a great family fishing session: "Hi Barry. The Kirby-Gray sisters smashed it again with a little fishing trip to Horsham lakes but this time we used home made boilies which worked a treat." Thanks, Kirsty.



PLENTY OF FISH FOR DUNGENESS JUNIORS!

Terry Carpenter sent in this report: "Dungeness Junior anglers had their October meet on Saturday 19 October. It was a showery Littlestone beach but 7 young anglers fished and all caught lots of whiting. Despite the showers, it was a nice afternoon enjoyed by the anglers who took part."



A DOUBLE FOR JAYDEN!

Lewis Rogerson kindly sent in this report of a very happy Jayden Abbot: "I took my friend's son Jayden out fishing for the day and despite the weather, he managed to catch himself a PB in the shape of an 11lb common carp. He caught it on on a quiver tipped pellet with scalded pellet wrapped around the hook bait before dropping it in the margins at Falkenvil Fishery main lake."



Jayden's mum, Abigail, is certain that Jayden will soon be sending us some photos of even bigger fish very soon!

Fishing 4 Schools – December Tip of the Month

from instructor Rob Goble

A wonderful winter's day

"Well we have certainly had a flush through, with deluges of rain in the past month! Most of the rivers are in flood and all the still waters have been renewed. The Medway in Kent has had its fair share, but luckily for us anglers there is an advantage to all this rain. It has filled up my local reservoir, Bewl Water.

When not fishing at Bewl, I like to go for walks around the lake. This is especially interesting when it is quite low during the summer months. It gives you an idea of the lay of the land and where the shallows and holes that might be of interest to fish are. Apart from enjoying the walk, there are also some quite lovely vistas to take in.

One place I can recommend when the lake is filling up is Goose Creek, where the pumps come into the lake. The pipeline comes all the way from Yalding into this creek, and when it's releasing all that water it's a site to behold. I believe it releases 250 million litres a day!

Whether the pumps are on depends on the rain, but it's worth travelling down to see this spectacle. You can park your car at a small dam by Rosemary Lane. You will see some cottages on the right side of the lake, go past these through a gate and carry on up the lane and you will eventually arrive at Goose Creek. Apart from seeing this spectacle you will hear the roar of the water being unleashed into the lake. It's well worth the effort, but best to find out if they are pumping.

At the main dam you will see the tower and beside it the draw off tower. This regulates the amount of water. The excess spills over, down a spill way and back out into the river Bewl. This is the other side of the dam wall as you look.



What could be better?

I have fished Bewl since its inception, so have seen its many moods and fished in all weathers that it could throw at me. I have had some spectacular days fishing, some not so, and of course blank days as well. It can be a frustrating place at times, but that's why we call it fishing and not catching!

I love the mysticism and magic of the lake and its surroundings, especially away from the crowds. It holds a special place in my heart!

So getting round to fishing this month. You can fly fish from the bank and of course now spin and bait fish, but only from the boats.

Bank fishing should be good at this time of year, trout will be eager to feed and fatten up to carry them over the winter period. They will be feeding heavily on fry (small fish) so the usual flies will work – cat's whiskers, blobs, boobys, minkies, zonkers, in fact anything that could mimic a small bait fish.



A great day's fishing

Sometimes it's not that obvious what trout are feeding on. If you are seeing fry skittering over and around, it's a sign that predatory fish are around and that includes perch. These may even be chasing them up the bank, stunning them with their tails and coming back to mop them up.

It may be that the fish will not take your fly and you ask yourself if the pattern is too large or small or is it the colour? All these questions will be going through your head when suddenly out of the blue there is a rod-wrenching take and a rainbow trout is disappearing towards the horizon. By slowly gaining control and eventually landing that fish, a smile comes back to your face. This trout is a prize to behold. Its beautiful silvery flanks with a magenta line running through its lateral line mean it was all worth it in the end. If it has been a difficult day I will take my prize home and it will make a splendid meal.



Marrow spoon

There is a gadget you can use to find out what is in the stomach of your fish, called a marrow spoon (pictured). After (and only after please) you have dispatched your fish, insert the spoon into the trout's mouth and push it carefully down the throat. Turn the handle all the way around and retrieve. There you will find (in most cases) its last meal closest to the handle and further to the end what it ate some time back. Have a small shallow container filled with a little water handy. Empty the part near the handle into the container and you may see all manner of insects as well as fry. This will give you a clue and take the guess work out of the equation for future fishing.

As Christmas fast approaches, we may have snow, but one thing is for sure, it will be cold. Don't be put off. Wrap up warmly, enjoy the short daylight hours and the fresh air and the trout will be there for the taking!

Have a great Christmas and hopefully new rods and reels etc,

Have fun, be warm but be safe. Bob G.

ANOTHER OUTSTANDING YEAR FOR ANGLING COACHING IN KENT!

BY WARREN WHITE (COACHING COARSE FISHING)

Although I do coach one to one and am involved in other coaching events in Kent, my main time is taken up running the Kent Branch of Fishing 4 Schools, which is a great organisation working with seven Kent schools and three Disability and Mental health groups, which gets more popular year on year. Kent has always been a county that loves it's fishing, further proof of that is that in this year's Fishing 4 Schools application for funding by schools for 2020. Kent came out top, head and shoulders above all the other counties in England and Wales!

I have been lucky enough to be involved in some outstanding angling events this year and here is a summary of some of those events:

HADLOW COLLEGE

This year, Brian Bailey the fisheries manager at Hadlow College, has played his part in trying to encourage youngsters to have a go at fishing. He runs several angling sessions throughout the year, with the help of some Fishing 4 Schools coaches, some of these courses are funded by the local council and others the college put on themselves. These events are always really popular as the participants get a chance to fish at a great venue that is normally only open for teaching purposes and get the chance to catch some of the finest fish you will ever catch.



GRAVESHAM COUNCIL

We had two wonderful days in the school summer holidays coaching young people on how to fish. Gravesham Council do a good job in funding these two daily sessions and this course is always oversubscribed and we tend to coach a lot of young anglers who want to have a go at fishing. The course is run by Danielle Lock from the Council and David Evans (coach). Over the two days it was nice to meet so many keen young people who wanted to try fishing and to talk to their parents about the need to get young people outdoors.



ROWHILL SEN SCHOOL, LONGFIELD

This school has the perfect model in Angling education. The younger students get their interest in fishing from a young age, taking part in a Fishing 4 Schools funded course, then have a pathway to progress on to an Angling qualification. At the school, we run a BTEC 2 year vocational course, the students that take the course are all keen to learn and the most important thing is they have chosen to be part of the course themselves! We have students that can struggle in an indoor school environment, but once we let them have the freedom of the fishery their behaviour improves, but this course is not all about fishing. The main part of being successful with this qualification is that the students develop a portfolio of their work in order to provide evidence of learning. Where we are at an



advantage over the school itself, is that the reward for getting their paperwork done is to go fishing on the lake and the lake at the facility at Hadlow college is just 10 metres from the classroom. So you could say we are on to a winner.

Another positive development to the course is that this year, Sam Weedon one of our students, successfully passed his 2 year BTEC course and has now gone onto Hadlow college for further education and hopefully a future in the Fishing industry. He has followed in the foot steps of other ex-students that have gone on to study at Hadlow College. This is a big part of what makes me do this work!

THE ANNUAL DDAPS JUNIOR FUN DAY

This event run by the Dartford Angling club, is a huge event with 350 Juniors taking part. Once again it was a great day and for some young people, it was the day they caught their first fish. I had some really positive feedback from parents about how much their children had enjoyed the day and that they had learned a lot, which is good to hear! A BIG thanks to the Tackle Box, Dartford for sponsoring this event and to the club and its members who do all the hard work of staging this annual event. Judging by the massive attendance of Juniors, it just goes to prove that there is a need and demand, in the area, to give young people an opportunity to have a go at fishing.



VENUES

In my work, it cannot be underestimated how having good venues help the courses run smoothly. At Grove Farm fishery, Hadlow College, we have a wonderful facility that has a classroom (lodge) a few metres away from the lake. At Monk Lakes we have one of the best all round fisheries in the UK. Recently, I have been working more closely with the T.W.A.P.S angling club, who, like us, are committed to getting more juniors into fishing, and have taken some positive steps forward in order to achieve that aim. They allow us the use of their water at Shorne Country park for Junior events as well as our Mental Health and Disability groups, and the use of a members' lake for small groups, something not many other clubs would do. When I look back at 2019, I will remember it as another good year, having worked with so many good young people and with my adult mental health groups who all love to go fishing.

Well done Barry (at the Freshwater Informer), in your first year of owning the magazine and to your on-going promotion of Junior angling.

Foot note: A massive debate that has rumbling on in recent times is why angling as a sport is in such decline. This is reflected in the massive decline in Rod Licence sales and further proof is the once mighty Birmingham Angling Association is now down to 9,000 members from a one time high of 45,000 members. This is not good news for the angling industry which includes tackle shops, commercial fisheries etc. I believe the most important challenge for anyone involved in fishing, right now, is how do we get more juniors involved in fishing and keep them in fishing, after all they are the future of angling. Lots of initiatives have been tried to arrest the decline in Juniors, such as the Angling Trust initiatives, but to no avail – many who go on taster sessions don't follow through. I think Kent is slightly a different case to other counties in the country, after speaking to a chairman of one of the biggest clubs in Kent, he tells me that Junior membership this year is up, which is good news, but is certainly not the case all over.

I find through the work that I have done with hundreds of Juniors over the years, that there are obvious reasons why young people do not get into angling, eg. too much indoor entertainment and parents who worry about children playing unsupervised. I, like many other anglers of my generation, got into fishing because our dads took us, but something I have recognised, especially in recent times, is there are a lot of young people that come from one parent families. Those parents are crying out for their children to be able to go fishing, but, need guidance and help to be able to get their children into fishing. However, these are often lost to fishing because they get no help, something that is often forgotten in the statistics for angling participation!

Personally, if I receive a request from any parent to coach their children, I always try to guide them onto one of the FREE Angling events that go on in Kent throughout the year, because I do not like to charge for Juniors. From my personal experience of working with juniors in the SE, given the opportunity, there has always been a massive response to any fishing event I have been involved in. I used to run a Junior Summer Angling event for Dartford Council and we had 32 Juniors on the course and over 32 more that wanted to get on the course. A look at the DDAPS Junior fun day this year saw over 350 juniors attending. Every year, the Gravesham Council Junior event at Shorne Country Park is oversubscribed, so there is no lack of Juniors wanting to get involved in fishing in the region.

The problem lies in how to keep them in angling, once you have got them interested. My answer would be for them to be guided onto a good local angling club, but once they have joined the club, then the club MUST play their part in organising Coaching days throughout the year, where they could teach a range of different angling skills including Pole Fishing, Carp fishing, fishing for silver fish etc.

This would definitely help get more young people into fishing and is a formula for more sustainability."

Have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all,Tight lines,Warren White (Coaching Coarse Fishing)

If you or your club would like more information, please call Warren on 07837 758923 or visit www.coachingcoarsefishing.co.uk

River Informer

Welcome to the December River Informer!

This Autumn has seen a lot of rainfall, although not as much as in some parts of the country. This has resulted in a better flow of water which has been much needed after the dry summer months. As you can see in Colin Etherington's catch reports, the Sussex Ouse was flowing hard and fast but it did not deter Colin from catching some magnificent barbel from the swollen river. I appreciate that anglers are safety conscious and sensible regarding personal safety, but, a word of caution if needed, the banks are very slippery at this time of year and a fall in to the flooded water in full winter clothing might not end happily. Please take care folks!

YOUR CATCH REPORTS

Team Bodle Angling on the river!

Ricky Deerans from Bodle Angling has been out on the river with Harry Sandercock, also of Bodle Angling and their friend Chris Aldous:

"Quality weekend's angling finished! Trotting maggot and bread for Chub on the rivers with Harry yesterday, and perching with Chris today."



Colin's swim - New PB barbel!

Colin sent in this great report of a new PB barbel from the Sussex Ouse caught in very 'challenging' conditions: "The Sussex Ouse was looking angry and nasty earlier this afternoon. I contemplated for a while as to whether to have a fish or not! So glad I did as I smashed my PB with a 15lb 1oz barbel!! Caught a 3FT Twitch Dubby pellet with a open cage feeder rammed with chopped lobs, hemp and pellets!"



Colin finds the barbel again!

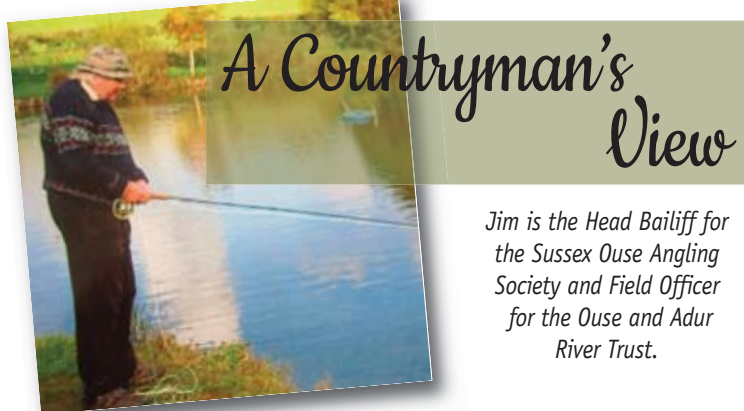
"The Sussex Ouse looked perfect today. The water levels had dropped by 2 foot since Thursday but the water was still quite coloured. I used lobworms on the hook with a cage feeder rammed with hemp, pellet and chopped worm. I had a lovely brace of barbel including a lovely big shouldered fish weighing 10lb 9oz! I went home happy for a curry!"



Not the biggest, but a pretty chub!

"A short evening session on the Sussex Ouse resulted in one bite and a lovely cheeky chub graced my net. Not a big fish but very welcome on a short 1-2 hour session using lobs... went home again happy."





A Countryman's View

Jim is the Head Bailiff for the Sussex Ouse Angling Society and Field Officer for the Ouse and Adur River Trust.

Wet, wet, wet and it's not a pop group!

"Out in the Ouse and Uck valleys, Mother Nature is changing, or is it Global Warming as we are informed? As you are more than aware, it has been so wet in the last few weeks ever since my last article on how dry everywhere was! Only last Saturday, the weather resembled a monsoon here in leafy East Sussex as the rain just looked like a white wall of water blown along in a full scale gale!"



A little choppy!

Not only have the leaves been falling in earnest, but many trees have fallen as well. The rivers are full of fast flowing water and there has been very little angling activity taking place. I must admit to staying indoors in these conditions, but I do wonder what effect all this is having on the fish and other wildlife. The 'flood season' has started early and seems to reflect the unsettled weather right across the world. Totally unweather related, but I saw the news that fracking has now been stopped. Great news as there has been activity centred on the Ouse catchment area. I have feared the contamination of ground water supplies as well as the tremors due to this operation. I am sure if you are the owner of a large lake or reservoir, you too must have had concerns. The whole show seemed to have lacked any real safety precautions.

On a walk in drier conditions, I watched a Jay collecting acorns and flying off to where he must be keeping his stash. A squirrel was also engaged in the same activity in the preparation for winter. Numbers of acorns appear good and the squirrels have also been on the sweet chestnuts, much like myself as I enjoy gathering up some of these tasty treats. The fungi are putting on a splendid Autumn show, especially the 'Pixie Toadstool' as I call it. However, please be aware that you should not cut any fungi unless you know what you are looking for as it can make you extremely ill and can be fatal! Anything other than the field mushroom should be left well alone! Some trees are holding on to their leaves as I witnessed on a recent trip to Sheffield Park to see the beautiful Autumn colours. Locally, a Spindle Berry Bush is putting on a fine



Getting ready for Winter



Sheffield Park in Autumn

display and a small Shomack tree in my neighbour's garden is putting on a wonderful show with its red and gold foliage. Every night, I have a Wren that roosts in the ivy which is also used by the Blue Tits as cover.

When you stand by a river in full flood, it is amazing what comes drifting down, through the sluices to the mill. This includes the usual



River Ouse in flood

trash thrown in to the river consisting of cans and plastic bottles. There was even a discarded Halloween costume and what looked like part of a Guy Fawkes from somewhere! One good thing is that with all this water, the sea trout will reach their spawning grounds. I saw a recent report that sea trout have been seen running the Uck at Uckfield. Last year, fish were found below Buxted and Hempstead Mill. When you consider the distance they travel to spawn, it almost rivals their salmon cousins and is surely one of Nature's miracles! The rivers have been virtually unfishable but it is always worth seeking out a sheltered bit of river and trying a worm. The places where cattle drink can be good but please take care when near a flooded river. It's not worth taking any chances!

One of the things that I used to look forward to were what I called my Highland Holidays. I have enjoyed some very good hunting and fishing with a pal in Perthshire. Grouse were a favourite and we often had the chance to fish the Tay for salmon. I remember one year we were fishing there in the pouring rain and the news came through that Chernobyl had blown up and that the fallout was heading for Scotland where we were fishing! They were great times in great company!



Salmon fishing on the Tay

The native birds are starting to lay in to all the various berries which will mean less for the winter visitors, notably the Redwings and Fieldfares. I wonder what this winter will bring us? I have noticed some moles have moved to a higher point on drier ground as their normal area is under water. I did find a dead mole and wondered if it had drowned. It was partly buried in a mole hill and it's run seemed to be flooded out. I gave the poor creature a burial. I also found some dead voles that were washed up, no doubt flooded out of their burrows in the rough grasslands close to the river. This area is often hunted by a Barn Owl in dry weather so more of the food chain has been lost.

I often think about the drought of 1976 when Dennis Howell was appointed Drought Minister. This drought broke with a vengeance after many rivers and reservoirs were almost completely dried out. There can be no doubt that Global Warming is impacting on our weather so coming years will be interesting to watch. Despite the significant changes to our weather, house building continues apace in the Adur catchment area. Doesn't anyone ever consider just where the water needed will come from? With all this rain, our local sports fields have been awash and have attracted the attention of a large number of gulls. They appear to be after the worms and have been successful! They disappear in late afternoon when they fly off to roost on a local reservoir. There has also been a regular flight of cormorants flying over, no doubt heading to clearer calmer waters inland as the



The drought of 1976

the rivers are so flooded. The seals have gone back to sea in the lower estuary and much silt and debris has also found its way down to the estuary.

I would like to wish everyone the very best for the coming Christmas Season. Many thanks to our landowners for granting access to the river frontage and let's hope for a Pollution and Trouble Free New Year!"

Cheerio for now, Jim Smith

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF COARSE FISHING *by Bob Rolph* Keston Ponds, Remembered 1956 to 1980 (Part Two)

Last month, we saw Bob remember the iconic days of Keston Ponds! In this article, Bob continues to delve in to the wonderful history of this Kent water and its place in angling history:

"The great carp anglers of Keston in those heady days were undoubtedly Ken Rowley, Steve Edwards and Chris Haswell. Charlie Stone had several 8 and 9 lb fish in the 1950s, but Ken's 10 lb leather from the boathouse swim in 1963 was the fish which really started it all off. He, like me, lived only 2 miles down the road at Hayes, and practically lived at Keston during the school holidays. Dozens of kids like us lined the "railings" in August, fishing for roach, rudd and perch with maggot or hempseed, but Ken wanted bigger fish. He methodically stalked feeding surface carp in the lilies with crust until he found the answer. This was all long before Fred Wilton had even seen a carp or boilie! No youngsters at all fish for roach with float and hemp like we did 55 years ago, they have missed so much in their determination to catch solely a 40 lb carp.



*22lb - John Kane - June 1967
- second recorded capture of Raspberry*

There were 6 or 7 of us there most summer evenings in the school holidays trying to outwit a giant carp. John Kane from Orpington, Ron Blackmore from Charlton, Alan Tisdall from Bromley and a young kid from Bromley called Steve Edwards, who tagged along with us asking endless questions which we could not answer, like how can I catch a carp? Forty years later, we would all be asking HIM the same question, after he developed into one of Kent's greatest carp anglers, God rest his soul. I was always there, but was never very successful, as I didn't have that "killer" instinct and spread my interests too widely, in fishing and in life!

It was historically the top pond which originally produced most carp in those early years. One of my first encounters with big fish was seeing a young angler called John Affleck, from New Addington in Surrey, catch three carp in quick succession from the weed beds in the summer of 1957. They were a common of 7 lbs, a mirror of 9 lbs and a leather of 11 lbs, and were the first carp that I had ever seen! This event prompted me to try for carp later on that summer holiday and resulted in my first two captures a couple of weeks later on the lower pond. I never saw that young angler ever again, and have often wondered what became of him. He was a true hero of mine who I only met one fleeting afternoon, but an encounter I have never forgotten. This was all the



The late Tim Johnson with a 15lbs mirror

same August in 1957 when Bob Reynolds from Northampton had his great carp catches at Billing Aquadrome, it all consumed me, and I had to join them in their quest!

The best carp I've heard of from the top pond is a common of exactly 20 lbs, but it is the bottom, or "middle" lake that still holds the biggest fish. Ken Rowley still holds the record, as far as I know, of



Ken Rowley's 31 lbs 8 oz mirror - mid 70s

a beautiful 31lbs 8ozs mirror caught in 1981, followed by a 27 and several upper doubles. It was, however, Steve Edwards who was first to break the 20 lb barrier in 1971 with his fine mirror of exactly 25 lbs which I weighed and photographed in the Autumn of that year. It was a very wet Monday morning when he appeared at my place of work next door, all bedraggled, to announce to all and sundry this great capture, luckily the research labs where I worked were just next door at Ravensbourne House.

This capture became legendary and catapulted Steve to instant carp fishing star status, a position he maintained with numerous huge captures until his untimely death in 2010. The great carp fishing legend, Jim Gibbinson, once said of Steve, that he would trust him to catch a carp to order, any day, and Jim knew and had fished with Steve since 1965.

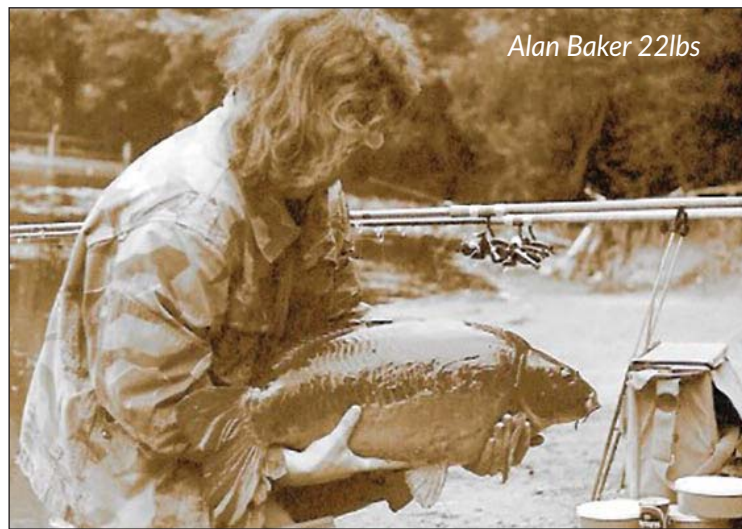
No doubt many large carp have been caught at Keston in recent years that I know nothing about, and the anglers concerned will be a bit miffed not to get a mention, but I am dealing here solely with the years I knew 40 - 60 years ago, when the 'Three Amigos', Ken, Steve and Chris ruled the roost as far as Keston was concerned. I was largely a bystander, unable to emulate these three great carp anglers, two of whom are sadly missed, and it is to them that I owe a debt of gratitude.

Today, there are still some good carp in Keston Ponds, but sadly not in the numbers that there once were. Fish thefts and illegal movements have reduced the obvious population drastically, I feel. In my day, I felt that there were about 100 good carp in the lakes, a handful over 20 lbs, but now on the evidence of walking round last July in the blazing sun, I only saw about a dozen fish basking as they did beneath the huge water lily leaves, where once great "blue" mirrors hid from view. The lilies of the boathouse swim seem to have died down and evidence of weed dragging spoils the water. The water quality is still great. I

took a reading at the well and recorded a pH of 7.9, slightly alkaline, but, great for weed and fish growth, so hopefully the lakes will continue to produce great captures of all species, not just carp, in the years to come. I've heard rumours of big tench, roach, pike and eels, they were always in there, along with some lovely crucian carp! How do I know? Cos I've had them off the railings in the very distant past!



Steve Edwards 25 lbs mirror 1972



Alan Baker 22lbs

When Tate and Lyle Research Labs moved from Ravensbourne and Forrest Lodge to Reading in the summer of 1972, the neatly manicured lawns which ran down to the two other lower lakes at Keston, fell into disrepair. Fences were erected prior to redevelopment of the site and the once lovely tench and wild carp ponds came under the auspices of Bromley Borough Council. A public footpath, now called the "Ravensbourne Walk", follows the infant River Ravensbourne from Caesars Well down past the Rookery Lake and onward past Catford to join the Thames at Deptford. All five lakes were once, 50 years ago, great fishing venues, where hundreds of local kids learnt their fishing, and their poaching!

Today, however the lakes are a disgrace; full of rubbish, and cut weed and never maintained as they once were. The corner swim by the boathouse is full of plastic bottles, cartons, weed and rubbish when a SW wind is blowing. The carp however bask under all this detritus, oblivious to all this scourge of our modern age. In my day, the two Common rangers, Sid and Arthur with his Alsatian dog, kept the lakes immaculate from 8am to 6 pm, seven days a week. They were employed by Bromley Council and operated out of the long lost hut just up from the boathouse. Tea was always brewing on their stove and they always showed great interest in our captures. Woe betide if you left a water lily leaf out of place, or dropped a bit of litter!

No wonder I hanker for the good old days, even if today's fish are more prolific and much larger! I switched to Reservoir Trout Fishing when Bewl Reservoir opened in May 1978 and next Spring I'll tell you all about it!

Keston, the best free fishing in Kent! You only need a rod licence, but please abide by the Closed Season, as it's on a river system. The bailiffs do come round, the only place I've ever been asked for my licence in 63 years of fishing!

The summer before last, in the heat of July, I met up with that great carp angler, Ken Rowley, on the banks of 'Caesar's Pool' for the first time in over 45 years. Ken, the captor of 30 lb carp from at least five different waters including Keston, Ashley Pool and Redmire. We reminisced about the good old days of the 1960s and 70s, whilst feeding a few mirrors basking in the sunshine amidst the still prolific water lilies. This summer, prompted by my articles in the Freshwater Informer, I received a letter from another old friend of mine, Alan Baker, with whom I fished at Keston 50 years ago.

Alan, from Biggin Hill, a local to the Keston Lakes, was keen to meet up again and tell me of the four great fish he had in 1974. We met again on the bank side last August and walked around the lake, each pointing out the swims where we did battle all those years ago! We talked to the new breed of carp anglers

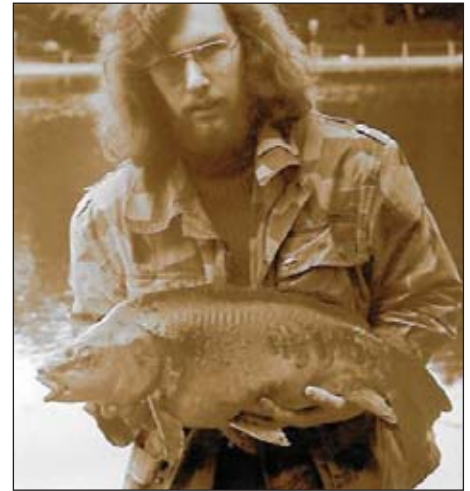
there, and marvelled at their modern tackle and learned of 18 and 23 pound carp caught there this July on floating dog biscuits. There was also talk of double figure tench from the top pond, not the first time that I have heard of this! We fished like kids that day, catching glorious colourful roach and rudd on float fished maggot, on the edge of the weed beds. Alan also had a few perch and we spied a brace of tench cruising in the open water just off the dam.



Bob & Alan on a recent reminisce at Keston

The atmosphere was most definitely still there. The fragrance of the Water Hawthorne now spread far along the top dam wall, brought back great memories of how it used to be, but the rubbish and unkempt bank side left a lot to be desired.

Evidence of raking and cutting of water lilies to make swims, was disappointing, if only they cleared up after themselves! Today, the bottom pond is covered in blanket weed, and the lilies by the old boathouse are being stunted in their growth by the floating detritus and blanket weed that congregates there. Sunlight and excessive nutrients promote blanket weed growth, but with no run off from nearby fields, the phenomenon this summer leaves me baffled.



Alan Baker 14lbs - Sept 1974



Ken Rowley 14lbs

Alan showed me the swim by the old diving boards where, in Sept 1974, he landed a brace of fine mirror carp in the same morning of 17 and 22 lbs, on sweetcorn bait. Apparently, this was the first time this new bait had been used at Keston! Rod Hutchinson and Chris Yates, of course, later pioneered this particle bait at Redmire with great success. Fred Wilton and Steve Edwards had been testing their new yeast based boilies here earlier in the season, but maggot and sweetcorn were the proven baits of choice in the early 70s, along with worms and bread, I may add, as most of my ten small Keston carp were caught on these baits in the 1960s! I recall the very day in 1971 when Fred Wilton, Ken Rowley, Steve Edwards and I met in 'The Posts' swim to test these new boilie baits that Fred had been working on, as it was 15th February and Fred had a pocket full of these new fangled (decimal) coins in his pocket. These were coins that had just come out that morning on "decimal day" and this was first time that I had seen them. Alan Baker was also there that day, pike fishing over on the far bank.

I will return one day, with hemp and mussels, and work out a way to tackle those great tench in the top pond, lying just under the weed in the crystal clear "black" depths. However, Sid and Arthur, the old common rangers of years gone by, would turn in their graves if they could see the state of the place these days. They kept the banks immaculate and the water free of rubbish. Bromley Council and the Environment agency should be ashamed! The old Kent River Board never let it get like this!"



Alan Baker with his 17lbs mirror
July 1971 on sweetcorn

Next month Bob looks back at the angling magazines available during those Golden Years!

"Resulting from part one last month about my old Keston story, I had a response from a current successful carp fisher at Keston. Thomas Lochrane from Bromley told me that he is catching 20 lb plus carp regularly in the early mornings on the most traditional of baits. I've seen the photos and impressive they are too! These are beautiful Keston fish, second only to Redmire carp and are often very distinctly leathery with few scales. These could well be the 6 inch fingerling 'Leney's' that I put in 50 years ago? So the carp of Keston are all still there, not the fish of old, but new stock and growing well in the very alkaline water with many in the 22-30lb range. I wish I still lived 2 miles down the road in Hayes, and was 30 years younger!"

Medway Man

Bob Morris

Having talked about using my barbel rods for piking in a previous issue, I have recently been fishing for pike on a couple of waters where it is often a good idea to get your baits out a bit further - for a variety of reasons. Often you may have shallow water in front of you or maybe the 'fodder fish' are only showing at range and keeping the pike away from the margins?



Sometimes you just do need a more powerful rod

Whatever the reasons, it becomes necessary to use a more substantial rod in order to first get your baits out there (unless a radio controlled boat is being used) and then to give a bit more backbone for playing a decent sized fish at ranges of 70/80 yards or more. I rarely use rods of more than 12 ft, although I do concede that used properly, and with the right casting technique, they can increase your distance. I much prefer a medium action, and a test curve of 3 - 3 1/2 lb, rather than the stiff, 'tippy' feel of some carp rods that are now used for long range fishing. It's not that these are bad for piking, but rather that I like to

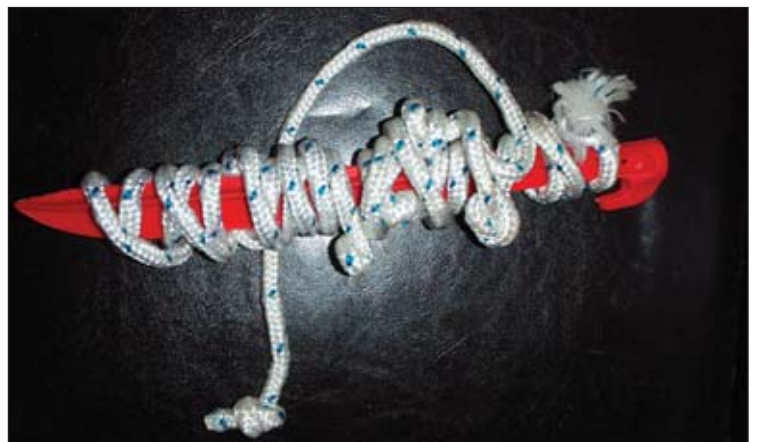


Pike to mid-doubles

have a bit of a bend in the rod to act as a buffer - particularly as I am often using a braided (non stretch) line. If given the option however, I will always choose to avoid long range fishing - whether it is for pike, carp or anything else, as hooking fish at distance is never as exciting. Sometimes you have to get the fish halfway in before you have any real idea of what size it is - although I must say that braided line does help in this respect. Bait and lead weight size are crucial for this type of fishing and cutting down on air resistance can be an important factor in reaching your chosen spots. Another aspect of long casting with pike baits is that it is vital to avoid any terminal tackle arrangements that are prone to causing a tangle. If your mainline gets caught around your bait, this can result in a pike biting you off and possibly swimming off with a mouth (or perish the thought, gut) full of trebles. Regular readers of this column will know that I have now given up using treble hooks altogether although I will not go into it all again here at the moment, except to say that anglers fishing for sharks, don't use them!!?

One of the advantages of my single hook rigs is that they are easier to pull into a pike's jaw at range. I say pull into, because I am sure that striking a take with about 80/90 yard of line out is almost irrelevant when piking - even with the help of braid. Also if the pike has the bait clamped in its jaws, then what you do with the rod will make very little difference as far as hooking it goes. A single hook gives an advantage here, I believe. A steady pressure is a much better ploy I find, although it is often hard to force yourself to do it and abandon the old ways of striking hard. I have just started my winter's piking efforts and, so far, I have had some success with a few fish - up to mid double figures - with some taken at range. As usual I have been experimenting with different rigs and presentations - with some variations showing real promise. I will leave the description of these until I have had enough time to draw a few conclusions however.

With what has turned into a very wet Autumn, the river piking that I had hoped to do, has not materialised, but I have had some interesting fishing with some good chub and barbel coming my way, often in extremely unpleasant and 'dodgy' conditions, and I have felt



Bob's knotted peg & rope for dodgy swims



The old favourites

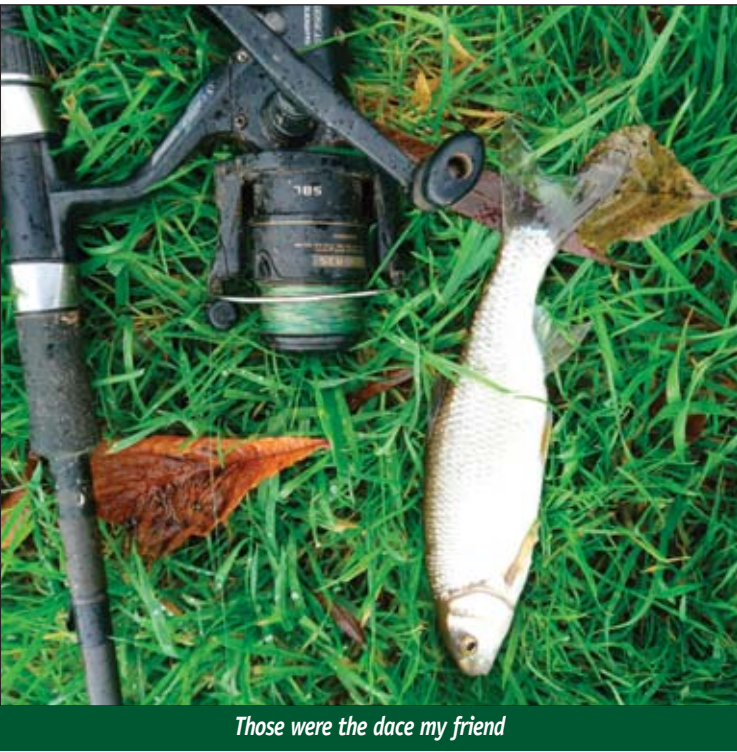
inclined to use my Dog peg and rope on a number of occasions - even in swims that I would normally have felt completely safe fishing from! Some of the other spots that I would have liked to try, I decided to give a wide berth to - such has been the slithery 'dangerous' conditions on the riverbank of late.



Blast from the past

Sometimes interesting fishing is not just about the biggest or the most, and trying something or somewhere different can be a real buzz. I have lately, had one or two trips to small stretches of river/streams, where the fish population is relatively unknown and the possibility of a surprise or two is always on the cards. These are the sorts of sessions where you travel light, with a float or quiver rod, a box of maggots, some worms and half a loaf of bread. It is amazing how satisfying it can be to catch fish that have probably never seen a

hook before. I always find that this sort of fishing takes me back to my early years, when I used to read Mr Crabtree and Richard Walker to recharge my batteries after a blank trip, and could really get quite enthusiastic about the prospect of catching a few gudgeon or some dace. The last trip of this type that I did was a couple of weeks ago on the local river Darent - one of my old stomping grounds, and that was exactly what I did catch.



Those were the dace my friend

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Brick Farm Lakes Herstmonceux, East Sussex

October and November have so far shown some fantastic catches to, not only individual anglers, but to the visiting corporate and larger group events, with many other bookings coming in for later in the year as well. We will cater with whatever food you request, from breakfast rolls to casseroles and lasagne with garlic bread, so just give us a call to get a larger group or Christmas booking confirmed.

Fishing has been going really well. Successful flies generally being blue flash damselfs, black & green and don't be afraid to use buzzers either as they've been doing really well! We had one day towards the end of October where every trout was caught on bright orange so who knows what the coming weeks will bring!

The photos show young George with his first 2 trout, the biggest at 2lb 7oz, another first also being for **Seb Pye** when he visited and is pictured with one of his first 2 trout and also a shot of **Frank Humphrey's** lovely 6 fish bag.

Don't forget we can take the hassle away from the horrendous task of thinking of what to buy that person who has everything this Christmas! How about a voucher to spend with us, or even a combined fish and coaching voucher? So even if they have never fly fished before they are sure to have a fantastic day at Brick Farm Lakes!

Tight lines and a Happy Christmas to you all. The Axells

We look forward to welcoming you all to our lovely fishery in 2020!



Seb Pye



George



Frank Humphreys - 6 fish bag

Chalk Springs Arundel, West Sussex

The last month has not been too exciting weather wise, rain, rain and more rain!!! However, the fishing has been good for the hardy fly fishermen and women. Many fishermen bagging up early, first thing in the morning. Fish have been caught fairly deep for the main part on blue flash Damselfs, hairs ears and buzzers with the occasional trout caught on dry fly. We have had some nice fish taken, with some nearly into double figures including Browns, Blues and Rainbows to nine pounds. Frosty mornings setting in now, so some good fishing to be had. A huge brown trout is lurking in the lake, waiting to be caught!!! Now there's a name to be made by his capture!! We are talking well into double figures, so there will be a bottle with this chap on the bank. Look forward to seeing you at Chalk Springs.

Tight lines and a Happy Christmas to you all, Nick and Ally



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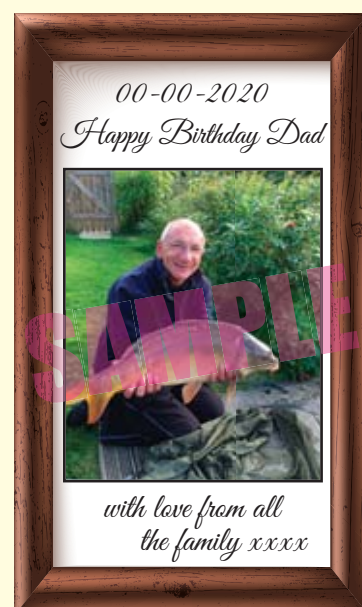
Please note that the size of the photo that will appear in the magazine will be approx 45mm (width) x 80 mm (height) and will cost £20.

The image would be a great keepsake and make someone's birthday / anniversary etc extra special or maybe you just want to say

'Thank you' to someone. Payment would be required by bank transfer or cheque prior to publication.

Please bear in mind the deadline dates of the magazine which are approx two weeks before distribution takes place so you might want to think ahead! The deadline date for the next magazine can always be found at the foot of the inside of the front cover. **Interested?**

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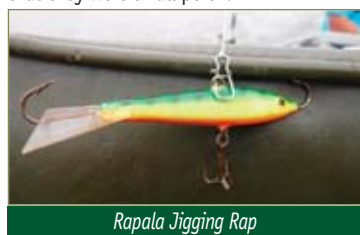


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www.brickfarmlakes.co.uk

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"My predator season started in mid-October, six weeks later than normal. I was uneasy about starting even then as the water was still rather on the warm side. Pike are easily stressed in these conditions, the warmer the water the less dissolved oxygen it contains. This explains why, as the water cools, the pike become more active and feed more often. I finally ventured out on Bewl Water [TN3 8JH] and my aim was to fish for perch, which seem to fare much better in these warm conditions, 16 degrees 'C. I wanted some casual, FUN fishing, with plenty of bites. Having guided a couple of guys for pike a few days earlier, I'd noticed vast shoals of bait fish. I was unsure what they were until I dropped an "ice jig" down and immediately started getting "plinks and rattles" which indicated, as I suspected, that they were small perch.

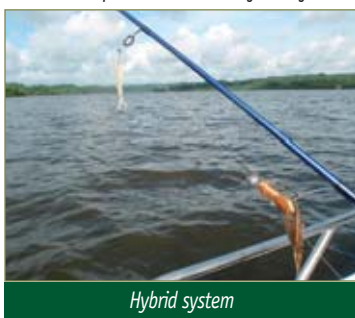


Rapala Jigging Rap

So on my first perch session, accompanied by James Gardner, we targeted the shoals I'd located around the back of the old "fish cages". The fish seemed very reluctant to hit our lures here so we moved onto the next bay where we found even more shoals, holding tightly in 25-30ft of water. We deployed the drogue to slow our drift down, and while I lowered my "ice jig" over the side James cast

his spoon across the wind. Once my lure hit the bottom, I proceeded to make short, sharp upward lifts that sent my lure sideways before descending in a very erratic manner. James' tactic involved lifting his spoon off bottom before taking two quick turns of the reel handle. A short pause followed, which allowed his spoon to flutter slowly to the bottom, before again repeating the process. With his lure cast across the wind, James' spoon would fall faster than when it swung in behind the boat, the "line drag" then slowed its fall. Subtle things like this make all the difference when it comes to catching more than average amounts of fish, and James likes catching more than the average, just ask anyone who fishes with him! Almost all the takes came "on the drop", with the occasional fish coming as we lifted our lures off the bottom. We had the impression that these fish had actually pinned our lures to the bottom! Takes came thick and fast and we gradually accumulated a fair number of fish, but no monsters. On our next visit, James and I continued perch fishing, but we adjusted our presentation slightly. We elected to use Dropshot rigs, but instead of using a weight at the end of our line we used a lure. This set up, known as the "hybrid system", is a method that Rikki Cooper and I came up with a few years ago. On the "Dropshot" single hook we added a small soft plastic lure with either a "split tail" or "grub tail".

Now it was time to explore new areas in the hope of finding some bigger perch. Catching fish wasn't proving to be a problem, but finding a better stamp of fish was. However, every now and then we were startled by bold takes that resulted in the capture of a "micro" pike. These fish were caught tight to the bottom in 30ft of water, possibly hiding from bigger cannibalistic pike. The session finished with us catching upwards of 100 perch and 16 pike that collectively might have weighed 20lbs!



Hybrid system

We were having FUN and we both wanted more, so the following week saw James and I "rock up" at Bewl again. Despite our best efforts, the results were very similar to the previous week's. The fish had moved a little deeper as the water was finally cooling down and the water level was increasing now that Southern Water had started pumping. The water hadn't coloured up noticeably, which was good, but we had to consider it could affect the fish's behaviour. This trip resulted in a load more small perch and another 21 "micro" pike. The action was fast and furious, but we were confused by our lack of success in finding the elusive better perch. At the end of the day as we unloaded the boat, one of the rangers, Rob Dixon, suggested we try "Beaumans Point" on our next trip. This sand bar extends out into the main basin; Rob had caught some good perch, around 2lb, there recently. So it was agreed we would try "Beaumans", on our next visit the following week.

Andy offers a guiding service for those who wish to learn more about "Lure Fishing & Fly Fishing". For details visit www.thefriendlyfisherman.co.uk or phone 01892-528677



Pike can be so much fun when they are angry!

Enigma Occasionally, I find a situation or water where I do not know what the fish are doing. When this happens, I fish as often as possible, using a variety of methods, in as many different locations as possible, in an effort to find the key that will unlock the door to future catches, and this was now our game plan.

The search continues The next trip couldn't come around soon enough. James and I were keen to hit the water again, we really were enjoying the fishing. Our results weren't that special, but the challenging nature of it had peaked our interest. First thing we needed to do was locate the depth band that the perch shoals were in now. We visited a couple of our "hot spots", before heading to the sand bar. The water temperature had dropped another degree and the level had increased a little too. The perch were now in 30-40ft of water, and scattered in loose shoals in several areas. We set the boat to drift over "Beaumans"; the bar is surrounded by deep water on either side. Our first two drifts produced several nice fish, slightly bigger than average, but nothing to get too excited about. On the next drift as I tried to lift my "ice jig" off the bottom, my rod tip stayed put, at first I thought I was snagged. Then slowly something came off the bottom as I applied extra pressure, at first I thought I'd snagged a perch in the side as there was so much resistance but no sensation of a fighting fish. Slowly, I gained line, I also realised that despite the lack of any fight, it did feel heavy. My perch rod now had a very healthy bend in it. Finally, I saw "colour" as a rather large pike appeared out of the depths. At this point I expected it would panic and



Andy with one very plump 17lbs pike

bolt off, but after no more than a lazy lunge, I was able to bring it to the surface and James scooped it into the waiting net. I got rather excited at this point, it was so fat it had to be over 20lbs? James wasn't sure it was long enough, and he unfortunately was right. The scales never lie, 17lb on the nose and my first ever pike on an "ice jig"! The rest of the day was more small perch and another pike of about 5lb, again on an "ice jig", how strange! So after a few trips to Bewl, I'm not sure we've solved the problem of location regarding the bigger perch and pike. On my most recent trip, when I fished solo, "Billy No Mates", I found the perch shoals had stayed at 40ft, but were now suspended over 60ft of water. I'm not sure what to make of this but you can be sure James and I will continue in our quest."

To be continued..... Tight lines. Andy Lush

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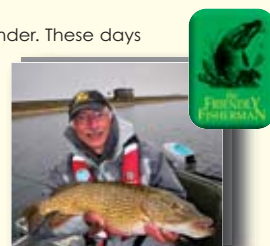
Trout

Reservoirs or smaller stillwaters in the South East. These days are suitable for beginners or improvers who wish to learn 'how to catch more fish', or just have a FUN day with an experienced fly fisherman.

Carp & Pike

More anglers are looking to find exciting ways of catching their favourite fish. Carp off the top during the summer takes a lot of beating. Pike in the spring and autumn, whatever their size they are a lot of FUN on the fly!

For details contact Andy Lush on 01892 528677



Angling Societies

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For further details contact: **Hon. Secretary: Chris Knowler on 07712 622858**

e-mail: chris@lintonangling.co.uk

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Please call 07766 623673 to book



For further details contact the Secretary:
Rob Tuck-Brown on 07484 144561
or email: robtuckbrown@hotmail.com
Visit us at www.WantsumAA.co.uk

Hastings Bexhill & District Freshwater Angling Association

Season runs from 1st April to 31st March.

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

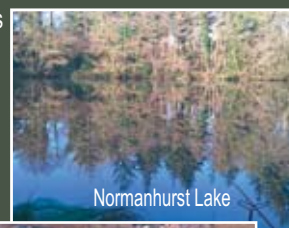
To apply to become a member please download and print the application form from our website. Complete and return to the Membership officer on the application, alternatively it is possible to purchase your membership from any of the tackle shops listed on our website.

For further information please contact:

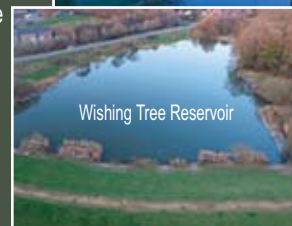
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Medway and Kent Sea Fishing Group

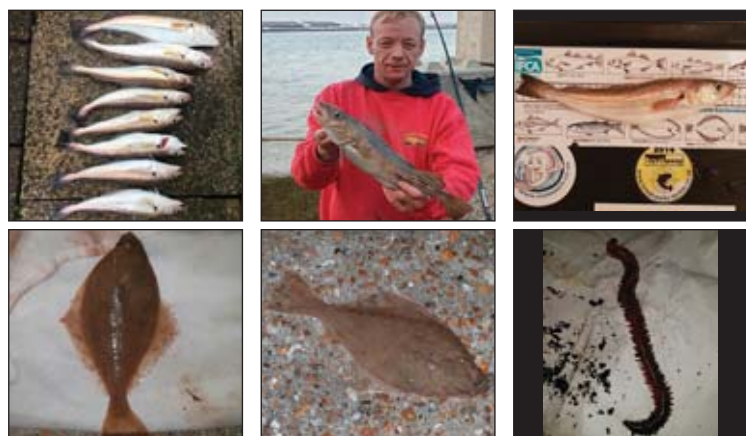


Sea Reports are proudly sponsored by - Medway and Kent Sea Fishing Group

Here we are in the last month of 2019 and the winter fishing should now be at it's best. However, nobody has told the cod once again! There have been a few caught from along our coast, most of these from the Sussex marks. The local charter boats have had the odd fish, but, once again the winter's 'dream fish' are not there. Perhaps we should now acknowledge that this once prolific fish and the mainstay of the winter catches, is now confined to a distant memory? Don't despair, but, there are still plenty of fish to be caught. The whiting are everywhere with this season's fish being of a larger size to previous seasons. Many competitions are being won with large numbers of dogfish and pouting and the skate are now appearing once again. It has been a great year for bass and the specie is still being caught around the coast. Regarding bass, regulations are now catch and release only until the end of the month. We will wait and see what the stipulation is for January 2020 onwards, although I foresee the rules being much the same as this year. The current sea temperature is around 14 degrees and will continue to drop as we enter the Winter months. **Don't forget to send me your sea catch reports and photos via the Facebook page or by email.**

Thames report courtesy of Wayne May

Fishing has certainly picked up over the past few weeks. Greenhithe at St Clements reach and behind Asda are fishing well with plenty of whiting being caught regularly and some nice sizes too for the river, averaging 30cms. Evening and night tides are now producing plenty of flaties at the same venues, using flapper rigs baited with black lug tipped with squid which is a great bait to use this Autumn. Low water is fishing better for the flounders with less whiting grabbing the baits. The Ship and Lobster at Gravesend is also fishing really well with the odd bass showing and again the whiting in numbers. Heading out to sea in the estuary, a few cod are starting to show, although I've not heard of many on the local beaches. The charter boats are the best place to be to get that Autumn codling! Many thanks to Nigel at NJ Tackle, Gravesend for some great bait, and local knowledge. **For all your tackle, bait and local advice, call NJ Tackle at Gravesend on 01474 353998.**



Medway report

Plenty of whiting, pouting and small bass being caught in the outer reaches and back as far as Rochester. A few flounders beginning to move up river recently and the flatie fishing should improve as we go through this month. See Daniel Terry's report in this section for an example of how good the fishing has been. **Medway Tackle Supplies at Twydall has a great range of tackle and baits available. Call 01634 475260.**



Sheppey report courtesy of Sheppey Angling

Fishing continues to pick up around the island and relative estuaries. The thornbacks are still being caught around the north side of the island and the whiting numbers seem to be thinning out. More flatfish are being caught, in particular flounders which seem to be moving in to the rivers in greater numbers. I don't want to get peoples' hopes up too much, but a number of codling, nothing big, have been caught! Best baits are lug, squid and fish. At the moment, we are not having any problems with the supply of fresh lug, but, this may change if we hit a cold, icy period. It may be wise to pre-order your bait with the coming holiday period approaching. **Call Sheppey Angling on 01795 661089.**



Thanet report courtesy of Fisherman's Corner

Ramsgate has produced some big weights in local matches from the East pier and main Sands, predominantly of whiting, pouting and dogfish with a solitary codling weighed in. Reports of bass along the Western Undercliff up to 3lb on lugworm along with dogfish and whiting in daylight after Southerly gales pushed colour in to the water, lugworm being the best bait. We're hoping for a good run of dabs this year which are great sport on light gear, fishing 20-40 yards off the East pier with 2 or 3 hook flappers and size 4 hooks baited with old lugworm works well for these. **For any advice, tackle or bait contact Fisherman's Corner, Ramsgate 01843 582174**

Deal Report courtesy of Dave Chamberlain

If December fishes as well as last month then there shouldn't be many unhappy anglers. Although whiting and dogfish will make-up the main catches from the beach and pier, they can be a pain. However, if the weather sets in cold there could be a scarcity of fish in January, so make the most of the harvest while it is available. For those who want a change, dabs are normally in abundance at this time of year. Smaller hooks baited with lug and tipped off with squid or herring will entice the larger dabs which are in prime condition. A few codling were caught in November so it will be on the cards that more might show this month. Another notable occurrence last month was the unusual amount of small congers caught locally ... could this be a good sign for the future? Don't forget, there are some cheap combination rods and reels available in the tackle shops which will make an ideal Xmas present for the young up-and-coming anglers. I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a successful New Year. **Call Fred at Channel Angling Deal for all your bait and tackle requirements on 01304 373104**



Dover report

At the time of writing, the Admiralty Pier is closed for repairs following the severe gales at the start of November. Any enquiries regarding the progress of repairs should be directed to Dover Sea Angling Association. Shakespeare beach and Samphire Hoe are still available for fishing.

Channel Angling in Snargate Street can meet all your tackle and bait requirements. Call Craig on 01304 203742.



Hythe & Surrounding Areas Shore Report by Stevie Bates

Although the recent weather has made fishing challenging, it has been very good along the Hythe and surrounding shorelines for the pleasure anglers. The whiting are now here in full force taking any bait almost as soon as it hits the water. Along with the usual suspects, dogfish and pouting showing in good numbers, there has been the odd nice flounder and some early dabs being caught. This means that many anglers are having bountiful sessions during the breaks in the unsettled conditions. With the huge number of whiting on most tides, there is still hope for the anglers targeting the bigger bass, short casts behind the breakers on a retreating tide into darkness or an early morning tide should still see you pick out a big fish patrolling the surf. Expect to





still catch thornbacks on squid or fish baits, there have been some reports of thornbacks at Hythe but not in the numbers that we have seen them recently close to the shore. You can look to catch all along the coast from Dymchurch to Sandgate on most tides with the evening tides still producing some of the better fish. Good luck and tight lines. **Your local tackle shop for bait and tackle is Dens Tackle 01303 267053.**

Eastbourne report courtesy of Tony's Tackle

This month's angling has been exceptional with some good sized bass, pollack and a few cod from the boats. Plaice continue to show in numbers from the Light Tower area drifting towards Hastings. Colin Vokins landed a 10 lb 7 oz bull huss, these are quite rare nowadays. Mackerel, squid, black lug and ragworm proving to be the best baits. Beach fishing has produced some good bass on squid and mackerel heads and congers continue to show from Langney Point and Bexhill beaches. Match fishing has been prolific with local angler Keith Erridge winning the Hastings and St Leonards Open Match picking up a cool £500 pound plus winning prize. Ian Hopper won the Tony's Tackle Brexit Open with 257 pts with over 5 lb of fish in a 4 hour match at Langney. He picked up £100 this month. Eastbourne hosts the National League final with over 150 anglers competing from all over the UK. The two day event should prove to be a prestigious event with large numbers of fish being caught along the Eastbourne and



Pevensey beaches. The match will be fished to catch and release rules. Gerald Sargeant, myself and Scott Brown continue to pick up money locally in matches. Joe Plumstead won the Shoreham Franks match. Dogfish, plaice, eels and the odd codling and bass continue to show. Best fishing is on long tides after a gale or strong winds. Luke Ripley and his group have landed some huge thornbacks and undulates to 10 lb plus from the shore this month. December should be the best and please don't forget to pick up all your rubbish after a session! Sarah Croft had an enormous conger from Worthing Pier weighing a staggering 43lbs. **Call Tony's Tackle on 01323 731388 for all your bait requirements! Fresh black lug and king ragworm are available to order.** Tight lines, Tony Kirrage



TONY'S TACKLE BREXIT OPEN

Tony's Tackle at Eastbourne held a slightly premature 'Brexit Open' at the end of October. Despite Brexit not happening, the lads enjoyed some good fishing! Results from Tony's Tackle Brexit Open at Eastbourne:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1st Ian Hopper - 259 pts | 2nd Tony Kirrage - 237 pts |
| 3rd Scott Brown - 226 pts | 4th Kim McGreevy - 189 pts |
| 5th Westley Sargeant - 179 pt | 6th Iain Smart - 172 pts |

Tony Kirrage added that there were plenty of fish caught with bass, soles, whiting, plaice and dabs. Money paid out: 1st £100, 2nd £70, 3rd £50, 4th £35, 5th £30, 6th £15.



KENT BOAT REPORT

courtesy of Jason Parrott

We are in to another month and the cod, or the 'unicorns' as we like to call them, are still hiding. A few have come up around the South East corner and Ramsgate has had a couple, but, they all seem very small so I'm sure they won't be in any numbers. Does that mean we should put the boat rods away for a few months? No chance! Fish for what is there and go with lighter tackle and enjoy the abundance of good whiting and dabs that are to be had. The only good thing with our 'warmer' waters is that we are still getting smoothhounds, not many, but on



some trips we have seen 5 or 6 depending if the anglers bring crab or hermits. Now is the time for big bass off Ramsgate! A good friend of mine on Bonwey had a nice 11 lb bass uptiding with double squid so the bigger

ones are there. Skate are still our back up and a few better females have been showing well over the magical double figure mark. We all encourage anglers to put back most of the fish and people are taking this onboard and are learning that to try and slow down the dwindle of fish stocks we have got to do our little bit to conserve our fish. It's tiny compared to the factory ships capable of 250 tons of fish a day; now that's a big problem! The spur dogs won't be long, we just need the water temperature to drop. They are my favourite fish but it's just very hard to predict as shoaling fish one day means you can have a good sign one day and the next day they are gone so I try not to target specifically. A new avenue that Lady Ann of Ramsgate has looked in to is squid fishing. We have got some light tackle rigged up ready and we have all the different jigs to try. We just need settled weather and clear water, that's the hard bit at Ramsgate, so we will be heading to St Margaret's or the Butt's as us yokels call it here. Ant Hills on Peganina from Rye has had some monsters so they are about and there are also some strap conger coming in on some of the Ramsgate vessels. Times are changing and it's hard to do, but we must change with it and if you are lucky enough to catch a 'unicorn' well done, but don't take too many pictures or you might find an armada of anglers following you!

Tight lines from all aboard Lady Ann of Ramsgate, Jason

Jason always welcomes new parties so if you are a single angler or a group and want a great day afloat, give Jason a call on 07966 273650.





MAGAZINE STOCKISTS PLEASE BE AWARE!

As we head in to the Autumn and Winter, I will be carrying less spare magazines when out delivering each month. This is to keep wastage to a minimum. If you would like your magazine delivery increased or decreased, please let me know in good time so I can ensure I order enough from the printers. Thank you for your co-operation.

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BEATING THE WINTER BLUES AND GETTING THE KIDS OUT!

"I see that after my article in the November issue regarding the crash of our beloved cod fishing there has actually been some codling caught from the beach at Dungeness! I salute the anglers that caught these fish as the effort, time and expense put in, for what in reality is a handful of small codling, shows good angling skills and dedication."



Dungeness cod

For December's issue, I wanted to write a more upbeat article, outlining some of the positive aspects of winter sea angling. The fact is that winter does offer some sport for those willing to brave the elements, and if expectations are kept realistic, a few hours on a beach with a fishing rod can still be very enjoyable.

Last January saw very good numbers of thornback rays caught from the shore around the Isle of Sheppey. It would be a good bet that these fish will be around again this winter, which will be good news for those who like a bend in their rod.



Nice thornback for Richard

Despite the absence of the cod, there are actually more fish to be caught in winter than in the summertime. This is due to the vast shoals of whiting that frequent our shores from September through to late Spring. With this in mind, an angler who is not too fussy about what he catches, can be kept busy reeling in these feisty little fish.

Whiting and thornback rays are not the only fish available during the winter months, bass are now staying longer, with some of the biggest fish coming through November and school bass up to a couple of pounds

regularly being caught right through the Winter. I know a guy who prides himself on trying to catch a mullet from the river Thames in every month of the year, I think he actually did achieve this back in 2017!

Despite being hammered as an unwanted by-catch, by the inshore gill netters, flounders can still be caught on cold crisp days from the creeks around our estuaries. Dabs are available from most beaches and piers on small tides, although not a sporting fish, they are one of my favourite fish to eat. Basic beach rigs like cut loop paternosters with small hooks baited with old black lug worms should find a decent feed.

Then there are the fighting, biting whiting! These obliging little fish were once a real pain stripping large cod baits in a matter of minutes. The Channel's beaches seem to mainly produce small pin whiting, to catch the bigger one's estuary marks like Medway City Estate and other marks around the Medway are worth a go. Again, there is no need for complicated rigs or expensive shop bought rigs, simply tie two or three loops in your leader, cut these loops to about 4 inches then tie on size two hooks. Whiting will eat any sea baits, but I find mackerel strips will sort the larger fish out. In years gone by the average size of whiting would be around half a pound, unfortunately this has decreased over the years. However, a few hours either side of high water should see an angler get

enough decent sized whiting for a good feed. I fillet them and shallow fry them in breadcrumbs.

When I was a kid and regularly out on my Dad's boat, when an angler caught a lesser spotted dogfish (LSD) it would be passed around the boat so we could all have a look, we probably saw one or two per year! Nowadays, they are considered pests by most anglers. Nature always fills a void and the dogfish is certainly doing a fair job of filling the void left by the cod.

Cousins of the LSD, the spur dogs, were also rare visitors back in the day. Now a decent fishery is being exploited by the Thames Estuary charter fleet.

These fish are a very welcome addition to the mix giving the skippers' punters some variety. Over the festive period, it is very easy to fester on a full stomach, so after the veritable banquet of Christmas Day, why not pull the kids off their tech devices and drag them kicking and screaming down to the beach for a few hours on Boxing Day. This will blow the cobwebs out from between their ears and give them a glimpse of the real world that lies outside the virtual world that the younger generation seem to live in a lot of the time. A long day down the beach is probably too much for most kids but an hour each side of high water at your chosen mark banging out a few whiting should keep them occupied. Although a pain to us dedicated anglers, a dog fish of a pound or so would be a real catch to a youngster new to the sport, especially if it is explained to them that this is a member of the shark family.

The key with taking kids fishing is making sure that they catch fish, two hours spent in the freezing cold on a beach with no wi-fi and no fish will put a child off fishing forever. On the flip side, a few hours spent down the beach catching a few whiting, dabs and dogfish could spark a fire that stays burning throughout their lives. Kids love an adventure, and let's face it, this is what most of us adults are chasing when we go fishing. We are reigniting the fire that was probably sparked by our fathers. The whole fishing experience of getting to the location, setting the rods up and casting them out, fires the expectation of what's going to happen. This can be enhanced for kids by cooking a few sausages on a gas stove or even just making some hot drinks to take the nip off.

There are many fishing marks around the coast that are easy for kids to fish. You don't really want to get them trudging miles along the beach carrying lots of heavy gear. Most beaches have parking nearby and most beaches produce fish during the winter months. If you want an easy life and don't want to trudge the kids along the beach, there are also many estuary marks where you can fish out of the car, eg. Medway City Estate, Warden



Gillingham Pier

Bay, Leysdown, Ramsgate Pier and Gillingham Pier to name but a few. To complete the whole experience, then why not take a few of the better sized whiting home for supper? They are fairly easy to fillet and cook. Simply fillet, dip in beaten egg, then dip in bread crumbs and shallow fry, real fish fingers that even Captain Birds Eye himself would be proud of! Just please bear in mind that the minimum landing size for whiting is 27cm.

So, despite the lack of a cod fishery, it is not all doom and gloom. You could start a whole new generation of sea anglers just by getting them catching whiting and doggies for a few hours.

Myself, I shall be fishing for pike this Winter, mostly from the comfort of our nice warm Broads cruiser with a glass or two. So please be sure to let me know if the cod come back and I may even venture back to the beaches.

Thank you to all of you guys that have read my articles this year, have a great Christmas and I shall catch up with you in 2020!"



Harley with a nice whiting



Ramsgate East Pier

Well lets 'kick off' by wishing you all a great Christmas, it has been a funny old year...weather has been a bit erratic but so have the anglers. The fishing has been stunning...another great year for bass, hoards of whiting, loads of rays. The best mackerel fishing for years...late but brilliant. November has been a 'bit wet' with the wettest autumn on record. Fishing this month has been a bit strange, a few early codling followed by loads of whiting and rays...and the first flush of dabs. Will next year be as good or even better that depends on the anglers going fishing?

BEACH REPORT

was telling people that November is historically a top cod month...not this year with so few anglers about, even fewer cod being reported...loads of whiting, monster dogfish, cracking bass and the first flush of dabs.

Here are a couple of the November reports coming into my site...

Three weeks = 9 codling...

I had this report in today from Colin Hemsworth...

"Hi Tony, Thanks for the great lug at the weekend, I put them to use at Dengemarsh, weather was a bit wet but at least the wind wasn't too bad. Tactics were simple, two pulley pennel rigs, 3/0 hooks and straight lug cast out as far as I could manage. I was straight into whiting and dogfish and this continued throughout the day. Sunday morning, target was achieved with a 2lb codling and that was it on the cod front but I'll be back for his big brother soon! Thanks again for the bait. Colin"



Plenty of fish about at Dungeness

I had this report in from John this afternoon...

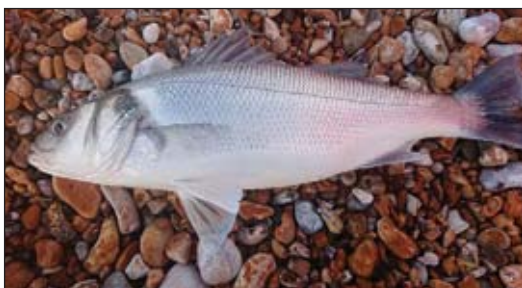
"Hi Tony. Thanks for the bait yesterday. Worked really well. 27 whiting and this cod between the two of us. John."



A lovely 'plump' bass for Andy...

I had this in Andrew Elsey at the beginning of the week...

"Hi Tony had two bass and some nice whiting yesterday fished near the boats"



Nick's match...second year...

We are looking forward to the 'Nick Burton Memorial Match' this December to honour Nick's memory...

A perfect ten for Colin...

I had this report this morning from Colin Hemsworth...

"Hi Tony, I fished near the station on Saturday/Sunday, it was a bit gusty but calmed down later on. I set up two rods both with pulley rigs loaded with lug, I was kept busy all day with whiting, doggies and a few pouting, some of the whiting were a good size and just after dawn on Sunday I reeled in a codling just under 2lb and that was my lot for this season. Thanks for the great lug as usual and see you soon. Colin"



Plenty of fish for Neil...

I had this report in from Neil Rodwell last night...

"Hi Tony. Cheers for the bait. Went behind the station today. Had a total whiting fest from the start with double shots every cast. At high water it all went dead then on the drop it all started up again with the whiting thinning out enough to let a few dabs through. Some of the Whiting were big and fell to everything including 2 whole squid pennel hooked! The live bait rig didn't yield anything big but will try again. Thanks again and will speak soon. Neil."



The Nick (No Fear) Burton Memorial Match
2nd YEAR
At Nick's favourite beach
GALLOWAYS
Sunday December 29th
Book in 9.30am Fish 10.30 till 2.30pm
£10 Entry (for Dungeness RNLI)
£5 Optional Pool, Heaviest Fish Wins
Bad Weather alternative Littlestone Wall
Match Captain Steve Harvey
For more information call 01797 366837

BEACH OUTLOOK FOR DECEMBER

Well we haven't had loads of cod yet...but there is still time for a Christmas bonus...you won't know if you don't go, we should see more dabs as well.

BEST BAITS

Big baits for big fish...this really does work, it might be a waiting game but can be worth it. try whole squid or cuttle or a fish fillet wrap. When it comes to dabs, old lugworm works best.

BOAT REPORTS

Here are a few of the November reports coming into my site...

There is still time for Mrs 'Big'...

I had this report in from Anthony today out on Pegania (07989778361) from Rye..."4 eels for us today no monsters but nice to get back out."



Jem skating in the East Bay

I saw this from Jerry Oiller posted last night...

"Fairchance fishing Dungeness 01797 363544. Skating in the East Bay, Local lads in the Boat today, managed to boat a Dozen Thornback Rays to --12 lb, a couple of small congers plenty of Whiting and dog fish and still a few Mackerel. Happy Days."



Nice autumn conger...

I had this report in this evening from Anthony out on Pegania (07989778361) from Rye...

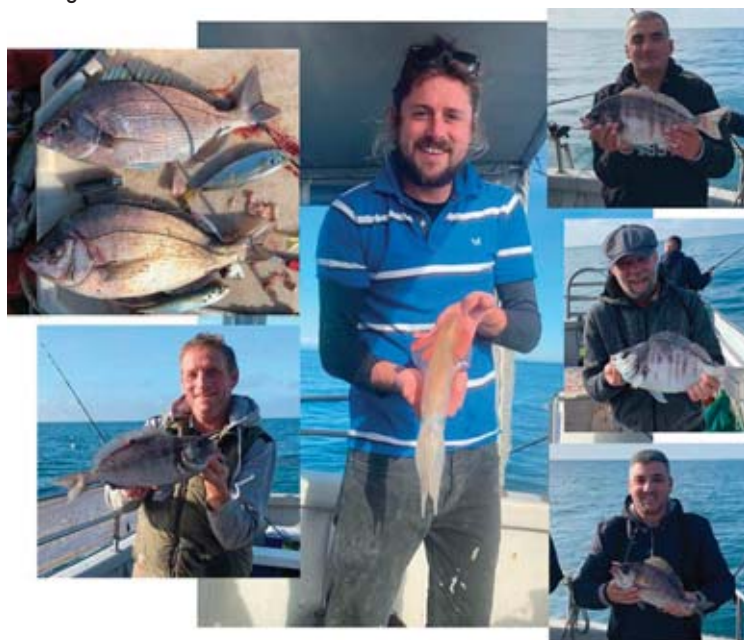
"Russ smashed his Pb conger - well done mate! Still good numbers of plump bream but it was slower than yesterday."



Another 'black' day for Pegania...

I had this report in this morning from Anthony out on Pegania (07989778361) from Rye...

"What a day yesterday was, the weather was amazing with plenty of very stropky, plumb black bream being railed as well as squid, cuttle, pollack, mackerel, scad, John Dory and of course those little brown darlings!!"



Things that go bang in the night...

I had this report in this morning from Anthony out on Pegania (07989778361) from Rye...

"13 year old Harley smashed out two eels on last night's eel trip - amazing effort, especially considering how cold it was too!!"



A beautiful autumn day for Jerry...

I saw this report from Jerry Oiller of Fairchance fame last night...

Foggy Robinson and Colin Burden in the boat today, managed to boat 4 thornback rays, the best going 14lb, and 6 strap Congers to 18lb, a beautiful Autumnal Day.



Quality pollack still to be had ...

I had this report in from Anthony this afternoon out on Peganina (0798977361) from Rye...

"Jack with a cracking pollack from yesterday's trip."

BOAT OUTLOOK FOR DECEMBER

We have a very cold wet autumn which has dropped the sea temperatures to the coldest for years...what effect will this have time will tell. Last year the bream and conger were there through December. I think if the weather gets worse it will be worth ago on the banks with fish baits to see if we can find some of the hound family on the feed (besides the thornbacks).

BEST BAITS

This is the year of the 'fish', herring, mackerel and bluey!



HASTINGS report courtesy of Hastings Angling Centre

The weather has been dire in November with lots of rain and strong winds. Boats have only had a few opportunities to get out. The black bream will pretty much have gone by now and the cod have just not turned up again, a few codling here and there but nothing to write home about. Best fish reported was a very nice 9lb turbot for Peter Wiseman.

On the shore the many days of rough weather have certainly made for very difficult conditions with limited spells of better weather. Some decent bass and soles still being caught though. The small conger eels are regularly coming up with fish up to 10lb being hooked but not usually landed. Worth a go for a change, with the right tackle they should be very catchable.

The South Coast Beach Championship was fished at Hastings on the first Sunday of November. The wind had been blowing very hard for several days prior to the match and with it dropping away nicely on the day high hopes were had for a bumper match. Unfortunately, nobody told the fish and they remained out at sea away from the turbulence. One more day may have seen them back in big numbers. See the report below.

Prospects for December, for the boats deep wrecking starts to come to the fore with pollack being the main quarry, any cod a bonus. On the shore the soles mainly disappear and be replaced by the dabs and rockling (joy!). It doesn't look likely there will be any decent numbers of codling about again.

The Hastings Angling Centre Open Beach match is on Sunday 29th December with a £300 first prize and other cash prizes. Details and entries call Hastings Angling centre 01424 432178.



HASTINGS SOUTH COAST BEACH CHAMPIONSHIP

Fortunately Saturday's awful weather abated and conditions on the Sunday were very reasonable for fishing with a light wind

and quite mild. There was still a considerable swell. The whiting were not as abundant as expected, possibly still out at sea after the Saturday's fierce blow. The conger eels still showed up with three being beached in the match, best 78cm. This year there was a new sponsor for the Championship PB BRICKWORK Ltd, many thanks from all to Paul Parsons for supporting this year's event.

RESULTS:

Luke Mooring was the clear winner of the £500 first prize, fishing on peg 5 he caught 23 fish for 13lb 12oz.

Runner up was **Philip A Lee** from the bathing pool with 19 fish for 10lb 11oz.

Biggest round fish was **Ralph Crosby** with a codling for 2lb 6oz. His second codling in consecutive matches.

Biggest flat was **Julian French's** sole of 1lb 6oz.

Pairs winners were **Luke** and **Brett Cotter** with a combined weight of 17lb 6oz

Pairs Runner ups were **Saul Page** and **Nathan Elliott** with 15lb 6oz.

Top Veteran **Mick Snelling** 9lb 9oz.

Top junior **Tom Ryder** 2lb 13oz.



Julian French



Winner - Luke Mooring



Pairs winners - Luke and Brett



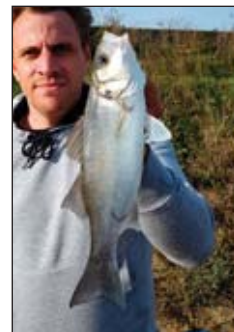
Junior - Tom Ryder



Veteran - Mick Snelling

GREAT SESSION ON THE MEDWAY FOR THE BOYS!

"We recently had a crack on the Medway and what a session we had! We fished a spot on the Medway from low at about 10 till high at 1.30. I was fishing with my pals Wesley Irons and Jake Miller and it was manic. There was bass for all of us nearly every cast. It was a very rough and windy tide with the high breaking over and flooding up to the wall but certainly produced well with myself having bass up to 48cm, one flounder, a doggie and one whiting on the out when it became unfishable with weed. Wez also had bass all the way through with the biggest being just over 42cm, a doggie and a whiting. Jake had his new PB bass at 36cm and it was a chunk of a bass along a fair few others and one whiting. It was a hectic session in the wind and waves but well worth the effort. Our bait was lug, rag and maddies." **Daniel Terry**



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Coombewood Fishery Redbrook Street, High Halden, Nr Ashford TN26 3JH	07895 679569
Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden TN12 8EL	01580 212512
Furnace Brook Fishery & Fish Farm Trolliloes, Cowbeech, Nr 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
Hartley Lands Fishery Swattenden Lane, Cranbrook TN17 3PS	07703 825064
Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	01580 753813
Horam Manor Fishery Horam Manor Farm, Horam TN21 0JB	01323 840889 07707 759364
Iden Wood Fishery Coldharbour Lane, Iden, Rye TN31 7UT	01797 280180 07906 232225
Knightingales Fishery Stone-in-Oxney, Nr Tenterden TN30 7HA	07941 176205
Mousehole Lakes Maidstone Road, Nettlestead, Nr Paddock Wood ME18 5HR	07725 783405
Orchard Place Farm Fishing Lakes Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6NY	01892 838576 07860 608218
Sandwich Lakes Coarse Fishery Sandwich Ash Road (A257), Near Canterbury CT3 2DA	07936 409912
Tanyard Fishery Tanyard Lane, Furners Green, Uckfield TN22 3RL	07833 532842
Tricklebrook Fishery Colts Hill, Five Oak Green TN12 6SH	07743 955812
Wylands International AC Wylands Farm, Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU	01424 893394

TROUT FISHERIES

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Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from r.nathan@btinternet.com	01892 770903
Hazel Copse Trout Fishery Baynards, Rudgwick, West Sussex RH12 3AF	01403 822878
Spring Hill Trout Waters Albans Farm, Romford Road, Pembury TN2 4BB	07951 304515
Tenterden Trout Waters Coombe Farm, Chennell Park Road, Tenterden TN30 6XA	01580 763201

ANGLING CLUBS / SOCIETIES

Bromley (Kent) & District AS PO Box 895, East Grinstead RH19 9ND	bdas-kent-enquiry@bdaskent.co.uk
Hastings, Bexhill & District Chris Pagan 07429 655237 Steve Potter 07935 268174 Postal enquiries: S.Corke, 2 The Siding, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1RF	
Linton Angling Society Chris Knowler 07712 622858 chris@lintonangling.co.uk	
Tonbridge & District A & FPS PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB	Donna 07947 557140
Wantsum Angling Association Rob Tuck-Brown (secretary) 07484 144561	robtuckbrown@hotmail.com

TACKLE & BAIT SUPPLIES

Absolute Tackle 12 Wealden Forest Park, Herne Common CT6 7LQ	01227 636724 07809 330854
Bodle Angling Southdown Store, Cuckfield Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8RE	01444 247757
Camos Carp Cabin 11 Turner Street, Ramsgate CT11 8NJ	01843 581784 www.camoscarpcabin.net
Carpers Den Ashford Road, High Halden, Ashford TN26 3LJ	01233 850644
Channel Angling 158-160 Snargate Street, Dover CT17 9BZ	01304 203742
Crowborough Tackle Shop 2, Lexden Lodge, Crowborough Hill, Crowborough TN6 2EG	01892 667671
Dens Tackle 73 Dymchurch Road, Hythe CT21 6JN	01303 267053
Fishing Tackle & Bait Ralph's Farm Shop & Nursery, Wierton Road, Boughton Monchelsea ME17 4JW	07724 776031
Fishon Tackle Shop Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6PY	01892 459217
Friendly Fisherman Camden Road, Tunbridge Wells TN1 2PS	01892 528677
Henfold Bait & Tackle Henfold Lakes, Henfold Lane, Newdigate, Dorking RH5 4RW	07956 043922
Hooked on Green Unit 2, Bellbrook Industrial Estate, Uckfield TN22 1QL	01825 760139
Kent Tackle Hawkhurst Fish Farm, Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	01580 754422
Medway Tackle Supplies 11 Twydall Green, Gillingham ME8 6JY	01634 475260
NJ Tackle 150 Milton Road, Gravesend DA12 2RG	Tel: 01474 353998
South London Angling Centre 286 Lee High Road, London SE13 5PJ	Tel: 0208 852 4451
Sues Tackle Cabin The Spice Warehouse, Rye Harbour Road, Rye TN31 7TE	Tel: 01797 225015 07980 290247
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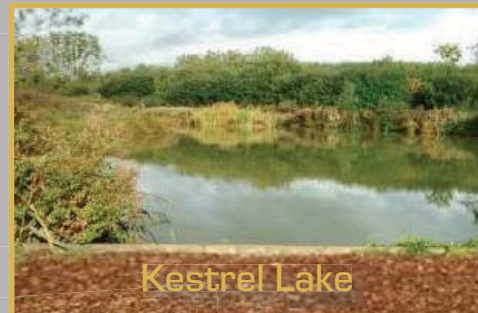
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