

WWFFG



Members of the Wild Trout Trust

Website: <http://wwffg.t15.org/>

MAY 2013 NEWSLETTER



Guild Meeting - May 8th. - Unfortunately Martin Cottis was unable to attend, but all was not lost, we played a DVD after our business meeting entitled 'Reservoir Trout Fishing' guided by England International Simon Gawesworth. This presentation featured flyfishing on Chew Lake with Simon demonstrating all methods and aspects of the sport. Appropriate as our Chew Boat Competition was held on 19th May.

NEXT GUILD MEETING - Wednesday June 12th. The Speaker will definitely be Martin Cottis!

A Wessex Water Representative who was booked for June will speak to us later in the year.

A new date has been made for our **Skittles Evening. Friday 11th October** and is now confirmed. It will be held at **The White Hart, Atworth;** **gather at 7.30 pm for 8.00 start.**

A mixed hot and cold buffet will be provided at a cost of £5:50 per head. More details nearer the time or contact Malcolm to book.

RESULTS AND REPORT OF THE CHEW BOAT CUP COMPETITION

Name	How Many Fish?	Best Rainbow.	Best Brown.	Total Weight.
Gerry Tinson	8	3lb 7oz	-	22lb 4oz
Roger Henderson	3	4lb 2 oz	-	11lb
Chris Holt	6	3lb 7 oz	-	16lb 13oz
Charles Freemantle	5	3lb	-	13lb 11oz
Gerry Barnes	3	3 lb 6oz	-	9lb
Andy Greatwood	1	3lb	-	3lb
John De Cesare	1	3lb	-	3lb
Mike Harris	0			
Bryan Hussey	0			
William Arney	0			

The weather conditions on Sunday 19th May, 2013, were probably the best that we have experienced for many a long year at Chew – we had overcast skies, little wind, a warm day and a significant presence of fly life. Casting our minds back to previous years we wondered where were the high winds, the white caps to the waves and the driving rain? The ten occupants of the five boats that set out to fish for the Tam Pearce Trophy had high hopes and in four instances those high hopes were realised. Fishing small flies in shallow water close to the edges Chris Holt was for a long time the favourite to win, by early afternoon he had six fish but then his luck deserted him and he caught no more. Gerry Tinson, by contrast, had only caught one fish during the morning but then he hit a shoal and his fortunes changed. He took his bag limit and won the competition by a wide margin. Chris came second on bag weight followed closely by Charles Freemantle. Roger Henderson won the bottle of wine for the heaviest fish with a magnificent rainbow weighing in at 4lb 2oz.

All in all, twenty seven fish were caught and a total bag weight of seventy nine pounds was recorded surely one of the most successful outings at Chew in recent memory. Congratulations to the worthy winner of the cup, Gerry T, and to the taker of the largest fish Roger Henderson. All who took part enjoyed the event and catching so many fish after last year's whitewash gives us all encouragement for next year.

AVON SPRINGS - SUNDAY 23RD JUNE - J. TURK SHIELD

(where we ALWAYS catch fish)! We shall fish for the J.Turk Shield. We shall fish a **3 fish ticket** and have a time limit of 4 hours. So rods in and non-stop fishing from 10:00am to weigh-in at 2:00pm. A splendid bottle of 'Stamford Brook' fishing plonk will be awarded to the person catching the heaviest fish in the contest. After weighing all our big fish we could have our picnics and a chinwag on the benches provided, if the weather is kind. As usual it would be good to see as many Members as possible attending on this day. Please abide by the fishery rules.

AVON SPRINGS FISHING LAKES

Recreation Rd, Durrington Salisbury, Wiltshire (Sat Nav SP4 8HH.)

British Fly Fair International June 2013

Staffordshire County Showground

June 22nd and 23rd

*“50 of the worlds best fly-tyers, 50 specialist trade stands,
plus theatre presentations and casting pool”*

9.30am till 4.30pm daily

Day 1 - £10 Day 2 - £17

For full info visit www.bffi.co.uk



Putting the record straight...

A correction seen in an edition of Fly-Fishing and Fly-Tying:

It seems that when we refer to water weed waving in the flow as 'ranunculus' we might be just hedging our bets because that covers all those plants in the buttercup family, which numbers around 40 and includes Marsh Marigold, Lesser Celandine and Wood Anemone. The more correct name we are probably searching for is 'water crowfoot'. Doesn't roll off the tongue like r a n u n c u l u s and a pity it sounds like something you get from having your feet in mouldy waders for too long.



Pollution in our rivers - How they suffered and the dangers they face.

Although shocking, and sometimes catastrophic, cases of river pollution still occur but at least today they make the headlines and people are held to account. The recent slurry escape into the Wellow shows just how quickly things can go

wrong and the after effects. In the past the river Frome and the fish in it no doubt suffered appallingly from the industries around the town of Frome such as iron working and cloth manufacturing. But the river which some say suffered more than most is the Wandle in Hertfordshire. According to an account in F-F & F-T, at the turn of the 19th, the Wandle - rising in Croydon was once regarded as one of the finest chalk streams that ever flowed - Nelson fished it before Trafalgar and Halford was a regular. However at one point there were 40 industries over its eleven mile length. Some records put the number of mills alone as high as 90. These various industries included two dyeing works, five snuff mills, three bleaching grounds, five oil mills, twelve calico works, a paper mill, and a copper plant. Most dumped their noxious waste directly into the river. Apparently it would run pink or blue depending on the colour the tanneries were using. In Victorian times it was called "the hardest working river in the world" but also "a-stout hearted little river" and catches were still good until the 1880's, though there is no record of whether people risked eating what they caught or just put it back!



River Wandle 1973 after being declared a sewer in 1960.

By the early 20th Century the Wandle was well and truly in decline and in 1960 it was officially declared a sewer. This must have shamed the right people into action because now it is described as being in the "rudest of health" and the brown trout are back.

River Wandle restored to prime condition

The history of the Wandle is the same as most rivers. They were all vying for the title of 'most polluted in Europe'. In 1974 when Parliament passed the Control of Pollution Act, 1,889 miles of Britain's largest rivers were "too dirty and devoid of oxygen to support fish". Margaret Thatcher was opposition spokeswoman on the environment and gave enthusiastic support. She said the Bill "was likely to have a greater, more lasting impact on the quality of life in many parts of Britain than most other measures" and that she would do all she could to assist its passage. But passing the bill was the easy bit...



Among the big industrial offenders named by The New Scientist in a 1984 article were ICI, National Coal Board, Imperial Tobacco and Rio Tinto Zinc. The CBI coordinated the opposition to the C of P Act so well that by 1984 virtually nothing had happened largely due to dithering by civil servants still wanting more consultation.. Ray Martingale (CBI spokesman) described the C of P Act as "a busybody's charter" Obviously not an angler !

It took thirty more years and further action by Parliament to restore our rivers to their current much improved though less than perfect condition. However much remains to be done and to paraphrase F-F & F-T's warning for today - "our rivers now suffer more from subtle deterioration occurring gradually over generations, as evidenced by the relentless decline of aquatic creatures in recent decades, and human memory is short."

To monitor this subtle deterioration the river Frome is surveyed every three years between April and October by the Environment Agency. The 2012 survey showed that it was "failing the Water Framework Directive (WFD) targets on phosphate levels, ammonia, & fish population. In the upper reaches the catchment is heavy clay, with lots of land drainage and intensive dairy farming". Prior to the EU Water Framework Directive EA monitoring was restricted to chemical analysis only whereas from 2015 it has been expanded to also look at the ecological health of the water which should ensure no further deterioration of waters.

In November 2012 a Steering Group was set up by the EA to allocate capital grants for Catchment Sensitive Farming; such as providing water course fencing, hard standing for livestock feeders and roofs over silage & slurry storage to reduce run-off. The impetus for this is the 2015 deadline for the WFD which the UK signed up to in 2000. It requires 95% of all British waters to be in 'good' ecological condition by 2015. That target is unlikely to be met but hopefully the Frome and Mole will be among them.

Mayfly

As you walk along a riverbank on a warm summer day you might see some small insects dancing above the water. They are probably mayflies and they may have been dancing over that river for thousands of years!

Mayfly myths!

The common name 'Mayfly' is quite misleading because this group of insects can appear throughout the year. In fact, at one point they were called dayflies due to some of the species having an adult life of a single day. The common name comes from the habit of one species, *Ephemera danica*, which emerge as adults when the Mayflower or Hawthorn is in bloom.



Mayfly nymph © Stuart Crofts



Mayfly, © Denis Greenough

Although some species only live for as single day, or even just a few hours as adults, there are individuals or species that can live a bit longer than that. In fact most of the life of a mayfly is spent out of sight as a nymph.

Mayfly life-cycle

Mayflies start life as an egg on the bed of the river, before hatching into a nymph. The nymphs feed on algae and other vegetable matter on the bed for up to two years in some species, before emerging from the surface of the water as an adult.

Mayflies are unique as insects in having two winged adult stages. After emerging from the water they fly to the bank where they shelter on the underside of leaves or in the grass. They then moult again, leaving behind their drab 'dun' skin to reveal their shiny 'spinner' skin. Following this moult they fly back to the water and form mating swarms dancing above the surface.



A mayfly emerging from the water as an adult © Stuart Crofts

Marvellous mayflies

Mayflies were one of the first winged insects, with fossils dating back over 300 million years - long before the dinosaurs! There are 51 species of mayfly known from the British Isles today and they range in size from less than 5mm to over 20mm.

Mayfly larvae, and the mayfly adults emerging from the water, are a vital source of food for many other freshwater creatures, especially fish such as trout and salmon. Mayflies, and other riverflies, help ensure that our rivers, lakes and streams are home to a rich variety of wildlife.

Populations of mayflies and other riverflies are declining in the UK. As a member of the Riverfly Partnership, Buglife is working with other organisations to try and understand the cause of these declines. Once the causes are known action can be taken to reverse the declines and protect beautiful mayflies.

The Iron Blue

Baetis muticus commonly known as the **Iron Blue** is regularly seen between April and October. As a nymph the Iron Blue has 7 plate like gills but the first pair of gills is very small and often overlooked in mature nymphs.



The nymphs live chiefly in riffle sections of rivers and streams often found in sand, gravel or mud on the bed of the water. There are two generations per year, firstly the over wintering generation which grows slowly then a faster growing summer generation. This spread of nymphs accounts for its emergence April to October.

FISHERMEN CAST INTO DOOM AND GLOOM AS SALMON AND TROUT GO MISSING FROM RIVERS

Fishermen could be casting in vain this season after one of the worst years for weather on record almost halved the salmon population.

Scientific studies by the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) showed that drought followed by floods in 2012 have badly affected fish numbers.

Meanwhile the Salmon and Trout Research Centre on the River Frome, Dorset, said that fewer than 7,000 salmon hatched compared with up to around 13,000 in recent times. Prof Sotherton, director of research of the GWCT, said many young salmon that hatched last year did not survive because drought meant that water was too low in the nursery beds.

Consequently, fish that have been at sea for a year - known as grilse will be down in number as they return to rivers. The conditions have also had an impact on the total of older fish returning and breeding.

Salmon populations in the UK have plummeted 70% in the past 30 years, according to the North Atlantic Salmon Fund. A study in Scotland by St Andrews University found that the average grilse are a third less heavy and the population has shrunk by nearly 10%.

(Part of a report taken from D. Telegraph)

Stocking the River Frome Friday 10th May.

As you can see from the photos we had near perfect conditions for our annual stocking. This year we stocked exclusively brown trout because it is thought they will be more resilient if we have a repeat of last year's floods/spates. A total of 285 fish were put in between beat 1 (Stoney Bottom) and beat 10 (Platform Pool).

They have been spot dye-marked blue (see photo) so we can differentiate between them and wild or grown-on fish in returns. It will also enable us to track them if they are caught by other angling clubs such as the Police Angling Club.

We would like to thank the six members for helping, particularly our new members - Rod, Roger and John.

The fish will by now have had a few days to settle-in so our advice is to get down there and make the most of it in case we get a repeat of last year's weather .

The bankside vegetation has suddenly started to grow rapidly so we will soon be asking for help to clear paths of stinging nettles etc.

Roger & Jim
Frome River Keepers.



HAPPY FISHING!.....BOB
PS.



"I've got a wife, kids, a career—Jesus! I'm twelve hours old! How did this happen to me?"