**West Wilts Fly Fishers Guild**

**Wednesday 10th November 2021 7.30pm Leigh Park Hotel, B-on-A**

**Present:**

Jon Jonik, Roger Henderson, Gerry Barnes, Colin Burbedge, Robert Eadie, Tim Pullen, Peter Marshall-Bailey, Maurice Dyer, David Edwards, Bryan Hussey, Richard Arney, David Little, Simon Steel,Edward Rhys (guest).

**Apologies:**

Malcolm Bond, Russell Bond, John De Cesare,Charles Freemantle, Richard Cripps, Elliot McBride, Neil Soni, Robin Sewell, David Griffiths.

1. **Minutes of October Guild meeting and matters arising.**

Accepted without amendment. No matters arising.

Roger thanked members for returning their 2020 season trophies.

1. **River Frome annual review**
2. **River Frome Report**

Roger gave an overview of the 2021 season which saw considerably more visits by members compared with 2020 and a 50% increase in the number of rainbow trout caught, although fewer brown trout. The average was about 2 game fish per trip. The report has ‘tips for new members’ to help them catch more in 2022. He thanked members for their support during the year with bank management and stocking – in total 17 members had helped, some on several occasions. The aim in 2022 will be to improve access to some excellent beats downstream of the flume.

To help members plan their fishing sessions in 2022 the report gives details about fly-hatches – e.g. mayfly and Roger asked members to let him know when they see good hatches next season so he can let everyone know.

This year five more members have qualified as river-fly monitors and we now have three fly monitoring sites on The Frome. Between them the three sites have ample areas of the key invertebrate habitats – ranunculus weed beds, clean stones and silt beds. Roger emphasised that river monitoring will be a key element in protecting and improving the River Frome especially as cleaning-up our rivers has been given great public prominence in The Environment Bill which has just gone through Parliament.

In the follow-up discussion:

* Members gave support to the prospect of the Environment Agency stocking grayling into our stretch subject to them assessing the water quality/habitat as suitable. The initial discussions will take place in 2022. Footnote - The EA is stocking grayling into The Frome upstream of Tellisford.
* River Frome rule changes:

1. Members agreed that fishing for Rainbow trout will no longer end on the 15th October because they are now triploid (sterile) fish ) not duploid as in previous years, so non-breeding.
2. Members agreed to end the ‘single fly’ rule so that a wider range of techniques and fly combinations can be used.
3. Barbless flies are ‘recommended’ but members wanted to retain the option to use barbed flies.

* Roger will source water quality testing kits for Nitrates & Phosphates so our fly-monitors can carry-out water quality testing.

The full River Report will be distributed with the Minutes of the meeting.

1. **Stocking in 2022**

The meeting agreed the same stocking policy as this season:

Rainbow trout – 1st stocking to coincide with mayfly carnival late May and 2nd stocking mid-August as a late season fishing boost.

1. **Bank management 2022**

A similar pattern to this season to keep footpaths and access points clear of nettles and brambles etc.

*NB Post meeting note* – normally we have a tidying session in February to clear debris/flotsam deposited by any winter floods. It is also the opportunity to do some essential coppicing to let light into the river which encourages weed growth and to cutback overarching branches etc before bird-nesting starts.

Provisional date for 2022 – Sunday 20th February (dependent on weather conditions). Roger will confirm closer to the 20th Feb.

1. **Christmas Hamper competition - Manningford Fishery Sunday 21st November.**

Jon gave an update on arrangements. We have 21 members taking part and although we have the Christmas hamper to be won the priority is an informal social fishing day with everyone catching fish.

Jon will email all members with details.

Fishing from 9.00am till 2pm for weigh-in and lunch in the lodge. Heaviest 4 fish bag wins the hamper. The heaviest rainbow wins a bottle of wine. NB the same person cannot win the hamper and the bottle of wine. Guild trophies for the heaviest Rainbow and the heaviest Brown trout of the 2021 season could also be won on the day. To allocate initial fishing spots Jon will read out members names in the order they booked their place.

After catching two fish in any spot the member must move to a new spot to give others the opportunity to catch.

The raffle boards for our Big Raffle to be drawn at our dinner on 26th Nov will there if members wish to buy tickets.

1. **Guild Dinner and Big Raffle Friday 26th November.**

20 Members and guests will be attending. It will be held in the room in which we hold our meetings.

As well as the Big Raffle there will be a Table Raffle for which donated prizes on the night would be appreciated.

Guests will be asked to judge the entries for the Guild Photography Trophy.

Mary Eadie was thanked for compiling the Table Quiz.

1. **2022 Programme.**

Suggestions:

1. Fly-tying sessions at the January and February meetings.
2. Guest speaker suggestions:
   * + Sam Stork as follow-up to the ‘Source to Sea’ project on The Hampshire Avon
     + Richard Cripps ‘Weeds’ – “a problem in perspective”.
     + Malcolm – Manager of Manningford Trout Fishery
     + Jim Williams – professional fly-fishing guide.
     + Doug Tilley (ex-WWFFG member)

**AOB**

1. Members agreed we should support the Wild Trout Trust by buying raffle tickets. Jon said any prizes won would be put into a ‘draw’ for members to win.

**Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 12th January 2022**