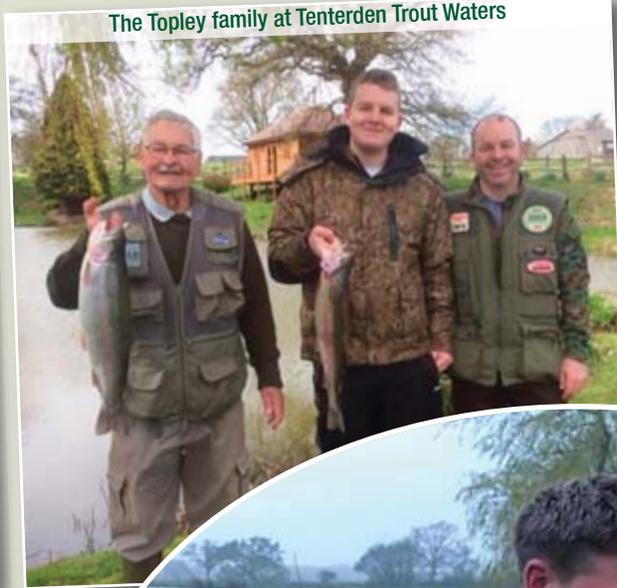


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Hello and welcome to the May issue of the Freshwater Informer!

The speed at which another month arrives is astonishing! No sooner were the April magazines delivered than the May deadline was here and another frantic few days of getting everything ready for another month! I am sure a week has been removed from each month as they seem to be getting shorter!

It is probably 'old hat' now, but, The Big One Show at Farnborough went very well. The event was much better organised than last year's for both exhibitors and visitors. It was nice that so many people stopped at the stand to say hello. Several anglers said they were disappointed that there appeared to be more carp fishing stands than ever before and that these seemed to be at the expense of match and general pleasure anglers. I can only guess that they are responding to demand, however, I am very aware that the carp fishing scene is not for everyone. That brings me to an often asked question: 'Why is the magazine all carp fishing?' The Informer, I believe, offers something for everyone and reflects the diverse range of fishing available here in the South East. I cannot feature silver fish reports if they are not sent in, so please make the effort to send them to us!

As you are aware the magazine is funded through the support of our advertising friends and without their support the Freshwater Informer would not be possible. Please take a look at our advertisers features and support them wherever possible! We are blessed to have an abundance of top quality fisheries here in the South East and an angler never has to drive more than an hour to have access to one. Our local tackle shops need your support more than ever before. You will often be surprised at what your local shop can offer you and if you are considering a big ticket item, why not speak with your local shop first? Our tackle dealers have a wealth of experience and knowledge and are only too pleased to help you wherever possible. Without our support, the local tackle shop may become a thing of the past and we cannot let that happen!

Every month I receive lots of reports, articles and news items and I will always do my best to place them in the magazine. However, there are occasions when the space is just not available and despite trying to move articles around, that extra space cannot be found. I always reserve the right to edit any material sent in and will always try my best to feature your reports in full, but, on the odd occasion it may be necessary to shrink your piece or not include all the images supplied.

I am always looking for sponsors for the different sections of the magazine. In particular, I would like to hear from anyone who would like to sponsor the Junior, River and Sea sections. Your company logo / banner can be placed at the top of the relevant section every month for a year showing anglers that you are as passionate about fishing as they are! To be a sponsor does not cost a fortune!

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Sad death of Graham East

Tributes have been paid to popular angler and football referee Graham East, who has died at the age of 67.

The Gravesend man, who was Chairman of the North Kent Sunday League and for many years wrote an angling column for the KM Group, passed away suddenly on Tuesday 9th April, prompting an outpouring of grief from family and friends. But while his family are yet to come to terms with the loss, wife Pauline said they had been overwhelmed by messages of support. "We put a post on Facebook and we've had so many lovely messages saying what a lovely man he was and how he helped people," she said. "It's just been incredible. "We're still in shock but it's a great support to read those things - it's really heart-warming." "He will be

remembered for lots of things - he's helped so many people. He's run fishing groups for youngsters, and he's helped young people when they've been in trouble.

"He always had people come up to him saying 'thank you so much for your help; when I was younger you really put me straight.'" On one occasion he even helped one youngster out by employing him in his well-known shop, Dolphin Angling Centre in Queen Street, Gravesend. "They asked him to be the father of the groom when they got married," added Pauline. "It was just the way he was - he would help anybody. If someone came into the shop with sob story he would help them out.

"He had a heart of gold. He was one of those people that just helped people with no gain for himself."

Having grown up in Gravesend, Graham's first job on leaving school was on the tugs, working as a cook and deck hand, and remained well known amongst the tug community. He was also well known around the area having worked for a time as a bus driver, and a social worker. But it's for his work in the sporting community that he will probably be most widely remembered. A keen footballer as a youngster he went on to become a referee and had recently achieved 40 years service with the Kent Referees Association, Gravesend Branch. And his mastery of the game's rules was just as evident on the pitches in Kent as it was when he competed for the KRA's quiz team, with whom he won national football quizzes. His connections also ran deep among the fishing community - who will remember him for his newspaper column, the Gravesend Open fishing competitions, which he ran three times a year, and his shop, which he ran from 1999 until retirement in 2017.

He was also a charitable man, supporting RNLI, Demelza House and Leukaemia Research, after losing a Nephew to the disease, as well as countless other charities, and had a long association with The Ship and Lobster Pub. Friend and fellow angler Keith Slater said his passing would leave a massive hole in the lives of people he knew and the organisations he was part of. "It's going to be such a loss," he said. "People who are not involved in football and fishing might not know, but the response to what he's done has been phenomenal. "He was a good mate and fellow angler. He will be missed by lots of people - he was very well known."

Graham is survived by his wife Pauline, and three daughters Clair, Nicola and Katie. His family hope to hold his funeral at St George's Church in Gravesend, followed by a cremation.



The Freshwater Informer

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Fishery Reports

Elphicks Fisheries Horsmonden, Kent

NORTH LAKE is still producing; **Chris Smith** had 3 mirrors at 27lb, 29lb, 35lb. **Dean Eaton** had a 35lb mirror. **Robbie Locke** had a 25lb ghost common. **Phil Tuppenny** had 2 commons at 28lb and 31lb, and a 41lb PB mirror. **Derek Adams** also had a 41lb mirror. **Mick Murray** had a 34lb mirror.



Tom Vien 25lbs North Lake



Robbie Locke 27lb 5oz North Lake 03.19

PLANTATION LAKE has not seen much angling action since we opened. **Des Valentine** had 14lb, 16lb, 18lb, 18lb, 19lb, 22lb, 28lb, and **John Briggs** had a 29lb common, 29lb mirror and a 32lb ghostie.

PRAIRIE LAKE is producing. **Scott Cook** had a 25lb mirror, **Robert Green** had 3 mirrors at 20lb, 23lb, 29lb and 3 commons at 18lb, 26lb, 31lb. 7 year old **George Steed** had a 28lb mirror. **Mark Evans Jarrett** had 3 mirrors at 23lb, 27lb, 34lb, and 2 commons at 23lb, and 26lb. **Arron Powell** had a 26lb, mirror and a 22lb, common, **Lee Hampton** had a 32lb, mirror, **Michael Whitney** had a 28lb, mirror, **Lee Brown** had a 22lb, mirror and a 25lb common, **Paul Kent** had 3 mirrors at 18lb, 20lb and 22lb. **Martin Cowdrey** had a 19lb common and a 31lb mirror.



Lee Brown 22lb 7oz Prairie Lake 04.19



Lee Brown 25lb 4oz Prairie Lake 04.19



Martin Cowdery 19lb Prairie Lake 04.19



Martin Cowdery 31lb 4oz Prairie Lake 04.19



George Steed 7 Prairie Lake 28lb 04.19



20lb Prairie Lake 04.19

SANDWICH LAKE is producing carp to pva bags and 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.

KETTLES LAKE is fishing a little harder this month. **Ricky Ben** had a 15lb, common, **Clinton Cole** had 2 mirrors 16lb and 20lb. **Kieran Smith** had carp 12lb to 21lb. **Robert Jones** had 6 carp to a PB 23lb 7oz. **Simon Long** carp to 11lb and 5 tench to 5lb, **M.Bell** had a mirror at 11lb, and a 13lb, common.



Emily Griffin, Sandwich Lake 04.19

PULLENS LAKE has still produced fish. **Tim Carter** had 2 mirrors at 27lb, and 37lb, **Nick Bedwell** had a

43lb, mirror, **Paul Kemp** had a 28lb, mirror. **Paul Carter** had a 26lb mirror and the big mirror at 50lb 14oz.



Nick Bedwell 43lb 7oz Pullens Lake 04.19



43lb 12oz westend 03.19

WEST END LAKE has picked up a bit now. **Alan Farmer** had 3 mirrors at 32lb, 42lb, and 46lb, **Chris Ratcliff** and his mates had 3 mirrors at 36lb, 43lb, and 43lb, **K. Dolling** had 2 Mirrors at 32lb, and 43lb, **P. Badley** had a 43lb, mirror.



43lb 2oz westend 03.19



36lb westend 03.19

Photos please and call at the lodge on your way out and fill in the catch report book. Please check net requirements for the lake you are fishing.

Iden Wood Fishery Iden, Rye, East Sussex

SPRING LAKE - Carp are feeding well, best fish this month a 22lb mirror taken on luncheon meat. The deeper swims producing bream to 4lb, soft pellet over a bed of pellet giving good results. Prawn taking perch to 2lb, maggot and caster taking good bags of roach.

MATCH LAKE - Best carp this month a 26lb mirror taken on meat. Surface baits starting to work well, corn and meat giving good results on the deck. Meat also taking some good bream to 6lb, prawn working well for the perch, and maggot on the waggler taking plenty of roach.

MIDDLE LAKE - Carp to 14lb showing tight to the island, bream roach and perch being caught down the middle track.

SPECIMEN LAKE - The island swims giving good results, best carp this month a 27lb common taken on popped up corn. Maggot producing roach catches to 10lb, pole at 7metres in the deeper areas fishing the best. A good perch just over 3lb was caught off the back of the island on prawn.

ORCHARD LAKE - Best carp this month was a 18lb mirror taken off the top on bread. Fishing just off the reeds producing the best results for carp. Quality roach showing on float fished maggot. Perch to 2lb being caught on prawn.



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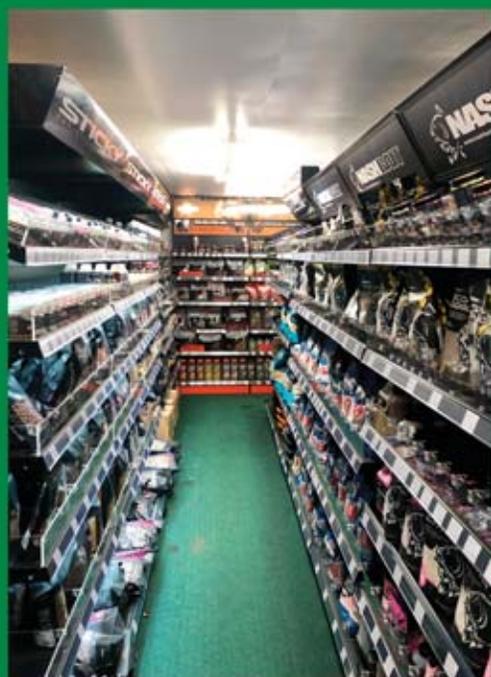
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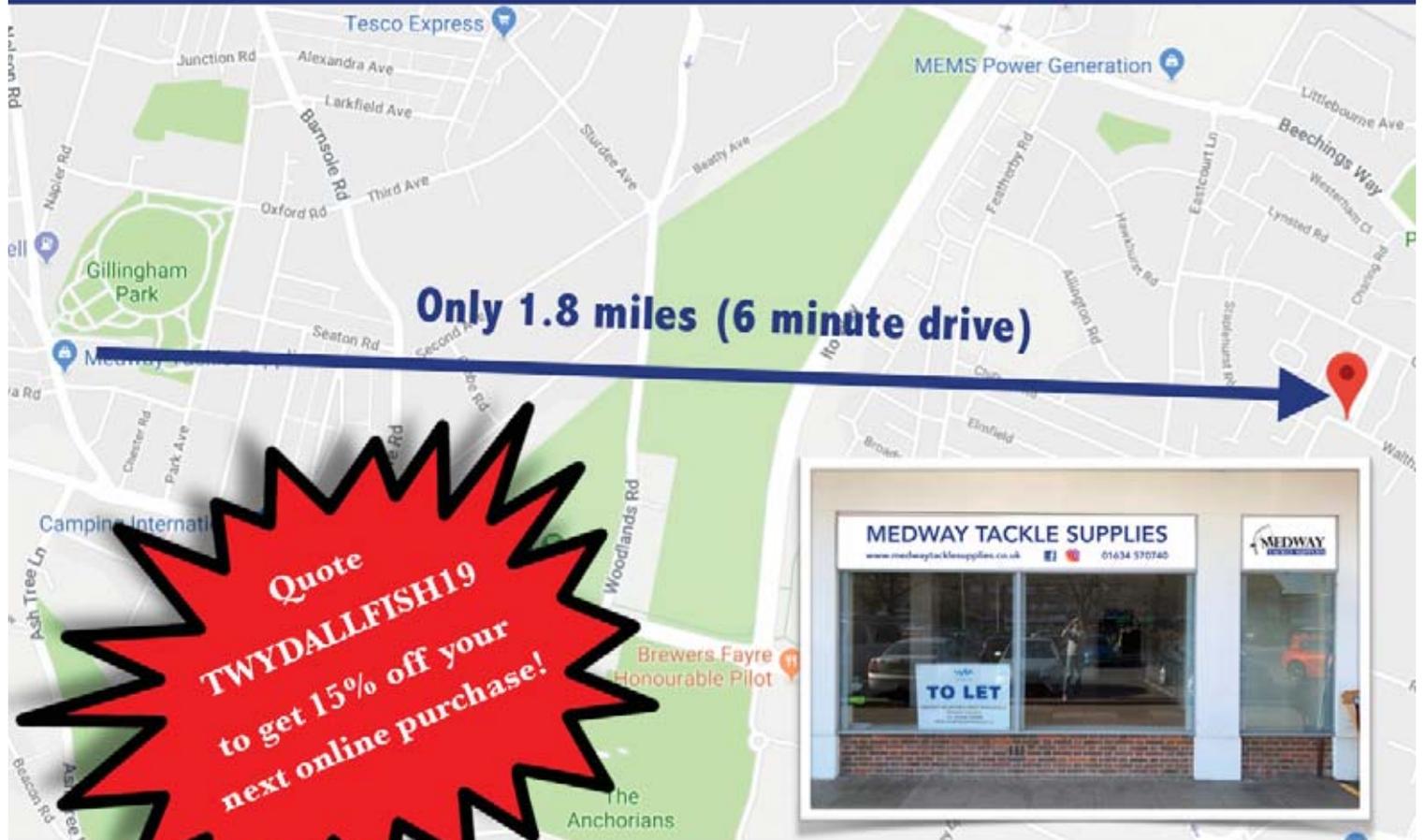


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Fishery Reports

Beaver Fishery Lingfield, Surrey

SNIFE LAKE has again fished well with some PBs and firsts also. **Kris Cuxton** had a 22-08 common, **Steve White** was back and landed a 25-08 mirror, **Craig Robinson** had a 25-03 common, **Jermaine Adaken's** first visit resulted in him landing a 15lb fully scaled stockie and a 23-02 common, **James Nunn** had the half lin at 29-10, **Darryl Cook** got amongst the fish again landing 2 commons at 18-15 and 19-08 and a target fish called stumpy tail at 19-04 as well as a 26-04 mirror. **Simon Gore** had a **PB** when he landed a common of 25lb, **Mike Lewis** had a **PB** too when he banked Hayley's Mirror at 32-07, our own **Ben** had a couple of commons out at 25-10 and 25-12, **Hayley McConnell** had a 21-14 common and boyfriend **Connagh Hoade** had a 18lb stockie mirror and **Matt Fisk** had a brilliant couple of sessions when he banked mirrors at 16-08, 17-08 and commons at 21-08, 24-02, 24-10, 2510, 26lb and 26-01.



Darryl Cook 19-04 Snipe



Hayley Snipe 21-14



Jermaine Adaken 15lb Snipe



Jermaine Adaken 23-02 Snipe



Matt Fisk 26-01 Snipe



Mike Lewis 32-07 PB Snipe



Simo Gore 25lb Snipe PB

TUSCANY LAKE has seen the cats start to wake up. **Darren Moore** had a 65-08, **Peter Ellis** had a 56, **Vic Collier** was back and landed one at 30lb. **Abraham Smith** banked his 1st ever cat at 47-08, **Lawrence Atwell** had a few to 52-06, **Jason Naylor** had a good session when he banked cats at 19-08, 27, 30, 32-08, 33, 34 and 38lb, **Jeff Betts** got his first one of the year at 34 then had a 31-14, **Rick Miller** had his 1st ever cat at 15lb. **Wayne Tibbs** also caught his 1st ever cat at 33lb. **Simon Mercer** did an overnighter and banked cats at 25, 25 and 26lb. Shane Heffer had a **PB** at 38lb, **Mark Slade** banked the biggest of the year so far at a new **PB** of 73lb. **Julian McConnell** had his first cat of the year at 46-14 then came back with his daughter Hayley and he had a mid double and another one at 46lb, while **Hayley** banked one of the few carp in Tuscany Lake, a 15lb common.



Wayne Tibbs 33-00 1st Cat



Darren Moore 65-08 Tuscany Lake



Julian McConnell 46lb



Lawrence Atwell 52-06

JEFF'S LAKE has been fishing well for day anglers in the cold weather, with all species being banked not just the F1's. **Jonathan Hazel** had a lovely ghost linear and some nice commons and mirrors have been banked too. The results of the open match were a bit lower than normal as the



Jonathan Hazel Jeffs Ghostie

conditions were very cold indeed but well done to young **Harry Haggett** who won the



Mark Slade 73lb

match for the second time in a row with 24-04. Second was **John Mills** with 14-06 and third was **John Vincent** with 12-8, all silvers. **MOAT POND** has again fished well. A few examples are **Terry Edwards** had 5 carp to 7lb, **Paul Shipham** had 4 carp to 5-10 and a chub of 1lb and **Clive Whittington** had 11 carp to 9lb and bream.

DAUGHTERS LAKE has been a bit hit and miss this month although there have been fish banked including a few grass carp. **Terry Edwards** had a mirror of 9-02, **John Weller** and his little boy had 2 commons to 14lb and a grassie of 17lb, **Mike Greenfield** had a grassie of 17-02, **Joe Grady** had mirrors at 8lb and 9lb and **Connor Wood** banked his 1st grass carp at 10lb and two mirrors at 9-04 and 11lb, while **Ben** had a 10-08 grassie and 2 mirrors at 10-02 and 10-06 on an overnighter.



Clive Whittington Moat Pond

EDEN POND has seen the tench wake up a bit as the daytime temperatures rise. Day anglers have reported multiple catches of both green and golden tench and some small carp have also been banked as well as some decent roach to just over 1lb.

MAZE LAKE has produced more bream than anything this month with some anglers banking them to 6lb while the new stock of 1000 F1's we introduced have yet to settle and get their heads down properly.

MAJORS LAKE has been producing a varied mix of species, as it was designed to do, again though with the mix of warm days and frosty nights/mornings the fishing has been a bit hit and miss. **Ben Keogh** had 4 carp between 13 and 15lb, **Luke Jones** had a 16lb ghostie, **Allen Cole** had a 3lb crucian and 4 bream to 6lb, **Jamie Askew** had a 14lb ghostie, **Chris Champion** had 4 bream to 6lb, 2 tench to 2-08 and a 5lb common, **Jon Wilson** had a 15lb pike and 2 commons to 8lb and I managed a couple of ghosties to low doubles stalking about in the brief bit of sun we had this month.



Connor Wood 11-00 Daughters Stockie



Terry Edwards 9-02 Daughters Stockie



Paul Weller Daughters Grassie

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Fishery Reports

Tanyard Fisheries Uckfield, East Sussex

COARSE LAKE 1 Rio landed six Bream and five Common Carp all under 10lb using maggot
COARSE LAKE 2 Rachel and **Elliot** came for a days fishing and landed between them three Common Carp weighing 5 and 6lb and two Bream weighing 5lb. **Alfie** landed himself three nice Common Carp all of around 7lb. **Shaun** had a good days fishing catching three Common Carp the largest of 7lb. **Radek**, on his overnight session landed 15 mix of carp the biggest of 11lb.

COARSE LAKE 3 Jeff came for his first fish of the year and had a good day landing four Common Carp largest of 8lb and two Bream 3lb and 5lb. **Nick** enjoyed catching two Common Carp 5lb and 10lb. **Alfie** had a long trip to reach us but succeeded to catch two Common Carp and left happy. Bill landed a mix of twenty Carp, Bream and Tench all under 10lb using prawns

SPECIMEN LAKE 1 Tony has just started Pike fishing came to try his new lures and landed a nice Jack Pike using a jelly lure. **Lukasz** came on a weekend and landed himself a nice 5lb Pike. **Craig** came for a days fishing on our Pike lake and landed three Pike, the biggest of 6lb. **Mike's** patience paid off with a nice 9lb Pike. **Joe** landed a nice 19lb Common Carp using essential cell boillies. **Gavin** came for a day session and landed a 14lb Mirror Carp using maggot and sweetcorn. **Kevin** had a good day landing a 9lb Pike and a 12lb Pike using a jelly lure.

SPECIMEN LAKE 2 James came for an overnight and landed a Mirror Carp weighing 23lb 4oz using prawns and sweetcorn. **Mark** on his overnight session landed a 22lb Common Carp. **Daniel** came for a day session and landed a 19lb fully scaled Mirror Carp.

SPECIMEN LAKE 3 Callum Hayhoe came for an overnight session and landed a 56.1lb Catfish using spam. **Luke** came for a weekend session and the first evening landed a 48lb and a 57lb Catfish. **Graham** joining Luke landed a 57lb and a 46lb Catfish. **Wayne** landed a 19lb Mirror on his weekend session. **David Gander** also on a weekend session landed a 58lb catfish using spam. **Rhys** on his first Catfish session landed a nice 57lb Catfish using luncheon meat.



Luke Potter



Luke Potter



Callum Hayhoe

Framfield Park Fishery Uckfield, East Sussex

SPRING LAKE Despite continued frosts the lake is fishing extremely well with goods bags of carp in club and open matches with weights up to 150 lbs. Most pegs producing good quality carp to 15 lbs with pegs close to the gap in the island the most productive. Best baits are corn and maggot with worm accounting for some good quality perch to 3 lbs. At the start of sessions it's best to start off fishing close to the islands on feeder or bomb coming in close later on with the margins really coming into their own towards the end of sessions.

BROOKHOUSE LAKE Pegs close to the Car Park fishing quite well with carp to 15 lbs falling to maggot or pellet. The pole or waggler at 10 metres proving the best method for good bags of carp and silvers. Corn is also a good bait when fishing the bomb against the islands from pegs in the 20's and 30's.

BURYWOOD LAKE Some good quality carp to mid 20's falling to popped up boillies especially when fished to features. A few nice grass carp to 20 lbs also showing from pegs opposite the Car Park. A few nice catfish to 50 lbs also showing now that the weather is improving.

WEDNESDAY OPEN RESULTS

Spring Lake

- 1 - Mike Head (Carp Shop) 149-6-0
- 2 - Steve Turner (Faulknors) 147-4-0
- 3 - Nobby Whiteing (Hawthorn) 140-3-0
- 4 - Tony Lane (Carp Shop) 128-15-0
- 5 - Lee Perry (Faulknors) 117-8-0
- 6 - Alan Stewart (Framfield) 91-10-0

Spring Lake

- 1 - Dennis Cooper (Framfield) 73-14-0
- 2 - Nobby Whiteing (Hawthorn) 61-13-0
- 3 - Eddie Green (Framfield) 57-0-0
- 4 - Dan Knight (Carp Shop) 50-9-0



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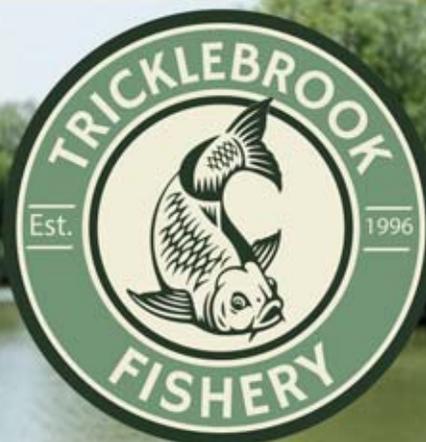
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- 12 Car Parks including Disabled Parking
- Match, Corporate and Memorial Bookings Welcome
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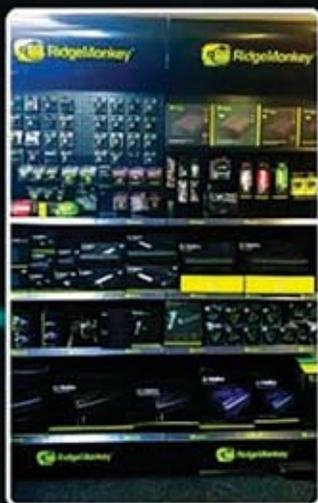
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**AMPLE FREE PARKING -15 MINS FROM M20 JUNCTION 9
BETWEEN ASHFORD AND TENTERDEN ON A28**

Fishery Reports

Hartley Lands Fishery Cranbrook, Kent

BRAMLEY LAKE really started to fish well two days before this report was due. PVA bags are still doing the business. **Darren Apps** had a 25.4lb mirror, **Glen Jenkins** had a 30.3lb, 22.6lb and 16.10lb mirror, **Mark** had a 34lb mirror, **Nick Copleston** had a 25.10lb mirror, **Neil Streek** had a 25lb common.

NICKS LAKE is producing fish all over the lake with fishing over a tight-catapulted area of boilies. **Gavin** had 5 fish from 14lb-24lb, **Anthony Smith** had a 33.2lb mirror, **Richard Cutts** had a 20lb common and 21lb mirror, **Darren Wood** had 3 fish to 22lb, **Mike Arayo** had a 21.5lb common, **John Kittle** had a 20lb mirror, **Stewart Tucker** had a 20.8lb common, **Alex Hall** had a 21lb mirror, **Jane Best** managed a new **PB** 18.8lb mirror and 17.8lb common, **Peter Best** had 3 fish to 19lb.

RESERVOIR LAKE is fishing very well with a lot of the fish being caught up in the water and they are taking floating pellet off the top. Zig rigs have been catching well if you don't want to surface fish. PVA bags in the margin are also producing well and the key is to feed little and often.

PEAR TREE LAKE is producing plenty of fish up to 21lb. Both float and feeder fishing are working well and the match winning weights are breaking the 100lb+ mark.

SAMSON LAKE is producing plenty of fish on the float. The matches are producing 100lb+ bags.

FINCHES LAKE is fishing well with a real mix of fishing being caught. Float and feeder fishing is producing a lot of tench, bream, perch, orfe and crucian carp.



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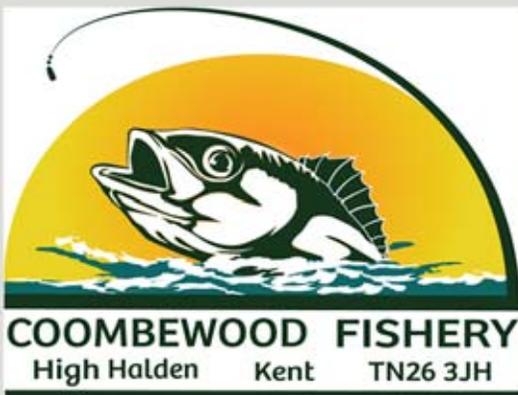
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LAKE AMY - Carp to upper 30s



LAKE EVA match/pleasure - Carp 27lb+ Tench 11lb+ Chub 5lb+
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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



www.newclaygatelakes.co.uk

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Bowie's Barber Shop
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Wadhurst TN5 6TE



Fishery Reports

Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hawkhurst, Kent



63lb 12oz Catfish - Main Lake - Jason



35lb Mirror - Specimen Lake - Stephen Taylor



39lb 14oz Common - Specimen Lake - Ricky Young

SPECIMEN LAKE A huge congratulations to **Ricky Young** on netting two new personal bests, a 39lb 14oz Common and a 33lb Mirror! He also netted a 44lb Catfish on his 36 hour session. **Ryan Dowdeswell** netted a beautiful 35lb Mirror during a quick overnight session; it fell to a 12mm CCMoore dairy supreme pop up fishing on a Ronnie rig. **Danny Betson** landed a beautiful scaly Mirror on a night session. **David Graveling** netted a lovely 22lb Common and 43lb Catfish. **Kevin Cosgrove** netted a 29lb Catfish. **Harry Sharp** had a good couple of days, managing to net two cracking catfish weighing 39lb and 50lb. **Simon Evans** landed a whopping 65lb catfish.

DOVE LAKE Mikey Dinnage landed a new lake record for Dove Lake in the form of a 63lb 12oz Catfish! He also netted a 54lb 8oz Catfish and a scale perfect 20lb Common. An angler uploaded some lovely photos onto Instagram showing his new personal best 28lb 8oz Common. **Carl Parish** caught a 19lb Common and 20lb Common on a 24 hour session, both in great condition. **Kevin Wright** landed a scale perfect 25lb 8oz Common on a night session.

The lakes have really come to life over the last few weeks with lots of catch reports coming in of both carp and catfish. It's been a very exciting time here at Hawkhurst Fish Farm as we have added new large carp to Main Lake, Dove Lake and Specimen Lake. There are some absolutely stunning fish and we are looking forward to seeing which lucky anglers land these carp first!

MAIN LAKE Sid Pelling bagged a massive 66lb Catfish during a 36 hour session from the back bank. **James Prior** had a good 24 hour session, landing 5 fish; he caught 3 Catfish up to 40lb and 2 Common Carp weighing 25lb 7oz and 25lb 14oz. **Chris Pearson** netted a 36lb 4oz Catfish from peg 5 on a night session. **Paul Mullineux** had an excellent 36 hour session, the highlight being a 39lb Catfish plus a few carp to 20lb. **Simon Dole** had a good day on peg 1, netting a couple of Commons to 15lb, and then an awesome 45lb Catfish and 29lb Catfish. **Kevin Cosgrove** netted a 21lb 8oz Catfish. **Mikey Dinnage** landed a new personal best grasscarp weighing in at 18lb 12oz. **Phil Potter** had a lovely time, calling us a "spot on venue", landing a 22lb 9oz Catfish, 22lb 10oz Common and 24lb 8oz Common. **Ronnie Platt** caught a lovely 31lb 8oz Common using Pacific tuna boilies and some krill spray. **Jason Platt** netted an impressive 63lb 12oz Catfish using pacific tuna boilies with a bit of artificial sweet corn tip off. **Shaun Hanks** said "once again your venue has done me well; just love coming here, all facilities and the fish makes the 3.5 hour drive worth it". He landed an impressive 44lb 9oz Catfish and two Commons weighing 22lb 14oz and 25lb 4oz.



20lb Common - Dove Lake - Carl Parish



25lb 7oz Common - Main Lake - James Prior



18lb 12oz Grasscarp - Main Lake - Mikey Dinnage



24lb Common - Specimen Lake - Wesley Tate



44lb 9oz Catfish - Main Lake - Shaun Hanks



50lb Catfish - Specimen Lake - Harry Sharp



47lb Blue Carp - Specimen Lake - Wesley Tate



29lb Common - Specimen Lake - Wesley Tate



Common Carp - Main Lake - Ricky Young



Scaly Mirror - Specimen Lake - Danny Betson

HAWKHURST FISH FARM STOCKS OVER 40 NEW BIG CARP!

Book your session now by calling 01580 753813!

We are thrilled to announce that the stocking of Main Lake, Dove Lake and Specimen Lake is now complete. These are stunning farmed fish from our off-site growing on lakes. Check out our Facebook or Instagram to see more photos!

Main Lake: 22 Carp from 18lb to 35lb 8oz.



Specimen Lake: 11 Carp from 20lb to 35lb 10oz.



Dove Lake: 11 Carp from 18lb 8oz to 36lb 8oz.



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www.hawkhurstfishfarm.co.uk - Hasting Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4RT

Fishery Reports

Mousehole Lakes Paddock Wood, Kent





Cackle Hill Lakes



Coarse Fishery



SPECIMEN LAKE 1

2 rods - £15 per Adult £13 over 65's & Juniors
Extra rod £3

SPECIMEN LAKE 2 3.5 acres

2 rods - £15 per Adult £13 over 65's & Juniors

MATCH / PLEASURE LAKE 1.5 acres

2 rods - £12 per Adult £10 for over 65's & Juniors
Extra rod £3

24 hour ticket: £25.00 Night ticket: £20.00

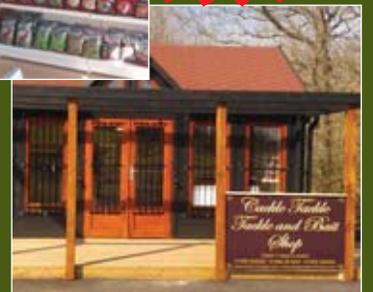
Species present in our lakes

- Common Carp up to 45lb • Mirror Carp 43lb+ • Ghost Carp 36lb+
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2 Rod £15

3 Rod £20

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• Onsite Fishery Manager



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Gates Close: 7.15pm

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Tel: 01892 838576 Mob: 07568 176058



Carp to 49lb+

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At Orchard Place Farm you can surround yourself in the natural beauty of the Kent countryside, located just outside of the picturesque town of Paddock Wood, and only 8 miles from Maidstone. The fishery boasts 11 lakes - 8 carp and catfish lakes and 3 for match/pleasure fishing.

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DAY TICKETS AVAILABLE
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48HR - £55
(additional charge for 3rd rod)

NEW - FULLY FUNCTIONING 30 PEG SILVER FISH LAKE

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

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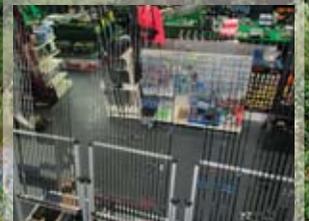
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Fishery Reports

Charlies Lakes Ashford, Kent



Charlie Rayfield 'Tango'

Nick Mathews in peg 13 had over 80 catfish on a week ticket to 42lb 12oz and was a new **PB**, followed up with 12 x 30s. **Steve Pitt** fished peg 12 on a day session and had 4 catfish including a 44lb 8oz which was a new **PB**. **Rob Childs** jumped in peg 12 for a day session and had 18 catfish up to 34lb. **Pete Ellis** fished peg 8 during our match over 48 hours and had a dozen catfish up to 44lb 12oz. **Gary Marsh** fished peg 14 during the match also over 48 hours and had 24 catfish to 37lb 12oz. **Scottie Roberts** fished the lake for the first time and managed to land 8 catfish including a new **PB** of 42lb then beat it again with a 49lb, he also had 3 carp from peg 12. **Charlie Rayfield** and his uncle did a 48 hour in peg 14 and had 21 fish between them including a 41lb and 42lb catfish and also managed our elusive common 'Tango'. **Ryan Goodson** and **Josh Evans** fished pegs 17 & 18 for a 48 hour session and they landed 57 catfish to 44lb 4oz and 2 carp with a total weight of 1196lb.



Steve Pitt 44lbs



Charlie Rayfield 42lbs



Gary Marsh 38lbs



Kevin Bond 41lbs



Nick Mathews 43lbs



Pete Ellis 45lbs



Ryan Goodson



Scottie Roberts 49lbs

Claygate Lakes Claygate, Marden, Kent



With some unexpected turns in the weather over the last few weeks, it's been great to see both regular faces and some new!

LAKE SOPHIE The tench have started to come out on Lake Sophie, along with chub which have been caught up in the water using banded pellet. Worm has been working well for catching bream and good old sweet corn has shown that it is worth a try!

LAKE EVA Fish coming off the top and upper layers of water to bread, also working well is the banded pellet again.

LAKE AMY The fish have now started moving about and good old cell along with some small bright coloured pop ups are taking fish. Whilst doing our annual netting on Lake Amy we have cut a few trees back to open up swims and to get the fish to move about rather than being shoaled up under the trees' overhanging branches. We also have a 33lb common and a 31lb mirror which to date have not yet been named, to be caught by YOU (hopefully!) – please don't try a name it with a football team name!

Are you a beginner or just want to try a spot of fishing? Not to worry if you don't have all the kit, we can offer you rod hire and help you set up with all the equipment you need! Adults £15 for the day - Children £10 for the day These prices include your tackle and bait. Don't worry, no maggots, we can also show you how to unhook your catch! Why not call Dave on 0777 051 3448 to book the training platforms. **FOOD UNIT OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK.**



Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society

Now that the river fishing has finished, the stillwater fishing has really started to pick up. There was one end of season river catch of note and that was the fantastic pike caught by **Ian Seamer** which weighed 26lb 5oz.

THE NEW LAGOON is fishing really well now, with several specimens being caught. The most impressive recently was that of **Jason Craven** which was a stunning 8lb 8oz Tench. Jason has also had Roach to 2lb 12oz and Rudd to 1lb 10oz. Venue bailiff **Bill Milton** has been doing well with Tench to 6lb 8oz and Rudd to 1lb 12oz. Bill also had a fine Crucian of 1lb 7oz. The Roach fishing has been exceptional of late, with lots of fish over 1lb being caught.



Bill Milton 1lb 12ozs rudd



Bill Milton 6lbs 8ozs

THE OLD BALLAST PIT has fished well all through the winter months with plenty of Carp to 25lb+. **Robert Brown Jnr** caught a couple of the stocked C3's which have both grown on to very healthy looking upper doubles. **Josh King** very recently caught one of the venue's bigger fish at 26lb 2oz and several other anglers have had Carp to over 20lb.

BARDEN LAKE has started to fish more consistently now with several fish being caught to 30lb+. The season's biggest was caught at 50lb 4oz by **Warren**.

One of the Society's newest member's is young **Malachy Trotter** who recently celebrated his birthday in style on the New Lagoon along with



Malachy Trotter with Birthday Carp

ten friends. Most of the lads caught fish and **Malachy** christened his new 5.5m whip with some quality fish, including this lovely little Carp.



Josh King 26lbs Ballast Pit carp

For anyone interested, we are holding our **Open Day on the New Lagoon on Saturday 24th August from 10.00am.**

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SUNDAY from
Easter Sunday
8am to 1pm

Letter to the Editor

WARNING - BEWARE THE ASIAN HORNET!



Dear Fishermen

I'm a Beekeeper and would like to ask for your help please and also to alert and warn you at the same time of a very serious likely insect invasion. We, as an island, are at present in the front line for an invasion of a new non-native pest. If you have not already heard about the Yellow Legged Hornet, please may I impress on you the need to be keenly aware of it as soon as this Spring and through to the Autumn.

This pest's full name is The Yellow Legged Asian Hornet. Mercifully, so far we have only had a few incursions into the UK, which have all been dealt with by the National Bee Unit.

We expect incursions to ramp up far more this year, as it will only take a favourable wrong wind from the infested European continent to help bring them here.

You might ask why is this of any interest to me as a Fisherman? Well, these Hornets under exceptional circumstances can KILL us! They also kill our native bee hives.

Again you might ask why would it particularly affect me?

Well, Yellow Legged Asian Hornets like to live near water, river banks and ponds etc. You will probably know that the European Hornet is native to the UK, and is sometimes known as the Gentle Giant Hornet, which is rarely any real threat. It has a nest size of up to about 500 hornets, significant but not often serious, and are not naturally aggressive anyway!

However, now for the worry or shock about The Yellow Legged Asian Hornet! It has a nest size of up to 7000! (it is a little smaller and blacker than our European native hornets) and it is extremely aggressive. So, should you get close to a nest they are likely to hurt you or more!



In France over the last few years 3 to 4 people a year have been killed, and one man on Jersey nearly died last Summer. So please, as a Fishermen take particular care if you think you see one. I have included a couple of pictures for size and colour comparison purposes. Hopefully, you will then be able to identify them, as you sit enjoying the peace and quiet of your surroundings and nature and watching your float! But, please if you hear a deep buzzing could you watch out for these little blighters!

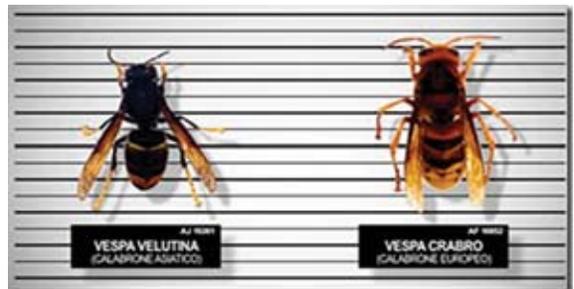
Should you see them, it would be really helpful if you could get a photo on your phone, and accurately record the exact site location. Please, don't go anywhere near the nests for your safety and then report what you have seen to the National Bee Unit who will come and find and clear the nest. They deal with this on behalf of DEFRA the government organization.

Their email address is: <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm> or alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk

Please will you also very kindly inform your local Bee club about your sightings. They can also assist with your identification and alerting the authorities. Bee Clubs are usually organised on a County and area basis. We at Kent Beekeepers are setting up a team to help, but this is a slow business.

If you do see something and respond, you could save lives least of all your own!

We Beekeepers are letting you know about this pest threat particularly as The Asian Hornet's favourite prey is our bees, their brood and honey! So, as you can imagine very important to us.



Please do check out The Yellow Legged Asian Hornet via the links above, and there is also a free app available. The Asian Hornet is usually much browner, unlike the European which looks like an oversized Wasp. Thank you for watching out for us all, and please may I wish you great fishing.

Peter Cobley Westerham/Kent Beekeepers



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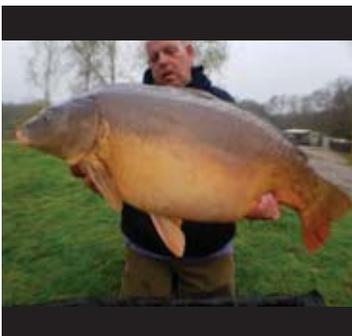
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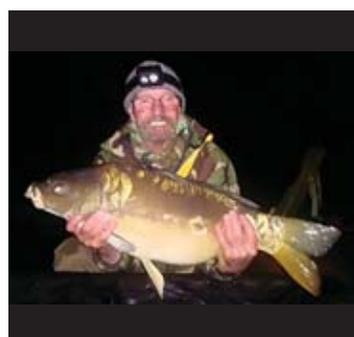
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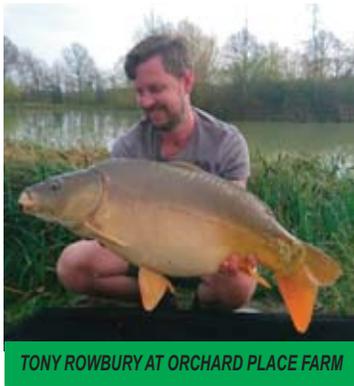
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Fishery Reports

Wylands International AC Battle, East Sussex

Spring is finally here and the fish at Wylands are feeding well with fantastic catch reports.

MIDDLE LAKE Newly re-opened, Middle lake has fished exceptionally well with many 20lb plus carp being caught. Nicolle caught her very first carp, a stunning 20lb mirror and young Alfie landed a fantastic 19lb common, just to mention a couple.



Brace from Middle Lake



20lbs from Middle Lake



Alfie 17lbs on Middle



Andy 17lbs Middle lake



28lbs from Middle Lake



Josh 18lbs from Middle Lake

HOUSE LAKE has fished well throughout the month with most fish being caught from the shallow margins or surface fishing resulting in some fantastic captures.

FIELD LAKE This is our ever-popular children's lake and a brilliant starting point for beginners. This lake is great for some family fun.

NEW SPECI It has produced some cracking mirrors and some high 20lb plus commons. Graham Carter and his family stayed a week in our accommodation fishing new speci resulting in four new pbs throughout their stay here at Wylands.



Brace on House Lake



Dylan on New Speci

OLD SPECI This has produced carp up to 22lb over the last few weeks with some anglers catching some beautiful tench and bream up to 7.08lb. This lake responds very to the feeder method.

ROSIE'S LAKE Most fish in this lake have been seen in the shallow end. Fishing towards the island has produced carp up to 20lb with the odd crucian making an appearance.



Dave on Maisies

MAISIE'S LAKE This is the only pre-bookable lake on our complex. Multiple catfish have been landed with the odd carp being seen on the bank. Dave Honeyset opened his account with a 46lb cat giving him a great fight.

KELL LAKE Kell is our trickiest lake on the complex. With the fish starting to wake up resulting in some lovely captures with both mirror and common up to 36lb. this lake is well suited to the angler looking for a challenge.

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READERS CATCH REPORTS

Great session for Chris at Orchard Place Farm!



PB cat 46lb



32lb

"Hi Barry, I recently done a 24 hour session on Orchard Place Farm Lake 4. It was chaos from the minute I got there with 5 catfish and 1 carp! A great session!"
Best wishes, Chris Cogan



37lb



35lb



20lb common

Great new PB for Rachel!



Rachel Lewington sent in this great report:
"Hi Barry, I smashed my 10.8lb PB with this stunning common weighing at 30lbs on the dot! Still in shock and my right arm is going to remind me all week of the fight she put up! This Queen of a fish was caught on Lake 7 at Frant Lakes, Hawkenbury Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent."

Well done Rachel on a remarkable PB that will take some beating!

Tricklebrook Trio for David!



David Kingsman had a magnificent week at Kent's Tricklebrook Fishery landing three huge perch over 2lbs! The largest fish was an ounce under the magical 3lbs mark!

To cap it off David also landed a clonking great roach!



Robin at Claygate Lakes



Regular contributor to the magazine, Robin Piper, had a recent trip to Claygate Lakes and posted in this report:

"Dear Barry, Please find enclosed a couple of photos from my latest outing to Lake Amy at Claygate Lakes at Marden.

The pictures are the best two from a short session of five hours, midday to 5pm. The total bag came to 28lbs 8ozs and corn and prawns were the baits on the day.

I dare say things will pick up as the season goes on as I think the weight is a little low for this time of year on this lake."

Many thanks, Robin



River Informer

Welcome to the River Informer!

By the time you read this magazine the Closed Season will be at the halfway stage, so only another six weeks to go before you can fish the waterways once more. The Environment Agency were running an online poll as to the Closed Season and were looking for anglers' views. Perhaps you completed the survey? From my conversations with anglers it would appear that opinion is split on retaining a closed period. I can see the merits in both sides and have heard lots of 'for' and 'against' arguments. As you will see further on in the magazine we have a number of clubs advertising memberships to their organisations and who have access to some prime stretches of water. Why not take a look at them and if you have any questions, give them a call? It may well be the best phone call you ever made!

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF COARSE FISHING *Bob Rolph*

A Double Centenary celebration this year!

"Probably the two greatest names in Coarse Fishing would have both celebrated their hundredth birthdays recently. One last May and one in February this year.



Dick Walker and Fred J. Taylor MBE were inspirational anglers and writers, and were born only 8 months apart from each other. Richard was born in Hitchin, Hertfordshire and Fred in Leighton Buzzard although he lived most of his life in

Aylesbury. They never fished in Kent, as far as I can ascertain, they had no need to, as the fishing potential in their native Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire was second to none just after the war. They fished in Hampshire and of course in Herefordshire, but our south eastern counties had not tempted them to venture this far. They had no transport in the early days preferring motorised push bikes and their legs, and the carp county of Kent was the poorer for it. Of course in the 50s and 60s the glorious carp fishing that we enjoy today in Kent was only in its fledgling form, with the pits in the Medway, Darent and Stour valleys still being worked. The chub and tench fishing however in Dick and Fred's neck of the woods was outstanding, and this is where they fished. Fred did fish at Wadhurst Lake in the 1950s for the wild common carp, and I did spy Dick at Darwell Reservoir once in the early 70s trout fishing from the boats!

Richard Stuart Walker was born on May 29th 1918 near Letchworth, Hertfordshire and died on May 2nd 1985 from cancer. He became Britain's most celebrated angler with his innovative tackle designs, ideas, writings, photography, fly tying and knowledge, culminating of course with the capture of the record carp of 44lbs at Redmire on Sept 13th 1952. When he turned to trout fishing, his expertise was unsurpassed, and I once met and talked to him on the banks of Grafham Water.

Frederick James Taylor was born on Feb 9th 1919 and died on May 7th 2008 after a long illness. He was much more of a countryman, field sports writer, cook, wine maker, traveller and fisherman, and shooter of rabbits. Fred loved rabbits and went to Australia to hunt them! He had one daughter, Valerie, born in England, who went on to marry one of the countries most successful chub and barbel anglers, Ian Howcroft from Luton. Ian wrote regularly in the fishing magazines of the 1960s, and was Fishing Magazine's most prolific pen. His catches of Bream from Tring, and chub from the Ouse, were legendary, and he helped Dick and Fred build



the hut on the Great Ouse at Thornton Bridge.

Things weren't going well in Luton in the mid 70s, and Ian decided to emigrate to Perth W. Australia to a much better life in 1974, but no chub or barbel. There were however 1000 lb tiger sharks waiting to be caught just off the coast, and Ian concentrated on these, breaking the record for the species on rod and line. It took him 3 days to recover from this experience he told me last month! Fred followed him to Perth in 1989, but missed the home life and fishing back here in England, and returned soon afterwards. Not before the rabbit population of Western Australia had been severely decimated by Fred's gun.

Last May, on the very day of Dick's birthday on the 29th, a small party of 12 anglers with connections to Dick Walker or Redmire gathered at the Pool to toast his memory, and recall the great days he spent down there often with Fred. Chris Ball from Hampshire, that great carp fishing historian was master of ceremonies and tackle from the Walker era was taken down to view. A Kentish oak tree was planted near the spot where the old Willow tree used to be, and the rod, the original Mk IV built cane carp rod, and the net, with built cane arms, that engulfed Clarissa were reunited for the first time at Redmire since 1952. The whole event was recorded for posterity by Wayne Cryer and a small commemorative book produced.

I was in Perth in February to visit family, so it was not surprising that I arranged to meet up with Ian Howcroft for the first time in 54 years. The last time we met at Walker's hut, on the Great Ouse, I was just a 19 year old boy, with great fishing aspirations. Ian only slightly remembered me, we had gone in different directions in the intervening years, literally!

I presented him with a copy of the Dick Walker commemorative book about the day, and we toasted the memory of Fred Taylor just one day late, on Feb 10th. Fred was one of 3 brothers and a cousin, all great fishermen, who had great catches of tench, chub and bream, but like me Fred never managed a Redmire carp of any great size!.

Redmire Pool today has just had a massive make over, with 300 tons of silt removed, and the whole place tidied up. The water was less than half the depth than in its heyday, but now there is again 10 feet of water at the dam, and a series of filter beds in the stream above catch the red silt as it comes down the valley. The clear water high in pH at 7.7 promotes weed and fish growth and over 50 pure Leney carp again grace the tranquil waters, hopefully once again to deceive many an ambitious angler in the years to come.

Mr Walker and Mr Taylor would be so proud!



At least 12 fishermen have received the MBE for services to angling over the years, but sadly the greatest of them all, Richard Walker, was not one of them. He died so long ago now that such recognition was not considered appropriate 34 years ago! He should have had a knighthood!"

Bob Rolph



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.

"I have many memories of my boyhood days and fishing with my tank aerial rod purchased from Pride and Clark at Stockwell by a friend of mine, along with a variety of crude floats made from Crow quills and any other feathers that you could obtain around that time. A friend of our family was running a local jumble sale and found a rod in a box. I believe it was Japanese and made from cane. My mother bought it for me for 2s/6d (12.5p!). I had a cheap reel to go on it and I felt like the King! So it was off to the river I went with some red worms from the dung heap at the farm. I was lucky that my father worked with heavy horses, 'Lion and Dobbin', for ploughing and also looked after the hop garden and he used to give rides to local children. I used to go to the local river with a friend and although our tackle was very basic we used to catch plenty of roach. Through the eyes of a child, they looked very large!



Handmade crow quill floats

Some months later on my birthday, I was given an envelope with my name on wishing me a Happy Birthday. Inside the envelope was an invitation to fish a private lake. This was a real surprise and only made possible as my father knew the landowner. The order of the day was to write a 'Thank You letter' and I eagerly looked forward to the summer holidays. These small acts of kindness meant so much at the time and any additional fishing was highly sought after!

I do a litter pick in the village and it is incredible how much litter gets thrown from cars. It takes no time at all to collect a large bag of the stuff. All totally unnecessary. Local wildlife is starting to respond to the Springlike weather now and there are lots of sticky Horse Chestnut buds appearing. There is lots of drumming from the mating woodpeckers and when it is still the noise carries like a drill. You would not believe that a small bird is capable of so much noise! Spring flowers are starting to show their bloom especially the patches of violets and primroses. Wood



Wood Anemone

spurge, cuckoo flower or Lady Smooch are all evident and the large amounts of white wood anemones and yellow lesser celendine are adding colour to the countryside. The bluebells are growing fast along with the swaths of wild garlic by the river. The birds are very active in the hedgerows and I have watched a blackbird take food to an early brood in the thick ivy. The buzzards overhead are calling out loudly and the smaller birds are chattering away in all directions. Being out in the countryside is not just about the fishing but it is the beauty of being surrounded by nature and life unfolding before your eyes.

However, with all this talk of Spring, I am mindful of the 'Blackthorn winter', which I have referred to in a previous article, so we will have to see what happens if the wind goes round to the north east. At present, the river has a good flow and the weed banks of starwort are just starting to grow, I just hope the swans won't attack it just yet and give it a chance! As I continue my walk, I find a couple of fishermen with no respect for the Closed Season. They either don't know or don't care! I startle a pair of cormorants and they take flight towards the coast. I don't think I have been the only visitor here as the remains of a moorhen suggests a mink has left it's mark. Sure enough a little further on, I see some pad marks in the mud from what looks like a large dog mink. I will chat more about them in future articles and how they have become so numerous. I would describe them as the 'James Bond' of the waterways as they have a 'Licence to Kill' just about anything.

The Spring really feels as if it has arrived given the level of birdsong. Although rainfall has been reasonable throughout the winter months, I am always concerned about the potential for water shortage and drought particularly if we get another long hot dry summer period. Last year's dry summer really drained the water ground levels in the chalky hills in this part of Sussex and it just adds to the reality that this is a water starved area. I just wonder when someone in control of the water situation will categorically tell government that the drain on the water supply is not sustainable. With ongoing climate warming the situation will need careful management, but, we all have to work together to protect this valuable resource.



Blackthorn winter

With the 'Blackthorn winter' in full swing, as we country folk say, the hedges and woodland edges are showing bright white blossom so it will probably be a good year for the sloes and good news for the sloe gin makers! The Spring flowers and carpets of wood anemones are producing their white flowers in abundance. It is now only a matter of time before we see the first of the house martins and swallows. These birds are a marvel of nature when you consider their flight from the African continent. I will also be keeping an ear out for another migrant, the cuckoo.



House Martin

As I write this in early April, I have had reports of a couple of house martins and a sand martin in the Lower Ouse Valley so I don my boots and take a stroll. Walking along the river a kingfisher flashes past me and in a small pool there is already signs of frog spawn. There are lilies appearing in one corner of the pool and a blackbird is sitting on her nest watching the world go by. Some pigeons are feeding on the new clover and have been having a go at the new ash buds. A large display of buttercup with it's large rhubarb like leaves is putting on quite a display. The river weed will soon put in an appearance in the rivers. Let's not forget that the rivers and countryside not only provide

us with some great fishing but the environment is also there for us to marvel at and enjoy so let's all work together to protect this unique part of our world.

If you see something which you are concerned about, report it! You can call the Freephone number on your rod licence 0800 807060.

Cheerio for now, Jim

Medway Man

Bob Morris

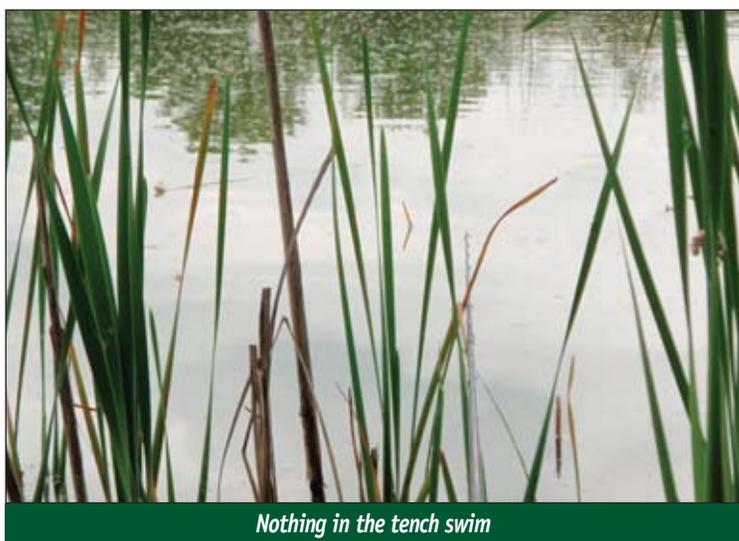
I ended last month's piece by saying that I had too many waters to fish and not enough time to do it in. The obvious and logical answer to this situation is to drop a couple from the menu, to give myself a better chance of concentrating on one or two in order to get a better feel for them - and hopefully some sort of consistent action as a result. For some reason however, the opposite often occurs and I end up with my sights set on even more options! That is exactly what has happened this year and I have already ended up with a couple of new venues to, at least, have an exploratory session or two on.



Wow

I really love being out on the bankside in Spring, as there are so many different aspects of the environment to demand my attention. On one occasion recently, I found myself a wooded spot to fish from where I was completely surrounded by bluebells, a stunning location and almost a total distraction in itself.

During a session last week, while I was concentrating on my float in the hope that a tench might oblige, a large female Sparrowhawk knocked a Collared Dove down into the near margin before, spotting me and zooming off along the tree line! A spectacular way to have your swim disturbed. I thought that I was going to have to rescue the unfortunate bird with my landing net, but after paddling, rather 'Duck like', around the area for a few minutes, it remembered what its wings were for and flew to a nearby tree, where it sat for a while - minus most of the feathers around its neck. I blanked during that session but felt that I had been privileged to have witnessed such an event at close range.



Nothing in the tench swim

Talking of margin float swims, I had an evening session in the same swim a few days later and got a bit more action, this time of the fishy variety. Just after dark, I saw a swirl in the vicinity of my baited patch and shortly after this, noticed a few movements on my short Peacock quill, which was equipped with a small starlight set into the tip. I had rigged it up to fish 'lift style' as I always believe that if the float keels over and lays flat, it is far more likely to be an actual bite as the hookbait and shot must have been lifted off the bottom to make this happen. After a few minutes this happened and the fish then moved off slowly to the left, with the float in tow. An upward strike was all I could do in this spot because of the trees that bordered the swim but it was met with a solid resistance that soon indicated that this was unlikely to be a tench. After, several times, preventing it from gaining the refuge of the pads along to my left the carp made for the middle of the lake, making several determined runs against my steady thumb pressure on the rim of my pin. I was not worried about the line at all as I have given up using anything lighter than twelve pound nylon when floatfishing the margins, because I seem to hook more carp than tench these days and often it's the bigger ones! After refusing to play ball for at least ten minutes, this one appeared to fall very much into this category. I was using one of my twelve foot, one and a quarter pound, barbel rods - which I find are normally up to the job, although this fish was starting to take advantage - big time. Nevertheless after a further five minutes or so there were signs that it might have had enough - I know that I certainly had! The net was in the water with the carp circling in front, game over, I thought. The Drennan size ten Super Specialist, at this point 'pinged out' - leaving me, how shall we say - Rather disappointed!! No more action that evening!!!



Just under 7 but does it really matter



More tench & bream on feeder at range!

Using exactly the same set-up but on another water the following week, I was in the middle of an afternoon tench session but on this occasion the float rod was a third string to my bow, as the majority of the action there normally comes to the feeder rods and also, frequently, at forty yard range or more. In fact these days on the waters that I am fishing, the action from tench and bream are often at range. It seems that the tench, particularly the bigger ones, have largely deserted the margins, which is a real puzzle because in

years gone by 'the closer the better' was often the rule when we were after tench. This may be a learned behaviour, as so much bait now goes in at range - although the carp still seem to be happy to patrol and feed in the margins!

On this occasion however, no action was forthcoming on the feeder patch. The float with a small side-hooked boilie, on top of a couple of handfuls of freebies, at just a rod length out scored at 3pm with the centerpin screaming the indication, as I had failed to notice the bite. Again long runs were the carp's MO and it took at least ten minutes to tame and bring to the net. It was a mirror and weighed in at 17lb 2oz - although its weight is largely unimportant, I feel. I am starting to think that we are all missing a trick by being so obsessed with the weight of our fish but this is a very involved subject and probably best left until another issue!



More tench and bream on feeder at range!



A big fish but are we too obsessed with the weight

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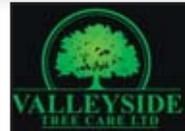
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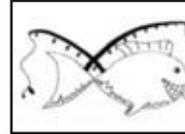
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Hello and welcome to the May edition of the Junior Informer!

We are now in to May and the summer months are almost upon us! Already the days are getting warmer and the evenings are now light until quite late in to the evening. May sees a welcome week off from school with the Whitsun half term break. I expect many of you are eagerly looking forward to some time away from studying, especially those of you with exams coming up after the holiday! No doubt many of you will be doing some last minute revision before returning to school and entering the exam room! I wish all students the best of luck and remember that you can do no more than your best. Fishing is much the same, you arrive on the bank for the day with your tackle and the bait that you expect will work on that water. However, not everything goes to plan and sometimes you need to stop and think about what is going on around you. What is the weather like, which way is the wind blowing, have the previous nights been warm or cold, has it rained recently, is my rig the right one for the type of fish I am targeting, what are the margins like in my swim, should I fish in open water or to an island? These are all questions that you need to 'read' when you begin your session. Only by reading and understanding the questions, will you be able to answer correctly! Good luck with those exams AND your fishing!

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

FISHING FOR SCHOOLS May Update

Following the success of last year's inaugural Fishing for Schools Kent art competition, the contest is back!

There was lots of interest in taking part in this year's contest, even before we sent out the invitations to all our schools, showing that there is real creativity among our SEN students.

We hope that the top entries will be featured in the Freshwater Informer and that editor Barry Reed will join our director (and talented artist) Charles Jardine on the judging panel.

F4S Kent organiser Warren White writes: "After the success of last year's F4S Art Competition we are delighted to be running another art competition this year. It is a great way of showing the generous people who fund F4S that our courses are not only about fishing but have a wider educational aspect. F4S celebrates art, encouraging our students to be creative."

Last year's subject was Freshwater Fish, which led to some very imaginative entries, which are still proudly hanging in the fishery lodge at Grove Farm.

This year our young entrants will take inspiration from Wildlife Scenes from the Riverbank, which we hope will prove equally inspiring.

"I hope they will take a wide interpretation of the title," said Warren. "Subjects could include images of a fishermen on a riverbank, to any wildlife scene of birds, aquatic mammals and of course fish."

"We want to stimulate discussions about the wildlife around our ponds and rivers."

The competition will take place in the autumn term.

The image below shows last year's winning entry, a painting of a perch, by JJ Perry of Broomhill Bank North School.



TIA'S HOOKED ON FISHING!

Uncle Daniel Terry sent in this report after a great fishing session with his niece Tia - Sky. Daniel took her to Horsham Fishing Lake recently to get her started in fishing and she absolutely loved it! Tia caught a number of fish the week before but in this session she had a bigger carp of around 2lbs. She is fully hooked now!



FILLER.....?

Fishing 4 schools - April Tip of the Month

from instructor Rob Goble

Now that May is here, it is highly welcome to feel the warmth on your back and remove some of the restrictive clothing you have been wearing through the colder months.

Everywhere is buzzing with life anew and in our lakes that means carp. It's spawning time, which could last a few weeks, or well into July. You will see and hear fish splashing around the margins and in the reeds and chasing each other. Frustratingly, this means they are not really interested in much else, but don't lose hope. They will eventually want to feed.

I have fished in conventional ways in past Mays, with all the paraphernalia, ie; rod pods and bite alarms and spent many hours under a bivvy waiting for that elusive monster to take the bait. It's exhilarating! The alarm sounds, the fish has taken the bait and starts to run. Thank goodness for the bait runner, all I have to do is pick up the rod and tire the fish out. Eventually, I get the net under the fish, place it on the unhooking mat, remove the hook, take some pics, job done. Now for another. A great time had by all!

I've had great fun as a trout angler at this time of year as well. A few years back, I wanted to catch on a fly (artificial bait) and boy what an experience that was! You haven't got all that gear to haul around on a trolley, everything is lightweight – just rod, reel, line, unhooking mat, a pair of forceps for unhooking if need be, your net for landing, and of course a small bucket of dog biscuits... I will come back to them later. And don't forget your hat and sunglasses.

It's possible to catch carp with imitation natural food as well. They do feed on shrimp and hog lice as well as crane flies etc. Being a trout angler, I also tie my own flies to imitate all the above creatures and they do work at times.

But coming back to dog biscuits, I suppose they are one of the best ways to catch carp. Dog biscuits can be purchased from your local tackle store, pet food supplier or online. The ideal size is roughly 10mm round in size, for scattering around to encourage the carp to come up to feed.



Don't fling too many in at a time - little and often is the best policy. You are trying to gain their confidence.

My imitation of one of these dog biscuits will be roughly the size of one particle (see the picture left). Can you guess the artificial?

You can purchase imitations from a good tackle store and online or learn how to tie these yourself. You can find

all this information online or on YouTube.

I use barbless carp hooks for all my dressings, in sizes 8,10 and 12, with a wide gape and a short shank. I spin deer hair around the hook shank in tight touching turns, then clip it down carefully to roughly the size of the biscuit.



Deer hair is hollow, so is an ideal material as it will float on the surface and is very resilient. I also add some floatant to help keep it up.

You will need a small piece of cloth to occasionally dry the artificial to keep it floating - especially after catching a fish.

If you have fly fished before you will have no problem with the casting but in actual fact there is very little casting involved. For those that haven't cast before and would like to try this method, help is at hand. You can look techniques up on the internet or YouTube or have a short lesson with a casting instructor (like myself). But, as I said, there is little casting involved. Most of the time your imitation will be lying on the water just two to three rod lengths away, so all you need to do is occasionally roll the line out in a roll cast.

To fly-fish for carp, you will need:

- ✓ A trout rod of 9ft to 9½,
- ✓ A fly line of 7 to 8 weight

- ✓ A reasonably good reel with a good clutch. You will need to set the clutch so as to not over-run when a carp decides to go to the horizon! It is very different from using conventional bait runner reels that are already set. If it does overrun, you can say good bye to the fish!
 - ✓ Plenty of backing line for safety because carp can run 100 yards plus in a blink of an eye.
 - ✓ Your leader or nylon coming off your fly line should be no more than 7-8 feet in length. There are many ways to attach the nylon to the fly line, all of which can be found in good books, on YouTube or you might know someone who knows.
- Please use copolymer not fluoro, with a breaking strain of not less than 10lbs. You can go lighter if you are fishing a lake with little snags, but carp have a habit of finding these places, so be warned!
- ✓ All that is required now is the water. There are lots of fisheries around, I'm sure there is one close to you.



Fishing the fly could not be simpler. Find your chosen swim. Before setting up the tackle, scatter a few biscuits out. Be patient and wait to see what happens. Eventually you will see the carp appear, their thick broad shoulders like torpedoes scooping up and slurping the biscuit up in their large mouths. Your excitement levels rise!

Carefully roll out your imitation, so it is sitting in amongst the biscuits.

Suddenly there is a large swell, the line tightens and the fish is off like a steam train, running hard. What line you have at your feet is soon out of the rod guides. The reel is screaming. You are now down to the backing. "Wow! Is it going to stop?", you say to yourself.

Suddenly it turns, it's coming back. The tension slackens in the rod, you frantically wind the line back onto the reel maintaining the tension. It turns left then right, all the while trying to shake the hook, but after some time you eventually get the fish near, it is starting to tire. The carp comes to the top laying on its side, beaten and ready for the net. "That was some fight," you say to yourself. "I need a rest."



Some important rules to take on board...

- ✓ Make sure the fishery allows fly fishing for carp as some don't.
- ✓ Find a quiet corner of the lake with the wind, if any, blowing in to a corner. You don't want to upset other anglers with baits out on the bottom or have carp swirling and gulping your biscuits on the surface in front of them. It's not good for relationships!
- ✓ Remember to leave your imitation biscuit in amongst the floating offerings.
- ✓ Do not have too much slack line out when you do get a take. You will know instinctively when to lift into the fish - they can of course hook themselves. Carp have a habit of sucking in the bait and if not careful can reject it, quite quickly, without you knowing.
- ✓ Carp can be canny, to say the least. They will swirl and drown your imitation and swim all around it, but eventually take it. As the saying goes, resistance is futile... after all, they are greedy beggars.

Be safe and most of all have fun Bob G.

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

Each 'Ready, Steady, Fish' pack contains:

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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!



WINNERS
well done!
The winners of the JUNIOR PHOTO ALBUM THIS MONTH ARE



Dylan and Dad Richard Green with a double take!



Freddie Kelly with his first carp!



ALFIE SMITH - ROYAL MILITARY CANAL



AMY DOUGLAS AT KNIGHTINGALES



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CHARLIE WILLIAMS AT HENFOLD



DYLAN LENNARD AT BARRATTS PARK



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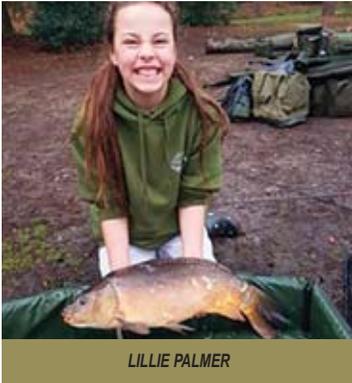
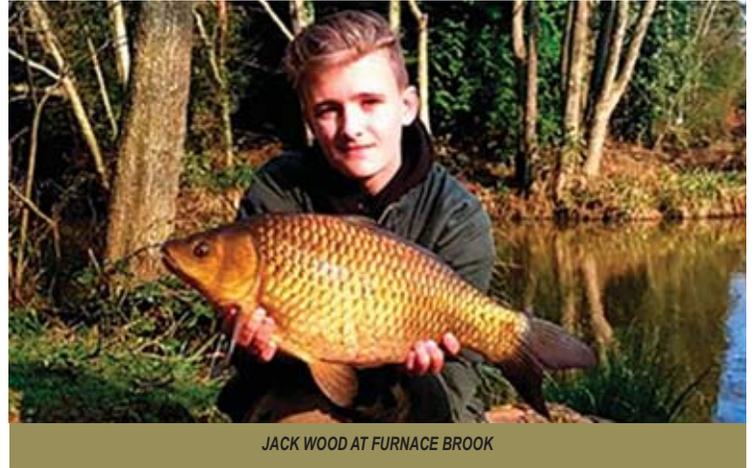
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JACOB GREEN



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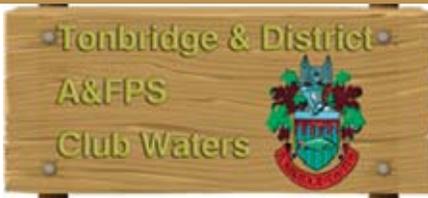
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For further details contact: **Hon. Secretary: Chris Knowler on 07712 622858**

e-mail: chris@lintonangling.co.uk

www.lintonangling.co.uk

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Rob Tuck-Brown on

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

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Chris Pagan 07429 655237 Steve Potter 07935 268174

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Normanhurst Lake



Wishing Tree Reservoir



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Trout Informer

Brick Farm Lakes Herstmonceux, East Sussex

Here at Brick Farm Lakes we have had a very busy April with many anglers at last coming out of hibernation from the colder months to enjoy the Spring weather and the longer daylight hours. Our closing times here are moving with the sunsets and we continue to stock most weeks with some lovely decent size trout. If there was a time in our angling calendar to come fishing for the whole day, treat yourself to a six fish ticket and enjoy the sunshine before it gets too hot then it must be now. Yes, I must admit that the wind has still a slight edge to it at times and we have had quite a frost this morning, (as we always do when the Magnolias are out), but with an egg and bacon roll to start the day and a warm log burner to come in to warm up by with a cuppa, then no worries, simples!

The sedges were emerging from Brick Lake just the other day so dry flies are certainly a good bet to think about now and buzzers - a bit of an art to fish with but boy do the trout love them! May flies should be in evidence soon and Stag Lake, in the past has provided the most fun in this particular department, so keep your eyes peeled when walking round the banks. One tiny, little nag, (I feel we know each other well enough now), if I may be so bold... make sure to MOVE, RING THE CHANGES

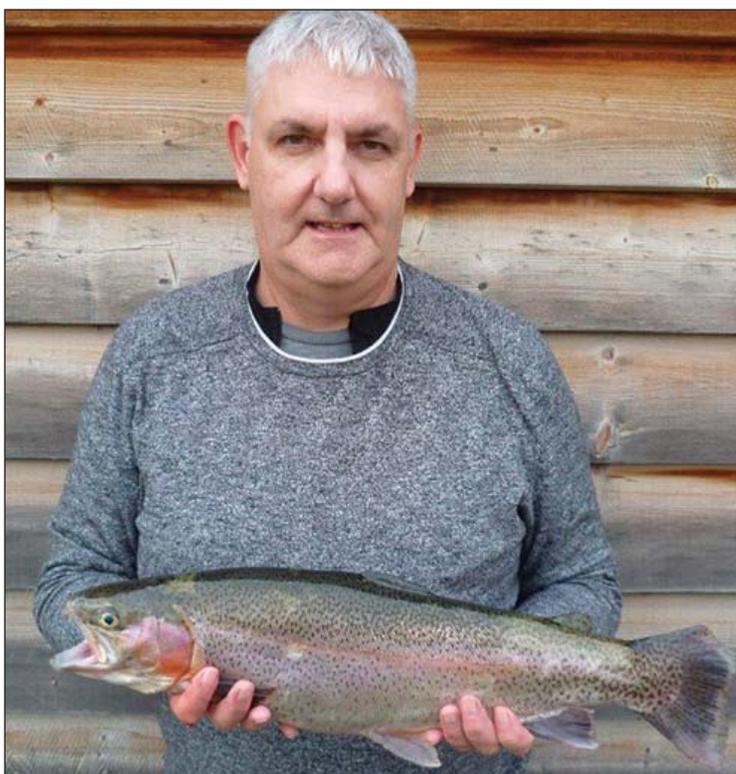


Spring at the Lodge

and CHANGE TACTICS. The three lakes here can fish very differently from visit to visit, week to week, day to day and even hour to hour. Too many times I see anglers stick to the same spot on the same lake time after time. We must remember that fly fishing is true "hunter - gathering", a blood sport and the conditions are never the same. The weather... well when you live in the UK, say no more!! The insect life is as diverse as it gets and is totally governed by the afore-mentioned! We never know exactly just when they are going to decide to move through the water, crawl across the bottom, blow onto the surface, hatch on the top or die and sink to the depths. The fish have to try to keep up with this ever changing tide of conditions as well. At Brick Farm Lakes we do not feed them, there is an abundance of food for them to feed on naturally and they consequently learn



Buster Jenner's 4lb Rainbow



Lovely rainbow!

to feed for themselves and thus confidently take a fly, so they get smart, quick! We anglers need, no, **must** move with this naturally changing "tide" as well and I have not mentioned the air pressure, wind direction or whether there is a full or new moon! As I say to beginners taking their first lesson, the skill of the casting is actually the "easy bit". It is all the rest of what is involved with fly fishing that makes it such a brilliant sport. Tricky and challenging to the brain - the hobby you will never stop learning - a touch of randomness to enjoy and despair over in equal measures - a sociable comfort to many lonely people - a feast for the outdoor senses... and so on. But, it is a very individual kind of hobby, where each to his own, live and let live and who, especially me, is to say what we should or shouldn't do? We have no fly or line restrictions here and if you have a special spot to admire the view, then why not wait and see what comes your way.

Stop press! We have recently stocked some hard fighting blue trout and by all accounts they are putting up a good account of themselves. They are bred with higher muscle content and can fight well above their weight; it is a bit like having a Jack Russell on the end of a lead! Enjoy!

Tight lines now for the lovely month of May, Annie and Caroline.



Buster Jenner's great Blue

PS. Don't forget Fathers Day in June. What about a voucher or two? Always a much appreciated present for a loved one, just call the lodge... 01323 832615.

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Chalk Springs Arundel, West Sussex

The fishing has once again been excellent over the recent weeks, with another high catch rate over 90%. The weather has definitely improved and Spring is almost thinking about becoming Summer! Lots of insect life has started to hatch around the lakes now, so be prepared to start using buzzers and dries more often. Hopefully, some early Mayflies will start hatching soon too. Obviously, the usual nymphs, like damselfly, pheasant-tails and hare's ears are still very effective at this time of the year. This should be the same through May and into the summer months. The fish are of a good average size of well over 2lb, both rainbows and browns, with the odd blue rainbow lurking about here and there, as well as some much larger fish too keep you on your toes!

The annual April Fools competition was held at the beginning of the month. Running since 1999 it is one of 4 'friendly' competitions we have here at Chalk Springs. As usual, it was well supported, with 22 regulars and members attending. The object of the day is to catch the largest bag consisting of 4 fish each, with fishermen being drawn in pairs. As always, the banter starts from the first cast of the day - but all in good spirits. The fishing itself was excellent, with fish coming out all day long. The weather held just long enough to finish the barbecue, before the heavens opened for a few minutes of rain, hail and sleet. Plenty of good fish were caught - see the photos. At the weigh-in, Mike Richards and Brian Kentish were crowned the winners, with a bag of 25lb 7oz, with John Pearn and Jimmy Madden coming in second with 23lb 10oz. I think it's safe to say that Mike was happy with his victory! As always, pre-booking is advised and keep up to date with the latest news on the weekly catch page of our website.

Tight lines, Darren and Ally.



Paddy Hill



Tony Harrison



Kevin Allen



Mike Richards



Danny Leung (April)



Kev Hunt - April Fools



April Fools Winners

Tenterden Trout Waters Tenterden, Kent

Fishing has been good at Tenterden in April, as you can see from the photos. We have had some large rainbows caught and Danielle Adams had a great time catching this Season's Best Fish weighing in at 7lbs 15oz caught on a Green & Black Viva.

The fishing has been varied and interesting - the trout have been feeding on the surface and then going down deep when the sun has come out but our anglers have been having some great fun in the good weather and enjoying stalking the waters. Popular Patterns: Red/Black Hopper, Diawl Bach, Montanas.

Easter will be over by the time this is published but we are all looking forward to this holiday period when we will have re-stocked the Lakes with some quality, fin perfect, rainbows and blues for everyone to enjoy at this time and thereafter.

The Farm and Fishery is looking picturesque at the moment with all the lambs running around in the fields with their Mums and the Spring Flowers are all in full bloom as I write this. Spring is the perfect time of year for fishing so please come and visit us and enjoy a few hours in this beautiful part of the Kent Countryside - we look forward to welcoming you for some great Spring Fishing with hard fighting Rainbows/Blues & Browns. Please check the Home Page on our website and click on the current

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month under Latest News for an up-to-date fishing report. We also have an Instagram Gallery - so please follow us.

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If you are looking to learn the skill of Fly Fishing this year please see the Tuition Page on our website and book a lesson with Richard Stokes. We also offer Gift Vouchers for that special present please call Gaynor on 01580 763201 or email gaynor@coombe-farm.com to make your purchase. We are pleased to announce that the Farm/Fishery will become a Wedding Venue when the Fishery is closed for Summer in July/August - we are taking bookings for 2019 & 2020 please see our website for further details.

Tight Lines, Gaynor



Mike Ironside 6lbs 4ozs



Danielle Adams
7lbs 15ozs caught on a Black & Green Viva



John Whiteside 7lbs 7ozs



The Topley family at Tenterden Trout Waters



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FROM HORSHAM take the A281 to Guildford go through Bucks Green and past the Fox Inn Public House on the left, turn right about 3/4 of a mile further on sign posted Cooks Hill follow the road for 1/4 of a mile, Hazel Copse is on the left.

Teise Anglers and Conservation Society

River trout and grayling fishing on the River Teise in Kent

Teise Anglers and Conservation Society controls more than 7 miles of the River Teise in the beautiful Kent countryside of the Weald near Goudhurst. We also have a well-stocked reservoir at Marden Beech.



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:
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Voted the 20th best stillwater fishery by Trout Fisherman magazine

IS THIS SPRING?

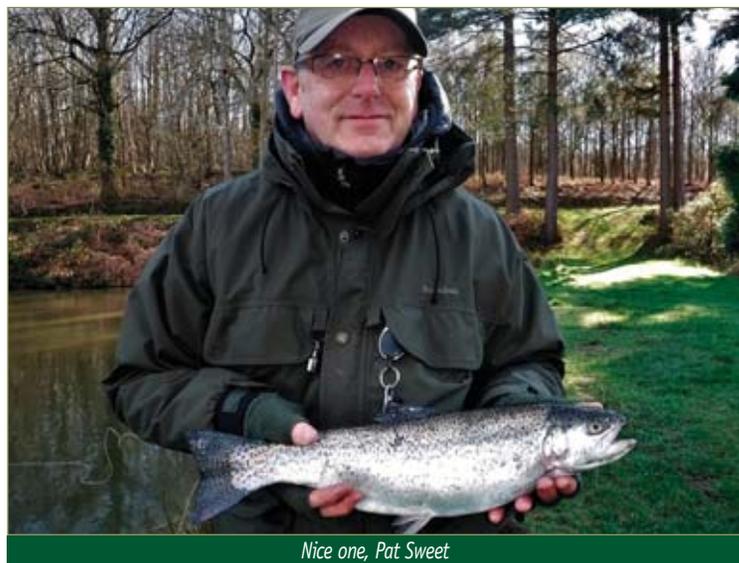
Hopefully this year we will get a period of Spring weather, a time when colour returns to the countryside and when life blooms beneath the water's surface. It's my favourite time of year as I've said before, when the trout are feeding hard and the water temperature is cool enough for them to be full of energy, what's not to like?

I've been busy this month fitting trips into several different waters and what contrasting weather we've had, one moment it's warm and bright followed suddenly by a blast of cold Northerly wind and showers of hail and sleet!

Cinder Hill Trout Syndicate

My first visit this month was to Cinder Hill a trout syndicate which comprises of two venues at Cinder Hill and Piplye. Each location has three lakes, set on the edge of the Ashdown Forest in the 1,000 acre Cinder Hill Estate.

I was taken to Piplye by Clive Newington and his charming wife Brenda on a bright but chilly Sunday in mid-March. Clive gave me a "guided tour" of the three small lakes, Grubbero, Piplye and Roundwood before we started fishing. As we approached the middle lake we saw Pat Sweet hook into a lively rainbow, Pat was using a large dry fly as an indicator to present his UV Buzzer, very clever.



Nice one, Pat Sweet

I elected to fish the bottom lake in the series of pools as it looked a little less coloured, the previous week's rain and storm force gales had reduced visibility somewhat. With the lakes being relatively shallow, 4 – 6ft I was informed, I decided to fish an indicator and suspended a Black UV Diawl Bach and an Olive Buzzer, set at 2ft and 4ft. I opted for one on the strategically positioned "casting fingers" that provided a large amount of water to be accessed without being obstructed by the trees that surround the lakes. Using the wind to drift my flies slowly around I was able to cover the far margin, one fly close to the surface while the other was in mid-water. Once the drift had finished, I slowly retrieved my flies back into my margin which was where my first fish came from, result! The next fish fell to different tactic, as the drift finished I gave two long slow draws on the line lifting my flies towards the surface and then allowed them to sink back to their set depth but before they could the Buzzer was intercepted by another lively rainbow. I explored a few other casting positions around the lake without further success and as I mooched around another fisherman offered me a hot drink which I readily accepted, it had turned hostile by now with flurries of hail and occasionally sleet.

I joined my now "best friend" and his companion on the middle lake, as I cuddled my hot drink we chatted about all things fishy, waters we'd fished, common acquaintances and so on. As we chatted, I asked if they minded me fishing with them for a while as I was enjoying their company. Two fish later and one of my new friends decided he should take a little more notice of what I was using, "every dog has his day" I said as I departed to the top pool



Piplye

hoping I could catch there too.

Clive had been on this lake all morning and was getting lots of frustrating knocks that he couldn't convert. This narrow lake again had some "casting fingers" and I took advantage of one vacated by Brenda who had to leave early to prepare Sunday lunch. Having had five takes and five fish so far I was brimming with confidence, surely I could extract fish from this lake too, wrong! What happened next left me totally confused, I had four takes in half an hour and missed them all, what was happening, I hadn't felt a thing as I struck? I decided not to strike the next time my indicator moved but let it develop. The indicator bobbed and dipped as I slowly retrieved my flies, I somehow managed to resist striking and waited to see what would happen next? What happened was nothing, it didn't develop and I was left scratching my head.

I was getting cold again so a food break was necessary and a re-think. I decided to return to the middle lake, my new companions had left by now leaving the lake deserted. I changed tactics and decided to start casting and retrieving using the "washing line" system to present my flies horizontally on my Rio 6ft Midge Tip, this line has a shorter intermediate sink tip than my favourite Lee Wulff Predator Tip which has a 12ft sink tip which is useful in deeper waters. My team of flies consisted of a buoyant top dropper and point fly with a Cormorant in the middle. First cast, after I'd straightened my line and leader and counted 15 seconds before starting my retrieve and immediately everything tightens up, fish on! Two casts later and it happens again, Clive has joined me now and has bagged a quick couple of fish too which seems a good time as any to finish. This gave us enough time, before the light failed to have a quick look at Cinder Hill a couple of miles away.

We drive around the lakes, the season hasn't started here yet, and these lakes look a bit larger than those at Piplye. Again there are three lakes, Top Pool, Hurstwood and McArthurs Pool. Clive tells me they get good rises in the evenings and I can quite believe it with the surrounding reeds and marshy margins.

For anyone looking for a bolt hole, far from the hub bub of everyday life would do well to consider taking a season's membership at Cinder Hill. Currently it costs £280 for 25 visits which seems a bargain to me, plus you get to enjoy the amazing locations. Taster days for prospective members are available by contacting. info@cinder-hill-trout.uk or phoning 07972 801914.

Bowl Water - Lamberhurst, Kent TN3 8JH [01892-890352]

The new season opened a few days before my visit, I'd heard the first few days had been nothing short of spectacular with limit bags being caught from all parts of the reservoir. Bank anglers had especially been enjoying themselves casting to fish that could be seen patrolling the margins.

A NEW ERA

The opening day saw the end of an era as Howard McKenzie greeted many old friends as they booked in before departing to fish. Opening day was one of Howard's final tasks before starting his well-deserved retirement having managed the fishery during its transition from Southern Water into private ownership, first with Kent & Sussex Attractions and now Markerstudy Group. The baton has been passed to Phil Daley who is starting to make some impact with several promotions including the new **Loyalty Scheme**.

James Gardner and I were excited to be fishing Bowl again; we consider it to be our home water having fished it for over forty years. We've spent so much time on the water as we learnt our trade, I reckon we've spent more than five hundred days fishing there!

So much for the history lesson but what about the fishing? Well our day started off very slowly as we anchored up on several good areas that should have held fish but didn't. We first tried the Children's Playground before moving onto Hook House, Bramble Point and finally Bryant's Point before making the move towards Rosemary Lane. On our way along Bowl Straight we noticed a boat making very short drifts into the margins which suggested they had found fish and were catching! We positioned our boat several hundred yards further



Andy's enjoying being back at Bewl

down the bank an area known as the Gorse Bushes.

The water was crystal clear and we noticed small midges hatching sporadically throughout the day. We both started catching fish on completely different methods. I was using a Rio 6ft Midge Tip line with the "washing line" system, top dropper was a FL Red UV Diawl Bach, middle dropper was a Cormorant and my point fly was a FAB Blob. I was catching my fish on all three flies at about 4-5ft. James on the other hand was using a full floating line with an 18ft leader, top dropper was a Blob, middle dropper was a Black Marabou Diawl Bach and the point fly was a weighted Damsel nymph. All bar one on his fish were caught on the point fly at about 10ft! So we were catching fish at a similar rate for over three or four hours but at different depths, very strange. When the takes finally dried up, I switched to the "indicator" and caught two bonus fish that had resisted my previous offerings, interestingly the successful fly was fishing at 3.5ft! James also switched to the "indicator" and again he caught his fish deeper.



A Bewl Buzzer muncher

GUIDED LURE & FLY FISHING DAYS WITH ANDY LUSH

Lure Fishing

Fish a variety of reservoirs for Pike, Perch and Zander. These days are suitable for beginners and improvers who wish to 'fast track' their way to success.

Learn more about lure fishing, the use of boats and fish finders, or just have a FUN day with an experienced Predator angler.

Fly Fishing

One of Andy's favourite methods, Trout, Carp or Pike can be targeted.

Trout

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

Carp & Pike

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



For details contact Andy Lush on 01892 528677

The fishing was never easy, we had to stay focused and think each time the action slowed but by changing tactics and switching our retrieves speeds and styles we kept catching. It was important to fish each cast all the way back to the boat, including the "lift" and a long "hang". I love catching these bonus fish in this manner, after such a super day we're already planning our next trip.

Arlington Reservoir – Berwick, East Sussex BN26 6TF [01634-276310]

It was good to be back after missing out last year as the "heat wave" kicked in before I had a chance to visit this charming water. Nestling under the South Downs Arlington offers the opportunity to use "top of the water" tactics as it's not unusual to see fish tracking up-wind taking emerging flies or terrestrials blown onto the water from the shrubs and wooded shoreline that surrounds the water.

My trip was a very sociable affair as it was "press day" and I was pleased to catch up with my old mate Peter Cockwill who had travelled up from his new home in Hampshire. There were several new faces in attendance, which was good as these guys were going to see and experience Arlington's hard fighting silver Rainbows for the first time. The strong Southerly wind would energise the fish as it oxygenated the water. We couldn't use the boats as the electric engines would struggle in these conditions so I reluctantly headed up-wind and fished off the dam seeking shelter rather than fish, I was hoping the wind would drop enough in the afternoon to let me go afloat. Peter Cockwill and a few other hardy anglers battled the conditions choosing to cast directly into the "teeth of the wind", the fish were predictably here and Peter skilfully extracted his six fish limit in double quick time.

After lunch with no respite from the wind, so no boats, I reluctantly went into "home bay" and fished into the wind. By shortened my leader to 9ft and fishing a single fly, a Gold head Damsel, I was able to cast about 15-20 yards. Fortunately the fish were close to the bank and very near the surface so I was able to catch a few fish when a shoal came past as they patrolled the shoreline. By four o'clock with most of the invited guests gone I managed to persuade the rangers to let me out in a boat. The wind had dropped significantly, anchoring in "home bay" and casting back towards the bank was so much easier, no trees or bushes to catch my flies on the back cast.



Happy Days! - Andy caught a few while bank fishing

Surprisingly, I struggled to find any obliging fish at first so I had to anchor in several different locations before I added to my tally. By now I was using my Rio 6ft Midge Tip line with a team of small Diawl Bach nymphs. As the light faded, I decided to drift towards the reed bed in front of the fishing lodge, just down-wind from the jetty. A wind lane had formed here and I noticed a few fish working their way up-wind, in haste I'd forgotten to grab my drogue from the car when I grabbed my boat seat, what to do?



Afloat at last!

I lowered the anchor on a short rope just shy of the bottom, tying it off to the rowlock, by doing this I was able to keep the boat broadside to the wind and slow the drift speed, genius. I spotted more fish sipping flies from the surface in the wind lane just to my left; my problem now was my "sink tip" was going to take my flies too deep, what could I do? I quickly tucked the rod under my arm and retrieved "roly poly" style, this continuous retrieve instantly caused a reaction with several fish chasing my flies across the surface. It took me four casts to catch my last fish, having missed three opportunities on the previous three casts! Arlington rarely fails to impress and I will be back to enjoy an evening rise very soon.

*Til next time,
tight lines
Andy Lush*



Medway and Kent Sea Fishing Group



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

At last the Spring is about to give way to summer and the hope of some fine weather and great catches from our beaches, boats and piers. April has been a bit of a 'mixed bag of weather' with a bit of everything thrown in to the mix. However, at the time of writing, Easter is bearing down upon us and the weather forecast is surprisingly good for a Bank Holiday period! The current sea temperature around the coast is currently just below ten degrees so gradually warming. The first of the smoothhounds have begun to arrive and this month will see the larger specimens appear. We expect to see the first of the mackerel arrive towards the end of the month and plaice fishing to continue to improve, although April did see some fine catches of 'spotties' along the Sussex coast.

Medway report

Still some flounders being caught along the river from the rowing club at Rochester down to the M2 bridge. The good news is that the bass are beginning to show along most of the river. Although of no real size it is an encouraging sign that they are moving into their summer feeding grounds. **Local shops for your tackle and bait are Medway Tackle Supplies (now at Twydall) 01634 475260, Anglers Den 01634 852180 and Rod & Line 01634 880770.**



Sheppey report courtesy of Sheppey Angling

Fishing has really begun to pick up and prospects for the coming weeks are good. There has been lots of thornbacks caught from right around the island! Other species include good sized flounders, eels, whiting, dogfish and bass. Bass to 9lbs from the boats, when they have been able to get out and bass to 7lbs from the shore. The first of the hounds are showing and their numbers will certainly increase during the month. Sheppey Angling does have peelers in stock but please book your order as amounts available vary daily.

Call Mick at Sheppey Angling on 01795 661089 / 07902 092595.



North Kent report

Fishing has certainly improved. The thornbacks are showing in good numbers and the hounds are beginning to put in an appearance. Other fish include dabs, whiting and dogfish. A number of bass are being caught in the Swale although small they are good sport on light gear and ragworm bait.



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

Few bass now showing off Ramsgate East pier, along with flat fish and dogs. Lug worm and ragworm working well. Anglers are now permitted to keep 1 bass per day per angler and we have **Free measure stickers for collection from the Fisherman's Corner** which is a 5 minute walk from the pier, fresh lugworm and ragworm available daily but please try to pre-book it **01843 582174.**



Deal report courtesy of David Chamberlain

This year's early crab moult will make peelers harder to find by the end of May - and it would be prudent to freeze down any surplus crabs after a trip, for future use when they become scarce. Smooth hounds have been feeding well on the peelers with some good size fish in among them. Deal pier and Sandwich Bay can be the best venues to find these fish, along with the thornback rays. Again some fine 10lb plus rays have been caught from the lower deck of the pier on fish baits. Apart from the curse of May weed clogging up the reel line, fishing from all of the Deal venues is as good as usual, with plenty of dogfish and a few bass from the Kingsdown and Walmer beaches. As soon as the sea clears, mackerel shoals should start to appear on the pier. The flood tide over the high water will be the time to find them. This month's all night Deal pier session is on May 12th.

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



Dover report

This month will see the arrival of the mackerel on the pier. A number of plaice, dabs, pouting, dogfish, smoothhounds and rays have been caught over the past few weeks. The bigger hounds will be arriving shortly and will provide great sport! Make sure you have a drop net handy! Don't forget that you now need to be a member of DSAA in order to fish the pier. Call Craig at



Channel Angling for more details. Samphire Hoe sport will improve this month with good sport from the pollack, wrasse, mackerel and garfish.

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



Hythe report



Local beaches have been producing plenty of dabs, plaice, flounders, dogfish and some thornbacks. The water is very clear at the moment which will improve the plaice fishing. Towards the end of the month expect to see the mackerel moving in and it will be worth casting a bait short to check out the bass!

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

Eastbourne report courtesy of Tony's Tackle

Beaches fishing well now with plenty of bass being caught up to 3lbs along with plaice to 2lbs from Langney Point and flounders, dabs and a few good sized whiting. Dan Wood had a good bag which included a dogfish of 41cms and Paul King had one of 2lbs 10ozs. Chris Kirrage had an 11lbs thornback after a blow. Glyn Morgan on the Anderida match at Pevensy with a 4lbs ray. Excellent fishing all along the beaches at the moment so



make the most of it. Best baits are black lug, ragworm and bluey and squid for the rays.



Local Eastbourne shops for your tackle and bait are Tonys Tackle on 01323 731388 and Anglers Den at Pevensey Bay on 01323 460441.

ANDERIDA BEACH FISHING CLUB REPORT

The Anderida Beach Fishing Club Annual Members Only Big Fish Big Bash was held on Saturday 23/3/19 with 25 members fishing. The wind turned to the east which made the fishing very tough, but the top three flatfish winners, all catching plaice and pictured below were:

- 1st Steve Martin 15¼oz plaice
- 2nd Mark Underhill 10¾oz plaice
- 3rd Andy James 9½oz plaice



Anderida Beach Fishing Club's regular beach fishing competitions are held on a weekday evening every fortnight in Pevensey Bay. Club matches are followed by sandwiches, a drink and chance to talk fishing at the Ocean View cafe! Open to new members.

TONYS MINI OPEN RESULTS Sunday 7/4/19

- 1st DANIEL WOOD 194 pts
- 2nd PAUL PARSONS 167 pts
- 3rd KEITH ERRIDGE 133 pts
- 4th DARRYL GOSLING 119 pts
- 5th KERRY SAINT 105 pts
- 6th TONY KIRRAGE 91 pts
- 7th PAUL KING 82 pts
- 8th PAUL CHRISTOPHER 71 pts
- 9th IAN HOPPER 65 pts
- 10th TREVOR ROONEY 57 pts



EASTBOURNE TOWN FESTIVAL RESULTS

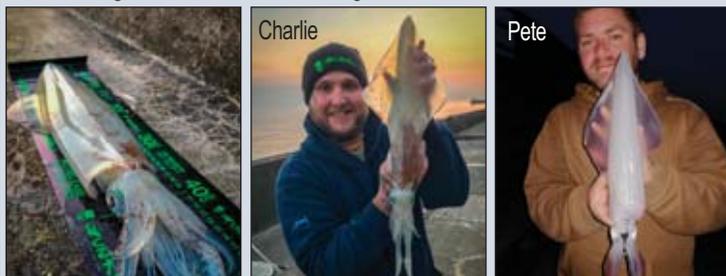
- 1st - TONY KIRRAGE OVERALL
- ZONE A**
- 1st G. SARGEANT
 - 2nd A. BAKER
 - 3rd D. VINE
 - 4th C. KIRRAGE
 - 5th A. AGHILI
- ZONE B**
- 1st I. HOPPER
 - 2nd D. WOOD
 - 3rd S. BROWN
 - 4th P. PARSONS



Heaviest flatfish – I. HOPPER
Heaviest round fish – P. PARSONS

SQUID JIGGING AT BRIGHTON!

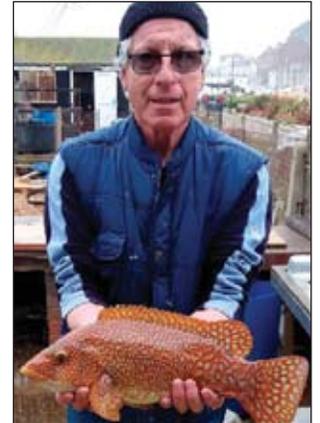
Pete Baker sent in this report from Sussex: "After hearing about squid starting to show at Brighton marina, myself and good friend Charlie Coppola headed over to the East Wall for our chance at a few squid. Slow retrieved jigs was the winning methods for the evening. Thanks Pete Baker"



HASTINGS

courtesy of Hastings Angling Centre
Better weather has allowed the boats to get off at long last. Bit late for the pollack though as most of them had spawned and were well down from peak weight. Some decent catches though and very welcome. Still plenty of thornbacks and plaice for the boats. No sign of any cod though, this last winter has been virtually cod free with hardly any cod being caught at all. We can only hope this is the bottom of the cycle and they can come back. Time will tell. No smoothounds reported yet but as the crabs have started peeling they cannot be far away. The East Hastings SAA had their first boat match of the season recently and best specimen was Alan Kent's very colourful Ballan wrasse of 3lb 12oz which was returned alive.

On the beach, fishing has been very poor with the expected run of plaice not coming inshore. This has left anglers scratching for a few flounders, whiting and the odd bass and plaice. Elsewhere, thornbacks in numbers have come inshore and some very good catches have been reported. The best news is that Hastings Pier has reopened and fishing is allowed. Buy your ticket at the gate. The plaice fishing can be very good.



Alan Kent

Prospects for May: in the boats the summer species start arriving with the smoothounds being the favourite, the first mackerel shoals and the black bream by the end of the month, bass on the wrecks. On the beach May usually brings some big bass inshore to feed up after spawning and lugworm fished over low tide on very rough days can produce double figure fish. Smoothounds should also be about.

KENT BOAT REPORT

courtesy of Jason Parrott
The Spring run has well and truly started with some better stamp smoothound showing mainly on peeler crab but the better ones still taking whole squid. Few smaller bass being caught on single lug and peeler crab but the skate are still the No1 fish with some females touching 15lb and showing in numbers. I know the skate are frowned upon by some anglers, but, for us charter boat skippers, they are our bread and butter. The only down side is that the weather is so unpredictable and the easterly winds are prevailing for the time being. I know the charter boats at Rye are picking up some nice plaice and when the weather let's them get out to the wrecks some nice pollack are showing. Further up the coast is fishing well with a few bigger bass showing and skate. One of the boats at Ramsgate did have his first hit of cod! It is good to see that they haven't gone for good and might show there beards once more.

Good Times ahead and tight lines from all at Lady Ann of Ramsgate.



If you fancy a day afloat with Jason on the Lady Ann, call him on 07966 273650.

Sheppey Angling

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LAST ROUND OF THE ASSO WINTER LEAGUE AND OPEN BEACH MATCH!

Fished in dull but very calm conditions with a very clear sea. There was great expectation of some good catches of plaice with conditions looking very good for them. Unfortunately, they didn't read the script and didn't turn up with only a handful being caught along with some flounders. Fishing was very hard indeed with many blanks. Many thanks to Asso for generously supporting the league again this year.

The winner on the day was Darren Brooks with 2 flounders and a plaice for 2lb 2oz fishing at the New Church. Heaviest fish was Luke Hutton with a bass of 1lb 13oz.

Congratulations to Channel Angling Deal on winning the league with Maidstone Angling runner up. Individual winner was Luke Mooring with 30 points, Kerry Saint and Tom Wales runners up with 27, and joint fourth on 26 were Neville Breeding, Darren Brooks, Colin Crosby, Neil Marsh and Sam Sampson.

Qualifying teams will fish the National Team finals at Eastbourne in the Autumn.



Darren Brooks



Channel Angling



Maidstone Angling



Luke Hutton



Mark Hurcombe



Kerry Saint



DUNGENESS Latest catch reports on www.seagullfishingtackle.com

As I said last month, it has been quiet for numbers of fisherman on the beach. Yes we have a few keen anglers and they have been catching fish. This time of the year traditionally has been quiet for catches, but as the match reports show the fishing has been good. Climate change is having an effect on the eco structure of the sea...different food sources encourage different species. Spring is here and the bass are back!

BEACH REPORT

Our local beaches have gone through big changes in species, the obvious ones are fewer cod and more rays, weather has a lot to do with it, I have always said 'wind makes fish', you get a good 'stir up' in October and it pushes fish food (and fish) into the beach. But climate change with warming weather is changing everything, but the numbers of rays being caught is amazing.

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

Cracking three days for Becky...

A great three day report from Becky Lee came in yesterday...

"3 x 12 = 41 Well I know the maths is off but the fishing certainly hasn't been. My target has been Thornback Rays these last three evenings. I have only fished for 12 odd hours in three nights but the fishing has been immense. Wednesday evening Arrived 1.5 hours before low and fished until 2.5 hours after. Baits were Bluey provided as always by Eazybait - Tim Knight. First two casts produced two fish and then it went quite for an hour until low and on the first of the flood 9 fish in the last 2 hours. Only one smaller one of about 4lb, all the rest were over 5lb most between 6-7lb and three around 9lb. Thursday evening Well all I can say here is in 21 casts I had 20 fish and dropped one on the way in. An unbelievable session again all on Bluey. The rays were ravenous and were smashing baits and pulling the rods right over and on a few occasions out of the tripods. Best ray of the night went to David Harrington of 10lb 11oz amongst his 8. Friday evening Well expectations were high again however the ebb tide did not produce the fish as the previous night and the ray bites were a lot more tentative and not as fierce. Managed one Ray of 7lb ish before low and dropped two others. The tide was huge and went off miles and as soon as low hit so did the fish. As the tide began to turn I managed 10 rays and dropped another 3. Some good fish but no monsters most again 6-7lb with a few around the 5lb bracket. Tonight was the only night I took some for the table (6) the rest from the previous sessions went back alive. Overall an amazing 3 sessions with great company and my personal photographer Dave Harrington. 41 Rays in 3 sessions has completely knackered me out. Time for a rest now."



The sun shines on Steve...

I saw this posted by Steve Harvey...

"Tough day on the parade ...managed to weedle one out ...some will say it was a fluke" ...no Steve...pure skill in choosing the right bait when the going is tough!

Clear seas at Galloways...

I had this report in from Wayne Beale last night...

"Hi Tony...hope you are well. An early start for me today, I got to Galloways about 7am hoping to pump a few worms on LW. The sand bank was cut off by a wide gully about 15yds across and too deep to wade through. So a detour round to Dunge and pumped 100 good worm in just over an hour. Then back to Galloways. I knew it was going to be a tough day from the start what with the NE breeze. Took my time setting up and started fishing about 10.30am. Two rods with 2 hook flappers baited and cast over the sand bank about 60yds. First fish an hour before HW, a nice little Bass, result. Then all quiet till after HW, when I had single whiting. I was expecting maybe a fish or two on the ebb and wasn't disappointed. First a flounder, this followed by another flounder half hour later. 3 hours into the ebb and a nice pull down resulting in a decent plaice. I packed up about just after 4pm. I was happy with the outcome considering the NE and clear water conditions, however, it was warm enough to take my shirt off and start on this year's tan. Another chap just up from me went biteless as did a couple of others further along. Plenty of bait left for another session on Monday. Renewed my DAA membership ready for the DAA vets league as I become eligible in May.

PS...A Mackerel washed up on the beach....are they starting to show???"



Yes Wayne we are getting mackerel on the boats in the bay...it won't be long till they hit the beach...

The 'Diamond' points the way...

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

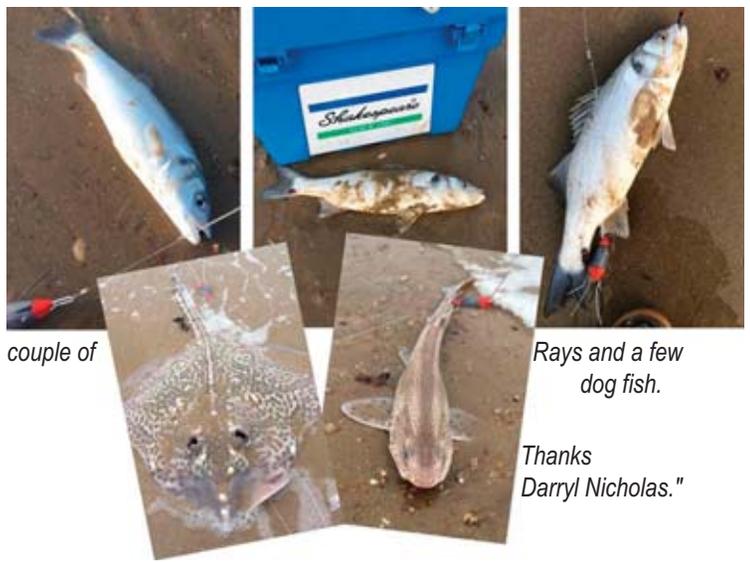
"Hi Tony, I fished Dengemarsh yesterday and arrived to fairly calm conditions with NE winds. Set up a few hours before HT with two rods both with lug and alternating one rod with bluey wraps in the hope of a Ray. First fish was a plaice about 30cm, followed by another and a few flounder, in the daylight most of the fish came at distance. As the light was fading I saw a familiar tap on the rod tip and was happy to reel in my first bass of the year, after that I went all in for another and fished two rods with lug close in but that was my lot apart from a rockling. Thanks for the great lug and will be down soon, Colin."



Darryl out on manoeuvres...

I had this report in from Darryl last night...

"Hi Tony, fished low tide by Hythe ranges Saturday morning had 2 nice bass



couple of

Rays and a few dog fish.

Thanks Darryl Nicholas."

BEACH OUTLOOK FOR MAY

This is a lovely month, we have the return of the bass (and a bit of heat) more rays and dogfish should see more plaice.

Best Baits

We should see more crabs moulting inshore, new season sandeels available ideal for bass, fish baits like 'blueys' and mackerel for rays, worms classic for plaice.

BOAT REPORT

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

"We're in for a 'bumpy' ride!"

I had this report in this evening from Jerry Oiller of 'Fairchance' fame (01797 363544) out from Dungeness...

"A good show for a Skate in the East Bay today, 14 caught in all."



What a cracking pollack...

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

"Best pollack of today's nothing-really-went-to-plan trip! I have spaces Friday, Saturday and Sunday! I am slowly getting my diary together, if you fancy a trip give me a shout!"



I do like blondes...

I had this report in last night from Jerry Oiller of 'Fairchance' fame...

"Fairchance fishing today 01797 363544 Dungeness. A nice Blond Ray for Ian today, with 1 or 2 Thornbacks thrown in."



Some cracking pollack...

I had this report in from Kevin Hicks this morning...

"Hi Tony, Managed to get out from Rye yesterday on a beautiful sunrise and day after a fruitless cod winter (1st time in 20 years not had a winter cod off Dungeness) although did have thick fog mid morning for about 3/4 hour, went wreck hoping found pollock best going just over 12lb also had Gurnard, Whiting and of course the ever loving Pout !!, but no sign of Bass or the elusive Cod don't think they are ever going to turn up now, had to return early due to a bit of engine trouble but lovely day afloat. Kevin Hicks"



More superb pollack...

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

"Some of the pollack caught on today wrecking trip."



Will 'Mr Spikey' come out to play?

Well its good news from April the first until the last day of October, we can take one (sizeable 42cm) bass a day so let's see if the bass come out to play this weekend. Just in case you have forgotten what a bass looks like, here is a picture of one caught on Anthony's boat Peganina last year...



Plenty of plaice today...

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

"Sean was top rod today - the photo is of him holding his best two out of the 16 he caught."



Another sign, summer's coming...

I had this report just in from Anthony out on Peganina (07989 778361) launched from Rye...

"Had some lovely big Grunters (tub gurnards) on today's trip - another species I'd associate with summer. Won't be long until the bream are on their way!"

BOAT OUTLOOK FOR MAY

As usual we need some help from the weather...if we get warm settled weather, yes we can get afloat but we could see more 'may water' (this is an algae bloom caused by the warming of the water amongst other things, suddenly growing and dying clouding up the water and sticking to your line) we need clear (black) water for wrecking using artificial lures for pollock & bass. Plenty of other species about rays, plaice... early turbot on the 'banks', we really are spoilt for choice.

Best Baits

With mackerel starting to be caught on the boats...you have to go a long way to beat mackerel as a bait. Blueys (and herring) have become very popular for rays. Worm baits for plaice.

FILLER.....?

Crab baits!

If I had to choose just one bait it would have to be crab bait!



Crabs are crustaceans and in order to grow they must shed their hard shells, and in a crab's case it's lungs too. This is the time that crabs become a very effective bait. I can only think of a handful of species that don't regularly eat crabs.

The easiest way to tell if a crab is peeling is to gently crack, twist and pull the last segment of the rear leg until it comes off. If the crab is peeling it will reveal a new soft limp segment.

Crabs use hydraulics to shed their shells. They pump the new soft shell that is under the old hard shell up with fluid. This causes the outer shell to start cracking at the sides, eventually lifting the top part of their shell. At this point anglers call them poppers. After the popper stage the crab crawls out. At this stage we anglers call them jellies. These jelly crabs are very fragile, but can be a deadly bait. I love to use them for close range bass fishing. Jelly crabs are still full of the extra fluid and this carries lots of scent that attracts fish as it's carried down tide. As the shell starts to harden the crab will turn from a jelly to a softy, to a crinkle back then back to a hard back. Crabs become less effective baits as they harden, although wrasse and smoothound will happily eat crinkleback crabs and even hard backs.

Once the days get longer and the chill goes from the air, the male crabs start to moult. This is getting earlier year by year and I feel this is due to climate change.

Generally I start collecting crab baits in mid-April, however many start in mid-March. This year I heard rumours of some collecting crabs in late February!

With a little effort and some common sense, male crabs can be collected, stored and live until around late May. Then the female crabs shouldn't be far behind normally starting their moult in June.

In order to reproduce, female crabs have to first shed their shells, for this reason female peelers and softies are found under the larger male crabs.



Collection

During the moulting process crabs are extremely vulnerable. To protect themselves from predators, crabs will use a multitude of habitats to hide. Groynes, under rocks, holes in the mud and even old tyres are all good holding areas to find crabs. When there are a few warmer days, crabs can be found under the rack weed that grows on our sea defences and in weedy pools of water that have been warmed by the sun. Often the groynes on our beaches that control

longshore drift have pools of water each side of them and these pools can hold many crabs that will bury themselves in the silty sand that collects at the corners. When lifting rocks or any other items to find crabs, lift the rock on it's end and carefully scrap about with your hand under the rock as crabs will often bury themselves. Most importantly the rock must be replaced the right way up. If rocks are not put back the right way up it will kill any weed or other life and destroy the habitat. If an area is looked after then crabs can be collected there again and the whole habitat remains intact.

I have seen roof tiles, plastic guttering and various other items put out below the high water line as crab habitats. I feel that there is more than enough rubbish in our seas and along our coast lines without adding to it. I often place a small rock under one end of a large rock to create a gap, this allows crabs to gather under the rock.

When collecting crabs, waders will need to be worn. Kneeling down and working your hand along the groins, or lifting rocks in shallow water is all dirty, wet hard work. Great care should be taken not only in preventing damage to the crabs but in preventing hurting yourself. There are all sorts of nasties in the mud and sand and it's easy to cut your hands to shreds.

Storage and Bringing On

The perfect peeler crab shell will give very slightly when gently gripped from the sides. Do not do this too hard as it will damage the crab.

Crabs start the moulting process by growing a thin membrane under their shell and this membrane will become the new shell. At this early stage they are not great bait, but if kept in a cool dry place like a shed in trays under rack weed the process will continue. Once they are at a stage where they will make a good bait, they should be transferred into a fridge.

All crabs that are ready for bait use should be stored in trays in a fridge under rack weed, the cool temperature will slow the moulting process. Crabs should be given a drink of sea water at least every two days. I do this by submerging the trays in larger trays that are filled in sea water. I drill lots of holes in the smaller tray so that when lifted the water drains freely leaving the crabs damp. Crabs should not be left in water as they will soon use up all the oxygen in the water and die.



Poppers, jellies and crinkle backs should be used fairly quickly, but crabs midway through the moulting presses can be kept in a fridge for several weeks. Any dead crabs should be removed from storage, these can be frozen for leaner times.

Crab bait presentation

My favourite method of presenting a crab bait is to simply nick a nice sized jelly crab on like a coarse angler would nick on a maggot. This method isn't for you power distance casters out there, these jelly crabs are delicate and anything more than a very gentle lob well see the crab hitting the deck behind you. If boat fishing jelly crabs can be nicked onto the hook and gently worked down tide. From the shore they are best used for very short range work. Lob them at features like gaps and gullies between rocks and the pilings beneath piers or any other close range feature.

For up tide fishing from a boat or medium range beach work, jelly crabs can be bound up with light bait elastic, this gives them some protection from the forces that casting puts on a bait. Peeler crabs are much tougher and when I'm up tide fishing from a boat using peeler crab bait, I do not use elastic. I can understand that some feel it gives better hook penetration and I get the point, however, if a fish has picked up a bait and started to move off it will very quickly hit the pressure of the tide on the line, this will drive the hook through the crab bait and into the fishes mouth.

For distance work elastic really is needed and some anglers take a lot of time and effort binding the crab baits in yards of elastic creating lovingly made little crab mummy's. We peel our crabs top and bottom then remove the legs from one side. We then use elastic to bind the crab to the hook with the legs facing the eye of the hook. This gives both a stream lined bait and good hook penetration.

There is lots more that can be said and done with crab baits. For example, peeler crab legs can be peeled and used for tipping baits, or used in bunches for species like wrasse or flaties. Large crabs can be cut in halves or quarters depending on their size and the target species.

All in all, crabs are in my humble opinion a great flexible bait and it's well worth the time and effort or the money to have some in your bait box when you go fishing.



Directory

COARSE FISHERIES

Beaver Farm Fishery Eastbourne Road, Newchapel, Lingfield RH7 6HL	01342 324006 07710 656041
Cackle Hill Lakes Headcorn Road, Biddenden TN27 8JW	01580 292292 01580 291954 07885 284500
Charlies Lakes Steeds Lane, Kingsnorth, Ashford TN26 1NH	07857 539785
Chequertree Trout & Coarse Fishery Bethersden, Nr Ashford TN26 3JR	01233 820078
Claygate Lakes Marden B21 62 between Collier Street & White Hart Pub, TN12 9PL	07770 513448
Coombewood Fishery Redbrook Street, High Halden, Nr Ashford TN26 3JH	07895 679569
Couldens Farm Fishery Hole Lane, Edenbridge TN8 6QS	07470 854915
Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden TN12 8EL	01580 212512
Furnace Brook Fishery Trolliloes, Cowbeech, Nr Hailsham BN27 4QR	01435 830835
Gabriels Fishery Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP	07730 066088
Greenacres Farm Fishery Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden TN27 8EH	07933 934942
Great Engeham Pools Bethersden Road, Woodchurch, Ashford TN26 3PU	07973 410973
Hartley Lands Fishery Swattenden Lane, Cranbrook TN17 3PS	07703 85064
Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	01580 753813
Horam Manor Fishery Horam Manor Farm, Horam TN21 0JB	01323 840889 07707 759364
Iden Wood Fishery Coldharbour Lane, Iden, Rye	01797 280180 07906 232225
Knightingales Fishery Stone-in-Oxney, Nr Tenterden TN30 7HA	07941 176205
Mousehole Lakes Maidstone Road, Nettlestead, Nr Paddock Wood ME18 5HR	07725 783405
Orchard Place Farm Fishing Lakes Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6NY	01892 838576 07860 608218
Tanyard Fisheries Tanyard Lane, Furners Green, Uckfield TN22 3RL	07833 532842
The Firs Fishery & Campsite. Nickley Wood Road, Shadoxhurst, Ashford TN26 1LZ	www.thefirsfishery.com 01233 733492
Tricklebrook Fishery Colts Hill, Five Oak Green TN12 6SH	07743 955812
Wylands International AC Wylands Farm, Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU	01424 893394

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Hastings, Bexhill & District Chris Pagan 07429 655237 Steve Potter 07935 268174 Postal enquiries: S. Corke, 2 The Siding, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1RF	
Haywards Heath & District AS	www.hdas.com info@hhdas.com
Linton Angling Society	Chris Knowler 07712 622858 chris@lintonangling.co.uk
Tenterden Angling & Preservation Society	Colin Sutton 01233 732006 www.tenterdenanglin.co.uk
Tonbridge & District A & FPS PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB	Donna 07947 557140
Wantsum Angling Association	robtuckbrown@hotmail.com Rob Tuck-Brown (secretary) 07484 144561

TROUT FISHERIES

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Chalk Springs Park Bottom, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 0AA	01903 883742
Chequertree Trout & Coarse Fishery Bethersden, Ashford TN26 3JR	01233 820078
Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from r.nathan@btinternet.com	01892 770903
Hazel Cope Baynards, Rudgwick, West Sussex RH12 3AF	01403 822878
Spring Hill Trout Waters Albans Farm, Romford Road, Pembury TN2 4BB	07951 304515
Teise Anglers Fly Fishing Memberships available at www.teiseanglers.org.uk	07960 518738
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