

FRESHWATER INFORMER **f** **FREE**



It's time to tighten those lines...
...WE'RE BACK!

Photo of Brick Farm Lakes

plus JUNIOR INFORMER pages 42-43, TROUT INFORMER pages 44-48, SEA INFORMER pages 52-58



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

To say it is good to be back would be a massive understatement! Our last printed copy was back in December when we published a joint December and January magazine. The reason for a combined issue at that time was due to the November 'lockdown' and the uncertainty about possible further restrictions looming early in the New Year. Little did we know at that time that the next 'lockdown' was to take us right through until late Spring!

However, we are now back and I am thrilled to be here! Although the magazine has not been published since the end of 2020, I have been posting regular items on the magazine's Facebook page which has enabled me to stay in touch with many readers. It has kept me busy (and sane!) as well as occupying my days! I hope that those of you who were furloughed or stood down have managed to keep busy. It was certainly welcome when news that angling could continue was announced, albeit on a local basis. Thankfully, we are now able to travel further afield and visit our favourite fishing spots.

The fishing has now moved in to it's Spring mode and we will soon be enjoying longer warmer days. Depending on the weather and temperature, we may well see the carp begin their spawning, but at the time of writing, things will need to warm up quite a bit! Due to the Close Season, the River Informer section of the magazine is absent, but will return once news and reports begin to arrive again after the re-opening in June. Apart from that, all your regular sections and favourite contributors are back and all with a 'lockdown' story to tell!

I am delighted to welcome back all of our loyal, supportive advertisers and sponsors who make the magazine possible as well as welcoming some new businesses to the 'family'! Do take a look at the advertisers and please support our local tackle shops who will be delighted to see you all again! If you have a business that is not currently being seen in the magazine, do get in touch for an informal, no obligation chat to see how we can work together and put your company in front of the region's anglers.

If you are a magazine subscriber, I have placed a letter in with your magazine this month advising of the credit that has been applied to your account which I hope will meet with your approval. Hopefully now we will be able to provide you with a normal service!

I thank you all for your patience and understanding during the past few difficult months, but hopefully now things will settle down and we can get back in to our stride once again!

Enjoy your fishing, Barry Reed

The Freshwater Informer

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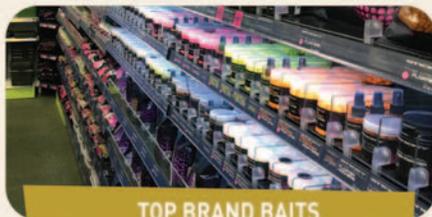
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During the lockdown, Peter Morris kindly put pen to paper and produced this great fishing poem. Peter has not had the opportunity to visit his favourite carp fishing venues due to the restrictions but told me it has given him the time to enjoy other outdoor pursuits!

The Morning Catch

*Up at first light to visit the lake,
Car full of tackle and smelling of bait.
On arrival the mist is starting to lift
And the rising sun is a pleasant gift!*

*There are swirls on the water as I feed up my line
And set the alarms for a target so fine.
An hour passes as I stare from my chair,
All sorts of thoughts surround me there.*

Letters to the editor



*I think of the depth and the leaves on the bottom
Curled and rank as they are rotten.
Staying alert to the tip of the rod,
I admire all around me the creation of God.*

*Suddenly the bleeper sounds in the stillness,
A fish pulls hard at the end that means business.
Round and round all water it splashes,
And then with a lift, it's on the bank
And it comes to rest but is it my best?*

Peter Morris

Regular correspondent, Robin Piper, penned me a letter recently. Robin stayed at home when restrictions only allowed local travel, but, he was keen to take advantage once we were permitted to travel further afield!

Dear Barry,

It has been a long time since we have seen any action on the fishing front! Once restrictions were eased, I did manage to grab a few short sessions out in March. One of the days I ventured out there was no breeze and only some grey cloud, but there was forecast of light rain in the afternoon. I ventured along to Claygate Lakes and lucky for me the Snake Lake was empty and I settled on peg 24 as it looked very inviting! I set up a bottom rod with 6lbs Maxima reel line and a running link with a half ounce Pallatrax Stonze weight.

I fed a few loose prawns and hooked one on a size 12 barbless hook. It was an hour before anything showed any interest and that interest came from a small mirror of about 3lbs 8ozs. There was then a long period of nothing! Too long for me so Plan B came in to play in the shape of a large loaf of bread! I introduced some loose bits on the surface to begin with to gauge interest. After just a few minutes, carp began to feed on the floating crusts and this put me in a better frame of mind! I continued to feed on the surface and the carp stayed with me.

I looked up at the sky and the grey cloud was now turning black and there was a rumble of thunder in the distance! I thought that it was a good time to pack up as in my rush to get fishing I had left the brolly at home! My bag for the day was 42lbs of carp plus a bonus chub of 2lbs 4ozs.

My next session shortly after the first and as we could travel was again back to Claygate. Imagine my surprise as when I arrived there were around 30 cars in the car park! However, to my delight there were just four anglers on the Snake Lake and I was able to find myself a nice swim. The fishery has done a lot of work during the early part of the year clearing and improving the swims and creating better access to the pegs. Today the weather had changed and there was a clear sky and bright sunshine and the temperature rose to 21 degrees and was the warmest day of the year so far. The nice weather did put the fish off feeding on the bottom and the surface fishing was hard, but I managed a few. By four o'clock any further bites had dried up and the fish switched off, but I weighed 29lbs 12ozs of fish.

I have enclosed a few photos from the sessions that I enjoyed and have also enclosed one of my PB perch, but that was not from these trips. Maybe a story for another day!

Kind regards, Robin Piper



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Well, hello everyone and its good to be back! As it is a few months since the reports were last printed we won't go into detail of all that's been happening as there's not enough room in the magazine! So here is a run down of some of the catches that have been reported to us and plenty of pictures.



Connor Ley 31-05 Snipe - New Common Record!!

We have seen **Snipe Lake**

produce a few 30's so far this year, The Ghostie came out at 30-08, the Scarred

Common came out at 30-06 and the Big Scaled Common was banked at a new common lake record at 31-05. We have also had lots of upper 20's banked and the stockies are growing well being banked to low to mid 20's. It's great to see our plan coming to fruition and watching the fish continue to gain weight. As for the cats, we have seen plenty of anglers getting amongst them and they have been banked to 67-08 so far this year. It's good to see anglers banking PBs ranging from the 30's, 40's and 50's too. We have again seen a bit of algae growth and some weed in **Daughters Lake** which has and is making the fishing a bit

harder than we would like, but we are advising anglers to spend a bit of time searching out clear spots. The grassies have been banked to 21lbs



Ben Gosling 51-00 - 1st Big Cat 2021



Andy - 27-06 Snipe



Ben - 27-14 Snipe



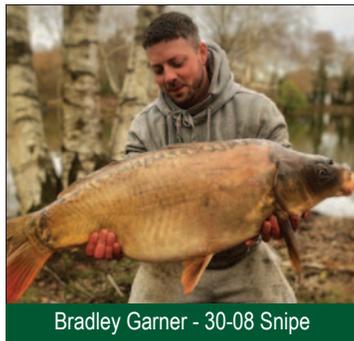
Chris Edland - Snipe 28-10



Jason VanArkadie - 30-06 Snipe PB



Josh Kissler - 27-04 Snipe



Bradley Garner - 30-08 Snipe



Matt Barker - Majors Stockie



Matt Burns - Majors

and other carp have been banked to 17lbs. **Major's Lake** has started producing some of the new stockies we introduced in the winter to low and mid-doubles and the lake record mirror was also banked at 24lbs. We have also seen some cracking bream to 8lbs and crucians to 3lbs being banked too. **Eden Pond** has just started producing the tench but as you can imagine with all of the overnight frost it has been a bit slower for them than usual at this time of year.

Moat Pond and **Maze Lake** have also started waking up with most species being banked.

Jeff's Lake is, as usual, fishing well with the original F1's being banked to 6-7lb and the new ghost F1's that we introduced in the winter are slowly settling in and are falling to a few lucky anglers. As usual Ben and I have been busy getting all of the usual maintenance done ready for our guests and we both look forward to seeing you all on the banks soon.



Craig Clayton - 21-00 Daughters



Richard Darch - 24lbs Majors Lake record



Arek Strychalski - Majors



Jon Wilson - 46lbs PB West Lake

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Speci 1 Fish coming out to anglers using solid PVA bags casting to showing fish or a lightly baited area using wafers or pop ups as hook baits.

Speci 2 Now the warmer weather has moved in the catfish are slowly waking up. The odd fish is showing during the day and late afternoons even as the weather has plummeted into the minuses during the night. However, the carp are showing to lightly baited areas using fluoro pop ups with yellow working the best. This lake has also seen a number of bream showing from 4lb up to 6lb being taken on the feeder. There is also a good head of pike to be had on single hook lures or dead baits.

Heron Fishes all year round as a mixed coarse lake and a very good runs water for carp. Small method feeders or float fishing works best in here and do not be shy on the bait as this will bring them on the feed. Favourite hook baits are maggots, worms, luncheon meat, corn, banded pellets and paste.

Kingfisher This is an overstocked match lake and great fun with a guarantee of catching, brilliant for families or anyone wanting to teach their kids how to fish. Stay away from boilies on here and use natural baits like maggots, corn, pellets, worms etc

Bluebell A little tench pond tucked out of the way. This pond is showing a good number of tench being caught on float or feeder tactics using worm, maggot, paste or sweetcorn on the hook.



Matthew and Rebecca



Anthony Hildige



Shane Hynes



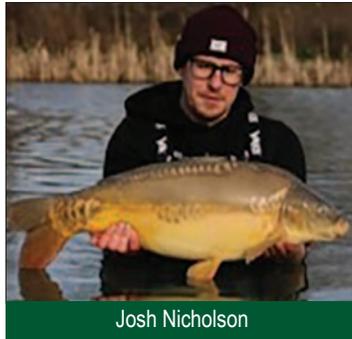
Pete



Josh Nicholson



Shane Hynes



Josh Nicholson



Louise



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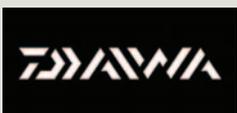
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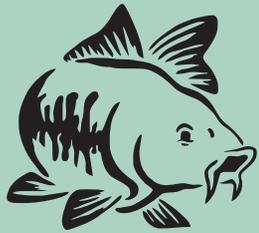
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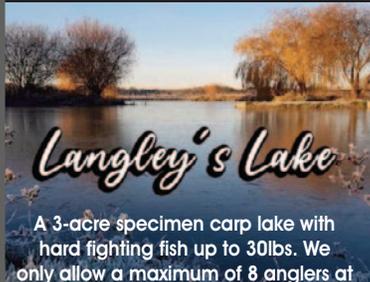
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Alfie Burton



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Luke Bostock



Lee Whitworth



Colin - 26lbs 8ozs



Darren Bird - 25lbs



Double take for Alfie

Tyler lands some Elphicks beauties!

Tyler Clarkson sent in this report:



Hi Barry, Well I'm home from a very memorable 80 hrs session on Elphicks North Lake!

Fishing wasn't up to the standards we were expecting, but with the massive change in weather from last week, it was inevitable that it could be a bit tricky. I managed to bank 3 stunning carp, but unfortunately lost 3 as well. My 1st fish came in the shape of a new PB common at 39lbs, followed by a smaller mirror of 21lbs 8ozs.

The following day I also banked a 'power house' of a mirror at 34lbs. All fish came to 4ft zigs. Happy to be home in the warm, but my time on North Lake isn't finished yet!



Regards, Tyler

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Charlie



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Scott 21lbs



Scott



The 46lbs fish 18 months ago!



Luke Bostock

**Good session for Paul on the Match Lake!**

Paul Muffett enjoyed a great day on our fishery's match lake and sent us this great report: Paul said "I decided to fish the match lake at Tricklebrook today. I was informed by the bailiff Nigel that there had been a leak on the lake that had now been resolved, but found the water level somewhat lower than expected with average depths no more than 2 and a half to 3 feet. I started on the pole at the 13m line with 6mm Skrettings pellet on the hook whilst feeding small amounts of 4mm over the top and had my first fish, a skimmer, after about 5 minutes which was soon followed by another. After having 6 or 7 skimmers in quick succession, bites slowed so I decided to increase to an 8mm pellet on the hook. This immediately resulted in a good run of F1s and carp between 2 and 3lbs. I had around 15 fish until deciding to switch to the 7m line. More skimmers, carp and F1s followed and the last fish was a mirror carp of about 5lbs. The key to catching today was depth, the bait had to be dead depth, an inch over or under would not get a bite. All in all I had approx 70lbs which, considering the low water level, was a decent result." All the best, Paul. **Unfortunately, Paul did not get any photos of his catch as all the fish were returned immediately to the water.**

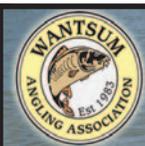
Good day for Andrejs!

Andrejs Melniks had a day at Sam's Lakes in Headcorn and sent in this report:

It was a very cold start to the morning! I had no bites on the bottom, didn't see any fish rising to the surface so tried

fishing on a float with some sweetcorn which didn't produce anything either. I then went to check out the top lake and saw some carp moving in between the islands, so I moved pegs. I decided to try

fishing with a bombard float and bread, which proved to work. It was very difficult to reach the fish due to overhanging trees and side wind but manageable. All in all I caught 12 carp with the heaviest being around 8lbs, average being around 5lb. I didn't see anyone else catch a single fish. It proved to be worth leaving the house today!

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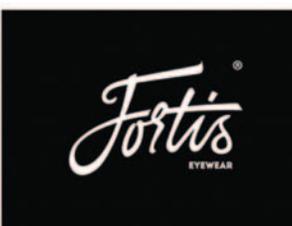
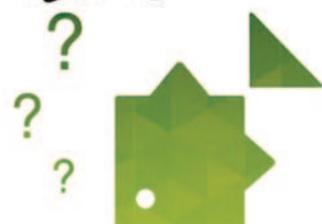
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Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hawkhurst, Kent

It's great to have everyone back on the banks at last for both day tickets and overnight sessions! The lakes generally have been fairly challenging, especially with the near freezing temperatures at night. This hasn't stopped our anglers though and many have been well rewarded for their efforts.

Our members lake, **Specimen Lake**, has seen some absolutely stunning carp grace the banks recently, including one of the new 36lb mirrors that was only stocked in March! **Main Lake** has seen a good amount of large catfish (to the 70lbs mark), and some beautiful carp - a few of the newly stocked mirrors have also graced the bank!

Dove Lake has been mainly carp to mid-20s so far. **Quarry Lake** has been quite up and down, some anglers have really struggled but others have caught double figures in a day (both carp and catfish). All lakes mentioned above must be pre-booked.



28lb Common - Specimen Lake - Rob Ledsham



27lb Common - Specimen Lake - Lee Mandry



30lb Common - Specimen Lake - Dave Bembrick



32lb Mirror - Specimen Lake - River Foster



34lb Mirror - Specimen Lake - Lee Mandry



Common - Four Trees Lake - Richard Ivinson



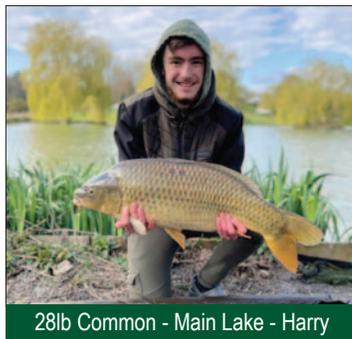
Common - Quarry Lake - Oliver Claxton



47lb 8oz Catfish - Main Lake - Ened



Mirror - Main Lake - Sam



28lb Common - Main Lake - Harry



Main Lake - Callum Emptage

Pleasure anglers do not need to pre-book for **Match Lake** or **Four Trees Lake**; just pay on the bank. We are also very pleased to finally be able to reopen our **Junior Lakes**. At the time of writing we have just finished our first week of re-opening. It's been very successful with lots of juniors catching! We've also started a competition on these lakes- we added one orange koi to each of the free ponds; if you catch one, you'll win yourself £10 off your next visit! Within the first 4 days of them being stocked we have had 2 prize winners already. It's proving a great way to keep the kids focused on catching, and to introduce the idea of a target fish for those that want to continue with the hobby.



21lb Common and 51lb Catfish - Main Lake - Barney Furlong

Hawkhurst Fish Farm

Hastings Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4RT

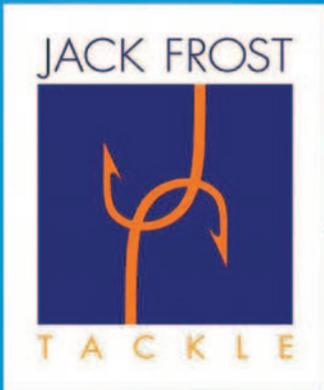
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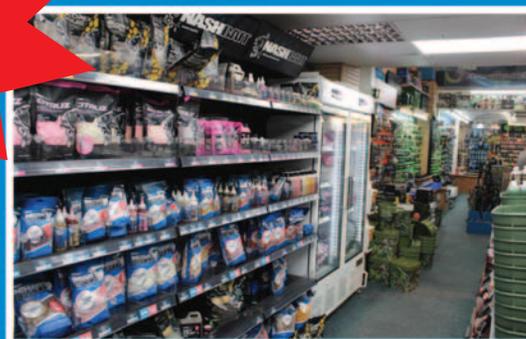
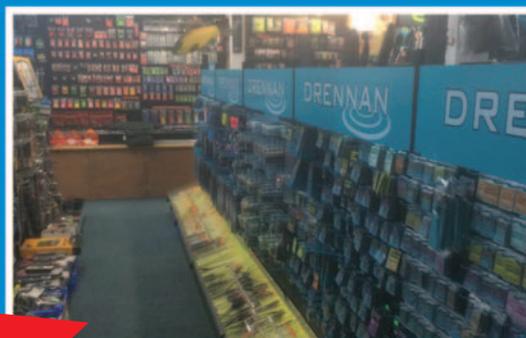
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BARRY & ADAM'S BIG DAY OUT

It has certainly been a long time since I wet a line! The last time was September 2020 when Mrs Reed and I had a week at our beloved lakeside lodge in Cornwall. Since then we have endured famine, pests and plague of near Biblical proportions (OK, a slight exaggeration!), which has seen all our lives and activities turned upside down.

It was both surprise and delight when my youngest lad Adam recently mentioned about going fishing again! It was a surprise in that it must be around 25 years since he last went! The last time I recall was when I was Match Secretary for the Stanhope Angling Society at Ashford and Adam used to participate in the regular competitions at our water, The Moat, on Park Farm, Ashford and he used to give a very good account of himself regularly beating many of the more experienced adults!

I needed to find a water that was convenient and would give a good chance of producing some fish, but not be too crowded and I chose the match lake at Charlies Lakes, Ashford. It fitted the bill in terms of location and fish.

I met Adam at Charlie's just before 8am and we had a brief chat with Karen, the owner with husband Steve. We showed our rod licences as the fishery requires all visitors to produce a valid licence. The barrow was loaded and, thankfully, Adam offered to push the heavily laden contraption from the car park to the lake! The fishery supplies nets and mats so at least Adam didn't have to push those as well! We selected a swim at the far end of the match lake and the cold northerly wind was blowing from our left to right down in to the corner we had chosen. Following an overnight frost and cold lake water, conditions were not entirely favourable, but we were there and I was determined to make the most of our day!



First one of the day for Adam

sat and had our bacon rolls and a brew from the kettle and chatted away. It was then that Adam told me that he and Amy, his partner, were expecting a baby in October! What great news and I am so pleased for them! Mrs Reed was also excited later when I got home and relayed the good news!

Once the bacon rolls were dispatched and the fishing was still quiet, Adam had a 'live tutorial' on how to tie a knotless knot and present a bait on a hair rig! He found tying the small loop for the hair a bit fiddly but, with a little help, he had soon tied up his rig. He changed the hook length on his feeder rig to the rig he had just tied and he presented a triple stack of corn on the hair. Not long after casting, the tip shot round and a slightly larger common was soon in the net! A delighted student!



Caution! Apprentice at work

We put the brolly up to keep the wind off while we tackled up and mixed the groundbait. I had a selection of baits, but initially showed Adam how to set up with a free running groundbait feeder, short hook link of around 6 - 8" and a size 12 barbless hook baited with maggots. A simple start, but it would give us an indication of what was about. After baiting up his feeder and hook and after a little instruction on casting, Adam soon had his rig in the water. He didn't have to wait long before the tip was rattling and his first fish, a pretty little roach, was on the bank. He was chuffed and so was I. The feeder was re-baited and new maggots on the hook. Soon after another roach on the bank. This was repeated numerous times before I changed the hook bait to sweetcorn to see if we could tempt anything bigger. First cast with the corn and another roach, albeit a little bigger! Adam re-baited with corn and cast out and within moments the tip went round and he had a small common of around 2lbs. Another couple of small commons and things quietened down so we



The winning formula before and after



By around 1030 I still hadn't got my own rod in the water so I set up slightly different to Adam in the hope of finding the bigger carp which inhabit the match lake. I set up a free running Pallatrax Stonze weight with a short hook link of about 4 - 6". The Stonze weight was then wrapped in the Pallatrax Maggot and Daphnia Crush method/groundbait mix and the hair was baited with a 14mm Source boilie wrapped in the Pallatrax Crave paste. Rig components were supplied by Carpers Essentials. Adam was fishing in open water to my right, but in front me was an island at about 50 yards with lots of 'carpy looking' features! However, as not having cast a line (accurately!) for some time, I wondered how 'rusty' my casting had become! However, my fears were short lived as a gentle flick saw the rig land perfectly about a metre off the island! Fluke or skill?



Adam's best fish



First one for Dad

The chill wind had shifted round and was now blowing directly in to our faces and the broolly needed to be roped down. Once base camp was re-established and more tea and coffee had been consumed, we were hoping for some more fish. Adam had already opened his account and was pleased, but his 'old man' had only talked a lot and eaten bacon rolls! Not long after midday, Steve (the owner) came round to see how we were getting on. We had a good chat as I hadn't seen him in a while and we caught up with all the latest gossip. Over on the main lake just opposite us, a couple of lads had had a brilliant weekend with around 60 catfish and while Steve was chatting, they had a double take! Steve and Adam jumped on the quad to go and have a look! They were both around 15lbs but were the first catfish Adam had seen!

Conditions were settling, the wind had eased off and the sunshine was feeling very pleasant. I then had a 'one toner'! After a good fight, I had a lovely looking common of around 10 lbs on the mat and I was pleased! With the photos taken and the fish returned to the cold lake, I felt that we might see some bigger fish begin a short spell of feeding. I asked Adam if he wanted to change his rig and fish similar to me, to which he agreed. He then tied up a free running Stonze weight and a #10 wide gape hook with a 12 mm Pallatrax Jungle boilie on the hair. The method mix was wrapped around his weight and Jungle paste wrapped around his boilie. The Jungle is made from peanut and tiger nut flour and yellow in colour. With his rig changed and cast out, it was minutes before his tip wrapped round and he was in to a better fish of around 5lbs, another fit stocky bronze coloured common. A very delighted student! Not to be outdone, shortly after I had another fish of around 14lbs which gave a very good account of itself. The changes had worked!



Lovely looking Charlie's common

I went on to have a final fish of around 18lbs making three for me for the day and Adam's last fish was his biggest of the day at around 10lbs giving him a total of seven carp and some roach!

We packed up at around 6pm after a thoroughly enjoyable day's fishing at Charlie's and Adam is keen to go again! The fishing bug has bitten him once again!

If you fancy a day's fishing at Charlie's, either on the main lake for cats and carp or the match lake, give Steve and Karen a call on 07857 539785.



My final fish for the day

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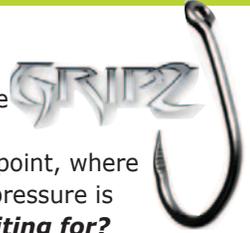
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Gripz Fishing Hooks

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

Grab your rods and head down to your favourite water and remember to take your phone or camera!



Aidan Kingsmill - 33lbs 12ozs



Ricky Deerans - Sussex day ticket water



Danny Colbourne - 31lbs 2ozs Elphicks



Jack Bond - 37lbs Loggies



Matthew and Rebecca
Greenacres Farm Fishery



Neil Wale



Roger Tanner
Kent club lake - 12lbs of silvers



Russ Robertson-Browne
30lbs Cackle Hill



Terry Donovan - 26lbs Loggies



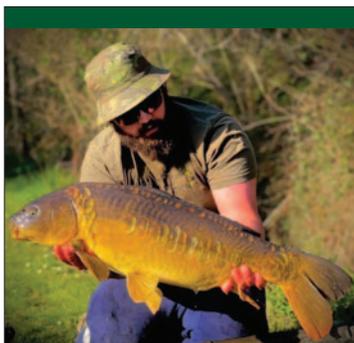
James Atfield - 20lbs Club water



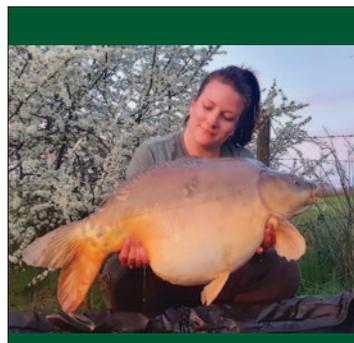
Chris Morgan - 19lbs Lovelace Farm



Jack Wood - 39lbs Elphicks



Alfie Thompson
18lbs Frogmore Fishery



Sarah Robertson-Browne
35lbs Cackle Hill



Tyler Clarkson - 39lbs Elphicks



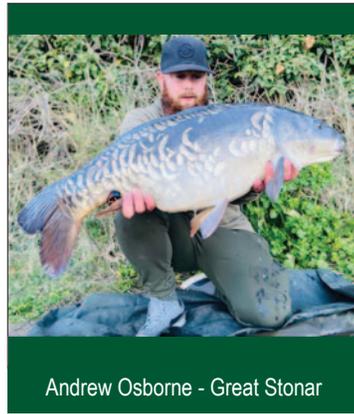
Simon Milton - 13lbs Greenacres



Shane Pope - 7lbs 2ozs Knightingales



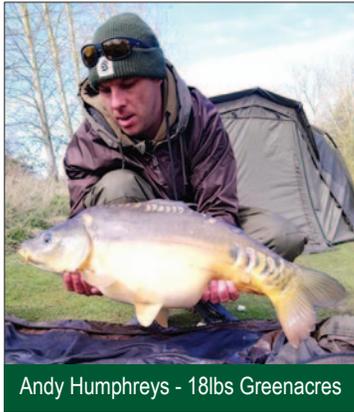
Sue at Lovelace Farm



Andrew Osborne - Great Stonar



Brian Lucas - Kent club water



Andy Humphreys - 18lbs Greenacres



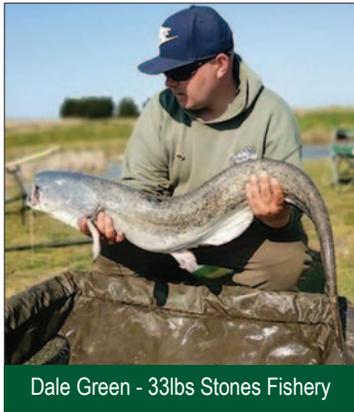
David Graveling
34lbs Hawkurst Fish Farm



Gordon Fellows
20lbs 12ozs Lovelace Farm



Sam Chats - 32lbs Swanborough



Dale Green - 33lbs Stones Fishery



Ryan Thorpe at Elphicks



Jake Trapp - 30lbs 4ozs Chequertree



Craig Watson
32lbs 2ozs Mousehole Lakes

May 2021

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Frankie-Ray at Chequertree



Frankie-Ray Joiner new PB at Chequertree



Gemma Baker 17lbs 4ozs Private water



Marcus Taylor & son Jorge Jago aged 5



Shane Hynes at Greenacres



Shane Hynes - Heron Lake, Greenacres

FIT FOR A KING!

Firstly, it is great to be back, and I hope you are all safe and well in these challenging times. Now Spring is here, and I have now seen my first swallows after their incredible journey back to the UK after wintering in Africa. It has always amazed me how these, and many others, migrate back to us from such far-flung lands – and with no sat nav!!

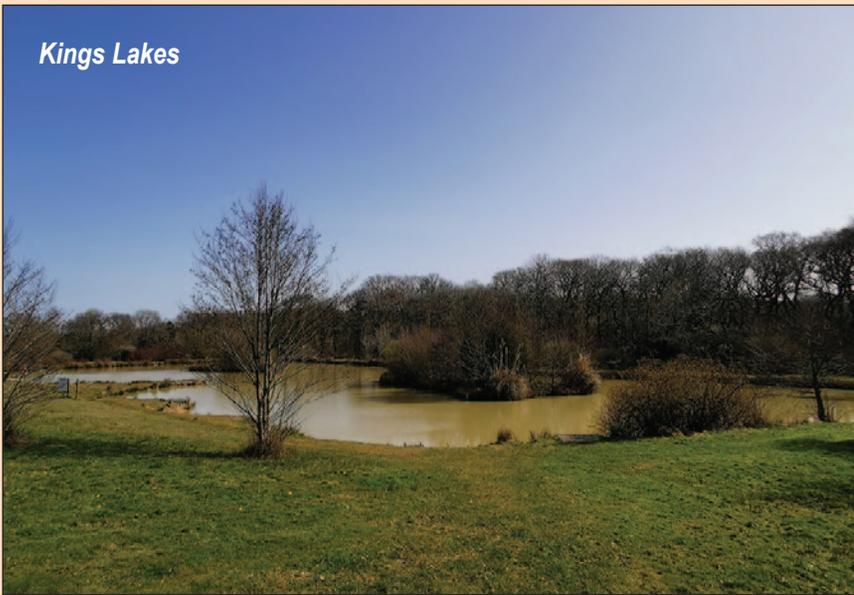
I have to confess to a winter of zero fishing with some rubbish weather and work keeping me incredibly busy. It is all well and good working in the fishing industry, but it certainly does not guarantee I get to go that much! Covid had also cancelled several trips and I was gutted not to be going to a lovely French Lake, La Planchette, earlier this month. The positive is that I have booked for next year!

I have some great trips planned both at home and abroad, so watch this space for some cracking venues I will be fishing, for a variety of species, and writing about my angling exploits this year exclusively for The Freshwater Informer.

One other thing to mention is that I have now got planning permission to dig three small lakes down here in Devon in a stunning setting. I am really excited to get the opportunity of building my own lakes and, as the digging starts soon, I will introduce this 'journey' in one of my features going forward.



Kings Lakes



So, to my first session of the year and the night before I was excited with the anticipation of finally getting bankside, even though it was only going to be for a few hours. A friend of mine, Andrew, has recently taken over as Fishery Manager at a luxury holiday complex here in North Devon and that would be my destination. Kings Lakes are set in a beautiful part of the country and with some amazing accommodation. It also offers several different lakes to fish on for a multitude of species, from some lovely carp through to some stunning tench, and most species in between.

I arrived at first light and it was 'baltic', not a good start, but at least I was out. As I drove into the car park, I saw Andrew was there and after a quick catch up, with Andrew telling me all about the exciting plans for how they intended to take the fishery forward, I 'barrowed' down to one of the carp lakes.

Andrew was fishing the shallower water and we both started off with the Stonze System and 10mm Jungle Squab pop ups. Andrew was quickly into a couple of fish but, though I saw some fish in my swim, there was no sign of any feeding on the bottom which got the grey matter into action. If there's fish in the swim and they seemed to be mooching around the surface whatever time of the year I have some dog mixers in the van. There is a belief that carp will not take off the surface in cold conditions, but I promise you that it is really not the case and I have taken them off the top even in the depths of winter with ice on the surface!

Pom and his first fish of 2021



I dribbled in a few 'chummies' and after several minutes started to see some fish

moving in the area and the odd one taking a mixer. I love sight/surface fishing! It is so exciting seeing that fish taking your hook bait, so as the lake was reasonably small I decided to go down the route of freelining a Fluoro White over flavoured Jungle 10mm pop up Squab which was hair rigged onto a size 10 Gripz Wide Gape pattern hook. For surface fishing this pattern of hook is a must with the in-turned point really being so efficient within this tactical approach.

The fish were definitely not in any form of feeding frenzy but I'm always confident of getting a bite if I have fish in the swim and it wasn't long before I saw a fish slurp down my pop up and tightening up it was first 'fish on' of 2021 – happy times!



Pom's rig set up

These fish were certainly up for a fight and on my 2.25tc rods it was a cracking battle, but after a couple of minutes my prize was pulled into the landing net. A lovely scaley mirror, they really do have some very pretty fish at Kings Lakes. Andrew was doing what all good anglers do and seeing fish taking off the surface he adapted to the conditions and soon was himself into action with another fish taking his free lined hook bait.

One tip when you are freelining is that you can only cast short distances and that can stop you targeting fish at further distances. How I get round this is to mix up a small batch of method mix and then wrap that around the hook and Squab. This then gives me some extra weight to cast further and then as soon as it hits the surface a quick flick and the method drops off and the pop up sits on the surface. One of the reasons to fish the Fluoro White on this day was so that I could clearly see it, being only 10mm and at a reasonable distance my old and tired eyes need all the help they can get!

Both of us had to cut the day short, I had to meet the engineer for the new lake complex, so we would have to unfortunately miss out on the afternoon and evening bite times. But, it was still a great few hours, good company, nice fish, and a lovely venue. We ended up with several more fish off of the surface, yet no further action on the deck – yet again showing that if you adapt you can still conquer!



Andrew deservedly took the honours by catching both the most and the biggest fish – I will be back! It really is a cracking venue and I think a tench session will be on the cards there before too long. Till next time, stay safe and catch more, and if you have any questions please always feel free to contact me by email at simon@pallatrax.co.uk.

Simon 'Pom' Pomeroy

The fishery details if you would like to stay and/or fish are:

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Claygate Lakes Claygate, Marden, Kent

A big 'Thank You' to Barry for starting the Informer up again after the Covid 19 lockdown!

A lot of changes have been taking place here at Claygate lakes! Lake Eva has had major repair works to her banks, meaning we have been able to add a summerhouse with electric that can be hired out. Eva has also been restocked with 4 x carp up to mid 30's and numerous double figure carp including some in the high 20's. We also now have a new separate ladies toilet and shower room, which incorporates wheelchair access for our disabled visitors.

Lake Amy: has been slow at times, but has started picking up with the increase in temperature. Monday **Ray** seems to be talking to the fish with mid 20's, a 28lb and 2 x 30's biggest 33.05lb coming out to his secret bait which I also eat in a sandwich with Branston pickle!

George Wells popped in for a day session and went away with a big smile after landing a lovely looking carp.

Lake Sophie: Richie has been trying for a big bream for the last few weeks and was lucky enough to see one come out at 11lbs, unfortunately, it was his mate who caught it. The biggest bream out so far this year has gone 13lbs. Whilst writing, some nice 1.8lb roach along with some better sized tench have started to show.

Lake Eva: Well done to **Cai Bowden** on landing a 33lb 10oz common when he popped down on a day session. To date, nobody has managed to catch a rather large pale coloured fish which has been seen in numerous swims around the lake. Practising for a match, **Kris Collings** hooked and landed a 26lb 4oz common on an 18 hook with a single maggot. **Dougie jnr** with his dad sums up the joy of first time fishing. The four year old held on for dear life whilst sat on a bait bucket, not a bad technique for a beginner.



Kris Collings 26lbs on a size 18 hook



New Claygate Lakes

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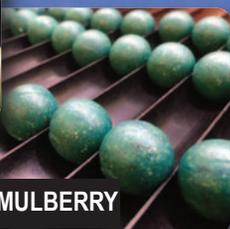


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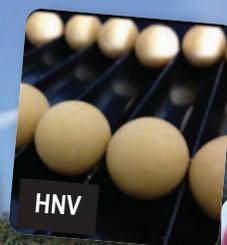
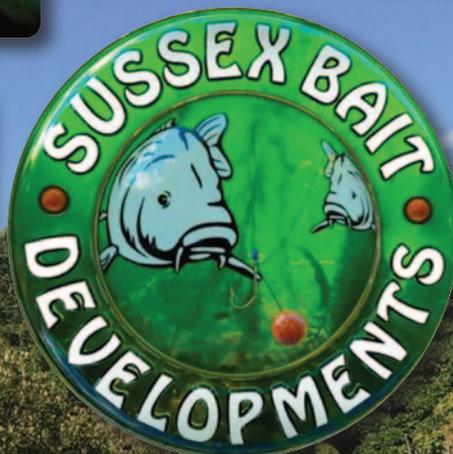
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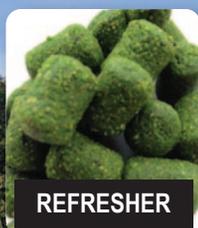
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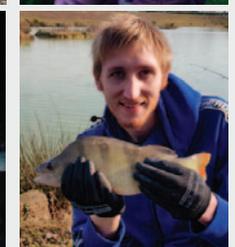
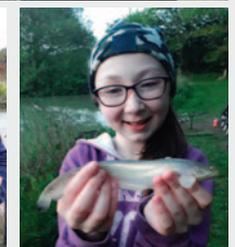
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Orchard Place Farm Paddock Wood, Kent



Danny & Mark - 16lbs and 19lbs Lake 2



51lbs - Lake 8



Craig Saunders - 52lbs Lake 8 - biggest of six cats



37lb

Tim Hine - Lake 8



16lbs 2oz Horsmonden Top Lake



Top Lake



27lb



23lb



Jim Pilkington - Dolan Manor



Glen Morris - Horsmonden Top Lake



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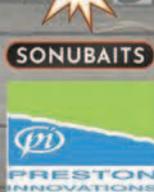


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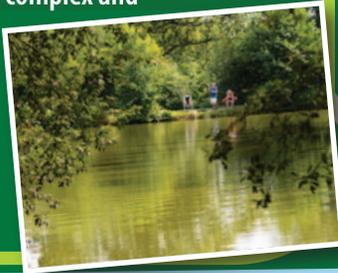
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BAIT AVAILABILITY DEPENDENT ON TIDE AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

4. FIELD LAKE stocked with a large number of small carp, Field Lake is ideal for introducing young people to angling for the first time. This 1 acre lake is nicely tucked away at the entrance to the complex and often produces a fish a cast! To complement the carp there is also a nice head of roach and rudd. In the summer we run beginner coaching sessions on this lake - keep checking the website for more information!

Difficulty - easy



5. MIDDLE LAKE is an intermediate lake with carp up to 30lb and can be a good challenging water. This is a popular lake being close proximity to all the facilities.



1. HOUSE LAKE is one of the more popular waters. At some 2 acres, this pretty fishery is ideally located close to the Snack Bar, Tackle Shop and Reception. It consists of 3 islands where many a carp patrol. The lake has 4 disabled swims that are easily reached from the roadway. The carp reach 24lb and the lake is also home to some fine silvers along with a good head of roach and skimmer bream. Try fishing at the top of the lake into the channel for some carp action. Floating baits work well in the summer with many fish taken off the top.

Difficulty - easy to moderate



2. ROSIES LAKE is perfect for the pleasure angler. At 2 acres in size it is fringed with reed beds and water lilies and there is an island at one end. Suitable for the disabled angler due to the easy access, Rosies contains a good head of carp up to 26lb, crucian carp, rudd and bream - there has even been a 19lb grass carp caught! Some of the larger fish are taken off the top with bread and a bubble float, whilst large numbers can be caught on the feeder or pole.

Extensive works have been carried out on Rosies to include new fishing stations and improvements to the island. Day tickets are to the left-hand side of the lake and on the right we have some private pods that can be hired.

Difficulty - moderate



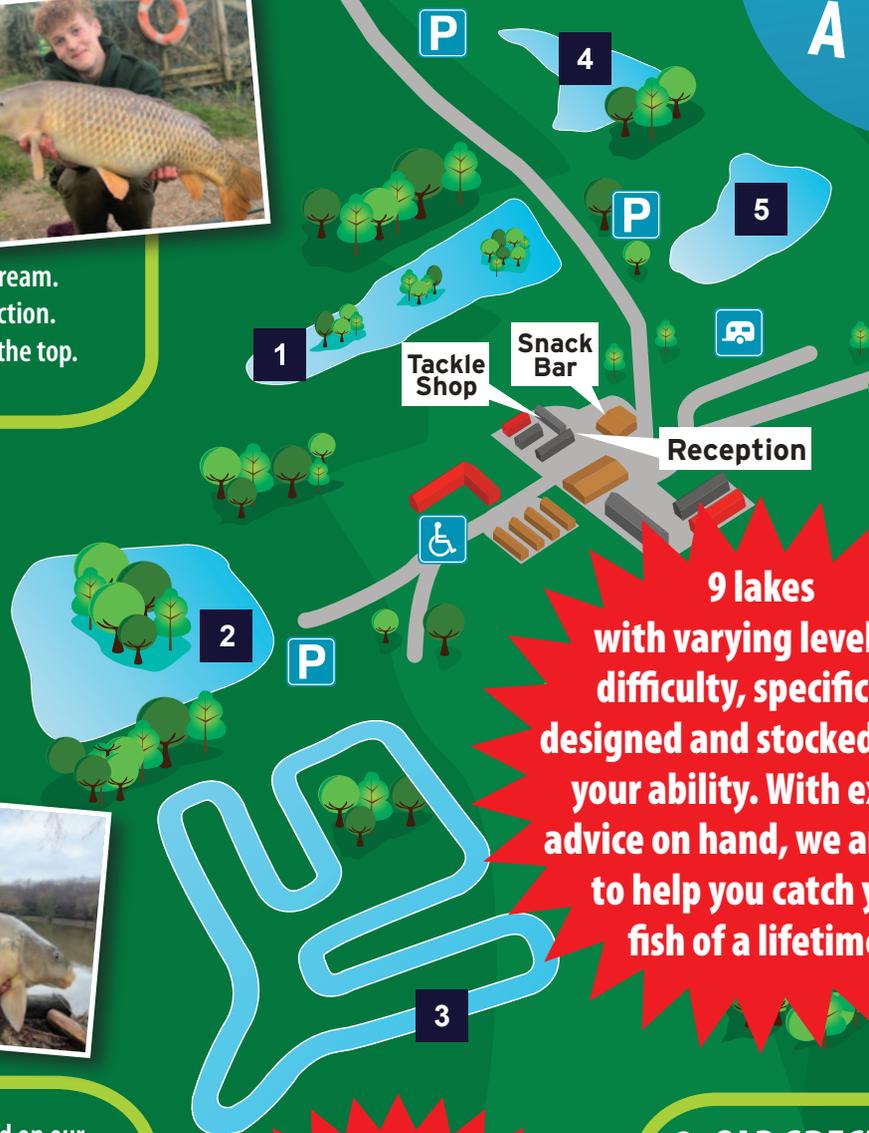
3. SNAKE LAKE Our open matches are currently being held on our 'Old Snake'. Every Sunday there is an open match which is available to all anglers. Booking in for the match ends at 8.15am with the pegs being drawn at 8.30am. Fishing starts at 9.45am and weighing in is at 4pm. We hold Monday evening matches during the summer. These run from 5pm until 9pm with pegs being drawn at 4pm. This venue is available for club bookings and hire by organisations and charities. Monday to Fridays (excluding Bank Holidays) the Snake is also a great pleasure lake.

Difficulty - easy to moderate



Easy online booking system to check availability and book your next fishing excursion

8. OLD SPEC that is located next



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6. KELL LAKE is the most difficult of our lakes but holds some of the biggest fish. A beautifully secluded 1½ acre lake in a wooded area of the complex and mimics an old estate lake. Stealth and quiet is the key, get the tactics right and this lake can be very rewarding! Contains around 50-60 carp with half of these 20lb+, going right up to mid-thirty.



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A YEAR

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6

Angling and accommodation packages available at fantastic prices!

7

P

9

8

7. MAISIES LAKE is our dedicated Catfish water. Spanning nearly 4 acres it is stocked with a good head of fish. Aside from the Catfish there are roach, rudd and some carp that have never been caught! This old stock pond averages 4' and has 8 purpose built swims. Booking is essential for this popular water, and with Cats up to 60lb it's not hard to see why. Please see our website for a list of rules specific to Maisies. This water is fished on strong tackle as a must. *Difficulty - moderate*



9. NEW SPECIMEN LAKE covers some 2 acres and is complemented by an island offset to the left hand side. It has recently benefited from extensive reworking, including the clearing of the overgrown island and woodchip paths. Carp exceed 30lb in the lake, with many doubles to mid-twenties. There is a good head of roach, rudd and perch to complement the carp. *Difficulty - moderate to hard*



NEW SPECIMEN LAKE is a round 3 acre water to the New Speci at the bottom of the complex. It has a large head of carp averaging 8-15lb with fish up to 22lb. It is a very prolific water that produces run after run - catches of up to 30 fish in a 24-hour session are not uncommon.

Difficulty - easy to moderate

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Gabriels Fishery Edenbridge, Kent

Since the national lockdown in November 2020, Gabriels Farm Fishery has been closed to the public. However, we at Gabriels have been very busy during this closed period and are very much looking forward to re-opening on the 17th May 2021!

Our tackle and bait shop in our Visitors Centre will be fully stocked up. The shop opening times will be 7am - 7pm every day, all year round! We will be accepting card payments only so no cash please. We have a new gate entry system with a code available to be given for your ticketed stay with us.

You may not see a lot of Derek with his multiple number of projects that he is overseeing and Helen will be on maternity leave during this summer. Do not worry, you will all be welcomed back to Gabriels by our new team of shop assistants, cleaners and bailiffs all overseen by our new wonderful Manager Sarah!

We have built a second toilet and shower block at Anglers Rest. It has 2 extra showers with underfloor heating, 3 extra toilets, 2 extra wash hand basins, a baby changing unit and an extra internal washing up station. Our new block also has sensor lighting for when you enter the building! We now have hot water for hand washing at Admiral car park toilet block!

Admiral car park has been extended all under the shelter of the trees. The swims, hedges and brambles around our fishery complex have been



trimmed. All five of our lakes have been electro fished. Sorting the fish will make **Silver Lake** and **Hare Lake** more of a pleasure mix including mirror and common carp. **Oak Lake** and **Admiral Lake** are both specimen lakes. 17 carp have moved from Hare lake into Oak Lake and 14 carp from Silver Lake into Oak Lake. Oak Lake's top weight is now 31lbs and we have put everything over 31lbs into Admiral Lake. 100's of roach and rudd, together with 50 plus bream, have been transferred from Oak Lake to Silver Lake.

Admiral Lake has been relieved of the pressure and presence of the many smaller fish and these have been moved in to **Swallow Lake**. We also managed to remove 76 pike from Hare Lake.

Additional fish stock has been introduced to the waters of Silver Lake and Swallow Lake. These include additional stock of: 200 Green Tench at 4-6" and 30 Green Tench at 8-10", and 200lbs of mixed fish at 4-8" that includes perch and roach. These have all been released into Silver Lake. 200 mirror carp at 4-6" have been put into Swallow Lake.

Admiral Lake has had 5 large carp, each 30 lb+ introduced. Making this season's fishing extremely exciting. We look forward to seeing new pictures of our new stock being caught and our wildlife admired and we are really looking forward to welcoming our visitors back to our beautiful fishery here at Edenbridge!



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Swallow lake- carp to 20lb

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Oak lake- carp to 30lb plus



Admiral lake (specimen lake)- stocked to 45lb.

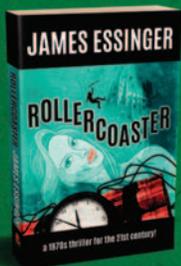
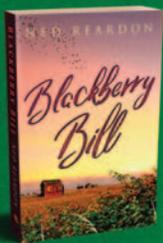
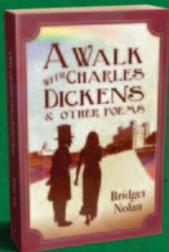
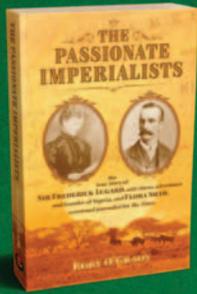
To fish this lake you will need the following equipment:
42" landing net, a carp cradle with sides and an unhooking mat

River fishing try the weir pool for chub and pike

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Elphicks Fisheries Horsmonden, Kent



Ashley Knight - Prairie Lake



Fred Kewley - 51lbs 2ozs North Lake



David George - 48lbs 12ozs North Lake



Jack Wood - 39lbs 4ozs Pullens Lake



Kim Scotney - 45lbs North Lake



Billy Wells - West End Lake



Billy Wells - North Lake



Tracey Elliot - 30lbs Plantation Lake



Greenacres delivers the goods!

Andy Humphreys and Simon Milton enjoyed their session at Greenacres Farm Fishery at Biddenden. Andy said:

We had a good session at Greenacres with five fish out, the biggest being an 18lbs mirror. Simon also managed a pike of 13lbs. Don't forget the little mirror, what a stunner that will turn out to be!



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

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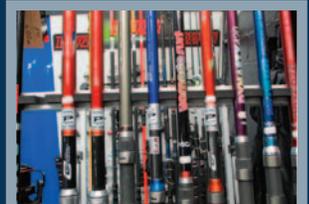
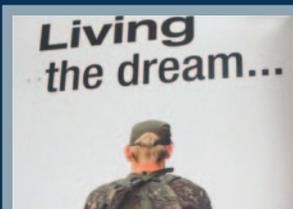
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The Golden Years of Coarse Fishing by Bob Rolph

MY MEMORIES OF A MASTER CARP FISHERMAN - PART THREE

The Great Steve Edwards 1950-2010

I have no compunction in continuing this article on Steve Edwards for a third month. He was probably the best all round natural angler that I have ever had the privilege to fish with and left us all far too soon at the age of 59, ten years ago now..

To think that in 1963 he actually asked me "how can I catch a carp?", on the hallowed banks of Keston Ponds when he was just a raw beginner at fishing and I was just 4 years older than him myself! Just because I had luckily caught a few small carp from the pond on worm during the long school holidays, he must have thought that I was some sort of 'expert! Little did he know that I was no more of an expert than he was and I never have been when it comes to catching carp, I never had that 'killer' instinct and was never ever dedicated enough.

Eventually Steve fished for carp in winter during the early 1970s along with Jim Gibbinson, Gerry Savage, Mike Winter, Dave Rudd and Keith Dickens and a host of the lads from the Dartford area who I did not know. They mainly fished at Sutton at Hone and Darenth then later at Horton Kirby. Bob Morris lived near Sutton Lake and Steve eventually became a bailiff there when it was run by Leisure Sport. I did several stints there in December and January in the cold and snow and we all caught fish there testing Fred Wilton's new protein baits. I mainly caught on potato as I was not convinced about these new fangled boilies, fool that I was! I once had four nine pounders there one night when Steve had 9, but we only fished until midnight, 8 hours was enough for me and I jacked it all in after half a dozen sessions, I preferred my creature comforts! News got out into the angling papers about our winter carp fishing and articles started to appear in Fishing magazine, to the extent that we couldn't get a swim the next season at weekends! Winter carp fishing was rare in those days and some disputed the authenticity of our catches, so we ended up keeping it all very quiet.

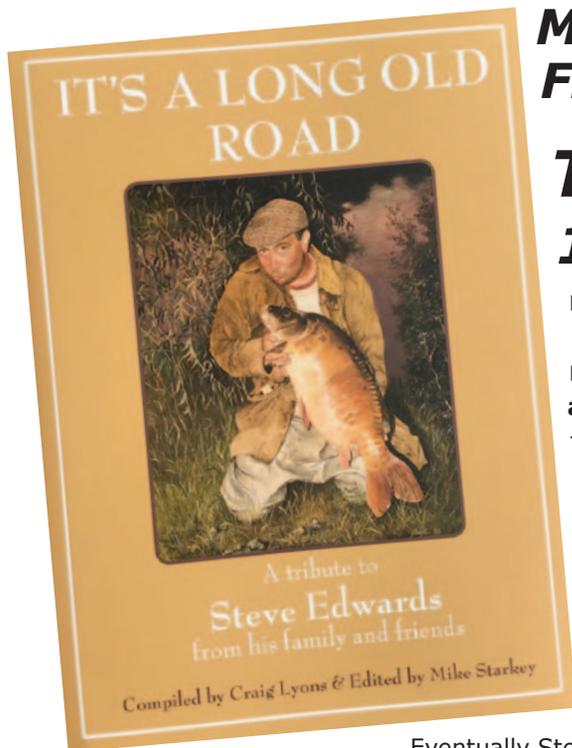


Bob with a fireside read

Steve would fish anywhere at any time if there were carp involved, so we in the Kent Group invited him and Ken Rowley to come up to the Electricity Cut at Peterborough one January weekend in 1967. Snow was on the ground and it was very cold but, mates from up North caught 20 lbs fish with their local knowledge of the canal like water. Steam came off the surface of the warm out flow water as our broilies became laden with thick snow and ice. Wagstaff, Goodrum and Hill all had glorious 20lbs mirrors, but we all of course failed miserably. Steve and Ken were not too impressed and never ventured up that way again! Jim Gibbinson and Grahame Igglesden both had 20lbs carp up there in the 1960s. The fishery is no longer there now, the power station long since having been decommissioned and the carp presumably swam back into the River Nene from whence they had come! For 10 years in the 1960s this was the in place to fish for carp, as long as you were hardy and mad!

I never caught a carp from the cut but most of my mates did, despite several long week end sessions there in the mid 60s. Steve Edwards fished The Rookery Lake at Bromley when it became a carp fishery in the 1970s. He had many big fish from there fishing with his mates Kerry Payton and Chris Haswell. They all worked together at that time at Marble products in Homesdale Road, Bromley, just down the road from Ken Browns tackle shop. I had introduced Steve to this picturesque lake as I had been a member of the original club under the ownership of Oliver Cutts since 1960. I caught small commons, chub and roach from the lily pads around the island and good tench, pike and crucian carp from the main lake which was always overrun with 'soldier weed', like a dark green pineapple plant that spread like wildfire!. Steve thrived on this small lake and had many large carp up to 22 lbs one of which I went to photograph for him one day.

It is reported and estimated that Steve caught nearly 1000 carp over 20lbs during his illustrious fishing life up to a monster of 41 lbs, I believe from Sutton. He was a true devotee of the carp and the carp fishing way of life and a great bloke who I only really knew well in his early years. We spoke for hours on the phone many times ,but regrettably I never got round to arranging a fishing trip together after about 1978 when Bewl opened. I became obsessed with trout and trout fishing and Steve was obsessed with carp, so our paths never crossed again. He often told me on the phone about his captures and said I should come, but I became heavily involved with the competition side of reservoir trout fishing and was unable to spare the time, much to my regret!



335/1984/ Steve Edwards

STEVE EDWARDS

W. 16 19 Aug 84

DAM	PITCH	FISH CAUGHT	ACTIVITY	WEATHER	REMARKS
TUESDAY	35 PITCH 9 AM TO 6 PM. CORNER PITCH 6 PM FOR NIGHT	6 small common TO 216 lbs. ON HARROTS	ALL OVER LAKE CHECKING BASSING & DUBBING. CRAWLING THE OVER DAMS. DAM ON A LOT OF GOOD FISH OFF DAM QUIET NIGHT	HOT. HAZEY SUNSHINE. NO WIND.	ARRIVED 6-15 AM. FISH MOVING ALL OVER LAKE BUT HAD TO RESCUE BOB WHO'D BROKE DOWN IN LA-SHARON. SOME GOOD FISH "SPOT" FEEDING OVER HARROTS. BUT DID NOT TAKE HOOKS. HAD 2 TAKES STOP ON TIGERS 9 PM TO MIDNIGHT IN CORNER PITCH - WAS USING LIGHT LEADS DUE TO CATCHING DIFFICULTIES ALL PULLED OUT OF TIGHT CLIPS & WENT OFF FAST BUT STOPPED.
WEDNESDAY	PLATFORM 9 AM TO 6 PM. DAN WALK L.A.M. TO 8 A.M.	13 lb - 5oz L. MIRROR 11 AM. TIGER 1-30 PM. 15 lb - 7oz common 1-30 PM. LOST COMMON 5-15 PM. HOOK PULLED WHEN TIE BROKE FROM WILLOW SPRING. - ANOTHER DOUBLE (1 HOOK)	DUBBING STUCK TO REEDS. FLOW DAM & MOVING ONTO SHADOWS. HOOK MOVING. 2-3 TAKES ON ALL AFFRONS	"	FISH WERE ALL NEAR EAST BANK FROM STICK TO ISLANDS. CATCHING SHOWING IN DEEPER WATER. THE FISH FROM THE PLATFORM ALL TOOK A SMALL TIGER - A 2" HAKE. I FISHED A TIGHT LINE DIRECT TO CORNER CLIP WITH ANTI REVERGE ON ALL 2 TAKES WERE 250MERS. NO FREE SAMPLES WERE PUT OUT AT ALL.
THURSDAY	R.B. CEM TO 11 PM. CORNER PITCH 11 PM TO 6 AM. KETFOEDS 6-10 AM TO 7.05 AM. PLATFORM 8 AM TO 9.30 AM	- NO TAKES ON BAIT IN TREES AT ALL. PERHAP SOURCES HAVE THROWN THE RIG? 30 lb - 12 oz MIRROR	SOME BUBBLES STUCK TO ISLANDS. LARGE FISH OFF KETFOEDS - IN MY CACK.	Dull & Dour LIGHT & VARIABLER BREEZE	* P.T.O.

Entry from the Redmire log book

I then gave up fishing for a long period to travel the world and ended up in Australia several times, so my coarse fishing was really only during the 60s and 70s. In 1965 and 66 I told Steve about my visits to Redmire Pool and how we had seen all those big carp basking on the surface during the Spring. I fished it for several weeks when it re-opened under the John Nixon era and witnessed several captures. Steve said "I'd like some of that!", so he joined the Surrey Specimen Group to gain access to the

£5 a week water! Subsequently in August 1967 he took himself off to Redmire pool in Herefordshire by public transport, no mean feat, a trip of 200 miles by bus, train and bus, then walked! He spent his 17th birthday on Aug 30th camped in the Willow Pitch, where he took his first Redmire carp of 10 lbs. During the week that he spent there Ron Gould, a mate of ours from the Bromley area, captured the 13th largest carp ever caught, a 29lbs 10ozs leather. He was from the S.E. London specimen Group and quite why they didn't travel down together I don't know! This must have inspired Steve even more as he returned to Redmire several times in 84 and 91 as a syndicate member under the John Carver regime with Ken Rowley and Steve Haswell, where he caught a fine fish of 32lbs. Hundreds of carp later from all over Kent, saw Steve diversify to tench at Johnson's Lakes at Snodland, where he once had 3 x 8lbs fish in one sitting and numerous big pike, carp and rudd. We fished together at one of the many Snodland lakes in 1969, just after they were dug out, but Steve favoured the Larkfield and Railway complexes rather than the old 'Freemasons Arms' lake. There are so many pits down Snodland way, all stuffed full of quality fish nowadays! He always caught more carp than me, he just had that killer instinct when it came to catching fish, any sort of fish!. I was a very lazy angler with so many other interests to divert my attention and often gave up fishing for weeks at a time, hence my catches were inevitably fairly frugal. Our first meeting on the banks of Keston in 1962 was most important to me. I was only a lad of 17 and Steve was just 13, this young kid growing up to be a great family man and one of Kent's, if not the country's, most prolific carp anglers.



Steve Edwards - 30lbs 12ozs Redmire Aug 1984

Last September, a planned get together of over 40 of Steve's old friends and acquaintances at Keston was thwarted by the dreaded COVID-19 rules. We were all due to launch Chris Ball's new book 'Historic Carp Waters 2' containing the Keston Chapter, and remember Steve, 10 years after his untimely death, but only eight of us could turn up. Steve's mate's son Simon Payton was there as well as Jim Gibbinson's son Peter, along with old mates John Carver and Alan Baker. We shared photos and memories of Steve on the banks of one of his most prolific waters, together with Thomas Lochrane, the current carp King of Keston! Steve's son Warren had work commitments which unfortunately prevented him from attending, but one day I will catch up with him, with photos of his father! Ken Rowley, John Kane and Dennis Darkin did not feel able to attend because of the Covid rules, but they were all great mates of Steve and miss his booming laughter and fishy stories! One day, when all this is over and we can meet up again in earnest, we will again arrange a larger gathering to remember the happy times we all had together on the carp lakes of Kent 50 years ago and raise a toast to those that have departed this world and gone to the big carp lake in the sky!

Cheers Steve! Bob Rolph

Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society

Although we have been in lockdown through the Winter months, the Society has kept busy with work parties once a month.

Projects included building a new bridge across the outlet on Longfield Lake, upgrading the swims at Pippins Farm, reinstating the platforms on Haysden Lake and general swim clearing on Longfield and the river. Our work parties will continue each month throughout the year.



Fishing wise, it has been much the normal for this time of year. Pike fishing has not been as prolific as previous winters, but some good specimens were recorded to 23lbs 8ozs. **Andy Bungay** had a productive winter on the **Old Ballast Pit** with several fish into double figures.

The carp fishing is still productive on **The Pit** with fish to just over 30lbs being recorded.

The **New Lagoon** has been hit and miss, but to those who persevere tench, bream and carp to over 5lbs have been caught. The big roach are starting to get caught now with fish to 1lb 8oz and lots of other 1lb+ fish being recorded.

Haysden Lake has been fishing very well for roach recently with several double figure bags reported with fish from 4" to 8" included in the bags. A few good bream also showing to feeder tactics. **Pete Groombridge** and his son **Ben** have enjoyed the roach fishing on Haysden of late, both recording good bags.



The last week of the river season threw up a few good quality Chub to over 4lbs. The biggest officially recorded fish was caught by **George Kyle** at **Hartlake** and weighed 4lbs 4ozs. **Larry Howard** and **Lee Wakeman** also enjoyed some good chub fishing at the **Six Arches** stretch of the Medway with fish to 4lb. **Lee Wakeman** had a shock whilst fishing Haysden, landing this 4lbs+ sturgeon which put up a great fight.



Hartley Lands Fishery

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Medway Man

Bob Morris

First of all I would like to welcome back all readers of the Freshwater Informer and also to my monthly ramblings through the piscatorial world. Let's hope that the Covid infection rate stays low as the easing of restrictions allows us to move forward towards some form of normality. This has been a very difficult and unusual period of time for all of us and at times extremely distressing. I am really impressed by the effort/progress made by our medical and scientific teams along with all of the other essential works, carried out on our behalf. It is, of course, easy to be critical of the way the pandemic has been handled and I am sure that there will, rightly, be a final analysis of it all shortly, but, bearing in mind that this is the first time that anything like this has happened over here in more than a century the overall response has been pretty good, in my view.



Welcome back

Back on the fishing trail! I have started my Spring quest for Tench, Bream, Carp etc, which as usual has been a two pronged approach using both feeder tactics and the float. I must say that as yet this has not been very successful and I have a variety of excuses at my disposal this spring, including the pandemic, family matters and, of course, the weather conditions. With night temperatures as low as -5c during early to mid April the overall water temperatures have been a lot lower than this time last year, when I was sunning myself in the garden at the start of the first lockdown. On the other hand fish have been coming out quite well on various waters so it is not the case that they have not been feeding. I do however sometimes think that a false impression of the actual situation is easy to acquire if you listen to reports of success. You often hear, for instance, that a certain venue is producing the goods and fishing well with numbers of decent fish being caught. If you have a lake with twenty swims and eighteen of them are being occupied on a regular basis, then it is more likely to be producing something than if only two or three anglers are there - the reports will not tell you that. Blank sessions are not normally big news and it may not be the success it might seem if only two out of twenty have scored. This of course is an oversimplified view, but, often quite relevant, I feel. It is also the case that these last few months have seen a huge escalation in the numbers of anglers fishing - due to the lockdown and furlough situation. I have personally found that many of the waters that I like to fish have been overcrowded during this last year and I have elected to leave them well alone.

Although I had some reasonable success on the river during the winter months, I spent the majority of my time piking and found it extremely tough going. Most of my effort was put in at Bough Beech reservoir which, in spite of our best efforts, produced less than half of the action that we would normally expect. Other anglers had similar tales to tell and the general feeling was that a substantial number of fish had gone. This view was strengthened by talking to carp anglers who told us that they had seen a lot of dead pike during the summer months. This is all a bit of a tragedy really, but will it stop me fishing it next year? Absolutely not. As I have said before BB is one of my favourite places to fish and watch the wildlife and I am indeed fortunate to have this great interest in nature running alongside my love of angling. I have been enjoying my recent sessions out on the bankside amongst the burgeoning spring foliage and wildlife - which just recently has included the first Swallows and Martins of the year and a solitary Cuckoo.

One of the features of this time of the year that I really enjoy is the emergence of the amphibians and we normally get a reasonable batch of Frogspawn and Newts in the garden ponds. There has been less this year and also a certain amount has been killed off by the severe overnight frosts of late - although I do try to cover the pools over to in an attempt to prevent this. I have noticed generally that this has not been a good year for frogspawn in particular and various places where I do normally see plenty appear to be pretty well devoid of it! Friends of mine have also confirmed that this has been the case and this is something that concerns me, as although the fortunes of amphibians do fluctuate from season to season and there has been a general decline over the last decade. One particular place where there has been a big problem is Brooklands lakes at Dartford where, I am told, there has been a large kill of Frogs and Toads.



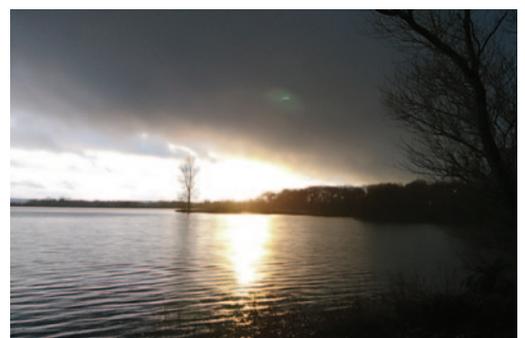
Pike fishing has been difficult

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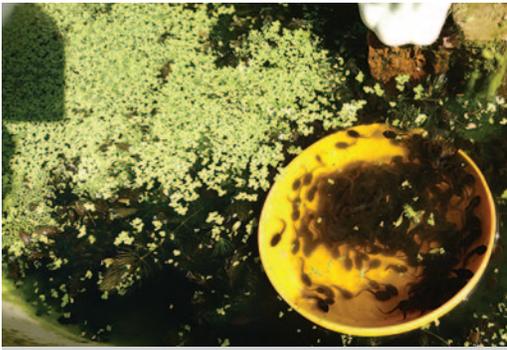
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Tench fishing again



Bough Beech



Are amphibians on the back foot?

These Lakes are owned by the local council and I hope that they are investigating this as a matter of urgency - as this was one of the main spawning sites locally. Apparently the Environment Agency are on the case and hopefully there will be some answers to

this potential disaster shortly. Toads, which were generally pretty common in this area at one point not so long ago, have become particularly scarce in recent years and I hardly ever see them in the garden or in the locality these days and this is something that I consider to be a great loss.

Many species of mammals and birds are in sharp decline these days and I could write many pages about all of the creatures that have more or less vanished from our area over the last thirty years. It is, however, a complicated issue and there are many reasons for this, including habitat loss, over enthusiastic use of pesticides and even climate change, which has certainly had an effect on many migratory species. This is a subject close to my heart and I would hope that it is the same for, at least, a substantial percentage of the angling fraternity - as everything is inter-dependent and so it is a matter that should concern us all.



Many species are in decline

Best Fishes & Environments
Bob Morris



Piscatorial Politics

I am really saddened to reveal that after more than 50 years of loyal support and service to the Dartford and District Angling & Preservation Society they have not renewed my club membership this year. They have

not given me an official explanation for this, no doubt in the belief that they don't have to! I believe that they do have to, as I have paid my subscription in good time before the deadline. Unfortunately, as they have refused to communicate with me on this issue I have now been forced to seek legal advice and hand the matter over to my solicitor.

The main dispute that I have with the club is over my access to the lakes at Devon Road, Sutton at Hone, which borders my property, and I have used this point of entry at the bottom of my garden for at least the last 25 years (in law this constitutes a legal right of way) or more without problem or complaint from previous owners - such as Cemex, Leisure Sport, etc. Even the Dartford Club themselves did not start objecting for the first 3 years after they took over!

As this has become a legal matter now I will not comment further at this point except to say that I am still hopeful that an amicable solution can be reached - particularly if, in my opinion, their inflexible and I am afraid I have to say what appears to be 'vindictive' approach is put aside.

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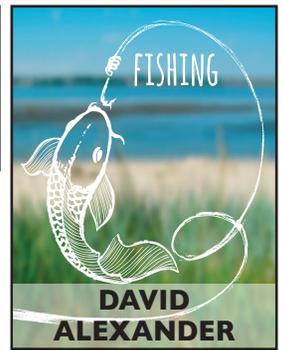
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**Thanks also to the
many magazine
subscribers for their
kind donations!**

Hello and welcome to the May edition of Junior Informer!

It is great to be back with the magazine! I hope you are all well and coped with the challenges of the past year. It has no doubt been a strange year as all of our regular routines have been turned on their head! However, we are gradually seeing a return to a more 'normal' way of life which is indeed very welcome to all of us.

The last 'lockdown' over the Winter came at the wrong time for fishing! Although we had more time on our hands, apart from the 'home schooling', it is not always the best time of year to fish. Fishing can be difficult when the days are short and dark, but if you are lucky, the fish are in fantastic condition. However, we can now look forward to longer, warmer days and the fish are much more obliging. Depending on the weather and water temperature, the carp can often begin to spawn in May and usually do it during the Whitsun half term holiday!. If you arrive at the lake and see the fish frantically splashing about in the margins, it does mean they are spawning, so you are often better to leave them alone and either go home or find another venue. Some fisheries do close their lakes when the carp are spawning to give the fish the time and peace that they need.

Now things are getting back to normal and your favourite fishing magazine is back, don't forget to send me your catch photos! Each month Pallatrax will choose two lucky winners for their 'Ready, Steady Fish' packs, but you have got to be in it to win it so send in them photos by email or with a message on the magazine's Facebook page! Please remember that I do need the permission of your parents or guardians to print your photo in the magazine!



Bewl Water is etched into my fly fishing psyche. Down the years, the water which straddles the Sussex and Kent borders has become a 'home' for me; a piscatorial shrine to be visited whenever I am in the area - be that from my now home in the west country or when I lived in Chilham, and Faversham, all those years ago..

This glittering star of a water has been the crucible of my fly fishing since almost its creation - a time when it was called Bewl Bridge and the world was a very different place; actually our sport - fly fishing - was in a different place.

Down the years so much has changed and the character of the fishery, evolved. Gone are the heady fly fishing only days. Times when it was the centre of fly fishing innovation, insect hatches that had to be seen to be believed and tactical creativity that reached deep into all fly fishing circles nationally and internationally. The reservoir hosted star laden internationals and embraced a palpable fly fishing buzz.

There is so much to be nostalgic about. Each bay, crease along the grassy banks into the reservoirs arms - a string of bright memory and the personalities that crafted this breathtakingly lovely venue; Ken Simfoil was the first and utterly cantankerous head water and fisheries bailiff, Florence Green, what a fish catching machine that woman was; the elegant and often piscatorial quirky - and my dear friend and still missed - John Hatherall, Brian Harris, John White, Paul Canning, the list of luminaries and fly fishing glitterati is almost endless....

But that was then.



And now?

Well, Bewl, as with so much in our world, has changed and evolved; basically, it has grown up. The reservoir in this commercial climate has had to meet the challenges of the now and not continually look backwards. The thing is, the reservoir is still, essentially, the same. The infrastructure may have altered, the voices might have a different timbre; but the loveliness, joy of fishing around and in, the reservoir is quintessentially, the same. The essence of the place still remains - as do the many of the characters.

I often think, that if I haven't made a new season's cast on Bewl, then my stillwater trout fishing hasn't started. This year as we all lumbered and clambered from the last lockdown abyss, once again I found myself making my usual fly fishing pilgrimage to the South East. Thank goodness, I could.

The water twinkled through the barren chestnut and oak branches as it always had done this time of year; the ground dry through those wicked North easterlies which haunt Kent and the South East coastline, the carpet of leaves brittle, brown and I felt the shudder of excitement as the new adventure begins. An adventure made all the better due to fishing with old friends - Rob Barden, Adrian and Anne Necci and the current and resident Instructor at Bewl: our very own Fishing for Schools coach - Bob Goble.

I often wonder, especially now, that a day's fishing is not - or shouldn't be - about just the activity and business of purely catching fish; but instead the characters and friends who sculpt that day. Angling friends are our most precious component, I think.

Sharing a day with the characters mentioned was scintillating - and made all the better by a gentle westerly wind teasing the surface into wavelets, the sight of Bewl Straight, the Nose, Copelands and Chigley bathed in spring sunshine and our Bank at Monty's Seat presenting a perfect early season combination of freshly flooded pasture descending to fish holding shelves and depth just about a perfect beginning as I can think of.

And we caught fish.... Buzzers - imitation Midge pupa - teased round on the breeze, fished on floating lines and longish 18 to 20 ft leaders, a minimal retrieve and a "hawkish" concentration on the curving line for any indication of a take. It was the style that day: as it was and had been in the past ... Some things never change. Just keep everything slow, easy and like the blissful spring day in the Wealden Kent and Sussex countryside. Thank goodness for thatand just the joy of celebrating being able to fish again at one of our loveliest reservoirs, in the company of lovely companions.

Honestly; is there anything better?



Bob - in his capacity of the Fly fishing coach and instructor at Bewl multi tasks and provides the One 2 One and group tuition and also Corporate Days. You can always reach Bob via email at robert.4trout@gmail.com (If he isn't fishing, that is!)

Next time, I will be updating you all, on where we are with fishing for schools and the immense strides we have made; also share the very readable story of a young man who has overcome so much and achieved through Fishing for Schools involvement and now become one of our top Ambassadors it is, I promise, a compelling story.

But forgive me this time; I simply had to celebrate my personal 'new year' celebrations with a piece on Bewl - my piscatorial stillwater matriarch.

For the record.

Bob Goble is all the things below ...and more!

He is.....

- A Member of the Game Anglers Instructors Association, (G.A.I.A.)
- Angling Trust Level 2 Coach / Instructor
- Fishing for Schools Coach
- Bob is DBS certified and holds both a child awareness and First Aid certificate



Great Fishing! Charles Jardine

If happy faces won prizes ...!

Lorna King, mum of Joshua King, sent in this report:



We took Joshua and his friend Jonas to Ardingly Reservoir for an hour and Joshua caught this 13lbs 10ozs pike. The colours on the fish were amazing and the picture doesn't do it justice, real vibrant orange on the fins and tail. Two very happy little lads when we went home!

Ollie is flying high!

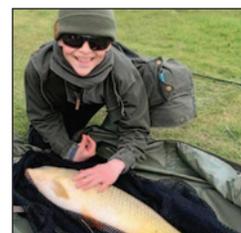
We had a great day yesterday (17/4/21) at Wylands. The photos are of 11 year old Ollie Peacock's first four carp on the fly on House Lake using his stepdad's (me) Ravioli flies... 10-8, 14-3, 10-8 and 18!!



Mike Le Lacheur sent in this report after he and Ollie enjoyed a great day at Wylands:

He was using a 9ft #7 weight Orvis Recon rod with the Rio Single Handed Spey line as his own #5 weight was a little too light. Leader was 12ft of Seaguar Soft Plus in 13.7lb. The flies we use are called 'Raviolis' and are my own pattern tied on a size 8 Fulling Mill Bonio barbless hook. We use these as they sit perfectly in the water unlike some carp flies which sit too high and are often refused. Martin, the fishery's manager, at Wylands has been really helpful and we are hoping to put on a guided carp on the fly day to introduce people to the methods this summer.

A very well done to Ollie, top angling!



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Tenterden Trout Waters Tenterden, Kent

I am so pleased to be writing this report again for our anglers and fishery friends. We have so much to thank the Angling Trust for keeping our sport open during the last lockdown and before. Our anglers have enjoyed being able to fish in their own space and enjoy their downtime during the difficult months of the Winter lockdown catching some quality trout at Tenterden.

Spring has arrived along with the lambs, daffs and kingfishers in abundance which has been uplifting for all and the start of the new season made for some good fishing at Tenterden. We re-stocked with more Brownies as well as our usual varying weights of Rainbows and our anglers have reaped the benefits. April has been a great month for catching larger Rainbows as you can see from the photos below - **Geoff & Mark** with their 9 pounders! Intermediate lines are working well and popular patterns are Bloodworm, Damsels, Hoppers, Buzzers on Lake 3. Stay & Fish - Our Shepherds Hut accommodation has re-opened, being a self-contained property, for both anglers who wish to stay and fish and for other guests who just welcome a short break away now that the lockdown is unfolding at long last and 'staycations' are popular. We are offering 20% off our permit prices if you stay in our Ghillies Hut and for more info discover our 'Shepherds Hut' heading on our website with a direct link to Airbnb. We all look forward to a great Summer on the Farm/Fishery now that vaccines are firmly on the radar which has been a game changer. Call or email gaynor@coombe-farm.com 01580 763201 to book your fishing. If we don't answer please leave your message, name and number and we will get back to you asap. We will limit our numbers to 12 anglers fishing at any one time to create the space you all need.

The Fishery Lodge will re-open on the 17 May, in line with the guidance, for tea/coffee with our compliments. We have great facilities with kitchen/dining/sofa, toilet and lakeside balcony where you can relax. See photos in our Gallery. We apologise for the inconvenience in not having WC facilities until then. Fishing Tuition has re-commenced and can be booked direct with Richard Stokes, our Instructor, please email richard@coombe-farm.com if you are interested in learning a new skill in 2021. It is always fun to learn new things in life and you can purchase a lesson as a gift voucher experience for someone special.

Event - 2 May 2021: Charles Jardine's Skill Set Day will be hosted here on the 2 May and our Fishery will be closed for this.

We are supporting Charles's Charity, Fishing for Schools, which he set up 12 years ago. We do have a couple of places available, see our website for further info, to reserve a place please get in touch.

For an up-to-date fishing report please go to our website and click on News/Fishing Report. www.tenterden-trout-waters.co.uk. Please follow us on Instagram and Facebook and visit our Gallery. We are one of the Top 50 Stillwater Trout Fisheries in the British Isles and Trout Master Water. Gift Vouchers for that special present which can be purchased by bank transfer, cheque or cash. Please call Gaynor on 01580 763201 or email: gaynor@coombe-farm.com - we can email/send them out for you. We would like to thank all our anglers for their support throughout 2020 and early 2021 and we look forward to welcoming you to our friendly, family run fishery for some great fly fishing this Spring/Summer.

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Andy Lush - The Friendly Fisherman

Lure Fishing

Welcome back!

I was pleased to see my good friend and fishery manager Ted Cocklin at Lakedown Trout Fishery. This was my first fly fishing trip of 2021. Lakedown is situated in East Sussex near Burwash [TN21 8UX] just across the valley from where I live, so it was easy to stay 'local'. Jamie Daltrey had arrived early, especially to let James Gardner and me in, but I was late 'you can't rush a Lush' I'm told! Anyhow after a 'socially distanced' chat James and I wandered off. Lakedown is such a beautiful place to fish with four large lakes to explore. We started off on lake 3 as lakes 1 and 2 were both more coloured than either of us fancied.



Lakedown, a watery wonderland

would hold a few fish now. It required a long cast to reach the deeper water where the fish seemed to be holding. I only managed two takes here and both came at the full extent of my cast; coming in the first five feet of the retrieve, I missed them both! Although we were struggling to get to grips with the fishing we were still enjoying the freedom of being out and about again. Eventually the 'penny dropped' when we realised we'd been fishing too shallow for most of the day! As soon as we went deeper, fishing 'slow and low' creeping our flies close to the bottom we started getting fish again.

Locating fish when the water is cold means you have to keep on the move, always looking for quiet unfished areas where fish can hole up, unmolested. It's easy to stay put in one spot for too long when moving a few yards is often all that's necessary to contact fish. It's worth remembering that the fish are cold blooded so they will not circulate around the lake and find you, so you need to go to them! Confidence is vital to succeed, fish methodically and always fish your cast right into the margins and slowly lift and hang your fly before finally lifting off, so many bonus fish can be caught at this 'last gasp' moment.

Lake 2

Our day was quickly drawing to a close when I finally fired a cast out towards the island on my favourite Lake 2. As I straightened the leader before 'counting my fly line down' I sensed my line gradually getting heavy as a fish took my Hot Head Damsel on the drop. Spooning the fish revealed it was feeding hard on Daphnia which was a surprise this early in the season. As the take had come on the drop it suggested the fish were higher in the water out in this open water section of the lake. I started exploring the upper layers, starting each retrieve earlier; I also changed to an un-weighted fly so I could continue using slow retrieves. A few casts later and another fish this time on an Orange Dabber confirmed there were a few fish up and feeding. Once again when spooned it revealed more Daphnia! That was the final action for me as the sun started to drop and with it the temperature plummeted. James had also found some more fish holed up in the top bay where the wind had pushed the warmer surface water and possibly some food.

Our first trip of the season had been challenging, just how we like it! As we left we were already planning our next visit.

Flying solo

Now I've retired, I can fish more often, so the smaller stillwaters I've previously neglected are back on my radar once again! Inspired by a couple of trips to Lakedown recently I now fancied a change of scenery. I'm fortunate having a few options locally and this time I chose Spring Hill at Pembury [TN2 4BB] for my next visit.

Half way down the bank on Lake 3 is a deep area that often holds fish. This hot spot was where we started fishing. Lubos Smajda, a Lakedown regular, arrived to see how we were getting on just as James hooked a fish on only his second cast, typical! James had chosen a floating line while I had opted for a mid-glass intermediate [1" per sec sink rate]. It's always a good idea if you're fishing with a friend to use slightly different tactics, with this 'two pronged' approach you quickly find the most effective way of catching fish than if you'd both fished similarly.

James was convinced his fish had taken close to the surface which surprised me as I was expecting them to be mooching close to the bottom in the margins. So with this in mind I sped up my retrieve in an effort to keep my weighted Black Humungus fly up in the water and immediately hooked up! After this instant action we'd both expected to add to our tally but this was not to be! After a long fishless period in which we both, varied our retrieves, changed flies, and even moved around the lake we decided to try another lake.

As I said, the beauty of Lakedown is there's plenty of water to try and so we headed to Lake 4, the bottom lake in the complex. We headed for the dam an area we've both enjoyed success from previously and were confident it



The end result, if you crack the code



The shallow end harbours food and fish

Plan B

Well if they didn't want my flies retrieved horizontally, maybe they would respond to a vertical approach? I tackled my spare rod up with an indicator and two flies. I put a quill bodied Cruncher on the top dropper set at 2ft and a Gold Head Red Apps Bloodworm set at 4ft on the point. By casting directly into the breeze and just taking up the slack I was able to fish the flies "dead drift" back towards me, right into the deep margins. This approach enabled me to search the upper layers in an entirely different way. I could, with a couple of long slow pulls lift my flies up towards the surface before letting them sink back to their set depths again. This method catches the attention of any inactive fish in the vicinity. On this occasion the takes came only if I could resist putting any movement into the flies, it's often said that "less is more" and so it proved. I had most of my takes, many of which were so subtle I still missed them, just as the flies reached the deep margin to my right along the dam face. Despite struggling I finally managed a respectable

It was good to catch up with Jane and Lee Green after such a long time. There's always a warm welcome at Spring Hill as all their regular rods can testify. I headed straight to the main lake, one day I must try one of the smaller Brown Trout pools, but I find it hard to resist the draw of the 'big pond'. The ripple was running the length of the lake pushing into the Lodge End reed bed at the shallow end. I'd fancied fishing this spot even before I'd arrived, the breeze was slight often non-existent, but when there was a ripple I'd cast across it trying to exploit the side-ways swing which would drift my flies in front of the reeds. I managed one fish using this tactic; the successful fly was an un-weighted Diawl Bach which I estimated was fishing about 3ft deep. A good start but no more fish followed this up so I gradually explored deeper. Nothing I tried produced any further interest so it was time to move. When the water's cold it pays to adopt searching mentality, moving a few yards along the bank from time to time until you locate fish, usually where there's one you'll find others. After a complete circuit of the lake I was back to 'square one'.



App's bloodworm does the trick again

bag of half a dozen fish and missed easily as many more takes! All the fish I spooned were completely empty which proved how 'switched off' they were.




GUIDED LURE & FLY FISHING DAYS

WITH ANDY LUSH

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

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

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!

TO BOOK A DAY email: info@thefriendlyfisherman.co.uk with your contact phone number and Andy will call you back and discuss details.





Sad news

I heard the unwelcome news that Wilf Welch, owner of Hazel Copse, passed away on April 6th. Wilf's family have confirmed that the fishery will remain open as Wilf wanted.

Wilf was a pioneer when it came to running his fishery being one of the first to allow 'catch and release' and also one of the first to stock 'Stillwater Salmon'! Only a few days prior to his passing James Gardner and I fished Hazel Copse. We were greeted by the affable Wilf who despite his ill health was as cheerful as ever. I'll cover our trip in next month's article. 'God bless you Wilf'.

John Parkman

I've also received the sad news that John Parkman who ran the successful Bayham Abbey trout fishery during the 80's and 90's has also passed away. I lost contact with John once Bayham closed but judging from the comments on my Facebook page he was well respected by his regulars. Many 'top notch' anglers cut their teeth fishing the club competitions run by John. A lot of those same anglers really got the competition bug from that period and went on to compete for their country in the home internationals, a fitting legacy to John's memory.

On a lighter note, spring is in the air although the dusting of snow this morning cast some doubt on this! In next month's article I'll be featuring my fishing trips to Hazel Copse and Chalybeate Springs.

Tight lines, Andy Lush

Brick Farm Lakes Herstmonceux, East Sussex

Here we are, slowly returning to what we can only hope will be some level of 'normality'! Fishing has been very good in general recently with some really stunning fish coming out for both regular and novice anglers. Generally speaking you can't go wrong with a Blue Flash Damsel or a Buzzer with the majority of fish being caught at depth, although we are excited to be seeing the occasional evening rise after a bright sunny day.

We have spent the last few months doing even more improvements to the fishery, including stand upgrades, general post - winter tidying, refurbishment of the seating and tables on the decking and decorating inside the Lodge. Access to the Lodge will remain restricted to the log book and fly/tackle table only for the coming months, we have tried to make the outside areas more welcoming and comfortable for those greatly missed bacon baps. We are back serving alcohol again so you can stop for lunch and enjoy a bite and a drink in stunning (and hopefully sunny) surroundings!

As always, we are continuing to stock weekly and are pleased to say that the general sizes have increased, with the usual bigger fish being added weekly. Notable larger fish of recent include **Nerijus** who has become a regular angler with us and after chasing a 6lb+ for many weeks, he was thrilled to land 2 stunning Brownies in one day weighing 6lb exactly and 8lb 2oz!



Nerijus - 8.2lb / 6lb

Four weeks later he was rewarded with another 7lb 10oz being the final fish of a 4 fish bag. 15 year old **Benjamin Gipson** visited with his Grandad and was thrilled to land a fin-perfect 9lbs 12ozs Rainbow.



Benjamin Gipson - 9.12lb

Caroline Cutmore who is one of our recommended qualified coaches was rewarded on Mothering Sunday with her new PB of 8lbs.



Caroline Cutmore - 8lb PB

Brian Wood and **Tim Tyrrell**, who often fish together, both had large fish competing Brian's 6lbs 12ozs vs Tim's 9lbs 7ozs.



Brian & Tim

We have now set up the Brick Farm League – an 8 months competition spanning September 2021 to April 2022 with monthly matches and brilliant prizes kindly sponsored by Snowbee UK and local village pub The Brewers Arms. There are prizes for each monthly match as well as overall League results and we are sure the competition will be fun, friendly and full of fantastic results! There are still some places available so please see our website, social media or contact the Lodge on 01323 832615 for any further information.

Tight Lines, The Axells

Brick Farm Lakes Trout Fishery

Prices start from £30 for 2 fish
Vouchers, coaching & tackle hire available
Corporate & group bookings welcome
with food options available

Set within the stunning East Sussex countryside, Brick Farm Lakes is a friendly family run Trout fishery comprising 3 lakes stocked with Rainbow, Blue, Golden and Brown trout, from 2lb upwards, including some double-figure sizes to challenge our anglers. Set back from the road, almost in a secret valley of it's own, we have a superb oak-framed lodge overlooking Brick Lake. The lodge provides a warm and welcome space offering complimentary tea & coffee for anglers, along with homemade cakes and other refreshments.



Tel: 01323 832615
www.brickfarmlakes.co.uk

The Fishing Lodge
Brick Farm
Herstmonceux
East Sussex
BN27 4RS

Coarse Fisheries

Beaver Farm Fishery Eastbourne Road, Newchapel Lingfield RH7 6HL	01342 324006 / 07710 656041
Charlies Lakes Steeds Lane, Kingsnorth, Ashford TN26 1NH	07857 539785
Chequertree Trout and Coarse Fishery Bethersden, Near Ashford TN26 3JR	01233 820078
Claygate Lakes Collier Street, Claygate, Marden TN12 9PL	07770 513448
Coombe Wood Fishery Redbrook Street, High Halden Near Ashford TN26 3JH	07895 679569
Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden TN12 8EL	01580 212512
Eureka Fishery Nicholas Road, Kennington, Ashford TN25 4AG	07597 879621
Frant Lakes Hawkenbury Road, Bells Yew Green Tunbridge Wells TN3 9AP	01892 616424
Furnace Brook Fishery & Fish Farm Trollilloes Cowbeech, near Hailsham BN27 4QR	01435 830835
Gabriels Fishery Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP	07730 066088
Greenacres Farm Fishery Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden TN27 8EH	07933 934942
Hartley Lands Fishery Swattenden Lane, Cranbrook TN17 3PS	07703 825064
Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	01580 753813
Horam Manor Fishery Horam Manor Farm, Horam TN21 0JB	01323 840889 / 07707 759364
Iden Wood Fishery Coldharbour Lane, Iden, Rye TN31 7UT	01797 280180 / 07906 232225
Knightingales Fishery Stone-In-Oxney, near Tenterden TN30 7HA	07941 176205
Mousehole Lakes Maidstone Road, Nettlestead Near Paddock Wood ME18 5HR	07725 783405
Orchard Place Farm Fishery Pearsons Green Road Paddock Wood TN12 6NY	01892 838576 / 07568 176058
Sandwich Lakes Coarse Fishery Sandwich Ash Road (A257) Near Canterbury CT3 2DA	07936 409912
Shirkoak Fishery Bethersden Road, Woodchurch, Ashford TN26 3PZ	07973 410973
Tricklebrook Fishery Colts Hill, Five Oak Green TN12 6SH	07743 955812
Wylands International Angling Centre Wylands Farm Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU	01424 893394

Trout Fisheries

Brick Farm Lakes Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux BN27 4RS	01435 830835
Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from email: r.nathan@btinternet.com	01892 770903
Coltsford Mill Trout Fishery & Fly Tackle shop Mill Lane, Oxted RH8 9DG	01883 715666 or 07798 605867
Duncton Mill Trout Fishery Dye House Lane Duncton, Petworth GU28 0LF	07855 822401
Spring Hill Trout Waters Albans Farm, Romford Road Pembury TN2 4BB	07951 304515
Tenterden Trout Waters Coombe Farm, Chennell Park Road Tenterden TN30 6XA	01580 763201

Tackle & Bait Supplies

Absolute Tackle 12 Wealden Forest Park Herne Common CT6 7LQ	01227 636724 / 07809 330854
A.R. Tackle 8 Castle Street, Hastings TN34 3DY	01424 422094

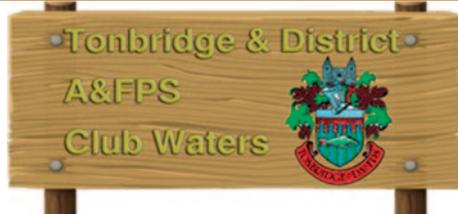
Arun Angling Centre The Old Blacksmiths Yard Water Lane, Angmering BN16 4EP	01903 770099
Bank Side Tackle Wylands Angling Centre Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU	07786 978476
Bodle Angling Cuckfield Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8RE	01444 247757
Camos Carp Cabin 11 Turner Street, Ramsgate CT11 8NJ	01843 581784
Carpers Essentials www.carpersessentials.co.uk Kent based customised hook bait & terminal tackle specialist email: steve@carpersessentials.co.uk	07874 347703
Channel Angling 158-160 Snargate Street, Dover CT17 9BZ	01304 203742
Crowborough Tackle Shop 2, Lexden Lodge Crowborough Hill, Crowborough TN6 2EG	01892 667671
Dens Tackle 73 Dymchurch Road, Hythe CT21 6JN	01303 267053
Eastbourne Aquarium & Reptile Centre 19-21 Seaside, Eastbourne BN21 3PP	01323 730635
Gabriels Fishery Tackle Shop Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP	07730 066088
Henfold Bait & Tackle Henfold Lakes, Henfold Lane Newdigate, Dorking RH5 4RW	07956 043922
Jack Frost Reynolds Place, West Green, Crawley RH11 7HB	01293 521186
Kent Tackle Hawkhurst Fish Farm, Hastings Road Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	01580 754422
Medway Tackle Supplies 11 Twydall Green, Gillingham ME8 6JY	01634 475260
NJ Tackle 150 Milton Road, Gravesend DA12 2RG	01474 353998
Orchard Tackle 58 High Brooms Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9DB	07494 670328
Pinions 431 London Road, Ditton, Maidstone ME20 6DB	01622 718580
Polegate Angling Centre Unit 7 Birch Industrial Estate, Eastbourne BN23 6PH	01323 486379
Sheppey Angling Unit 5, Regis Business Park New Road Sheerness ME12 1HA	01795 661089
South London Angling Centre 286 Lee High Road, London SE13 5PJ	0208 852 4451
Sues Tackle Cabin The Spice Warehouse, Rye Harbour Road Rye TN31 7TE	01797 225015 / 07980 290247
Tony's Tackle Shop 211 Seaside Road, Eastbourne BN22 7NP	01323 731388
Trade In Tackle Maidstone Road Wateringbury ME18 5EH	01622 814296 / 07941 085011

Angling Clubs & Societies

Bromley (Kent) & District AS PO Box 895, East Grinstead RH19 9ND email: bdas-kent-enquiry@bdaskent.co.uk	
Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from email: r.nathan@btinternet.com	01892 770903
Hastings Bexhill & District Postal enquiries to: S.Corke, 2 The Sidings, Bexhill On Sea TN40 1RF Chris Pagan: 07429 655237 Steve Potter: 07935 268174	
Linton Angling Society Chris Knowler: 07712 622858 or email: chris@lintonangling.co.uk	
Tonbridge & District A & FPS PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB Martyn: 07802 248802	
Wantsum Angling Association 01227 678063 or contact via website www.wantsumaa.co.uk	

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Ladies Membership – £30 + £10 Joining fee

OAP 65 years – £35 + £10 Joining fee

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Family Ticket (parents + children u16) – £100 + £10 Joining fee

Flood Barrier Night Ticket – £175 + £10 Joining fee

Student 16–18 years – £35 + £10 Joining fee

View the waters on the web
www.tonbridge-angling.co.uk

PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB

Contact Martyn on 07802 248861

The Linton Angling Society - Membership Vacancies

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

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

e-mail: chris@lintonangling.co.uk

www.lintonangling.co.uk



Hastings Bexhill & District Freshwater Angling Association

Season runs from 1st April to 31st March.

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

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

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

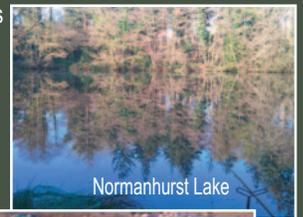
To apply to become a member please download and print the application form from our website. Complete and return to the Membership officer on the application, alternatively it is possible to purchase your membership from any of the tackle shops listed on our website.

For further information please contact:

Chris Pagan 07429 655237 Steve Potter 07935 268174

Postal enquiries: S Corke, 2 The Siding, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1RF

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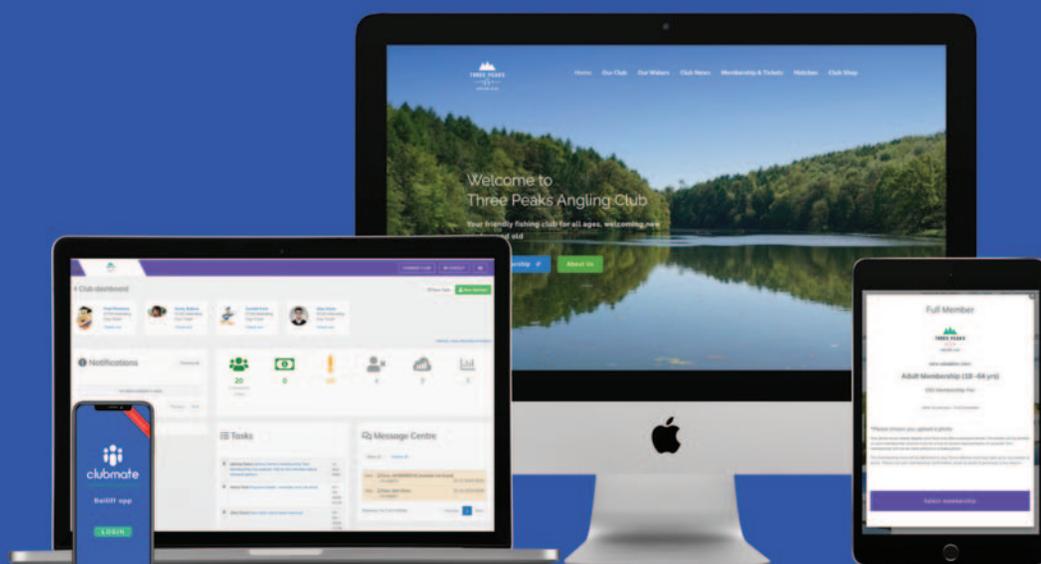
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Sheppey Angling UNIT 5, REGIS BUSINESS PARK, NEW ROAD, SHEERNESS ME12 1HA 01795 661089 / 07902 092595



Please support your local tackle shop!

It is good to be back! The last Sea Informer reports back in December saw us talking about codling in the Thames (!) and although there were a few of these mythical fish caught during the winter, it was, once again, sadly disappointing.

With Winter now gone and Spring about to give way to Summer, we can look forward to warmer days and the arrival of the summer species. Bass were caught regularly throughout the winter along with the rays and anglers particularly along the North Kent coast will now be looking forward to the arrival of the smoothhounds. A few small pups began to arrive in April and no doubt the larger fish will arrive as the crabs begin to moult in earnest. The Sussex plaice fishing in the early Spring was a bit 'hit and miss' due to the unsettled conditions, but when conditions were right some lovely fish were caught. Lots to look forward to in the coming weeks! At the time of writing, the sea temperature is around 8.5 degrees on the Sussex coast and a little lower at 7.5 degrees in the Thames Estuary. If you have a catch photo that I could use in the sea reports, please do send it to me via email or Facebook message!



Thames report courtesy of Wayne May

With cold nights and warm days recently, fishing has been somewhat challenging. I've spent three nights on the Thames at Greenhithe with only a few school bass to show for my efforts. Gravesend behind B&Q fished reasonably well on early morning tides producing several flatties, although small were regular. The ragworm supplied by NJ Tackle at Gravesend was excellent quality. Mark Ranger recently fished the Thames Estuary and reported several flounders and a codling around a 1lb in weight. Mark fished using frozen blacks and fresh lug tipped with squid. **For all your fresh and frozen baits and tackle, call NJ Tackle at Gravesend on 01474 353998.**



Medway report

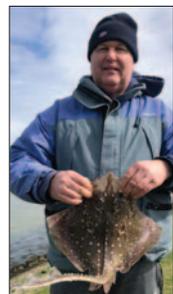
The bass are now beginning to show further along the river, nothing big but a good sign that the fish are on the move. Pouting, whiting and some eels further out towards

Gillingham and the Estuary with the occasional thornback ray. **Medway Tackle Supplies at Twydall can provide you with all your tackle and bait needs. Call 01634 475260.**



Sheppey report courtesy of Sheppey Angling

Plenty of rays being caught right around the island, mainly on fish baits. Flounders and dogfish are also being caught and the bass are now beginning to show. There have been a few hound pups from the beaches, but the boats in the Estuary are beginning to find a few larger fish. All the signs are looking promising for May when the larger fish move within casting range of the shore anglers. **Sheppey Angling can supply all your fresh and frozen baits along with a great range of tackle. Call 01795 661089.**



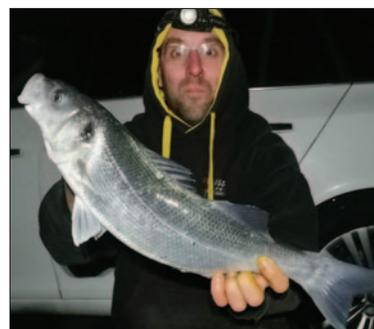
North Kent

Catches have consisted mainly of thornback rays to 9lbs, bass, whiting, dogfish and a few small hound pups. Some good thornbacks have been caught in the Swale Estuary and some good catches of dabs and flounders at Tankerton. **Absolute Tackle at Herne Common keep a great range of fresh and frozen baits as well as a good selection of tackle. Call 01227 636724.**

Thanet report courtesy of Fisherman's Corner

Thanet has fished consistently over the last few months with good numbers of rays, flatfish and now bass showing. We expect to see increasing numbers of bass over the coming months and lure fishing will play a big part of the bass season as the water clears.

For any advice, tackle or bait Fisherman's Corner is situated 5 minutes from the East Pier. Call us on 01843 582174.



Deal report

Plenty of dogfish and whiting from the town's beaches along with some thornback rays and small bass. A surprise turbot was caught from the beach! Sandwich Bay has produced dabs, flounders, pouting, whiting, bass and rays. **Call Channel Angling at Deal, by the pier's entrance, on 01304 373104 for all your bait requirements as well as top advice and tips.**

Dover report

The Admiralty Pier remains closed to anglers but those anglers fishing Shakespeare beach have landed thornback rays, dogfish, pouting and small bass. Samphire Hoe has produced pollack, wrasse, pouting and bass. Channel Angling at Dover is your 'one stop' shop for all your bait and tackle needs. **From a score of lugworm to a brand new Zzplex rod, Channel Angling has it all! Call Craig on 01304 203742.**



but as Kent starts to open back up and we can move around, some anglers have been able to get out to try new venues, old venues and venues further afield. We have had a real mixture of weather since January and it literally has blown hot and cold with plenty of snow and sunshine. This has not put the fish off to much though, with rays and plaice showing along the parade at Hythe and also these species have been reported



from Folkestone pier. There is plenty of the usual suspects about at the moment with dogfish, dabs, whiting and the odd decent flounder being caught. There has also been a report of a couple of small blonde rays caught, which is not unheard of, but a great catch for any angler. Pulley pennels baited with fish baits or squid should help you find the rays and fresh lug on clipped down rigs should help you find the plaice before they move offshore. **Local tackle shops are Dens Tackle 01303 267053 and Best Buddies 01303 487144.**

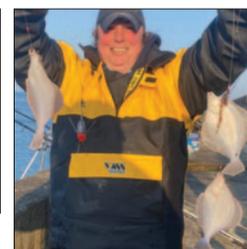


Eastbourne report courtesy of Tony's Tackle

Good plaice showing from the high numbers at Langney. Scott Brown landed one over 50 cm with plenty in clear water, but slower with smaller ones showing when the sea is murky. A few good flounders turned up early in the month on fresh or old black lug. No one bait is outperforming



at Seaford, but worth tipping the lug with ragworm at long range. Top man Darren Bond (the human trawler!) landed 52 plaice in a session using two rods at range! Night tides have produced plenty of thornback rays on blueys and squid and top quality sandeels. Peter Cornwall landed one of 11lbs plus from the shore. Whiting are still showing along with a few dabs. As I write, a few small hound pups are starting to show on crab baits this last week. It makes quite exciting news as the bigger hounds usually follow about 4 weeks later so stand by for another bumper season at Langney Point beaches and grab some crab which I hook on pulley pennell rigs. A valuable tip! DONT forget to set your drag! I have watched a few rods go down the beach last year! I predict the first ones to arrive in the first week of May. Eastbourne pier re-opened this week with Kim McGreevy catching 12 plaice in one day and a few rays were also caught. The cost to fish is only ten pounds a rod and is a fair price if you fish the whole day. Best baits are black lug and rag. Call Dan at the shop to book to fish. Eastbourne boats catching plenty of plaice and thornbacks with a few big bass from Beachy Head. Some good size pollack from the wrecks. The best baits at the moment are lug, mackerel and squid. **To order your bait, please call Tony on 01323 731388 or 07821 514853 for all fresh and frozen baits or visit our website at www.tonystackleshop.co.uk**



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Well, we are back open after a four months closure...what's happened while we have been away and how has the fishing changed? The big change was a cold weather snap, not just snow, but the low temperatures at sea. I have seen the lowest temperatures for over forty years! Checking online I saw a report at the Folkestone buoy and it reached as low as 3.5 degrees Celsius, that's low, very low! So how has that affected the fishing? It has slowed down catches on the beach, and sad to say things are still a bit slow. The sea temperature today as I write this on April 17 is only 7.8 degrees. With the seas a bit cold, it has put the brakes on the plaice here, but nothing slows down the dogfish.

BEACH REPORT

Not much to report having been closed for so long. I have seen reports and heard of a few with the odd bass, plaice and rays. Bait has been difficult, but now the spring lug has popped, we should see more bait about, all we need is some better, warmer weather.

On a brighter note, I was invited to see the installation of the new fishing line waste bins being installed at Dengemarsh and Galloways, just down from Dungeness in the west bay. The installation was organised by Eric Brown of the Romney Marsh litter pickers and set up by the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme. I would like to thank the Ministry of Defence for their continued support and to their contractors Landmarc in clearing our litter picking / beach clean bags and debris from this area. We are also very thankful to Martin and Kevin Addison of Addison

Construction and Civil Ltd for their financial contribution in paying for these new bins and their continued support with our group. It is great to see a local firm putting something back into the community where they work and live. Also to Dungeness Anglers Association for their support via a cheque to the group for £500 which is an unbelievable fantastic contribution and was presented by Chairman Alex Whittlesey, which will help towards additional installation costs, bags, new equipment etc. The Marsh has never been so clean, well done to the dedicated volunteers!



BEACH OUTLOOK FOR THE 'NEW YEAR'

Yes you have to stay positive, as the sea warms, we should see more fishing moving in, but with the shock of cold water peeler crabs could be rare.

BEST BAITS

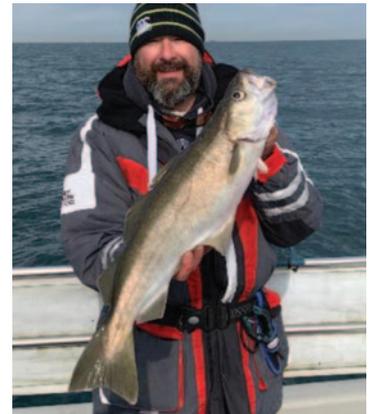
Certain baits could be in short supply. I'm hearing stories about a world shortage of 'Blueys', squid price increases and with the cold water supplies of crab and sandeel could be limited.

BOAT REPORTS

A slow start due to 'lock-down' but we have had a few pollack reported...

It's just great to get out!

I had this report in tonight from Anthony out on Peganina (07989778361) from Rye:
"Tim with one of the better pollack from today's trip"



When the wind is in the east:

I saw this report from Jerry Oiller tonight...

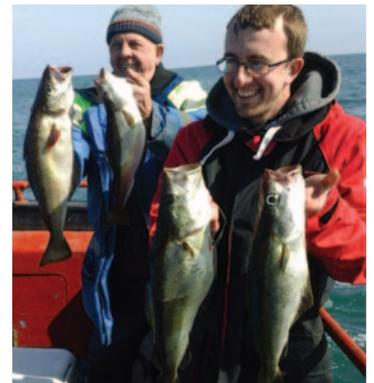
"Fairchance fishing Dungeness 01797 363544. Hard work today, 1 or 2 fish on the wrecks, for Dave Foggy Robinson but very slow at anchor, air pressure dropping quickly, maybe the fish know that the wind is going North Easterly again. You can't win them all.Happy Days."

Great day to be out:

I saw this posted by Jerry Oiller this evening...

"Fairchance fishing Dungeness 01797 363544

Today, A Beautiful Summer's Day on the water today, Tried Drifting the wrecks today water was a good colour for the Gills, managed to scratch out 9 or 10 Pollock, nothing Big, 3 to 5 lb but good sport on light gear. Happy Days."



What a cracker!



Great report from Anthony out on Peganina (07989 77836) from Rye...

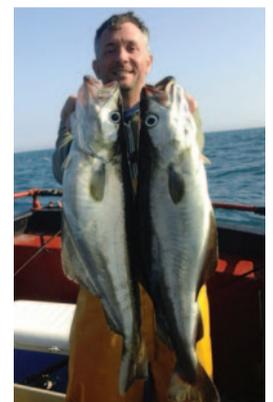
"Early bird catches the worm....very good to be back offshore this morning!! First double figure pollack of the year!!"

In spite of everything!

I saw this posted up the other day by Jerry Oiller of Fairchance fishing Dungeness 01797 363544.

"Dan the Man in the Boat today, Drifting the wrecks managed to boat 8 or 9 Pollock, quite a few takes that came to nothing, a gentle Breeze and sun shining. Happy Days"

BOAT OUTLOOK I think we are in for a great summer fish wise as we fight to get back to normal after Covid 19. The big question is after all this cold weather how will it affect fish movements and next winter? Will we go back to a more traditional species in their seasons and will we see a return of the cod?



BEST BAITS

I'm told that 'Sidewinders' are doing the business on the wrecks. Fish baits for those of the shark family and worm, lugworm & ragworm, for the flatties.

OUT AND ABOUT WITH ANDY by Andrew Cook

Sheppey Raiders!



Today's session found me over on the Island (Sheppey), meeting up with Richard Steel, Trev Hartley, Luke Ingram, Dave Geoffries and Peter Upton for a socially distanced dangle. We also bumped into Michael Whibley and Ashley Jr Whibley. In the end we had Admins from three different Facebook fishing groups all on the same stretch of beach!

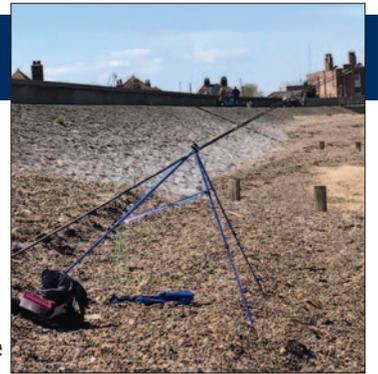
Our venue today was Ship on Shore as there's been plenty of rays coming out and there was also the outside chance of an early hound. We were on the mark at 12:30 after picking up 1/2 lb of quality rag courtesy of Medway Tackle-Supplies at Gillingham. The wind was a brisk North Easterly with a slight chop on the very coloured water.

The baits went out, usual pulley rig set up with bluey and rag / frozen peeler on the other. After only 45 minutes Trev has already landed three rays before Richard was into one. My left hand rod started to dip slowly and I was in. There was definitely a fish on but it was not doing much so it didn't really come as a surprise when a dogfish broke the surface and slithered onto the shingle.

A quiet half an hour followed with the exception of Trev hooking and then losing another one. Then all hell broke loose! Trev was into another one, while at the same time Dave who was fishing close in from the Groyne was into what we thought was a decent bass, but it was actually another ray. I helped Dave land his and walked back to my rods, the right hand one was pulling down and I was into a ray, apart from a few tugs it didn't do much and a few minutes later I've landed one of around 4lb.

While this was going on Richard was into his second after also landing a sole and in the space of five or six minutes we have landed four rays, Richard's one ending as the overall biggest at 6lbs 13ozs, I believe.

In the next 10 minutes Trev hooked and lost another two, he was on fire with four landed and three dropped. For me an hour before HW it went dead and I didn't get another bite, but Peter managed a target flounder, Dave had a dogfish and Trev managed another two rays to



take his tally to six. I packed up by 6:15 but Luke managed a ray on his last cast. The Whibley lads have also managed four between them from up on the concrete. There were plenty of fish about today but I just struggled to get among them, it was still a good session and always good to get out with friends.

Good luck if you are venturing out soon. Next week maybe a Brighton trip to get among the carpet of plaice currently raiding the Marina.

Tight lines all, Andy

HASTINGS report courtesy of Hastings Angling Centre

At long last we seem to be well on the way back to normality (fingers crossed!). The sun is shining very brightly but still very chilly, hopefully the temperature will rise soon and the late spring can catch up.



Sea fishing is picking up well with the tackle shops now open, the pier is open for fishing and the clubs launching boats. Fishing has been patchy off the beaches with some good catches of plaice but things are a bit slow with lots of may rot about now. It could do with a good SW blow to give it all a good stir and warm things up. There are a few bass starting to show and a good wind would bring the big fish in nicely and get the crabs peeling.



In the boats the good news is there are quite a few codling about only 2-4lb but very welcome. Some good pollack on the wrecks and reefs with herring still about to feed them up well after spawning. The first of the smoothounds, mainly smaller males are about already.

Prospects for May, warming sea and a good SW gale will see the big bass come inshore to feed up. Smoothounds will be off the beaches soon as well. Boat wise bass and pollack (and codling) on the wrecks with hounds tope and rays on rough ground. We don't get the first mackerel and black bream until June usually.



SAM'S FISHING JOURNAL

courtesy of Sam Cox

One Last Cast

- In memory of a dear friend,
Matthew Lee

"I would rather be a lucky angler than a good angler" was one of Matt Lee's favourite sayings. Truth be known he was both.

I first met Matt when we were kids back in 1985 at Bradwell Marina, I was catching flounders from the bow of my Dad's charter boat when Matt and his Dad walked past just as I was landing a small flounder. Our paths crossed again a few months later at a small pond in Tillingham. Matt and I once caught sixty-five crucian carp in one afternoon from this pretty little pond. These fish were like peas in a pod all weighing three quarters of a pound, apart from one of the crucians Matt caught that weighed one pound four ounces.



It wouldn't be until 1998 that our paths would cross again when I moved opposite to him, within days we were out fishing again. Matt was a carp angler, not my cup of tea but he loved it, and was good at it with carp to 46 pounds on his resume. He did show a lot of interest in catching a decent bass. I explained that, unlike carp, bass are a wild fish and therefore do not have names, and that they eat things like crabs, not sweet smelling little pink balls. He still seemed very keen, so we planned to fish a small local beach mark for a few hours either side of low water.

Matt turned up with his carp rod and a big pit fixed spool reel. He asked what set up was needed and I explained that a simple running leger is best. I showed him how to prepare a fresh peeler crab and within a few minutes he cast out to where I had pointed. He then rolled a fag and as he lit his cigarette, he asked me "how will I know when I have a bite?". At this point his £250 carp rod was almost ripped out of his hand as a bass ran across the tide at some speed. This bass weighed four and three quarter pounds, not bad for his first ever bass! I asked him if he wanted to take it home for the table, but Matt did not like eating fish. However, he said: "Me Mum will have it and she will love that!".

A few years later I bought an old 16-foot Dory. Matt helped me collect it and we took it to his parents' caravan park to jet wash it and test the engine. A few weeks later saw us eighteen miles out to sea fishing for smoothhounds off the edge of the East Barrow sands. We caught about fifteen small hounds to about seven pounds that day. Matt was impressed by how well these fairly small fish fought and was looking forward to our next trip.

On our next trip we made the big mistake of misjudging the weather forecast. It was forecast for ten miles per hour south westerly increasing to seventeen miles per hour by late afternoon. We stayed too long and the weather caught up with us. As the tide flooded it covered the sand banks leaving us exposed to the full force of the increasing wind. The Thames Estuary does not seem that big in a boat that can travel at 20mph, it's much bigger in bad weather that restricts your speed to 6mph. The conditions got so bad that one wave blew the Perspex window out from the front of the cuddy! This meant that every wave we took over the bow just filled the boat with water. My small bilge pump just could not handle this amount of water. Matt started bailing. "This is officially serious!" he said after fifteen minutes or so of bailing. I was too busy keeping the boat at the right angle to stop us taking on more water to really digest what he was saying. But it was serious! We managed to get back to Prior's jetty on the Crouch with an egg cup worth of fuel left and a big lesson learnt. This trip went down in our angling history and we often reflected on how lucky we were to make it safely home that day.

Matt really took to sea angling, so much so that the next year he bought his own boat the Mica Lou, a brand new sixteen-foot Explorer Elite with a Mercury 65hp engine on the back. This boat was fast, and Matt liked to go fast. There was no conversation or tea making on the way out to the chosen mark, no it was a white knuckle ride all the way!



Matt was competitive! On one of my first trips onboard the Mica Lou with him we were targeting thornback rays on a mark called the Swire Hole. This mark tends to throw up larger fish rather than big numbers of small ones. It was late afternoon and we had five decent sized rays each. Matt caught several but then caught the best one of the day at fourteen pounds, "Right time to go" he said, and with that he had won our friendly little contest.

In the first two years of owning a boat and seriously dedicating his time to small boat sea angling, Matt had caught double figure bass to fifteen pounds and big tope to over





fifty pounds. Matt then sold the Mica Lou and bought a brand new Aqua Fish 24, this was a home build project that Matt and his Dad Joe would spend the next ten months or so fitting out. She was fitted with a Volvo Penta 280HP engine and with a top speed of 37 knots she flew like a bird, a very loud bird a bird that could be heard from ten miles away.

Matt was very tired on one trip and asked me to steer the boat back to Bradwell. We had been out on an experimental trip to some wrecks just off the Kent coast. It was the last couple of hours of the flood tide so we could cut across all the sand banks. Matt had the boat almost flat out and even though it was flat calm at that speed every ripple is felt. As soon as he had fallen asleep, I backed off the throttle, so the boat was travelling around 22 knots. All the vibration stopped, the engine noise became bearable, and the journey home was far more enjoyable. I woke Matt up as we entered Bradwell creek, "Oh bloody hell that was quick mate, I slept like a baby", was all he said!

Back in 2006 my Dad and I renovated a 16.5 foot Del Quay Dory. She was about forty years old and the Yamaha 55hp outboard was around 30 years old. We renovated the Dory, but had not touched the very elderly trailer. Matt kindly offered to launch her for the first time using his Dads Toyota Hi-Lux 4-wheel drive pick-up. We left my house in Dengie and headed off to launch her at Burnham marina, I followed Matt in my van. About halfway to the marina streams of sparks could be seen coming from the wheels. I flashed Matt down and he pulled over. "Sod it", he said. "We are almost there." We launched my Dory (Raptor), carried out some test runs and put her safely on her new mooring at Rice & Coles. Funnily enough we left the trailer in the marina car park and totally forgot to pick it up.

The next week saw us out on Raptor for a short tope and smoothound trip. Matt explained that he had a nice little mark on the Middle Deeps that only fished for two hours ebb. This was perfect as the forecast for the afternoon was not good.

We got out to the Middles and I caught an eight pounds smoothound first cast then Matt's tope rod went off. After a ten minute fight, I leant over the side and pulled aboard a lovely 45 pound tope. By this time, we could see the predicted weather front moving in so lifted the anchor and headed home. After about ten minutes steaming my outboard engine just stopped. I tried starting it to no avail. Matt piped up "I knew I shouldn't have come out on another of your bloody old boats Coxy!" As it turned out, Matt's tope had knocked the fuel connector off the outboard while we were trying to un-hook it. I pushed the connector back on and pumped the fuel back to the engine. She then started and we flew home safe and sound.

I have so many memories of Matt, far too many to get down in a fifteen hundred word article. Most of us anglers will have friends like Matt, mates that are always up for an adventure, that thrive on catching big fish from very fast noisy boats. Please value these friends and the times and memories we have with them. None of us are immortal, there is not always more time or more adventures."

Thanks for the memories Matthew Richard Lee, they will last for ever.



Fishing is getting back to some form of normality, but that's where it stops! The water temperature is still so low with all the N.E winds. We are seeing the peeler crabs are at least a month behind now when normally we would be getting good numbers in the middle of April, but at present we are lucky to see 50 on a good day. It isn't helping the smoothound fishing, but the usual small hounds are here so hopefully the females won't be far behind! We have had a few this season on straight yellows which is encouraging with the lack of crab. I've been learning to pump my own yellows in the lockdown as it was essential for me to have bait when we came out of lockdown and to have around 2000 rolled in the freezer. I do think it's a good way of exercising and very addictive and on a good tide, I would expect 300 decent yellow tails. You can either keep them whole or blow them (take the guts out) then lay on newspaper at home to dry them and wrap in newspaper and freeze or use fresh.



Back to the fishing! We are finding usual amounts of skate here at Ramsgate with some good size fish up to 14lbs coming up but the usual size are small males around the 4lbs mark which are still good fun on light tackle. I have switched over from my Zziplex to Tubertini for the skate season, but my Zziplex is never far away, thank you Shane Pullen! Rigs can be as basic or as fancy as you want, but I just like a running trace with a 6ft hook line on a 70lbs trace and 6/0 Koike hook. I use strong line as it is needed just for the wear on the line especially with the dog fish that seem never ending some days. For uptiding, I use a very long pulley rig with same line and 6/0 hook. My usual baits are herring chunk, bluey or squid.

Now on to the prime bass. The yellow tails seem a go to bait for the bass and fresh yellows are dynamite! However, no big bass have come up yet and the fish are averaging around 4lbs which would be the expected size. I use the same rigs, ie a pulley with flowing trace or even a standard bolt rig with lighter line around 30 lb with 4/0 Koike. The big debate is always the hook length. I like to use around 10ft, even 12ft when I'm fishing chalk ground for extra movement. However, it can be tricky to cast but I just put on grip wires and flick out. I don't think I need to go in to the dog fish too much apart from there are 1 or 2 here! The preferred bait? Anything! We are getting dabs, whiting and pouting which can all be caught on the slack water on lug, fish baits and squid.

A quick mention about the spurdogs that swim through here on their migrating pattern north. You have to be very lucky to be in the right place at the right time. We had a nice 15 lbs spur recently which went like a steam train tangling 4 rods, all part of the spur experience, but as usual, Mother Nature kicked in and the weather stopped play and that was the end of the spur story!



Keep safe people and tight lines and I hope to see some of you onboard Lady Ann of Ramsgate! Jason



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



Is this the end of an era?



News has recently emerged that Dover Harbour Board is going to close the Admiralty Pier to anglers for good. The iconic pier has been closed for some time as it was claimed that repairs were necessary and access along the walkway was unsafe.

A recent report made the news and anglers not just from the local area, but nationwide, have been outraged by the decision by Dover Harbour Board. Generations of anglers have grown up on this pier and learnt how to fish with their fathers and grand fathers. The Admiralty Pier had the deserved reputation as offering some of the finest fishing in the country and anglers from far and wide would travel to fish here.

Dover has now lost all of its beloved fishing structures although angling is still permitted from Shakespeare Beach to the west of the Admiralty Pier. Access to the Breakwater was stopped many years ago and the Prince of Wales pier was lost with the development of the Western Docks and new marina.

There are numerous petitions on Social Media and some high profile campaigners are now joining the fight with the Dover Sea Angling Association. All anglers are strongly urged to sign the petitions to show the Dover Harbour Board that angling and other port activities can live side by side.

Dover Sea Angling Association held a zoom meeting with DHB and following the meeting issued this statement:

Admiralty Pier and CT3

"Yesterday (21/4/21) Dover Harbour Board held a zoom meeting with DSAA which we believed was to arrange the re-opening of CT3 disabled area after lockdown closure. In this meeting DHB announced they intend to stop all fishing within Dover Harbour forever. They said that legislation introduced after the Manchester bombing called 'Protect' meant they needed to prevent any public access to any part of the port. They said this legislation would also effect other events in Dover including the Regatta and the Christmas Market. Obviously we were unprepared for such a discussion, however, a number of questions were asked and it was very clear this was not a consultation or discussion, it was an



already made decision and no further thoughts were welcome as to how a way to continue fishing under these new rules could be found.

DSAA have been running fishing events from Dover piers for over 100 years and have in recent years been unable to stop DHB chip away at angling in Dover. The breakwater was closed with very little explanation other than it's unsafe, the Prince of Wales was closed to enable the new freight terminal and the failed marina. As the Prince of Wales had been a renowned easy access venue for anglers with disabilities and limited mobility, CT3 was offered as an alternative and has been a huge benefit to the wellbeing of 100s of locals, many of whom cannot physically fish anywhere else due to walking and casting



difficulties. The Admiralty Pier is one of the best known angling venues in the country and has had 1000s of anglers using it every year for over a century. For around 10 years DHB has been monitoring a weakness in part of the walkway, no repairs have been carried out and for years it was tested and deemed safe. In 2019, the testing detected deterioration in the walkway and it was declared unsafe. DHB had promised repeatedly that the work to repair the walkway would be carried out in due course but with no angling permitted this expensive repair will no longer be necessary.

As news of this huge loss to the community of Dover and the wider area has spread there has been a massive response. It's very clear that the permanent closure of these venues will have a terrible impact on a lot of people and will result in businesses closing and jobs being lost. DSAA will be fighting this decision with everything they have, we have today been in discussions with board members of the Angling Trust and will update on their involvement in the coming days. We will need everyone's help and support to make our case and bring this terrible decision into the spotlight. Once we have met with the legal advisors we will update on how everyone can best help with the cause".

Dover Sea Angling Association

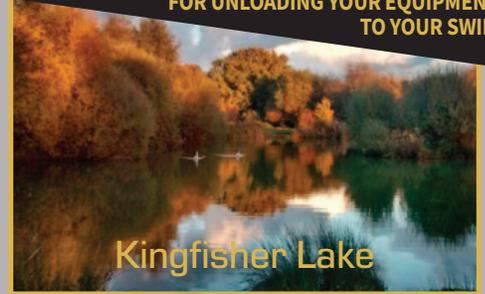




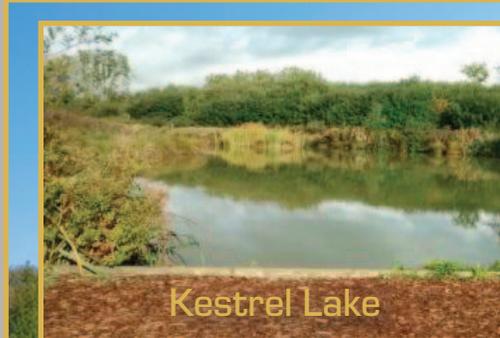
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Swift Lake



KESTREL LAKE

Day Ticket: £15 for 2 rods / £20 for 3 rods
24 hours: £30 for 2 rods / £35 for 3 rods
48 hours: £50 for 2 rods / £55 for 3 rods

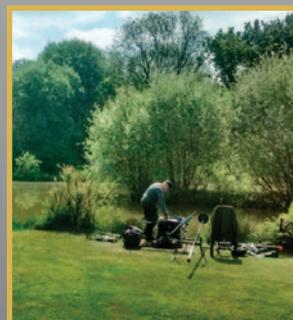


KINGFISHER LAKE

Day Ticket: £12.00 for 2 rods / 3 rods £15
(3 rods at the discretion of the bailiff)
24 Hours: £25 for 2 rods / £30 for 3 rods
36 Hours: £35 for 2 rods / £40 for 3 rods
48 Hours: £45 for 2 rods / £50 for 3 rods

SWIFT LAKE (Match/Pleasure)

Day Ticket: £7 for 1 rod / £10 for 2 rods



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