

FRESHWATER INFORMER

JUNE 2019

Jayden Murphy

12lbs at
Claygate Lakes

Connor Murphy



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Bradley Murphy

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

At last summer is here and no doubt many of you will have your summer campaigns planned. The Closed Season comes to an end shortly opening up the rivers and many other waters once again. With the introduction of the River Informer section shortly before the Closed Season began, I was receiving some great river catch reports. Please do keep sending them in once you are back on the river banks again. Many of the clubs that advertise in the magazine provide access to some of the best river fishing in Kent and Sussex. I would strongly suggest that if you want to enjoy the beauty of river fishing then take a look at what these great clubs have to offer! You may find that after fishing running water you might never want to fish still water again!

For those of you that follow the magazine's vibrant Facebook page, you will have read that with regret I have decided not to pursue the Essex adventure. I was disappointed that, although the magazines were being very well received by the county's anglers, there was no interest from business by way of advertising, which as you know provides the lifeblood that sustains the Freshwater Informer. The additional cost of the extra distribution with no return was a cost that I was unable to sustain. I had originally given myself six months to build that area, but, it needed revenue in order to do that and sadly it was not forthcoming. However, never fear, the magazine continues to build here in Kent, Sussex and Surrey and it is here that I will now continue to concentrate and improve.

Continuing the Facebook theme, it is disturbing to see so many tackle thefts occurring while anglers are asleep at night on the bank in their bivies. Thankfully, there have been no reports of this happening in our area, but, a number of people in other areas have awoken in the morning to find their rods, pods, alarms, nets etc all gone. I can't begin to imagine how that must feel! There are a number of products that can be used to deter this type of theft and I would suggest that if you fish alone and feel that you may be at risk then to do some research and look at the products available. The best anti theft device is a dog, but, very few fisheries allow dogs on the site.

The magazine is always grateful for your support whether it is by advertising or by sponsorship. You do not have to be a business to provide sponsorship to the various sections of the magazine. As an individual caring angler who is passionate about his sport, you too could become a sponsor and by donating whatever you wish can have your name, if required, placed at the top of the relevant section showing everyone how you care for your sport. I am always looking for sponsors for the River Informer, Junior Informer, Sea Informer and Trout Informer.

I am always at the end of the phone if you want to call and have a chat.

Enjoy your fishing, Barry Reed



ST. MICHAELS HOSPICE CHARITY EVENT AT KNIGHTINGALES FISHERY

Shane Pope, Neil and Paul Willis, friends and family spent the Easter weekend at Knittingales Fishery at Stone. The purpose of the event was to raise money for the St Michaels Hospice. The family had the fishery to themselves from Good Friday to Easter Monday. The previous few months had seen a huge amount of work done acquiring a massive array of raffle prizes, selling raffle tickets and much more. The weather was absolutely glorious for the whole weekend and although the fishing was a little slow to start, it picked up as the weekend went on and a good number of fish were landed. I popped along on Easter Saturday to meet the family and had a go with a rather special float rod! I even managed to catch a few nice roach. Early indications were that around £1400 was raised for this marvellous cause who provide such a magnificent, caring service.



Well done to all concerned. I'm sure your donation to the hospice will be well received and put to very good use.



HAPPY 'RAYS' FOR STEVE AND RICHARD

"So with the recent weather - wind, rain, cold E and NE breezes, we eventually got a break in the weather. With the wind blowing itself out and the rain moving out over the Channel, the conditions provided us with a clear and calm night - perfect for ray fishing at our chosen venue. I arrived to find Richard already fishing and into a small ray as I came down to join him on the sand. A great start to what turned out to be the most exciting and successful trip Richard and I have ever had on the rays. I set up alongside Richard, baiting up with straight bluey on single 4/0 Sakuma Manta extras on a pulley dropper and put a bait out into the murky water. 15 minutes in and the rod tip gave two thuds and buckled over and soon after my first ray was on the beach at around 3-4lbs. Between me and Richard, we reeled in nine rays from 3-9lbs until we hit LW at around 10.40pm. The tide turned and started to flood which brought the rays back on the feed and we landed a couple of biggies that we estimated at around 11lbs. Before we knew it, it was around 1.30am and the whiting bites started which indicated it was time for bed! We ended up with 19 rays between us - 9 for me & 10 for Richard! Certainly a session we will remember and talk about for many future trips to come. All fish were returned unharmed to fight another day."



Well done Ollie!

Proud dad Steve Bates sent in this report of a recent session he had with son Ollie:

"Thought I'd share with you a trip to Hythe with my son Ollie. The fishing was hard and we were searching for daytime rays using bluey for bait. We had all manner of weather that day, rain, hail, sunshine and gusty winds and the only fish caught was Ollie's big channel whiting!" Cheers and tight lines, Steve and Ollie



The Freshwater Informer

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Fishery Reports

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The shop now stocks Middy and Kodex tackle, this is a very exciting addition to our already growing stocks in the shop. We have a selection of refreshments available as well, such as cans, hot drinks and snacks which you can take with you to the lakes.

The lakes have been fishing very well. **Barry** reports that he caught a 17lb Grass Carp off Oak Lake after quite a fight. **Sam Chorley** caught a 26lb mirror and a 25lb common off Admiral using Pineapple pop ups. **Roy** caught a 15lb carp off Oak Lake and **Dave** caught a common carp from Oak. As always we love to see your catches and hear your stories, please send us your reports!



Dave - Common carp on Oak

Roy Williamson - 15lb Common



Sam Chorley - Mirror 26.1

Sam Chorley - 25.2 Common

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Fishery Reports

Charlies Lakes Ashford, Kent



Adrian Hodges 41lbs 7ozs



Benjamin Garwood 43lbs 14ozs



Ben Sambrook 24lbs



Lee Newland 41lbs 6ozs

Carl Flack fished peg 14 for the first time and had 40 catfish over a weekend biggest being 44lb. **Sarah Browne** and fiancé **Russell** fished the lake for the first time and had 9 catfish and 4 carp including a 42lb pb catfish. **Norman Temp** fished peg 2 during a 36 hour session and had 15 catfish up to 33lb. **Kevin Bond** and **Michael Delaney** fished pegs 7 and 8 over 36 hours and had 45 catfish to 36lb and 9 carp to 20lb. **Nigel Bond** was in peg 18 for 48 hours and had 12 catfish including 5 x 40lbers to 48lb 12oz. **Kevin Angus** did 48 hours in peg 13 and had 29 catfish up to 29lb. **Adrian Hodges** and four of his mates did 36 hours in pegs 5, 6, 7 and 8 they managed a staggering 99 fish combined including 2 x 40lbers with everyone breaking there PBs. **Dean Follington** cut his session short to roughly 50 hours after having 49 catfish to 35lb and 2 carp from Peg 8.



Bethany Murray 31lbs 10ozs



Dean Follington 35lbs



Gary Marsh 37lbs 4ozs



Nigel Bond 48lbs 12ozs



Sarah Browne 42lbs

British Carp Angling Championships Returns to Dartford Lakes



After a 12 year absence the BCAC returned to the historic Brooklands lake in the middle of Dartford for one of the qualifying rounds in this years competition. The match held on 26th April was a pairs match fished over 48hrs with the top 3 pairs moving onto a semi final to be held on St Johns at linear in August Local anglers, as well as others from across the region, took part and with pegs decided via a watercraft draw, local knowledge could be key. The draw itself was really unusual in itself, with first out Mark Gibson & John Walker selecting match peg 1, 2nd out choose peg 2, 3rd peg 3. This continued right through the field!

The first pair to get off the mark were local lads Rob Dunk and David Collard fishing peg 5 'Back Point', with a cracking mid double mirror. Also off the mark on the first afternoon were Graham Price and Matt Smith in Peg 2 'Beaky'. At the start of the match the fish were stacked in Peg 1, Homebase Bank, but it wasn't until the first night that Mark and John started to get amongst them with a couple of smaller fish followed by a 23lb mirror which put them into the lead that they would maintain throughout the match, ending up with a total of 7 fish for 130lb 2oz. The catch included a Common known as 'White Tips' at 26lb.

By the half way stage on Saturday lunchtime, 5 pairs were on the board with Leigh Saunders and Mark Gregory in peg 6 in second and Ashley Izzard and Tony Reynolds easing themselves into 4th. Saturday afternoon saw the biggest fish of the match banked, a fish called 'Not Patch' at 28lb 4oz, an absolute Banger! A flurry of fish for Rob and David in peg 5 shot them up to 2nd slot which would be enough to see them through with 98lb 3oz. The real battle was for the last qualification spot, as we headed towards the end of the match only 3lb separated 3rd and 4th and 5th was only 17lb off 3rd. Really tight!

With no more fish to the battling pairs it was Leigh Saunders and Mark Gregory who secured the final Semi Final spot with 3 fish for 49lb 5oz.



DDAPS MATCH RESULT

Fourteen fished the club match on Baldwin's lake on Sunday 5 May 2019.

1st - **Bob Hesmer** 59lb 8oz mostly Bream, including one of 10lb 2oz

2nd - **Mick Powell** 58lb 4oz Bream and Carp

3rd - **Martin Chapman** 41lb 4oz Bream and Carp. One Carp went 19lb 6oz

- it was weighed and returned.

4th - **Mark Barnet** 30lb Bream and Carp.

Nearly all of the anglers caught. Paul Simmons and John Savage had PB bream of 10lb 4oz and 8lb respectively. A few tench were caught too."

Paul Cooper , who kindly supplied the report added, your readers may find this DDAPS club match result interesting reading. Brooklands Lakes, Dartford, can be fished on a day ticket all year round, obtained on the bank. There have also been a good number of big carp out of the other lake up to 38lb 8oz in the last week or so.

Paul Simmons



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Fishery Reports

Mousehole Lakes Paddock Wood, Kent



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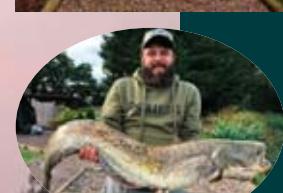
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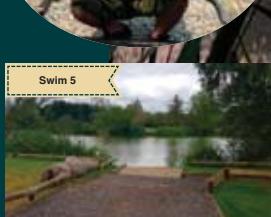


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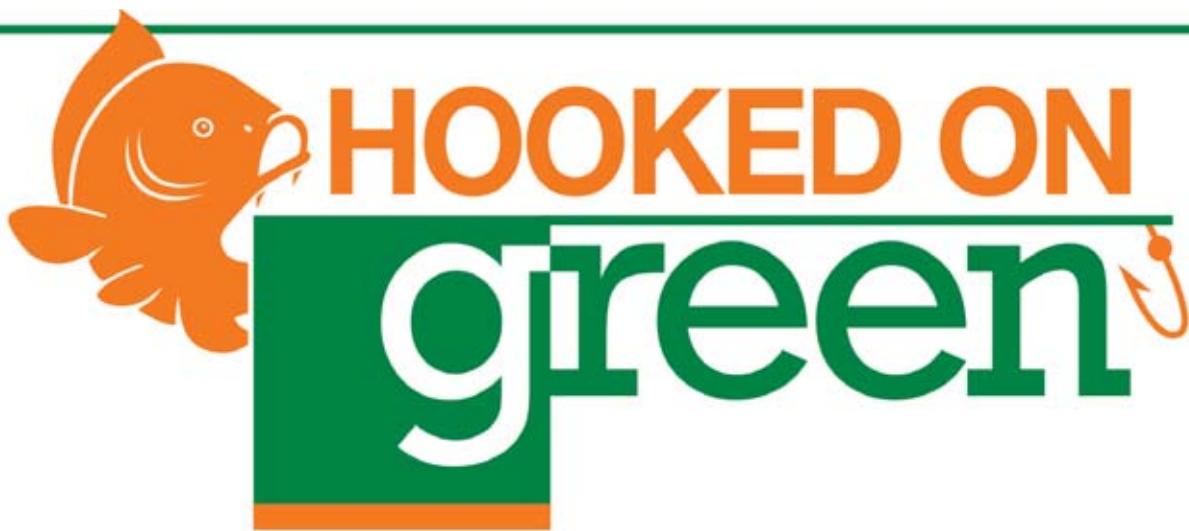
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Fishery Reports

Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society



Now the close season is upon us, our stillwaters come into their own.

NEW LAGOON keeps producing the goods with the tench fishing being exceptional with fish to over 8lb and lots of 5-6lb fish being caught. Venue regular **Roger Fermor** caught the biggest tench he had ever seen, let alone caught, which weighed 8lb 8oz. There was another tench of 8lb 2oz caught that weekend. There were also some great silvers caught with several roach to 1lb 8oz and rudd to 1lb 12oz. **Jason Craven** catching the biggest Rudd.



THE OLD BALLAST PIT is fishing well for carp to mid twenties, tench to 7lb and bream to 6lb.

BARDEN LAKE has produced plenty of the big carp with several fish to over 40lb.

HAYSDEN LAKE and **LONGFIELD LAKE** have not had many anglers but the fishing should improve as the water warms up.

WEIRWOOD RESERVOIR has been fishing well. **Austin Battell** had a good day drop shotting from the boat with four pike to 11lb 4oz and several perch to 2lb 4oz.



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Fishery Reports

Wylands International AC Battle, East Sussex

With mixed weather throughout the month and with some interesting fishing conditions, all lakes are seeing the fish on the feed.

KELL LAKE has been producing some lovely carp both mirrors and common with quite a few mid 20lb carp caught throughout the month.



Gavin - Kell



Sam - Kell 29lb



Darryl Rowbury - 30lb Kell

HOUSE LAKE is producing a lot of mid doubles. More fish have been caught in shallower water or in the margins recently.

OLD AND NEW SPECI LAKES Both waters have been very popular throughout and in turn we have had some great catch reports. New speci produced a lot of 20lb plus carp close to the island to some very lucky day anglers. Fish on this lake seem to be moving around and feeding well.



Dean Eaton 20lb New Speci



William West - 26lb Middle



William West - Middle Lake

SNAKE LAKE is fishing really well with great bags still being weighed in despite the weather being up and down. Snake lake is also fantastic for some pleasure fishing.

MIDDLE LAKE has been going well and we are now getting anglers having some great sessions with carp up to 26lb 8oz being netted

MAISIE'S LAKE The cats and carp are now getting on the feed with carp up to 29lb and cats up to 56lb.



53lb - Maisies Lake

Claygate Lakes Claygate, Marden, Kent

LAKES SOPHIE & EVA banded pellet along with meat working for match and pleasure anglers with bags of 150lb being taken by pleasure anglers. Some of the bigger carp have also been coming out to the match anglers using meat.

LAKE AMY Well done to Tim on his 32.5lb and 28lb common never seen anyone eat so much in my life! **New** had to climb through a tree with the help of his mucker **Jack** to land a carp that came straight into the margin and then took off at 5am. **Ed** took a lovely selfie of the common he had out and well done to **Bradley** and his son **Jaydon** with **Bradley** having a 35.5lb common.

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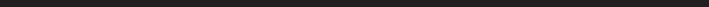
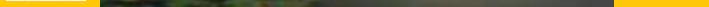
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LAKE SOPHIE match/pleasure - Carp 16lb+ Tench 8lb+ Chub 5lb+ Barbel 4lb+ Perch 3lb+ Bream 11lb+ Roach 2lb+ Skimmer Bream and other silvers



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Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road
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Tel: **01580 212512**

email: info@elphicks-fisheries.co.uk

www.elphicks-fisheries.co.uk



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SPECIMEN LAKE 2 3.5 acres

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Fishery Reports

Cackle Hill Lakes Biddenden, Kent



Fishery Reports

Tanyard Fisheries Uckfield, East Sussex



COARSE LAKE 2 Radek landed four Common Carp and three Catfish all under 10lb on an overnight session. George landed five Carp, one Mirror Carp and four Common Carp. Toby landed four Catfish around 7lb using luncheon meat.

COARSE LAKE 3 Mike Wheeler landed a lovely Catfish on his first session of the season. Frazier Hookings landed a collection of Carp on his weekend session.

SPECIMEN LAKE 1 Paul landed a nice 24lb Common Carp and two Pike of 9lb and 12lb. James landed a 22lb Fully Scaled Mirror. Simon landed a 19lb Common Carp on an overnighter. Stephen landed a 29lb Common Carp using spicy pepperami on a day session.

SPECIMEN LAKE 2 Tyler Nightingill landed a nice 26lb 8oz Mirror Carp. Phil landed a 31lb Common Carp on an overnighter using Cell boillies.

SPECIMEN LAKE 3 Lenny Smith along with Levi Smith landed three Catfish weighing in at 56lb, 55lb and 48lb also a Grass Carp high 20s. Peter Ellis landed two Catfish one of 52lb and one of 49lb. Shane Heffer landed the LAST 60+ catter hat with a respectable 65lb 10oz Catfish. James Scudder landed a nice 61lb 3oz Catfish, landing himself a 60+ Catter hat. James Murphy landed a 30lb Mirror Carp using tutti fruity boillies. Stuart Carey had a good session landing a 28lb 14oz Common Carp, 28lb 8oz Mirror Carp, 28lb 11oz Mirror Carp and a 36lb 7oz Grass Carp. Mark Styles landed a 19lb 12oz Common Carp and a 28lb Mirror Carp.



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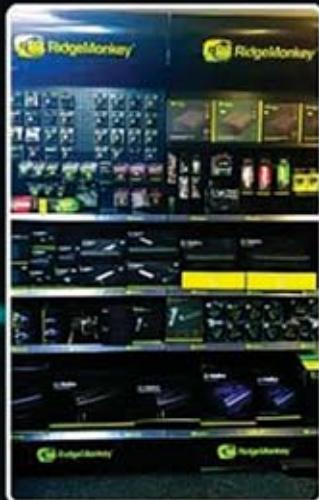
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Fishery Reports

Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hawkhurst, Kent

It's been an insanely busy month with a lot of beautiful fish coming out over all the lakes. One session that really stuck out to us was **Daniel Legg's**, who smashed his PB several times whilst on Main Lake. We decided to reward him with a free 24 hour session! With that in mind, we've also restarted our Fish of the Month competition, which will once again run in time with the Freshwater Informer. The next winner will be picked in Mid-June and announced in the July edition!

MAIN LAKE **Benjamin Rolfe** brought his brother along for a 24 hour session and they had 16 fish between them even though it was tough angling in torrential rain. They had carp between 12-25lb and a 43lb catfish. He said "I would just like to say a huge thank you to HFF and the staff me and my disabled little brother fished there this weekend and I must say everyone was very accommodating." **Josh Hall** landed a stunning 29lb mirror. **Ross Farnes** caught a 59lb 8oz catfish on a night session. **Dean Main** netted a fabulous 34lb mirror on a weekend session. **Steve Hall** landed a massive 57lb catfish from the back bank. **Nelson** netted a 17lb common and **Flavio** caught a 35lb catfish. **Scott Ridley** had an incredible 24 hour session, with 10 fish caught (and 1 lost), including a new PB of 34lb 8oz mirror. All fish were caught on Pacific tuna fished over a mix of chopped and boilie crumb, skretting pellet and halibut pellet. **Mr Sturges** netted a lovely 19lb common from the back bank. **Roger Whyman** caught a 34lb catfish and 17lb common on his session, he said he was "loving it!" **Andy Hayman** landed a pristine 29lb 5oz common. **Lewis Colegate** landed a lovely looking 22lb 11oz common, and would like to thank **Dan Rudd** for the pictures. Lots of upper doubles and 20's caught up to 28lb on Main Lake this weekend by **Roger** and his friends. **Alastair O'Brien** booked the lake for an exclusive 48 hour session, and between them they netted over 65 fish. They said "A big thanks again for a great fishing trip with great staff and facilities. We all caught and had over 65 fish in 48hr session. Including 3x30lb plus carp and a lot just under. Cats to 64lb.8 and few 30s and 40s. Much appreciated and a special thanks Jasmin and Rob. You've both been great help". **Daniel Legg** has fished exceptionally well, breaking his PB's with a 46lb 4oz catfish and 31lb 8oz mirror, as well as some other awesome catches! **Chris Pearson** landed two catfish during a night session including a UK PB of 45lb 8oz, both caught on Halibut pellet. **Roger Williams** and his friends booked the lake and caught lots of upper doubles and 20's up to 28b. **Rhys** caught a scale perfect 17lb 8oz Common. **Roger Whyman** landed a 34lb catfish and 17lb common on his session. **Jack** landed a lovely 17lb common and 52lb catfish. **Chris Logic** landed a 55lb 8oz catfish. **Scott Cook** landed an impressive 58lb catfish.

DOVE LAKE **Ryan Cobb** was part of a 48 hour group booking; they had 20 fish out altogether! **Ryan** landed 2 commons weighing 21lb and 24lb, and a PB mirror weighing 33lb 8oz. **Dave Leftley** had an "amazing" 36 hour session, landing a new PB - a 30lb 10oz common amongst others. **Graham Young** landed a stunning 26lb 8oz common from peg 8. **Jamie** caught a 31lb common and 26lb common, the rod took off at 1am and he landed his new PB! He says "thanks to rob and the guys/girls at Hawkhurst fishery! What a way to start the weekend". One angler sent in his catch report via Instagram, saying he had a good session, netting a 22lb and 26lb common. **Jason Emmett** had a great session, netting a 35lb mirror and 38lb catfish. Both were caught fishing tight to the island, using snowman rig pacific tuna and mystic spice goo. **Jimmy** sent in his catch report via Instagram, having caught a 6lb tench. **Tom Marshall** caught one of our new stockies weighing in at 34lb 8oz and has requested it be called 'The Marshall'! **Aiden Punter** landed a 41lb Catfish which put up a great fight!

SPECIMEN LAKE **Ricky Young** caught a lovely brace of common carp weighing in at 30lb & 26lb during a 36hour session on the Specimen Lake. **Tim Porter** fished an overnighter on Specimen Lake, landing two beautiful mirrors; weighing 33lb 12oz and 36lb 8oz respectively. Our bailiff Rob netted his



45lb Catfish - Main Lake - Jack Wood



55lb 8oz Catfish - Main Lake - Chris Logic Bye



61lb Catfish - Specimen Lake - Luke Williams



64lb 8oz Catfish - Main Lake - Jack Wood



Alastair OBrien group booking - Main Lake



Alastair O'Brien group booking - Main Lake

first fish of the year on a quick hour session after work. It was a lovely 23lb 8oz mirror. **David Graveling** had another great session, netting a 34lb mirror and one of our new stockies at 23lb 6oz. **Tim Stoneman Jr** netted an absolutely stunning linear weighing in at 28lb. **Oli Rickson** caught 4 fish, the smallest being 20lb 13oz and the biggest 27lb over a 48 hour session.

QUARRY **Charlie Wilson** netted an impressive 19lb 8oz common and 21lb 7oz catfish from Quarry Lake. On another session he netted 16 carp up to 15lb 4oz! **Wayne Eldridge** netted a whopping 32lb 4oz catfish.



Benjamin Rolfe - Main Lake



Daniel Legg



Daniel Legg



Oli Rickson - Specimen Lake



35lb Mirror - Dove Lake - Jason Emmett



41lb Catfish - Dove Lake - Aiden Punter



34lb 8oz Common 'The Marshall' - Dove Lake - Tom Marshall

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for MAY is...
Jason Craven
well done!



AARON CHAMBERS 20LBS MOUSEHOLE LAKES



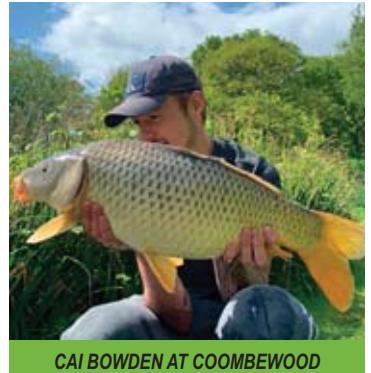
ALEX HALL CACKLE HILL 30LBS



BILLY LAMBERT 39LBS AT CACKLE HILL



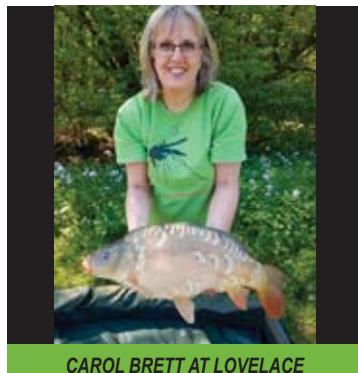
BRYANN COLLINS 39LBS AT WHITE COTTAGE



CAI BOWDEN AT COOMBEWOOD



CAMERON BUTCHER 90LBS DARENTH LONG LAKE



CAROL BRETT AT LOVELACE



CHARLIE ONSLOW AT MONK LAKES



CRAIG LINK AT HORSMONDEN



CHELSEA JONES AT WILLINGHURST



CHRIS SMITH AT ELPHICKS



COLIN ETHERINGTON 6LBS EAST SUSSEX WATER



DAN KENYON 30LBS KNIGHTINGALES FISHERY



MATTHEW STACEY 22LBS



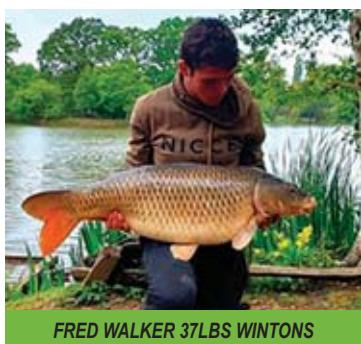
DAN LAWSON 25 LBS AT ORCHARD PLACE FARM



DARREN VINCENT 30LBS AT LOGGIES



DEAN EATON 20LBS NEW SPECI AT WYLANDS



FRED WALKER 37LBS WINTONS



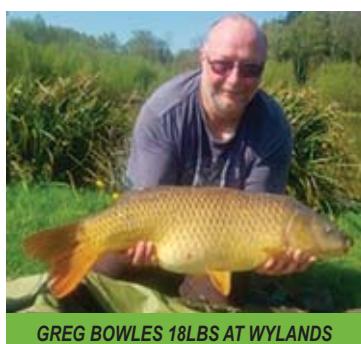
GLENN WOOD AT HAWKHURST



GORDON FELLOWS AT LOVELACE FISHERY



GRAHAM YOUNG 26LBS AT HAWKHURST



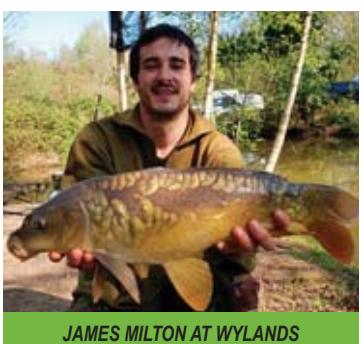
GREG BOWLES 18LBS AT WYLANDS



HAYLEY JAMES AT CHEQUERTREE



JACK FORD AT HORSMONDEN



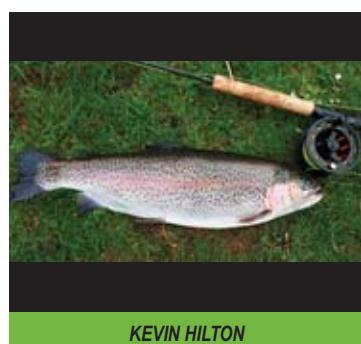
JAMES MILTON AT WYLANDS



JUSTIN TWORT 24 LBS SHARNFOLD FARM FISHERY



KEITH HARRISON LAKE 8 ORCHARD PLACE FARM



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LAURENCE GILBERT AT WYLANDS



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NICK CHILCOTT 18LBS AT TANYARDS



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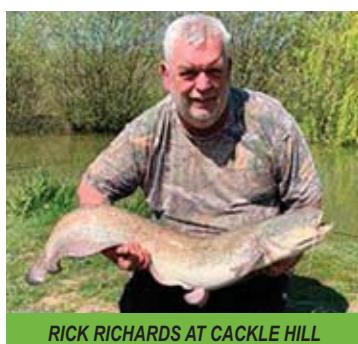
PAUL ROBINSON NEW PB 49LBS



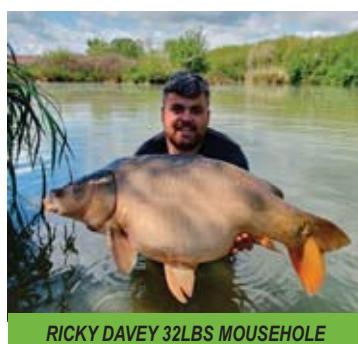
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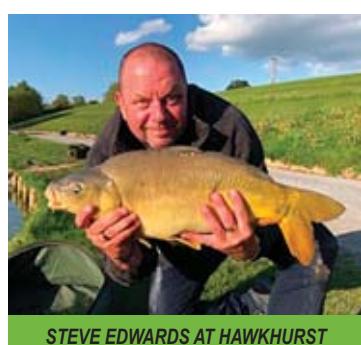
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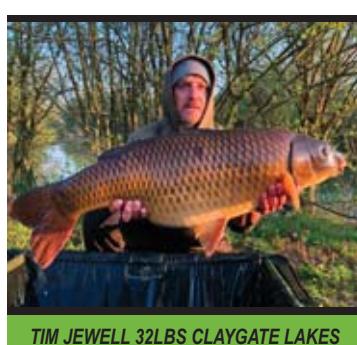
STEVE EDWARDS AT HAWKHURST



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SNAKE LAKE METHOD FISHING

BY ANDY PHELPS



Now that the warmer months are finally upon us, I thought I'd go and do some experimenting with different ideas for future matches. Today, I am on the match lake on the Cottington complex, usually I can get away with fishing to the far bank with a pole, but, as is so often the case down here on the coast, the wind plays havoc with presentation. So I sat down and thought how do I combat this problem? The easy answer is the feeder rod, but then what length do I use.....? There are many questions that need to be considered when fishing a snake lake. Rods that are too long for the job are too cumbersome and therefore create issues when casting. I found whilst testing a few short feeder rods, that between 7-9 feet is the ideal length. I have come across two superb little rods for the job, both are from the Middy range. The first is the Battlezone and the second is the White Knuckle, both very good rods, one slightly more forgiving than the other. I use the White Knuckle for fishing slightly away from snags as the softer action is better for playing fish that have room to swim, whereas the Battlezone, as the name suggests, has more backbone and can be used as a hit and hold tool close to the far bank snags.



All I am using today is 1 pint of the new Van den Eynde Super Crush Sweet groundbait, and about the same of 2mm method pellets. To prepare these, I just cover them with water in a bait tub, then place a second bait tub of the same size inside the tub, then simply turn upside down and then let the water slowly drain off. By the time I have finished setting up they will be perfect. At this time of year you can never be sure what the fish want, whether it be pellets or groundbaits, hence why I prepare both, I do however, have a spare EVA tub with a mix of micros and groundbait, mixed 50/50.

I am using a small 20g Middy Gripper SG method feeder with a ready tied Middy Band Em Method 4 inch hooklength in size 16. Hook baits for the session are VDE Dumbells, 6mm pellets and some Bait-Tech Wafers.



Seeing as the far bank is approximately 15- 17 meters, clipping up is vital. The easiest way of doing it, is to cast softly, and deliberately cast shorter than needed, then gradually go further each cast using the line clip, simply by releasing the clip after the cast and paying out a little more line until you have the perfect distance. Not forgetting to feather the line before the feeder hits the water is also vital, otherwise the feeder will crash into the water and either spook the fish or worse, end up in the far bank foliage. The way I do it, is to cast then immediately hold the rod upright so the feeder hits the water slowly with the added bonus of a few yards of extra line when the rod is in the rest.

Another idea I have come up with, is to use the method in the near margins. I have found that this eliminates line bites and foul hooked fish!



First cast in with a liver flavoured Dumbell, mixed micros and groundbait on the method, and within 3 minutes the rod is almost dragged in. A few minutes later and a nice chunky carp is netted. There was a pattern that emerged throughout the day, if I had no bites within 5 minutes then I had to re-cast. After 10 carp things went a little quiet, as they often do, I started to ring the changes, just groundbait, just



pellets, pellets on the hook, sprays, Dumbells, Wafers etc. I then thought about casting into the holes in between the overhanging branches, where I would usually fish the pole. Hey presto, the fish were hiding there!

I had an interesting day out and learned a lot about where the fish back off to and how to present bait to them.



In the end I had according to my clicker, 32 carp ranging from 2-10 lbs all on the method feeder, and all on minimal bait. Another thing I learned, was that you don't need the top of the range rods to catch a lot of fish at short range, the rods I used were under £60, which is certainly affordable for most.



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AFFORDABLE PRICES

RODS				COMBO KITS				
Darent Valley Specimen Rods	RRP	Offer Price	Item Code	Reel + Line In each kit	RRP	Kit at offer prices	Kit Offer Additional 10% off	Item Code
12ft 3lb 50mm	£74.99	£59.99	16603	Daiwa Regal BR 4000 + Bulk Spool 12lb Daiwa Sensor	£134.97	£108.97	£97.99	20522
11ft 3lb	£69.99	£54.99	18578	Daiwa Regal BR 4000 + Bulk Spool 12lb Daiwa Sensor	£129.97	£103.97	£92.99	20523
10ft 3lb	£65.99	£51.99	16604	Daiwa Regal BR 4000 + Bulk Spool 12lb Daiwa Sensor	£125.97	£100.97	£89.99	20532
9ft 3lb	£59.99	£48.99	16605	Daiwa Regal BR 4000 + Bulk Spool 12lb Daiwa Sensor	£119.97	£97.97	£87.99	20535
6ft 3lb Tree Rod	£49.99	£39.99	18581	Daiwa Regal BR 2500 + Bulk Spool 12lb Daiwa Sensor	£109.97	£88.97	£79.99	20536
SPOD, MARKER AND DEVICE RODS								
12ft S&M	£84.99	£67.99	16606	TF Gear Max Power Big Pit + Kit**	£200.95	£158.95	£142.99	17234
10ft SMD	£69.99	£54.99	19606	Nash BP10 Reel + Kit**	£196.95	£160.95	£143.99	20521

**Spod & Marker Kits include:

Marker Braid, Korda Marker Float, Korda Marker Stem, 3oz TB Stainless Steel Marker Weight/Rake, Korda

RODS				COMBO KITS				
Darent Valley Specialist Rods	RRP	Offer Price	Item Code	Reel + Line In each kit	RRP	Kit Price at offer Prices	Kit Offer Additional 10% off	Item Code
11ft 9ins 2.25lb	£74.99	£59.99	19042	Daiwa Regal BR 4000 + 250m 8lb Daiwa Sensor	£134.97	£108.97	£97.99	20537
NEW 11ft 1.75lb LSG (Low Set Guides)	£69.99	£56.99	20565	Daiwa Regal BR 2500 + 250m Guru Drag Line 8lb	£126.48	£103.48	£92.99	20567
11ft 1.25lb Avon/Quiver (Stand-Off Guides)	£84.99	£69.99	15307	Daiwa Regal BR 2500 + 250m Guru Drag Line 6lb	£141.48	£116.48	£103.99	20541
11ft 1.25lb LSG (Low Set Guides)	£61.99	£49.99	19683	Daiwa Regal BR 2500 + 250m Guru Drag Line 6lb	£118.48	£96.48	£85.99	20544
11ft 1.25lb (Stand-Off Guides)	£60.99	£48.99	18579	Daiwa Regal BR 2500 + 250m Guru Drag Line 6lb	£117.48	£95.48	£84.99	20547
*11ft 0.75lb	£54.99	£44.99	14363	Daiwa Crossfire 4000 + 250m Guru Drag Line 4lb	£101.48	£86.48	£76.99	20690
*11ft 0.75lb	£54.99	£44.99	14363	Daiwa Regal BR 2500 + 250m Guru Drag Line 4lb	£111.48	£91.48	£81.99	20550
8ft Quiver	£57.99	£46.99	17223	DLT Bionic 3000 + 250m Guru Drag Line 6lb	£89.48	£73.48	£65.99	19054
**13ft Specialist Float 2-piece	£79.99	£64.99	18580	Okuma Sheffield S1002 Centre Pin Reel + 250m Guru Drag Line 4lb	£336.48	£251.48	£224.99	19056
**13ft Specialist Float 2-piece	£79.99	£64.99	18580	Daiwa Crossfire 4000 + 250m Guru Drag Line 4lb	£126.48	£106.48	£94.99	20691
***12ft Specialist Float 2-piece	£69.99	£54.99	17224	Okuma Sheffield S1002 Centre Pin Reel + 250m Guru Drag Line 4lb	£326.48	£241.48	£214.99	19058
***12ft Specialist Float 2-piece	£69.99	£54.99	17224	Daiwa Crossfire 4000 + 250m Guru Drag Line 4lb	£116.48	£96.48	£85.99	20692

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Fishery Reports

Elphicks Fisheries Horsmonden, Kent



Danny Hodkinson 45lb North Lake 05.19

NORTH LAKE is still producing Danny Heskinson had a 45lb ghost mirror, **Michael Foley** had a 22lb mirror and commons at 31lb, 36lb, 37lb, 38lb, **Charlie Teather** had a 32lb Mirror.

PLANTATION is fishing well. **Teddy Tahir** had 3 mirrors at 19lb, 22lb, 38lb, **Billy Cousins** had mirrors at 15lb, 19lb, 21lb, an 18lb linear and a 33lb common. **Luca Corona** had 2 mirrors at 15lb, and 17lb, **Des Valentine** had commons at 15lb, 16lb, 22lb, 29lb, 29lb, and mirrors at 31lb, 32lb, 32lb, 34lb, 35lb, **John Briggs** had commons at 17lb, 21lb, 29lb, 30lb, 37lb and 2 mirrors at 34lb and 9 other mirrors to 29lb.



Billy Cousin 33lb PB Plantation lake 04.19



Teddy Tahir 38lb plantation lake 04.18

PRAIRIE LAKE is producing. **Les Trapp** had a 32lb common, **Paul Mathews** had a 21lb Common and a 24lb mirror, **Mark Osgood** had a 25lb common, **Dean Eaton** had Mirrors at 20lb, 25lb, 26lb, 29lb, 29lb and a 20lb, common, **Chris Smith** had commons Mirrors and ghosties at 15lb, 19lb, 23lb, 22lb, 22lb, 23lb, 23lb, 24lb, 25lb, 33lb, **Dan Fisk** had an 18lb, common, and 2 mirrors at 21lb, 29lb, **Mark Johnson** had 3 Mirrors at 20lb, 25lb, 33lb, **Teddy Tahir** had commons and mirrors at 22lb, 31lb, 24lb, 23lb, 28lb, 23lb, 22lb, 26lb, 33lb, 30lb, 34lb, 24lb, 28lb, 29lb, 25lb, 20lb, 21lb, 27lb.



Dan Fisk 29lb 7oz Prairie Lake 05.19



Les Trapp 32lb 2oz Prairie Lake 04.19



Mark Johnson 33lb 3oz Prairie Lake 05.19



Paul Mathews 21lb Prairie Lake 04.19



Sam Lyman 23lb Prairie Lake 05.19



Sonny Reynolds 26lb Prairie lake 05.19



Chris Smith

SANDWICH LAKE is producing carp to pva bags and a small method feeder. Silvers are coming out on bread and maggots. **Mr Excellent** is still taking carp off the top and **Mike Harrington** had carp at 3lb, 6lb, 9lb, 10lb, **Mike Harrington** had 8 carp to 12lb, **Mark Farmer** had 14 carp to 15lb. **KETTLES LAKE** is fishing well. **Paul Mathews** had mirrors at 18lb, 23lb, and 3 at 12lb, **Mark Osgood** had mirrors at 10lb, 13lb, 15lb, **Andy Tree** had a 12lb mirror, **Paul Arnold** had carp to 20lb, **Jim Cowie** had 7 mirrors to 19lb, and 3 commons to 14lb, **Rob Barrett** had mirrors at 18lb, 18lb, 22lb and a 12lb common.



Mihai Botezatu 17lb 7oz Kettles Lake 04.19



Alvin Oades Sandwich lake 04.19

PULLENS LAKE has still produced fish to **Steve Brammer** mirrors at 27lb, 29lb, 30lb, 38lb, 44lb, **John Daly** had a 34lb common, and a 35lb mirror, **Lee Mangold** had mirrors at 31lb, 49lb, **Steve Lowe** had a 47lb mirror, **Owen McCarthy** had a 36lb mirror, **Michael Vass** had a 26lb mirror, **Mark Eveleigh** had a 31lb mirror. **WEST END** has picked a bit now. **Costa Koureas** had 2 mirrors at 30lb, and 33lb, **Shaun Thomas** had a 32lb mirror, **Anthony Benge** had mirrors at 42lb and 50lb. **Foxy** had a 37lb mirror, **Den Granger** had a 50lb mirror, **Gary Harrow** had mirrors at 45lb, 43lb, 27lb, 45lb, 28lb, 41lb, 20lb, **Chris Nicoll**, had mirrors at 34lb, 35lb, 35lb, 42lb, 44lb, **Rob O'Neil** had mirrors at 32lb, 40lb, 42lb.



Antony Benge 50lb 8oz Westend Lake 04.19



Robbie Locke 31lb 5oz Pullens 05.19



Shaun Thomas 32lb Westend 04.19



Simon Fox 38lb Westend 04.19

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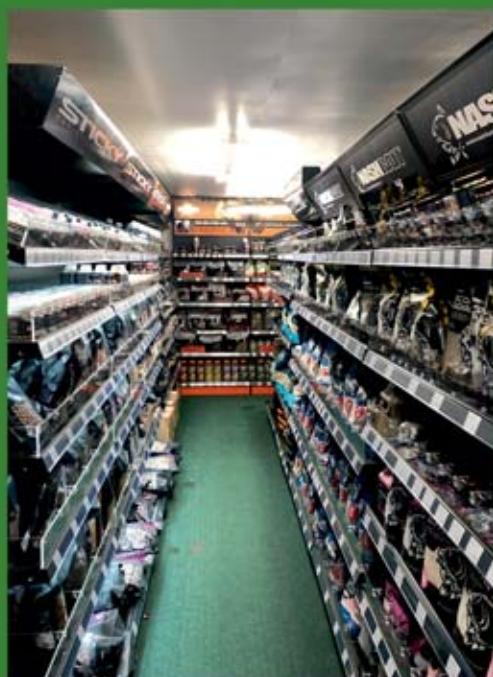


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Fishery Reports

Beaver Fishery Lingfield, Surrey

SNIPE LAKE has been producing well this month with some cracking fish banked. Well done to **Mathew Rustemeyer** who banked a common of 27-04 and a **PB** grassie of 18-12 and a 14-06 linear, **Martin Butler** had a mirror of 19-10, **Darren Hickes** had a 19-08 mirror, **Brian Doran** banked the Maze Mirror at 25-08, **Simon Gore** had a 22-04 common, **Steve White** had a 16-04 mirror and a 27-14 common, **Matt Fisk** had 2 commons at 16-02 and 19-02 and a 17-14 mirror, **Chris Shepherd** had a 16-05 mirror and **Darryl Cook** banked a 17-04 mirror. **Andy** had a couple of the newer mirrors and **Ben** had the big lin at 24lb.

TUSCANY LAKE has again seen the bigger cats make a show. Well done to **Chris Jones** who



Andy Snipe



Ben - 24lb Snipe



Darren Hicks - 19-08 Snipe Stockie



Darryl Cook - 17-04 Snipe Stockie



Mathew Rustermeyer - 14-06



Matt Fisk - 17-14 snipe



Simon Gore - 22-04 Snipe

banked one at 62lb, **Tony Luckett** his first ever at 48-08, **Charlie Green** had a 35-12, **Mark Slade** had a 45, **Josh Bashford** had one at 42lb, **Steve Dear** had a **PB** at 58lb, **Julien McConnell** had cats at 10lb, 15lb and 64-08, **Clive Jones** had a **PB** of 49lb, **Nick Porrett** had an amazing session when he banked cats at 17-15, 20lb, 20-08, 21-10, 22-01, 30-09, 34-02, 33-12 and a **PB** of 37-02, **Wayne Tibbs** had a 28, **Aaron Hayes** had a **PB** at 60lb and **Bob Vine** caught his first ever cat at 51lb and followed that up by banking another at 66-10.

JEFF'S LAKE has again fished well for the



Chris Jones - 62-00



Clive Jones - 49lb PB



Steve Dear - 58lb PB



Tony Luckett - 48-08 1st ever cat



Bob Vine - 66lb 10oz PB

majority of the anglers. The Jeff's Lake Open results were 1st : **Harry Haggett** with 58lb 8oz, 2nd : **Paul Barnet** with 27lb 4oz and 3rd : **John Vincent** with 26lb 4oz. Well done to Harry, 3 matches on the trot now, the older fellas are going to have to pull their fingers out to catch him up.

MOAT POND has been great this month, anglers catching a good mix of species. **Simon and Livvy Ellard** had 15 carp to 7lb between them, **Chris Harman** had 5 carp to 5-08, **David Gray** had 2 ghosties, 3 commons, 1 linear, 1 tench and 1 crucian, **Colin Jones** had 4 carp to 10lb, 3 crucians, bream and tench and **Dave King** had over a dozen carp to 12lb, bream to 5lb and a 3lb crucian.

DAUGHTERS LAKE has woken up a bit this month. Young **Connor Wood** had mirrors at 12lb and 13lb and a **PB** grassie of 18lb, **Ashley Dearlove** banked a mirror of 11-02, **Jon Wilson** had mirrors at 10lb and 14lb, **Lee Fisher** had a 13lb mirror and a 10lb ghostie, **Luke Auger** had a **PB** grassie at 19-01, **Ian Webster** had a 9lb mirror and a 15lb grassie, **Will Thompson** had mirrors at 9lb and 12lb and a common of 8lb, **Jack Redgrave** and **Rick** had a 12-06 common and a 15lb grassie, **Paul Flint** had an 8-08 fully scaled mirror and 2 other mirrors at 10lb and 12-08 and **Brian Owen** had a mirror of 9-04.

EDEN POND has seen the tench banked in abundance this month now its getting a bit warmer. **Charlie Cox** had 18 tench to 4lb, **Allan Cole** had 8 tench, a small carp and some silvers, **Colin Jones** had 7 tench to 3lb. There have been some cracking roach to 1lb banked too.

MAZE LAKE has seen the bigger bream being banked this month, day anglers have been reporting to us as many as 15 in a day session up to 8lb. **Sabi** and **Nora** did one day session and then a 24 hour session and ended up banking 62 fish between them including 29 carp to 10lb, 3 of the Carshalton A.C men had a decent day when they banked carp, bream, tench, silvers and perch and also got amongst the new G1's we put in over the winter.

MAJORS LAKE has done well this month, **Ricky Constable** had a mirror of 18lb, **Phil Acutt** had bream, a fully scaled mirror at 11lb and a ghostie of 14lb, **Bradley Gore** banked a ghost common of 10lb, **Allan Cole** had 13 bream, 4 tench and 1 carp, **Bob Arnold** had 5 bream, 2 carp and 2 tench,



Connor Woods



Lee Fisher - 13-00 Daughters Stockie



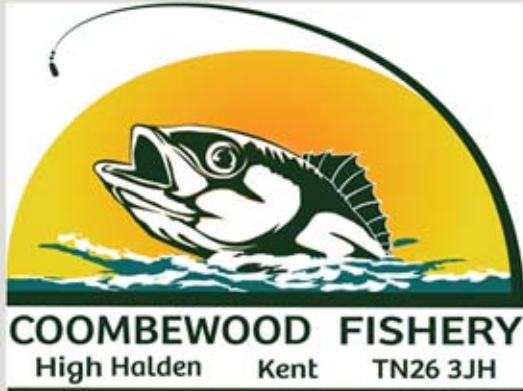
Luke Auger - 19-01 PB Grassie

Terry Edwards had a couple of good sessions when he banked a 13-13 ghostie, 4 crucians to 3lb, 10 bream to 4lb, a grassie and a common both at 8lb and a mirror of 17-08, **Pawel Lesniak** had 3 carp to 10lb and 10 bream to 8lb, **Rob Turner** had a mirror of 18lb, **Clive Whittington** had 3 bream to 5lb, 1 tench and 1 common, **Simon Howard** banked a mirror of 08 and **Tony Slatery** had tench at 5lb and 3lb a crucian and bream to 4lb.

Well done to all and please don't forget to send in or tell us about your catches.



Ricky Constable - Majors 18lb



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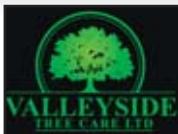


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Hello and welcome to the June edition of the Junior Informer!

Now the weather is getting better, the fish are becoming a lot more active and always looking for something to eat! The days and evenings are getting longer so have you thought about just going fishing for an evening, once you are home from school and mum and dad are back from work? The warm summer evenings see the lakes come alive and a great way to fish is in the margins for tench. Methods are very simple and nothing more than a simple float set up is required with sweetcorn being the ideal hook bait. It can be a good idea to pre bait your swim for a couple of evenings before you go with baits like dead maggots, corn, hemp and pellets and even some broken up boilies. One of the reasons for using dead maggots is that they will not burrow down in to the silt and hide. I generally kill my maggots by placing them in to a plastic bag and securing it tightly and then placing that bag in to another bag and again securing tightly. Then place the bag in to the freezer for a day or two! Please get mum's permission before putting your maggots in the freezer unless you are lucky to have a bait fridge/freezer in the shed! I have found that red maggots seem to work better when targeting tench. Don't be surprised if you hook in to a big carp as they also love to feed in the margins! Hook up and hang on! Good luck and send us your tench photos (and carp of course!).

The support of our sponsors listed above makes the Junior Informer possible. If you would like to become a Junior Informer sponsor please do get in touch!

Having your logo displayed at the top of the page for a year shows everyone that your business supports and encourages junior anglers!

Please email, call or send a message to the Facebook page. Contact details are at the bottom of the inside front cover. Thank you.

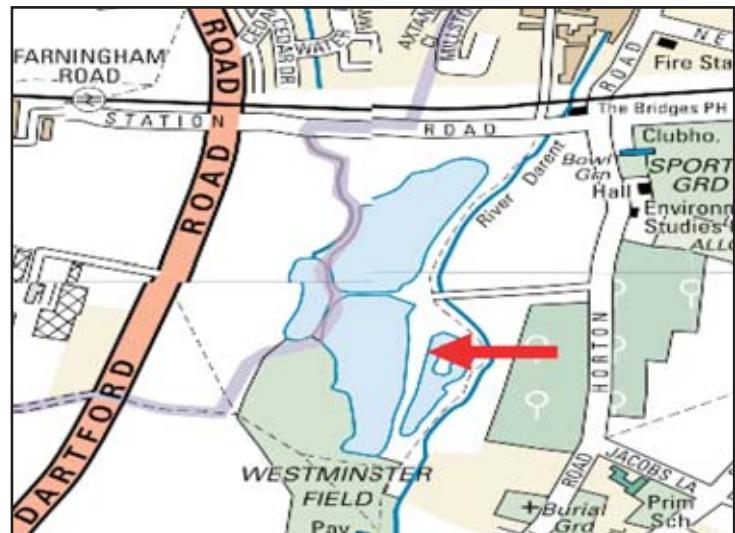
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FROM MONDAY 10TH JUNE**

OLIVIA AT MONK LAKES! Proud dad James Leeman sent in this great report and photos of daughter Olivia at Monk Lakes on her first overnight fishing session. James said: "We had 14 takes and landed 13 fish during 16 hours fishing using Bevos Baits." Here are some of the photos of their great session!



FISHING FOR SCHOOLS

June Update

This month, Warren White, Fishing for Schools' instructor and co-ordinator for the Kent area, tells us about one of the outstanding pupils who has come through his courses.

Warren writes: "From time to time, I hear something special about a student that I think would make a good story, and here's one I find very interesting. Liam Murphy came on a Cast Awards course with Thamesview School in Gravesend a couple of years ago and went on to do the accredited Aims Awards qualification. He was also part of the successful team that won the F4S Match in 2017. I noticed straight away that Liam, a quiet and modest lad, was really keen on fishing, as were all of his group. But as the course went on and I got to know Liam better, I discovered that he was a bit of a globetrotting young angler, encouraged by his father who also is a fisherman. He showed me pictures of some outstanding fish he had caught on his family holidays in Florida, USA. Most adult fisherman would love to have caught the fish that Liam has."

Liam's father told me that although there are great rewards to be had fishing in Florida there are times when fishing is hard, due to weather conditions, and you don't catch. This means that patience and perseverance are hallmarks of this type of fishing.

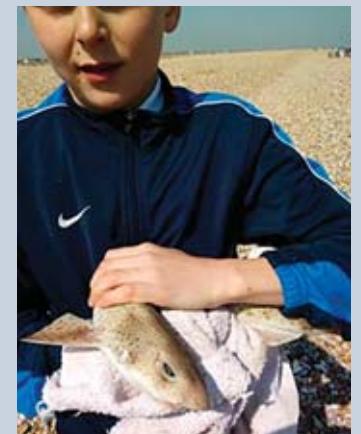
Liam passed his Aims Awards course in spring 2018 and soon after left Thamesview school for St George's school in Gravesend, another school we have worked with. But due to a few delays, I did not receive the certificates until the end of last year.

I recently visited Liam's parents to drop off his accredited certificate and while there I asked his parents for permission to use the story and photos for the FWI, which they agreed."



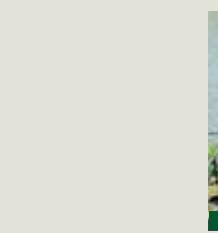
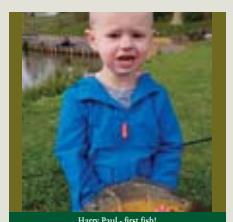
DUNGENESS ANGLING ASSOCIATION JUNIORS MATCH

The DAA Juniors had their April meeting on Easter Bank Holiday Monday. We had a good turnout of 11 young fisher folk. They fished behind Fairchance on a lovely sunny morning and all caught fish, mainly doggies with a couple of whiting and rockling. *Well done to all who fished!*



HAPPY DAYS AT HAWKHURST FISH FARM!

The recent Easter Holidays and Bank Holiday weekend saw lots of young anglers visiting Hawkhurst Fish Farm. As you can see from the photos that Hawkhurst Fish Farm sent in, they all had a great time! For more information on junior angling at Hawkhurst please call 01580 753813.



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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!

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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



Joshua Davenport - aged 6 - First pike



Freddie Pritchett

well done!



ALISHA YATES AT PASSIES PONDS



AMELIA ETHERINGTON AND HER FIRST CARP!



BILLY AND JAI COLEMAN AND DAD!



DAMIEN BARTLETT WITH UNUSUAL TOPKNOT AT DEAL



DYLAN LENNARD AT BARATS PARK



FINN AND DAD JAMIE BROWN



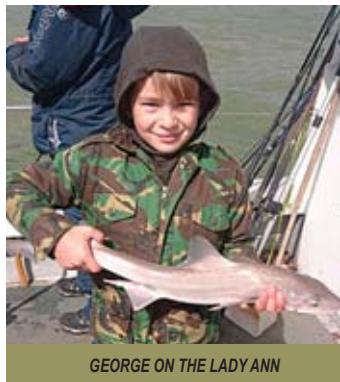
FREDDIE PRITCHETT AT SANDWICH LAKES



FREDDIE TAYLOR 24LBS AT GREENACRES



FREDDY BEANEY AT PITTLANDS



GEORGE ON THE LADY ANN



GRACIE - MAY AT HORSMONDEN



IZZY NEAVE AT COOMBEWOOD FISHERY



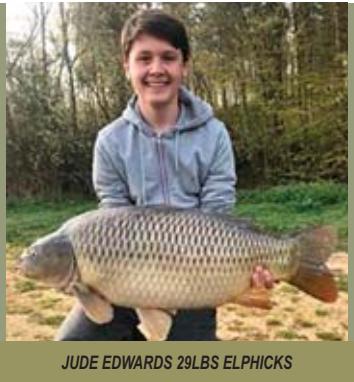
JACK HOWE AT GABRIELS



JACK HOWE AT GABRIELS



JAMES PINDARD LOCAL LAKE



JUDE EDWARDS 29LBS ELPHICKS



JUNIOR HOLNESS AND DAD DANIEL 20LBS AT CACKLE HILL



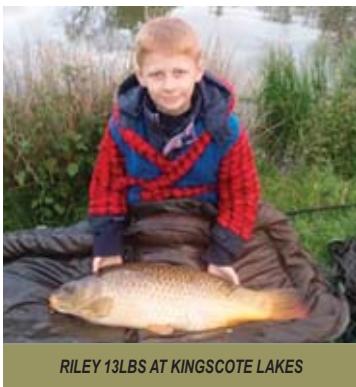
LILY WEBB 12LBS AT HARTLEY LANDS



MAGGIE TOFTS NEW PB CLUB LAKE



PEYTON AND LILY AT PASSIES PONDS



RILEY 13LBS AT KINGSCOTE LAKES



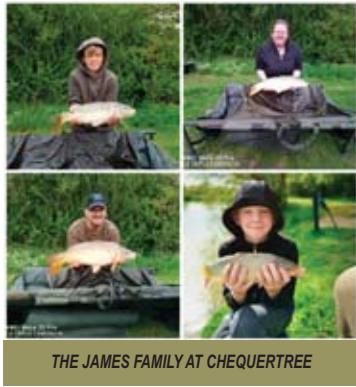
RILEY KENNEDY 21LBS AT WINTONS



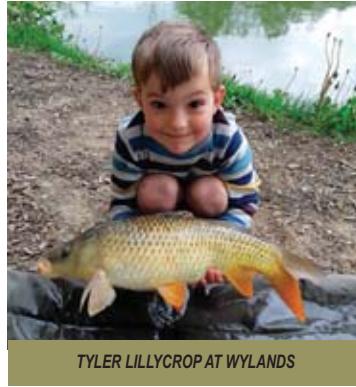
STEVE MACK AND CHARLIE AT HARTLEYLANDS



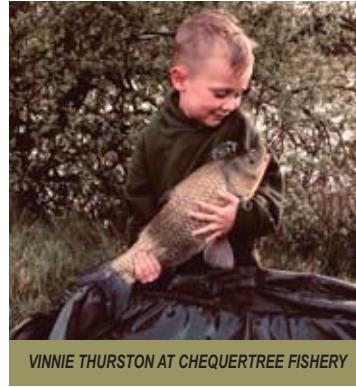
TAYLOR PATTENDEN 30LBS JURASSIC LAKE



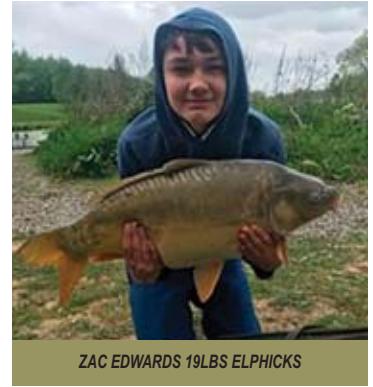
THE JAMES FAMILY AT CHEQUERTREE



TYLER LILLYCROP AT WYLANDS



VINNIE THURSTON AT CHEQUERTREE FISHERY



ZAC EDWARDS 19LBS ELPHICKS

Fishing 4 Schools – May Tip of the Month from instructor Rob Goble

Now June is with us, the temptation to be by the waterside is enormous, as all around, the flora and fauna is in its full glory. Green, spiky reeds cover the edge and there is just enough cover to see below and on the surface of the water. In the early morning stillness and wearing a pair of polaroid glasses you can see invertebrates ascending to the surface, at close quarters. These will mostly be midge pupae. I wrote about the importance of this little creature, chironomidae, in the March issue of the Informer.

Before you set up your tackle, if you take a while to observe what is going on around and especially close to you, you will see all manner of insects. But, the one we are interested in is the midge pupae.

If you watch closely by the water's edge, you will see how they emerge. Ascending from the silty bottom, they thrash their way to the surface, fall back then continue up. Once on the surface, they emerge into the adult form and flying off to mate. Luckily for us, their shape resembles the hook we use. Not all survive. Some cannot break free from the water's meniscus and die, while others are stillborn.

My article in the April issue of the Informer, you may remember, was about the shuttlecock midge pupae and how to fish it, with its underbody below the surface of the water and the wing above for your observation. It is a deadly method on its day, but there are times when trout get preoccupied and refuse to take it.

Trout can be fussy and selective, and you may have to present your offering slightly differently, this is where this little midge pattern - the Shipman's (see picture) - can be useful.

Dave Shipman came up with this pattern, again to imitate the hatching buzzer. Its construction means it lays flat on the surface film, imitating the striate bodied profile of the natural item. Again, it is fished

as a dry fly. You can see the breathing filaments which project from both head and tail (see picture). Construction is very simple, again using CDC (cul de canard) for the wing. You can also use a man-made material called Antron or a close cell foam - but that can be a little bulky in small sizes.

The body of the fly is made of seal fur or a substitute, in black, olive, red, orange or brown, as you would use for your standard buzzer patterns. This all held together with a rib of pearly tinsel, which gives it a sparkly sheen and suggests the effect of air trapped within the skin as happens on the natural. Pick out the body a little with a piece of Velcro to aid its buoyancy. The Shipman's is a very effective pattern on lakes and reservoirs and is a particular favourite of mine when conditions allow on Bewl Water.

When the fish are moving up wind, topping and tailing, cast your offering out well in front to intercept them. You may not see your fly, but this does not matter if you are in touch with the end of line. Keep slack to a minimum. The take will be positive and with the line tightening it can pay to slowly pull the fly back, just lift into the fish. Great fun! I have also included an image of a little conspicuous fly called the F-fly. It can represent several different insect varieties, for example buzzers, olives and sedges, and is another useful pattern for your box.

All these patterns can be obtained online or from a good tackle store that supplies fly fishing gear, or you can make them yourself.



Be safe but most of all have fun, Bob G.

River Informer

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Welcome to the River Informer!

The wait is nearly over! Three months does not seem a particularly long period, but, when you are waiting to get back on the river banks, it can seem like an eternity! The rivers and their surroundings are looking wonderful and the rain we had has been more than welcome, however, after a dry Spring and Winter, we really do need some more to keep our waterways flowing well. With the ground being so dry, any rainfall received is now quickly absorbed by the grass and crops so very little ends in the rivers. As much as I enjoy the summer months, the need for gentle rainfall, preferably overnight, is greatly needed. The summer of 2018 was nice, but, did not do the water table, lakes and rivers any favours! Let's hope Mother Nature will be sensible when giving us rain rather than giving it all in one afternoon!

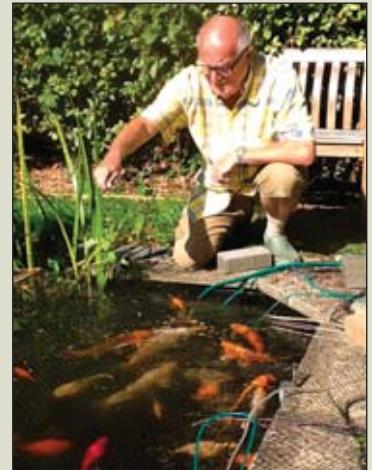
AN INTRODUCTION TO BOB ROLPH

Last month saw the first of Bob's articles written for the Freshwater Informer. As Bob will be writing a series of articles, we thought it would be nice if you knew a bit more about this 'new kid on the Freshwater Informer' block!

"Bob started fishing at Keston Ponds 63 years ago now, and has fished with many of the top anglers of his era as founder of the Kent Specimen Group in 1964. He later turned to Reservoir Trout fishing when Bewl Water opened in 1978 and once held the brown trout record there. His early pioneering catfish angling 50 years ago and visits to Redmire Pool are well documented and he is

credited in Kevin Clifford's 'A History of Carp Fishing' with the first development of the fishing bivvy in 1965.

Now, on his return from Australia, he recalls the 'Golden Years' of Coarse Fishing, mainly relating to the Freshwater Informer circulation area, with a series of monthly articles about this nostalgic era 50 years ago. He still fishes occasionally for carp and tench near his home in the Stour Valley and for trout at Bewl Water, but follows the sun more these days on trips around the world."



THE GOLDEN YEARS OF COARSE FISHING 1952 – 1982 by Bob Rolph

Bob Rolph has been an angler and angling journalist for many years and got in contact with the Freshwater Informer about supplying articles about his years on the bank. In the second of Bob's pieces, he looks back at the formative years of specimen angling.

From Clarissa to the Bishop

"We're all pensioners now, those lucky ones of us that are still around, and fished in the glorious years of the late post war. More than half of us have gone now, to the great 'carp lake in the sky', but what fishing it was ,all those years ago, when a 5 lb tench or a 20 lb carp was fish of a lifetime, and huge bags of roach and dace were commonplace from the unpoluted rivers and dykes in our region.

This era all started I suppose with Dick Walker's record carp from Redmire on Sept 13 th 1952, a 44 lb common ,which he named Clarissa, and extended right through to Chris Yates huge fish, the Bishop 30 years later.

They were great times, the fish were not as big as some are catching today, but fishing in those days had a magic, a mystery and was uncomplicated. We kids caught everything from gudgeon to perch to small tench and if you were really lucky, a huge carp of perhaps 8 lbs 14 ozs, as I did in 1960!

We never really knew what was in the lakes and ponds we were fishing. Sometimes you could see the fish, and estimate what you thought they weighed, but, waters had been stocked perhaps many years earlier, and no record had been



kept of what exactly went in. There was a mystery attached to fishing, which seems to be lacking today. Every known fish has a name today and is repeatedly caught and weighed several times each week.

In the 1960s when I started coarse fishing ,there was far more to fishing than just carp. We all started on the railings at Keston ponds, fishing for roach, rudd and perch with maggot, chrysalis and hemp seed, dozens of us in a row, all with a yellow keep net at the ready in which to pop our prized catch. Size didn't matter

in those days. The roach of Keston Ponds had a smell so distinctive, that it lives with me to this day, and as for the white flower of the water Hawthorne on the corner of the top pond, well that smell gets me going more than any ladies perfume!

Today, you hardly ever see a youngster float fishing for roach or perch. It's just carp, carp, carp. Some, I'm sure, have never even caught another species except carp, and then they expect it to be over 40 lbs. They have all missed so much. But of course the small roach, perch and rudd population of our lakes has suffered in recent years with the introduction of catfish, a predator so ferocious that the pike will be running out of food soon!



I am partly responsible for the advent of this huge beast in our southern lakes today, as 50 years ago no such fish were present in any waters in Kent and Sussex. Catfish were introduced into this country in 1888 by The Russell family of Woburn Abbey, where they thrived in the four lakes on the massive estate in Bedfordshire. I see today that Kentish catfish feature heavily in catch reports in this publication each month, but when I first fished for them in 1968, there were only eight waters in the county that held such fish. The Leighton Buzzard angling club in Bedfordshire ran three lakes that were stocked in the 50s with catfish from Woburn. Claydon House lake, a National Trust estate, had a long narrow lake full of huge catfish, from where an angler called Reg Hutt caught an unexpected fish of 33 lbs in 1961. This prompted two mates and I from my Kent Specimen Group to start fishing there in 1968.



We failed to catch at first, but when hot weather developed later in that summer, we began to catch low double figure catfish at night on a regular basis. Huge freshwater mussels, dead roach and live perch proved to be our most successful baits, and the following year we were there at the start of the season at midnight on June 16th with our rods in place and baited up ready to do battle. There was still very much a close season in those days, and the lake was seriously bailiffed, and woe betide if you cast out before midnight! Well the first night of the 1969 season gave me my greatest ever catch of four double figure catfish for a total weight of 58 lbs. Fish of 18 lbs, 15 lbs, 13 lbs and 12 lbs. graced my net by 7 am in the morning, and I was able to photograph all four on the grass later that morning. The picture was under exposed and has not seen the light of day for 40 years. Both my angling mates, the late Ron Blackmore and Dave Cruickshank, also caught double figure fish on this most memorable of days. I went on to catch four over 20 lbs, up to 24 lb 12 ozs in later years and in total we had over forty double figure fish during that campaign.

We all returned many times that hot summer and caught many 20 lb fish, and I had another brace of 15 and 16 lbs one night. All this caused quite a stir in the

angling world 50 years ago, and I wrote about it at the time in the fishing magazines. But it was nothing to the news of what came out of Tring Reservoir in 1970, a huge catfish of 43 lbs to a local angler called Richard Bray. This really set the specimen hunting world alight, and catfish became the 'in fish'. We fished two more seasons up in Bedfordshire, at Woburn and Rackley Hills as well, and our catches improved with our knowledge of baits and swims etc..

There was such an interest in this new exotic species that anglers started to venture further afield to France and Spain for a chance of a big catfish. The Rio Ebro system inland from

Valencia was starting to produce huge fish, far larger than those we had been catching in the English countryside, and in the 1970s and 80s anglers from Britain started to cross the Channel to tackle these huge beasts. The favourite venue was at a town called Macquinez below a power station on the confluence of the Ebro and a side stream. Carp as well were putting on weight in France to the extent that today carp over 100 lbs and catfish over 250 lbs are regularly taken.

Of course catfish were not the first non indigenous species of fish to reach these shores. In the 60s, Zander began to spread across East Anglia, and are now very prevalent in the Great Ouse Relief channel and Grafton Water, to name but two venues. Grass carp came in from China and Japan, and are now up to the 40 lb mark, and not forgetting that mirror carp are originally an import from Holland. We only had the wild common carp, that the monks used to keep for food. The rainbow trout came from America to supplement our native brown trout. So imported species are not a new thing, but the catfish, *Silurus glanis*, is by far the largest of our non native stock.

I was as guilty as most, by stocking baby cats washed over the dam wall at Claydon in the massive storm of August 1968, into several lakes and ponds in Kent. Cannon Bridge at Tonbridge was washed away that week end, quite the worst storm I have ever fished in. I did the same with baby Redmire carp, baby Leney strain fish barely half an inch long, hundreds of them were being washed over the outfall to certain death in the stream below. Ron Blackmore and I rescued hundreds of them and brought them back to Kent in weed filled dustbins to put in my garden pond. Something we would never do today due to the risk of infection.

I have no idea what the policy is nowadays with the Environment Agency or how permission is sought, but, years ago I know you had to have a licence to move fish about. I of course never had a licence, but I wasn't moving 30 lb. catfish! That

great carp and catfish angler Kevin Maddocks, was instrumental in the catfish story later in the 70s and 80s, but it was the Kent Specimen Group, fishing 100 miles away in Buckinghamshire that started it all off 50 years ago this month.

I first wrote about it in the Angling Times on Thursday August 26th 1971, where I said at the end of my piece. "I doubt if these catches will ever be bettered in England, until some enterprising club introduces these fish into their waters". Little did I know that 50 years later, 60 lb catfish would be coming out of dozens of waters on a regular basis in the Kent and Sussex region, and that my prediction had come true!"



Medway Man

Bob Morris

This month, I am starting with a line from a track by one of my favourite bands - Muse. This is from 'Knights of Cydonia' one of their big hits of a few years back. "How can we win when fools can be King". I seem to be forever running into examples of this actually occurring - but for the purpose of this piece it is climate change and the continuing and ever escalating problems that we are causing for the planet by our activities that I have in mind. It never ceases to amaze me how many people (other than Donald Trump) actually prefer to deny this and seem to believe that it is all some sort of con!



Natural World

I guess that I really should not be surprised by this because one of the things that I learned quite early in my life is that many of our species seem to have an incredible capacity for self deception and total denial of facts - often very sound scientific ones. My grandfather always believed that the world was flat, in spite of being shown pictures of earth taken from space. He was sure that these were fakes, of course. Everybody is entitled to their own opinions and it is right that we should support this basic principal in a democratic world but it is up to us all to support the planet and try to reverse the harmful effects that our existence has caused and also, I strongly believe, we should not allow fools to be King. If you believe that this is a heavy way to start a fishing column, just think of all the aspects of the natural world that have changed drastically during your times at the waterside. A few years back if you drove for an hour or so to reach your chosen venue during the summer months, it is likely that you might have had to top up the windscreen washer bottle to keep the screen clear of spattered insects. This does not happen now and I find that I can drive right down to the West Country without needing the washers at all! Many years ago when I first moved to where I currently live, near to various lakes and streams, it was impossible to leave the back door open on a summer's evening without the need to have some sort of insect net to prevent the house filling up with a whole variety of moths, beetles and other insects.



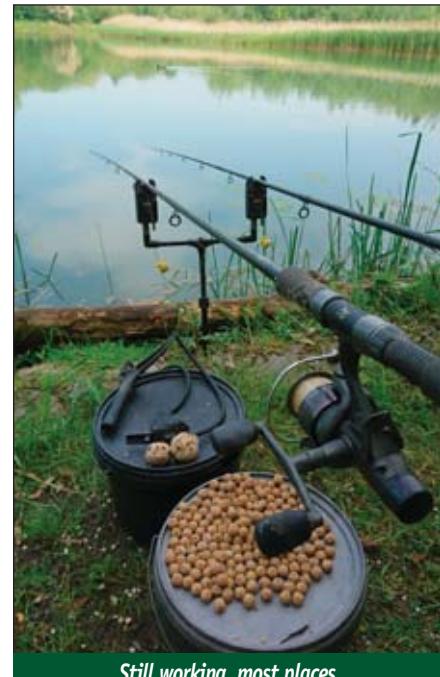
Increasingly scarce Stag Beetle

No trouble with this anymore! This is all the evidence that I need to tell me that we now need to take drastic action to repair this worsening situation, as I now have a Bat box with no Bats, a Hedgehog box with no Hogs, House Martins nest boxes, empty & no Toads in the hole etc. Amphibians have had a bit of a hard time in recent years and certainly reptiles have become less common. I can't remember the last time I saw a slowworm and grass snakes appear to be very much on the back foot - if that is the right phrase. We used to have them nesting every year in the garden compost heap, the cats would bring in one or two small ones, before losing interest in them - sadly this does not happen anymore and generally they are much more scarce in the area.



Grass snake

Talking of grass snakes however, I saw a decent sized one during a session a couple of weeks back. It emerged from the marginal reeds and made its way across to my float, where it momentarily stopped, which allowed me to attempt a picture. I was just thinking that it would make a great shot and wondered what would happen if a bite developed. Would the snake grab my float? At that very moment a bite did develop, unfortunately it was on my other rod with the feeder set-up, the indicator shot up and the alarm sounded, scaring me and the snake, so no interesting pic. I did land a nice tench of just over 7 lb though! As I was saying last time, I seem to get more tench on the feeder rods these days and as it happened I had four that day and all on the feeder rod again. In fact on this particular water I have only ever had two bites on the float, one was a good sized eel and the other the inevitable carp.



Still working, most places

Fishing feeder style does allow me to use various baits over a tight patch of feed, which I normally add to a mixture of Vitalin and breadcrumb. This can be rolled into firm balls for firing out or used as a softer texture groundbait with a variety of different swimfeeders - depending on the mix and freebies, whether it be boilies, pellet, corn, or maggot etc. At this time of year, particularly on rich waters the tench, bream and carp can become pre-occupied on natural food - bloodworm, shrimp and other water life which can be extremely frustrating as they then frequently refuse to feed on our baits during these times of plenty. It would seem that a feeder full of maggots would be a better bet during these conditions and sometimes it does work. Having said that I have seen examples of tench completely ignoring a substantial carpet of wrigglers in just four feet of clear water. Unfortunately, this carpet was mine and it was a most infuriating experience.



Another good one

Generally I have been doing ok for action recently but there are a couple of waters that are proving rather stubborn to put it very mildly and refusing to give up the goodies for me. The rewards are there to be had but, as yet, I have not been able to crack the lock and get onto a winning streak. I will let you know when this happens, although both of these waters have a strict publicity ban, which can make it a bit awkward - although this is something that I fully support as I am able to view it from a club committee point of view. Over the years, I have seen a good few examples of waters that have been spoiled by excessive exposure in the press and social media. Sometimes however, clubs do need publicity in order to keep going and so it is far from a simple issue and very much a case of getting the balance right. Perhaps I can discuss it in more detail another time?



Decent eels still patrol

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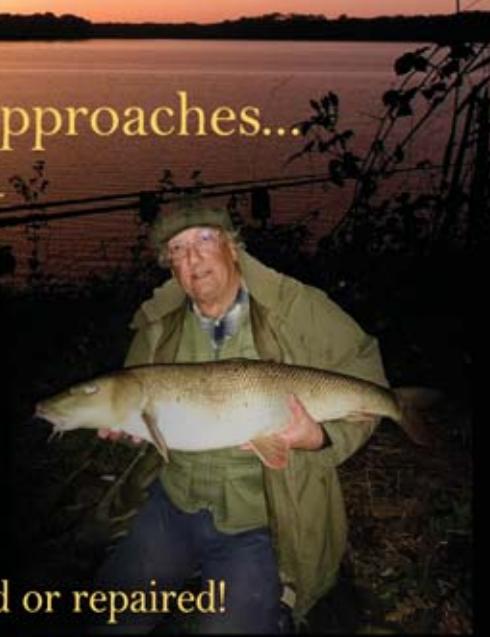
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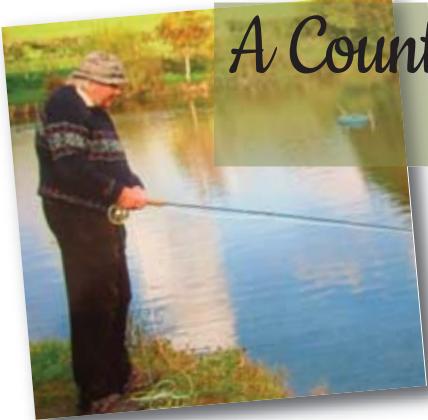
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A Countryman's View

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

"What a change some sunny weather brings to the environment that is our countryside and natural world. The gardens and woodlands are alive with birdsong and Spring flowers are putting on a splendid display. The bluebells ate a show on their own, interspersed with white anemones. There is also a lot of wild garlic in the woodland and on the river bank along with early red campion and the lovely primroses.



Woodland bluebells

One sunny morning while out walking, I see a pair of Orange Tips over a large patch of 'milkmaids' that usually flower early along with some early purple orchids which are well on their way. In previous articles, I have mentioned the 'Blackthorne Winter' and this year the flowers were very vibrant indicating that winter was not quite over. It proved correct as we had a spell of cooler weather and some very cold nights! The woodlands are starting to take on that verdant green colour now and I noticed some Water Figwort growing and how my mother used to make a dressing from it to treat our cuts and bruises! The rooks are nesting high indicating a fine summer but let's hope that doesn't come with water shortages!

The birds are becoming so much more active now and occasionally I am treated to the sight of buzzards circling high above. In a riverside thicket I notice a kingfisher and on this part of the river in the 'Robin swim', the little fellow comes over to see what is happening. He will soon have company by way of an angler with a full bait box! A little concerning is the river flow which is quite low due to the dry Spring and Winter, again another possible sign of a long dry summer. The river weed is beginning to grow and I take a bag of bread crumb with me to see what surface activity is about fish wise. It won't be long before the dace and roach start showing on the surface as well as some small chub. On a blind bend in the river I disturb a

heron that rapidly departs with a squawk of protest! I was pleased to spot a couple of pairs of swallows and I hope that the numbers of swallows and house martins are more than we saw last year. The butterflies are becoming more active especially around a mature holly bush, although I could not make it what type they were. Nature is waking up fast and is a joy to watch and although we are full of expectations for the 16th June, fishing is often more than the joy of rod and line.

The end of Spring saw some more chilly weather, especially overnight. However,



Robin

as the sun warms I decide on a wander down to the lower Ouse estuary for a look to see what is happening in the river at that end. There were several shoals of thin lipped grey mullet doing nothing much although no doubt mindful of a seal sitting on the bank thinking of a mullet lunch! I noticed a large bird flying towards us and it is being mobbed by some crows. It continues to fly past and head inland no doubt just having crossed the Channel. Not unusual to see this at

this time of year and something I have observed many times in my years as a bailiff. It is a joy to be able to sit quietly on the bank and watch the mullet swimming around in the tide just feet away from us.

Behind much of the river banks are delve ditches. These were dug by hand by labourers and the clay would be banked up to provide extra protection and the ditches drainage. While on my wanders, I heard a splash in a ditch and a mink came hurtling over the bank and into the river and headed for the opposite bank. Not a welcome sight was three cormorants perched high above among the electricity pylons! Laying in the mud was the remains of a conger eel that must have been brought in by the tide. An angler is fishing for flounders and has already caught a decent sized one on ragworm. A little further along a lone fox is searching the tide line no doubt hoping for an easy meal. She might even find that conger eel! The nightingale is a joy to listen to from a riverside thicket and such a joy in the Spring sunshine.



Fox

Whether you live in a town or the countryside, it is delightful to hear the Dawn Chorus first thing in the morning. It is usually the blackbirds that begin and they then start everyone else off! I had a call that a film of yellow was spotted on the river at a confluence of the Ouse. I donned my shoes and went to investigate. Shoals of small fish were swimming around and none too bothered and the yellow film turned out to be tree pollen. I was not concerned at all about the false alarm as it is much better to report something you are concerned

about early to prevent it being a possible major incident. The number to call is printed on the rod licence and is 0800 807060. Always report anything you see that does not look right!

On another stream I noticed a wonderful display of red campions and a sky lark and high above a pair of magnificent buzzards. It just served as a reminder that we anglers are guardians of the rivers and lakes and other watery environments.

We have to think about conserving this unique part of our natural world by treating it with the respect it deserves. The wonderful wildlife that we see is dependant on us!

Having been in fishery work for close to fifty years, we did have some laughs! One such occasion I was out with a fishery officer using radio tracking equipment to monitor tagged sea trout smolts. I was holding the aerial up to locate any bleeps from tagged fish by the intake of a reservoir when a lady walked by. She asked what we were doing and I replied that we were tv engineers and were

responding to complaints from locals that at peak viewing times they could not pick up Coronation Street on their televisions and we were looking for the signal. A few moments later there were a couple of bleeps on the tracking equipment. The lady looked pleased and said she was pleased we had found the lost signal! We had a good laugh at that poor lady's expense as she was convinced about the signal as we tried to be so serious!"

Cheerio for now, Jim



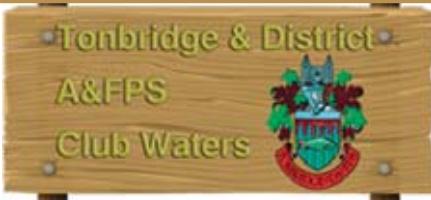
Thin lipped mullet



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Herstmonceux, East Sussex

What a beautiful month June is for everything! Whether in the garden, walking the dog, down by the sea... it is just lovely. The roses are coming out and the rainfall is soft. The trees are green and the evenings are long. The swallows are back. It is my favourite time of year without a doubt. I can not imagine being anywhere other than England in this early summer-time.

Fly fishing as well, some argue, is at its best right now and I would not disagree. If ever there was a time to hone your dry fly fishing skills then it has to be now. Maybe this is something new to you if you are a novice, fresh into this fantastic hobby and you may feel a little daunted by the particular skills and techniques that are involved but don't, please, be put off giving it a bash! We all have to start somewhere with anything new, (you should have seen me on a pair of skis for the first time)! If the fish are properly feeding on the surface, they are top and tailing, not jumping, (generally) and this can be at very particular times of the day, it is a great time to try a dry - not necessarily early morning or late evening and not necessarily for a very long time either, and, especially if it has been a hot, clear day, you may not see a fish until the sun is setting. The idea of "matching the hatch" obviously makes perfect sense and sometimes the trout are indeed fixated on a certain type of insect, either hatching up through the water or blown onto it and held trapped in the surface film. You could put a worm next to them and they will turn away totally unimpressed when they are in this type of mood. Watching what fly they are taking needs some good eyesight at times like this. Sometimes they are actively hunting, creating bow waves across the water and swimming at speed, hitting the flies hard and fast. Sometimes they are more relaxed, just cruising under the surface, swirling around the insect to sink it just below, where they actually prefer to feed (generally). If your dry fly submerges, do not worry too much, it is more likely to be taken, although you may not have the joy of witnessing the fish actually take the fly... does this matter? If this is important to you then try a dressing such as GINK to help keep the fly "dry". You can of course whip the fly back and forth quickly in the air to dry it prior to casting, a cheaper alternative without a doubt but a method that can spook the daylights out of any wary fish nearby!

Tippet length is definitely something to consider too. It is a mistake too commonly made to fish with a leader that is much too short. I know as a beginner you think you are more prone to a tangle but when the fish are high in the water, in good light they can spot a line a mile off. In other words the fly is too close to the end of the line and they are easily spooked. The experts even say that their eyesight is so acute that they can pick out the shade of a camouflage coloured tippet, so always use clear. A gentle turnover of your fly to settle lightly on the surface just takes practise!! What can I say other than to come as often as possible and your casting will improve no end, also watch other anglers nearby, you can learn loads from their expertise and mistakes in equal measures! Take your time when you arrive at your chosen spot, especially if you are the first to arrive. Have a good look at the water and the margins to spot activity before you start wildly casting at random, it can really pay off to employ a little water craft and stealth to a session.

I could go on but I do not have enough pages. This is a sport where you will never know everything, always have surprises and something different to learn from every single visit. There is a true randomness to this hobby; a lucky cast just as a fish happens to swim in the right spot, in the right direction can see a total novice catch the biggest fish of the day! Never give up when things become



Andy Watts and 7lb Brown caught on a Daddy



Colin Maslin with 6lb 7oz caught on BFD



James Glover Novice with 5lb 6oz on 4.5.19



Mick Woodhouse and his albino trout

difficult, we can all learn a lot from the odd blank day and remember to enjoy the "fishing" as much as the "catching".

Here at Brick Farm Lakes we are going to stay open for extra after work evening fishing in June until 9.30pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Why not come and enjoy the evening rise as the sun starts to set and the fish come alive? No need to book, just come along and make the very best of this lovely time of year. We have seen some lovely fish landed recently and hosted a few larger groups of angling buddies for a bespoke day of fishing. If you are interested to book a day for a group just call Annie at the Lodge for some ideas and prices for a special outing on 01323 832 615.

Tight lines now for flaming June.



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Web Site www.crawleyflyfishers.org.uk

Phone: 01342 324718 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/>



Tenterden Trout Waters Tenterden, Kent

We had the best Easter that I can remember at Tenterden both for fishing and the glorious weather. The lakes were fully stocked for the Easter and Bank Holiday weekends and the trout were really performing well for our anglers as you can see from our photos with Mark & Barrie going home with a bounty of rainbows and an unusual brownie! The trout are feisty and of varying weights and some anglers have been taken by surprise and many have been broken and a 6lbs breaking strain leader needs to be in the bag. Other anglers have experienced an amazing fight that takes anglers to their backing, such great sport. The trout have been at varying depths and they have been interested in Tadpoli, Cats Whisker, Damsel and Montanas. We have had some superb brownies being caught during the last month, as you can see in the photos, which goes to prove that they are in there but sometimes they can be elusive. Boris our big trophy brown weighing over 9lbs has still not been caught yet so that challenge is still on!! We hosted the Trout Masters on the 19th May and look forward to the winner going on to fish in the final at Draycote Fishery on 7 October 2019.

Tight Lines, Gaynor



Clive Pettifer



Emma



Mark & Barrie



Bill Buckley 6lbs 15ozs

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Park Bottom Arundel West Sussex BN18 0AA

Voted the 20th best stillwater fishery by Trout Fisherman magazine

Chalk Springs Arundel, West Sussex

May was a very busy month with some decent weather at last as we move towards the summer. The fishing has been excellent, with fish taking all sorts of flies – from goldhead nymphs to dries and small cats whisker lures. Mayflies have been hatching most days, so mayfly nymphs and dries have been particularly effective. Buzzers fished on a floating line and drifting with the breeze is also a good way to catch. Small nymphs and dries will be the way to go for most of the summer months as the huge variety of insect life in and around the lakes provides plenty of food for the fish, so the challenge is to work out exactly what the fish are eating on any given day and then match it! The average size of the fish has been very good recently with most rainbows well over 3lb. Keep an eye out for some decent big browns coming out too. Not much else to report this month....just a few reminders.....pre-booking is always recommended as we limit the numbers of fishermen on the lakes to allow plenty of space for everyone. Also, keep up to date with the weekly updates on our website. Our annual Summer Invitation cup competition takes place in early June – look out for the report and results next month.

Tight Lines, Darren and Ally.



Danny Leung



Danny Leung



Jones



Kemp

Teise Anglers and Conservation Society

River trout and grayling fishing on the River Teise in Kent

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Full details of the Society and the fishing can be found on the website:
www.teiseanglers.org.uk

Memberships are currently available. If you are interested in becoming a member please contact the secretary.

Email:
secretary@teiseanglers.org.uk

Telephone: 07980 518738

GOING DUTCH 2019

I'm back on track this month lure fishing, after several weeks of fly fishing which I've enjoyed immensely by the way. My friends and I made our now annual visit to Holland at the end of March; this has become a boy's trip where we catch up with each other after months of only talking via the internet.

Our group consisted of four anglers, Andy Blazey and Rik Wesley from Cambridge plus James "the Doc" Gardner and myself. Once again we were traveling to Willemstad in southern Holland where we were hoping to hit the jackpot in our quest for jumbo perch. The weather the preceding two weeks had been appalling with gale force winds pounding both the UK and Holland.

The first morning dawned bright and cold but promised to warm up later on; we excitedly waited in Willemstad harbour for Willem Stolk, the "Perch Magician" and his companion Adj to arrive with their boats. Our plan was to fish with each guide over the first two days keeping to our original pairings as we worked out how to catch the huge perch that have become an obsession of ours over the past few years.

We hadn't expected to see the water so dirty! The gales and rain had stirred the water up so badly that Hollands Diep, the area we were fishing had less than 3" visibility! This was not something we'd ever experienced before, nor might I add the absence of wind! James and I were in Willem's new Lund boat which is an amazing fishing vessel; it made the boats we regularly fish in here in the UK look like playthings from a bygone age!



Willem's new boat!

We would be casting 9 and 10cm soft plastic shads or grubs, attached to 7, 10 and 12g jig heads, towards the shallows searching for lone aggressive pre-spawn perch that would fend off these interlopers. Willem slowly manoeuvred the boat along the shallow margins in a large spawning bay just down from some wind turbines. Today it produced seven small zander for James, plus a bonus roach and a succession of short takes and lost fish which showed the fish weren't really hitting the lures precisely. As always, I take a few hours to get into my stride and today was no exception. I finally got my act together and put three 'Zeds' in the boat, but I only had three takes which showed how well James had fished. Andy 'B' and Rik had very much the same experience catching a few zander but no perch!

Fog stops play!

The following morning we were greeted with a blanket of fog which showed no sign of clearing anytime soon. It was mid-day before the harbour master allowed any fishing boats to venture out onto the river. Being a busy trade route for cargo vessels traveling through Holland and up into Germany, safety is a consideration and heavy fines are meted out for those who flout the rules.

Today, James and I are were fishing with Adj. Adj always works hard to put us on fish, his boat might not be as big or as sophisticated as Willem's, but it's more than adequate. In fact if James and I ever had the need to own our own boat it would be a duplicate of Adj's. We joined the others in the spawning bay, but kept a respectable distance; the bay is off the main shipping channel and covers about 100 acres, so no need to get too close. James was as determined as ever and settled into his rhythm of cast and retrieve, systematically searching every inch of the water in front of him. I always find it difficult to stick to just one style of lure for too long, unless we've established it's the right pattern to fish at the

right depth, at the right speed, I'm afraid it's colour is my last consideration. So I was playing around trying things that James wouldn't be using in a vain attempt to find the "lure for the day". I picked up a stray jack pike while using a Chatterbait but sinking Rattle Baits, spoons, tail spinners and a variety of shads, in various colours had all failed to trigger any further action. In the distance we saw Rik Wesley hook into a good fish, but what was it? As the landing net scooped it out we guessed it was a good perch but when Rik punched the air we knew it was something rather special and at 6lb 4oz, a new PB, it certainly was!



Willem Stolk admires Rik Wesley's 6lb 4oz

Our next move took us to an area in front of some wind turbines but we failed to get any takes there but nor did any of the other boats, it was beginning to look like another grueller was on the cards. We tried other areas, but by early afternoon I was totally out of ideas and suggested a change in tactics and location were in order. So off to the "dumping grounds" we went. The "dumping grounds" are an area that has many features that draw fish throughout the year, it consists of humps and gullies created from the spoil deposited from dredging the harbours that line the upper river. I fished vertically for zander while James stuck to what he does best. He continued casting in an effort to "finesse" some perch out. Up until now Adj hadn't been fishing but we urged him to have a go, if he was catching we'd know we were on fish at least! Adj set up a Dropshot rod but attached a small deadbait rather than a soft plastic lure. Adj skillfully steered the boat to each of his waypoints, these mark his hot spots amidst this vast mid-river area.



Andy with a 'Black Zander'

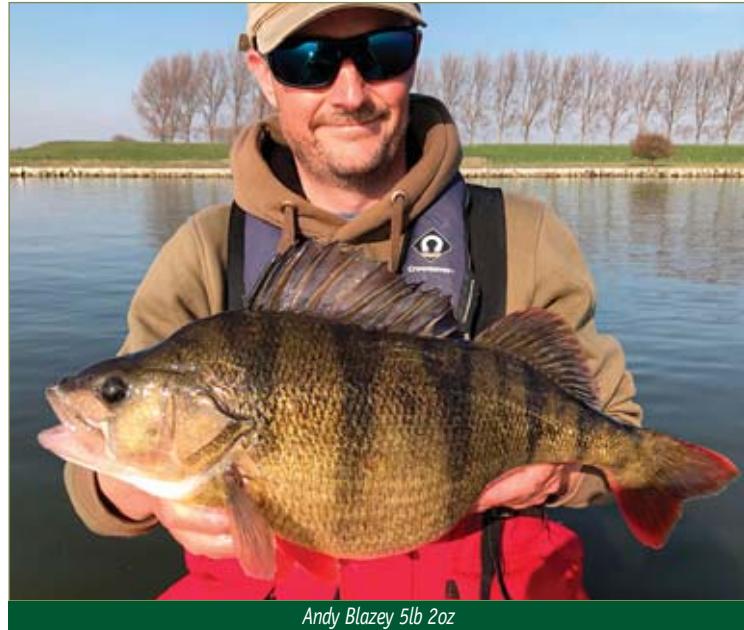
It didn't take long before Adj struck into a nice zander and shortly after this I lazily struck into a fish which caught me napping and managed to slip the hook mid-fight. I was suddenly alert and poised, ready for action "like a coiled spring"! I didn't have long to wait before my Megabass X-layer lure was slammed. The aggressive culprit was a "Black Zander", a male fish that was ready to fight all comers! I love catching zander so much and I wanted another, so my lure was quickly sent back into the depths. When your lure gets hit right under the rod tip, in such shallow water as this, we were fishing 20ft to 25ft, it's shocking and sends a jolt right up into your elbow! Four takes and three fish in 20 minutes saw me eager for more but unfortunately that was it for now. Adj had also caught a couple of fish on his Dropshot and bait method while James had missed one take on the "vertical" but his heart wasn't really in it, it was time to move on again.

Back to the spawning bay

We were keen to finish the day back where we'd started, "it only takes one special fish to turn a dull day into a 'red letter one', that's always been our mantra that keeps us trying until the very last minute. A zander takes my tail spinner shad but that's all we could muster despite our best efforts today.

Rik and Andy's red letter day

The boys were on 'Cloud Nine' when we finally caught up with them that evening. They had left Holland's Diep and ventured further down river into Haringvliet which had been much clearer and they had caught several more perch, including a new PB for Andy Blazey at 5lb 2oz! Andy had in fact managed far more takes than all of us put together so I was keen to get the low down on exactly how he'd been fishing, speed of retrieve, jig head size and finally colour of lure.



Andy Blazey 5lb 2oz

All change

Our last day saw me fishing with Andy 'B' in Adj's boat while James and Rik were going with Willem. It's good to "pick and mix", it keeps us on our toes, besides we don't get to see each other that often and today I was going to see how Andy was fishing, as the fish were definitely responding to his presentation. I was first into action with a small perch of 3lbs, anywhere else and I'd be ecstatic but here it's not worth a picture or weighing! What a relief after yesterday, the water's definitely clearing. Andy catches a couple of zander and misses a couple of takes so his method is still working. After an hour without any further action it's

time to move on, under the motorway bridge into Haringvliet and we head to the area that produced perch for Andy and Rik yesterday. We slowly work the marginal drop off; it's between 1m to 4m so we're using 5g, 7g and on occasion 10g jig heads. Andy's on fire with two jumbo perch of 4lb 10oz and 4lb 6oz while I can only manage a mid-double pike, d'oh! The bites seem to peter out by mid-day so we end up trying several other areas before I'm done and can't concentrate any longer. Anyone who thinks fishing is relaxing should try lure fishing, I was exhausted. With time running out we sped to the "dumping grounds" where I picked up two last gasp zander and that was the end of another Dutch expedition.

James, Rik and Willem had enjoyed a more fruitful day having ventured further down into Haringvliet, between the three of them they'd boated a dozen big perch to over 5lbs. James got his 'mojo' back after his blank the previous day catching the lion's share, so normal service had been resumed!

The conditions were improving by the day and we knew that the following week it would be perfect and so it proved. On our return to the UK we kept a close eye on Facebook for reports of specimen perch being caught by our friends as they fished the last few days of March, before the season's close. By the time you read this 'Carl & Alex Fishing' YouTube channel will feature a session that Alex had around this time, you're sure to be impressed!

Til' next month, tight lines - Andy Lush

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Medway and Kent Sea Fishing Group



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The fishing has picked up and now enters into the summer season. The mackerel are being caught at Dover and will no doubt be within the reach of beach anglers very soon, weather permitting. The current sea temperature is around twelve degrees centigrade. It is nice to see some great smoothounds being caught, especially at Dover where a number of double figure fish have been taken. The bass numbers are improving and the dreaded 'May rot' seems to be fading which will improve the conditions for shore anglers. The marks around Sheppey and North Kent have been doing very well with some great thornback and smoothound catches. Any time now a surprise stingray may be popping up along the Herne Bay beaches!

Medway report

Fishing beginning to improve in the river with numbers of bass increasing although nothing above a couple of pounds but encouraging. Flounders and eels still showing. Ragworm and maddies being best bait. Some mullet have been sighted in the marinas but catching them is something else! Seals have been sighted sun bathing opposite Roman Way which would indicate an increased fish population in the river. Local shops for your tackle and bait are Medway Tackle Supplies (now at Twydall) 01634 475260, Anglers Den 01634 852180, Rod and Line 01634 880770.



Sheppey report courtesy of Sheppey Angling

Good numbers of smoothounds and thornbacks being caught along with bass to 5lbs, good sized flounders and eels. The whole of the north coast from Sheerness to Leysdown fishing well. The hounds are wanting a crab bait and fish baits for the rays. The flounders appear to be taking pretty much anything put in front of them! The good news is that the 'May Rot' has pretty much gone now improving the fishing no end.

Contact Sheppey Angling for your tackle and bait on 01795 661089 / 07902 092595.



North Kent report

The hounds have arrived and fish to double figures have been caught. Still plenty of thornbacks around as well as bass, whiting and flatfish. Anywhere from Reculver to Herne Bay worth a try as well as Seasalter and the Swale for school bass and flounders.

Absolute Tackle at Herne Common stock a great range of quality fresh and frozen baits and tackle. Call 01227 636724 / 07809 330854.



Thanet report courtesy of Fishermans Corner

Thanet is now showing good numbers of bass from most venues. The East pier, Western Undercliff and all promenades fishing well with easy parking and free to fish. Worm baits are working well, either ragworm, blow lug or black lug. Few unusual species have also come up, Dover sole, small turbot and smoothounds, which occasionally show. Fisherman's Corner a short walk from the East pier has a great selection of fresh and frozen bait's. Call us on 01843 582174



Deal report courtesy of Dave Chamberlain

Most of the May Weed has dispersed by now, although it has not been as bad as other years. With the clearer water, mackerel are showing on Deal Pier along with scad and a few garfish. Night tides on the pier have been producing smooth hounds on crab and some of the fish are of a good size. Thornback rays are still being caught from the lower deck on herring and bluey baits along with pollack, wrasse and pouting around the pier piles. It is worth noting that the Dover Council gives a prize to the angler who catches the largest fish from Deal pier each month. However, the fish must be reported and weighed by the pier attendant. All night pier session this month is on June 9th. A small number of bass are moving in on the beaches, while the best time to catch is after dark.

Channel Angling at the pier entrance can provide your tackle and bait. Call Fred Leach on 01304 373104.



Dover report

The Admiralty Pier appears to be the place for good numbers of hounds to double figures along with thornbacks. The mackerel are showing as well as dabs, plaice, dogfish, whiting and bass. Some bass being caught from Shakespeare beach but fish close in and don't cast more than 10 – 20 yards. Samphire Hoe should now be worth a try with float gear for pollack, garfish, wrasse, bass and mackerel.



Channel Angling at Dover can provide all your tackle and bait. Remember that Channel Angling are an authorised stockist of Zziplex! Call 01304 203742.



Hythe report

The fishing has been improving now the 'May rot' is slowly clearing. A few early mackerel but none in any numbers. This should change as the weather enters summer mode. Thornbacks and hounds from the beaches along with dogfish, pouting, plaice and a few good sized whiting. Bass to be had but they are very close in! Might be worth getting down to the beach with the lure rod where sunrise and sunset coincides with high water.

Your top local shops for tackle and bait are Dens Tackle 01303 267053 and Best Buddies 01303 253881.



Hastings report courtesy of Hastings Angling Centre

Boats have managed to get out a few times in the last month but with little of note to report. Smoothounds have been slow in arriving with only smaller males showing, best 9lb so far. The big females not about yet. The May rot is quite thick this year and slow clearing, probably the cooler temperatures and persistent offshore breeze slowing the break up. Plaice and rays a plenty as well. Pollack on the wrecks as usual, best heard of 12lb. Pete Wiseman had a spotted ray recently – an unusual catch from around here, it was the second largest ever recorded at the East Hastings Club.

On the beaches plaice and flounders with the odd sole starting to appear. A few small bass about but again need a good SW blow to break up the rot and bring the large ones in.

Prospects for June – sport usually picks up appreciably once the May rot goes we should see the first of the mackerel in numbers, first ones are often large. Best time for the smoothounds - hopefully - in larger numbers and bigger. The first of the black bream usually arrive by the end of the month. Given a good blow, June often sees some big bass inshore feeding up. Worth a go over low water on rough days. Call Hastings Angling Centre on 01424 432178.

Bexhill to Seaford report courtesy of Tony's Tackle

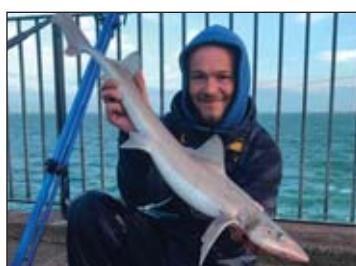
This months sea report consists of plenty of thornback rays at night from Bexhill, Langney Point and the bandstand area up to around 9 lb on bluesys, squid and mackerel. Martin Stevens landed a couple of good size ones at Langney and Pete Cornwall caught around 5 in on night. Some good sized bass being caught up to 6 lb, plenty of schoolies keeping the match scene busy. Matchwinner Tony Royal had 3 in a four hour catch and release match last week. Ian Hopper continues to dominate the local matches lately but has had to put up with a few second places. Terry Taylor won the Tonys Tackle mini open angling club league match Friday with over 200 points. Plenty of dogfish around and Paul King had one over 2 lb. Plaice and whiting during the daylight although the plaice have thinned out and are not so big this month. The bigger ones continue to

show from the Seaford area on fresh black lug. With the peeler crab arriving small hounds are showing and in about 2 weeks the larger smoothounds should arrive as crab being their main diet. It's a shame the May rot has ruined most of the month's angling, although there has been some good fish landed. Andrew Vine caught some good rays from the Bexhill area, Brian from charter boat Panther Icharters caught a few good cod and some big plaice. this month from the light tower area. Please send me your reports from the beach or boats to Tonys Tackle 01323731388 or 07821514853. Tight lines, Tony.



ADMIRALTY PIER SMOOTHOUND MATCH

Craig Collins of Channel Angling Dover reported on the smoothhound action from the Admiralty Pier: "Team Channel Angling had an amazing night on the Admiralty pier fishing the all smoothhound competition. 6 anglers fished seeing 14 hounds landed with the biggest being a massive 127cm and on the SAMF conversion chart weighing an impressive 23lb 2oz! The overall winner was Martin Humphries with 4 fish and a weight of 13kg 880g, 2nd place was Barry Sedgwick with 2 fish for 12kg 940g and 3rd place was Tom Hunt with 3 fish for 10kg 210g. Well done to every one who fished and braved the horrible wind. Hope to see you all at the next one!"



KENT BOAT REPORT courtesy of Jason Parrott

Wow, May definitely came with a bang! The May rot is here thicker than ever but so are the fish. We have had so many double figure hounds which is unusual this early on. They are taking a mixture of squid and peeler crab. Let's hope when the May rot goes and the water clears, the fishing will get even better. Most of our usual fishing spots at Ramsgate are all producing so all we need now is some good weather. Skate are here in large numbers as well. They do seem to be everywhere but are always good for a bend in the rod. Some good fish as high as 14 lb to be had and numerous double hook ups and triples. Bass are still not quite here at the moment. We are getting the odd one every other trip but good medium sized fish. I still think the water has to clear for best results. Whiting and pouting are still nibbling and although some say a bad thing, we have had both well over the 1 lb mark. Do like this time of year and although May can be a frustrating month, we are looking forward to when the May rot goes. Just be thankful for what's here!

Tight lines and you are all welcome to come and try a day out on Lady Ann of Ramsgate!



If you would like a day's fishing on the Lady Ann, give Jason a call on 07966 273650.



DUNGENESS

Latest catch reports on www.seagullfishingtackle.com You can feel summer is on the way, we have had a bit of 'may water' but hopefully it will have passed by the time you read this. The sea temperature is warming nicely over 11 degrees as I write this, so roll on the warm weather with all those summer species to look forward to.

BEACH REPORT

The fishing has been great with the bass moving into the beach in good numbers. Nice to see the smoothounds as well (my favourite fish) showing in numbers as well. Mackerel have already been caught so if we get settled conditions it will suit them and plaice.

In front of the power station...

I had this report in from Simon Drury...

"Late report fished Thursday near station 2 nice bass plus flounders, whiting, ling, plaice"



What a beautiful baby...



I had this report in this evening from Robert Broad...I had this report in this evening from Robert Broad...fishing Friday on the 'wooden walkway'...

"Was a nice sunny day. Me and Lee had 6 or so whiting a small plaice and the smallest thornback I've ever seen."

Beautiful mackerel weather...

I had this report in this morning from Neil Rodwell...

"Hi Tony. Thanks for the bait today. I fished denge marsh from 10am to 5:30pm. Fished with 3 rods using lug, sandeels and herring. No bites for most of the day but managed a solitary flounder at 4:30 and that was it. Someone next to me had a string of mackerel so they must be about! The may weed and bright conditions didn't make it easy but saved a blank anyway.

Also got the tan going for this year as well! Will speak soon. Many thanks. Neil"



You just don't know what's next...

I had this report in this morning from Alan Mills...

"Fished Pevensey Bay last night, not seen this before, 2 thornies on the same bait"

Spring bass are back...

I had this report in from Shaun Brough...

"Hi Tony: I hope you are well. A couple of catch reports for you and your readers from over the bank holiday weekend. We fished up to the midday high tide on Good Friday. Caught a nice bass first cast 1.5lbs (returned) and then nothing for the rest of the session.

Returned on Saturday night and had two bass (the best 2lb) and four whiting. Plenty of bass about over the past year and it seems those EU rules are improving stocks. Please can you remind us what the rules are at the moment (it's one per session and has to be 42 cm I think?).

All fish fell to lug. The tide ran strong and it was hard to hold the bottom (even with 200 grm/7oz grapple leads). Any tips on how to keep the bait out there in strong tides would be greatly received. Best Shaun B"



Yes Shaun, you are right from the first of April until the thirty first of October you are allowed to retain one bass over 42 centimetre per day. Holding bottom can be a challenge, try walking 'uptide' a bit before you cast (if you have space), don't over tighten your line, allow a bigger 'belly' of line just above the waves to stop you being dragged in. If you still have a big problem try shortening your cast to reduce tidal pressure on your line...some day's on a big spring tide with heavy surf the sea wins. Look at your tackle, what line do you use? a lighter thinner main line, say 15lb will reduce tidal pressure, then a twenty foot shock leader will act like a 'chain on a anchor' this will help you hold bottom, I hope this helps.

Cracking early bass session...

I had this report in this evening from Arkam Belhouchet...



"Hi Tony, Plenty of bass showing up yesterday. squid sorted the good ones out (6 sizable)"

BEACH OUTLOOK FOR JUNE

Well as usual it depends on the weather, but it must be more bass, smoothhound and mackerel, it's looking good.

BEST BAITS

Fish baits for the bass, smoothhounds and rays. Choose from squid, bluey, mackerel, herring and sandeel.

BOAT REPORT

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

It could be summer...

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

"Fine day at sea!"



Mixed bag for Kevin...

I had this report in last night from Ken Hicks fishing out of Rye on Wednesday... "Hi Tony got out yesterday 17/04 with fine sunshine as we left the harbour but fog got thicker the further we went out and stayed overcast and gloomy most of day (unlike bright sunshine in land !!, people don't believe you when you get back and they say you must have had a lovely day in the sun) we went to several wrecks was hard going as seemed to be lots of May rot (gully water down deep) had lots of small mackerel, pollack, Gurnard, whiting, and a rare species for the area a codling!! tried live baiting with joey mackerel for a bass and landed up with A 12 1/2 lb pollack biggest of the day hard work but better than work !! Thanks. Kevin Hicks"



Summer come early...

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



"Hooked three and landed 2 small straps. Had some cracking bites considering the time of year - very encouraging also had a couple of codling and 7 pollock!!"

Return of the plaice...

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

"Much better day on the Plaice this afternoon. Tim was top rod with around 20."



BOAT OUTLOOK FOR JUNE

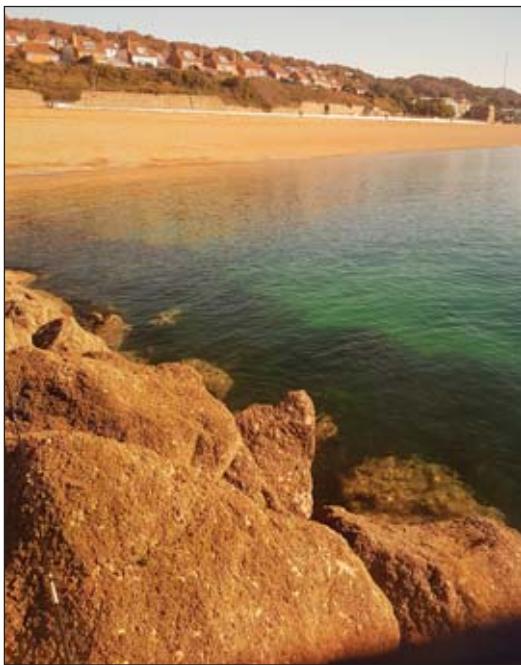
It's a lovely time of year as the heat starts to build, the growing number of summer species to catch...more bait available with the shoals of mackerel to be caught. A time of great promise...all we need some good weather and light winds.

BEST BAITS

Fish baits are favourite...the size depends of bait and hook will depend on the species you are after. You can't beat fresh mackerel...but frozen bluey come close along with other frozen fish like sandeel. Trusty lugworm will catch a lot of species...plaice love them.

LIVE BAITING FOR BASS - PART ONE

Trotting with sliding Floats



Live baiting to some is controversial, but to me it is the most natural way to fish for predatory species like bass. It doesn't matter where you are fishing, it's always worth having a rod out with a live bait on the hook. There are many methods to present live baits, too many to list in one article. So in this article, I will endeavour to outline one of my favourite methods of presenting a live bait and that is under a float.

When conditions allow, I use a standard sliding float set up with a light, but strong rod such as a carp rod, this should be matched with a medium sized fixed spool or a small multiplying reel. The main line should be between 12lb and 20lb depending on location. Any angler familiar with basic pike fishing tactics will know how to set up a sliding float rig. First a bead is slid up the main line followed by the float, then a drilled bullet or olive weight, then another bead to buffer the weight and protect the knot to the swivel that is tied to the end. Lastly, the hook length is tied to the other end of the swivel, at the end of the hook length surprisingly a hook is tied. Above the first bead a stop knot is tied, I often just use an off cut of mono, but power gum is much better as it does less damage to the main line. I use a four turn uni or grinner knot as a stop knot, leaving the tags just long enough that they can be pulled to tighten the stop knot as required. The stop knot can then be moved up or down the main line to adjust the depth being fished.

Float, weight and hook sizes depend on a multitude of variables.

Firstly bait size must be considered, it would be over kill to use an 8 inch float and 10/0 hook if using live prawns as bait. Secondly conditions and the kind of mark you are fishing need considering. On a calm day trotting live prawns or live soft crabs through sandy gullies between rocks or along the pilings of a pier mean that tackle can be scaled down. When it is really calm, I like to use the same set up, but with no weight, the live bait then swims without the restrictions of the weight. When using this method takes can come on the drop as the live bait swims down looking for cover. This can be a very effective and pleasurable way of fishing, but it does have its draw backs. The live bait is prone to staying near the surface so when this happens it very quickly attracts bird life. It can also be hard to control if there is any amount of wind or tide. Float fishing lets the angler present a live bait in a more natural way and bass often take with more confidence than if the live bait was presented on a ledger set up.

My preferred bait is live fish of 6-12 inches. Scad or horse mackerel make a

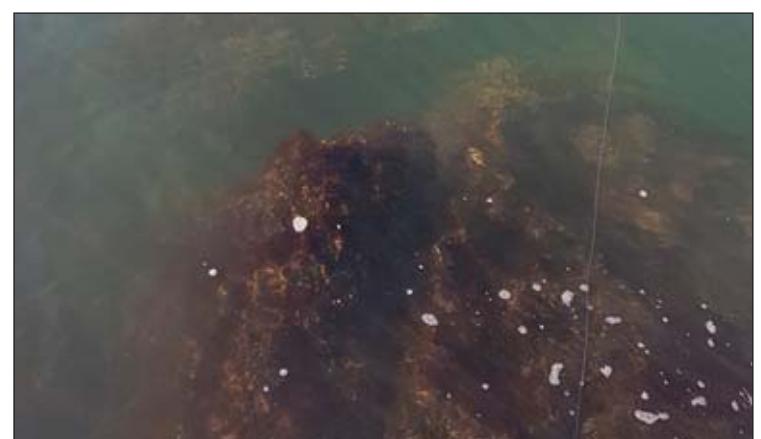


very good live bait as they are hardy fish and survive being worked for hours. Pouting, whiting, mackerel, poor cod, and pollack also make good live baits. Please bear in mind that some of these fish are subject to minimum landing sizes and although there is an argument that using them as live bait isn't actually landing them, I always 'err on the side of caution'. For 6-8 inch live baits, I use 4/0-6/0 Cox & Rawle Aberdeen hooks. These are sharp and much stronger than they look being a forged hook, and very importantly they are a nice light weight hook that doesn't wear out the live bait quickly. When using large live baits, I will go up to a 10/0. Warren Hayes prefers the Cox & Rawle Crab Hook, these are a very strong short shanked hook with a wide gape, in fact I like these myself for larger baits. Do not be afraid of using larger live baits if that's all that's available. A bass has a cavernous mouth and even a four to five pound bass will wolf down a half a pound whiting!

Up until last year, I always lip hooked live bait, however on occasions the hook will turn and stick into the gills, this masks the point and leads to lost fish. Most days I am fishing for that one take and to lose that fish due to the hook turning into the live bait's gills is so frustrating. Last year my bass angling pals and I tried a different method. At the front of the dorsal fin on most fish there is a hard sinewy muscle so we tried hooking the baits through this muscle. This has given us better hook up ratios although the hook can still turn and be masked but not as often as lip hooking. This year we plan on experimenting with bridles, these are like a hair rig and often used in the USA for mounting live baits.

Ideal conditions are over cast but calm days with a steady tide run. I like neap tides as the rise and fall is less. I really enjoy working my live bait down tide, letting line out slowly covering as much ground as I can. Periodically, I will stop letting line out and hold the float still. Providing there is enough flow to the tide this will make the bait rise in the water and can induce a bass to take. Watching a float sail away is a very satisfying moment and certainly gets the adrenalin flowing!

Last autumn we started missing takes, the float would go under and stay under but when the strike was made it would result in nothing but a battered live bait. Then one day when the water was exceptionally clear my float went under and stayed under. I could clearly see the float around three feet under the water, it was static. I let out a few feet of line and after about thirty seconds the float started to move up tide, I then struck. This resulted in a nice little bass of about two pounds. Bass are bold little buggers and will take baits much bigger than most would think. However, they do need time to deal with these bigger baits, the bass needs to turn the bait in its mouth into a position in which it can then swallow it. Had we been ledgering, we would not have noticed this and would have continued to miss the smaller fish, and let's face it on hard days a fish is a fish!



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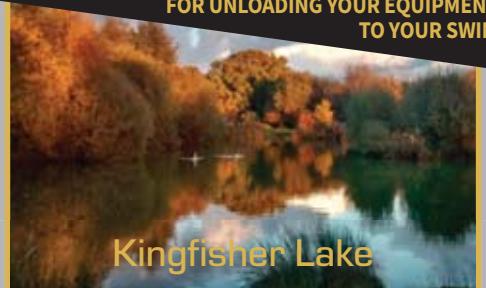
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