

## WEST WILTS FLYFISHERS GUILD



Members of the Wild Trout Trust

Website: [westwiltsflyfishersguild.com](http://westwiltsflyfishersguild.com)

## AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER GUILD MEETING - **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at the Shaw Hotel**  
Speaker to be announced

*The Big Raffle and the WWFFG Guild Annual Dinner Raffle*  
Has been launched so bring some extra cash for a few tickets.  
To be drawn at our Guild Dinner on 17th November.

### **Sea Trout Fishing on the Tweed. (photos page 3&4 )**

It was the morning of Monday 19th June 2017 when an email arrived from a good friend saying "as a result of someone cancelling, there is a rod for a few days on the Tweed commencing Monday 26th - are you interested?" I had been told that there can sometimes be good Sea Trout fishing on the Tweed at this time of year.

The ink in the email had not yet dried and my response was "Yes - I'll take it, thank you".

Just under a week later (on Sunday 25th) we were on our way by 10 a.m. to make the long 8 hour drive to Coldstream.

Monday 26th we arrived at the fishing lodge only to be told the river was very low (**doom and gloom**) - they had not had any rain for some time - so not to expect too much. Hence why the previous person had cancelled and left the opportunity (!!!) for me to take up. Anyway I fished all day covering several pools in what I would regard as good fishing weather with the temperature around 15 degree C - the heat (33 degrees) of the previous week was thankfully gone.

Tuesday 27th - weather getting colder but no rain. Around mid morning a large fish (not sure if a Sea Trout or Salmon) followed my fly for around 20 feet or more as the fly swung in the slow, but still moving, current. Needless to say it turned away at the last second (as they do having first raised the heart rate!!) and so nothing. At mid-day we packed up and headed for the coast for an excellent pub lunch (superb crab soup) and a tour of Bamburgh Castle - very interesting.

Wednesday 28th - Day started with rain from around 1 a.m. so that by 9 a.m. the river had risen a few inches but thankfully the water was not too coloured and still fishable. Around mid-morning I finally had a fish on but only for about 3 or 4 seconds. It had pulled a good length of line and then must have opened its mouth and spat out the 'sun ray shadow' fly I had on!! By mid-day the water was too high to fish and I thought that was the end on my fishing. Late that afternoon the rain actually stopped and that same evening a call came from one of the river keepers saying "*Could be good tomorrow if the water level starts to drop during the night.*"

Thursday 29th - We woke up to really heavy rain and my first thought was that it was probably best to abandon any further attempt to fish. As it was our last day we thought we would go down to the river and see how bad it was and then decide. Well we got to the pool I had hoped to fish and found it was not too bad - the rain was really hammering down though and I could see that within a few hours the levels would be too high again - so decided to have a go. I think it was my third cast (around 10:15 by then) when the line flew out of my hands whizzing down stream. It took around 10 minutes to bring it to the net - a superb safely landed 7 lbs Sea Trout. Kathy did the netting net part perfectly (best Ghille ever). Kathy spotted that just as the fish was netted it had managed to unhook itself - so it was a close one.

7 lbs of solid muscle - a bar of silver with big black spots - I have to say it looked twice that size when I first looked at it! Its funny how fishermen seem to develop magnified vision when then catch fish!

For some reason the heavy rain and 50 mile an hour head wind that I had been battling with seemed now not to be bothering me!! The temperature had dropped to 11 degrees C!!! Felt like it was the Autumn.

After a 10 minute break I waded in to the water again (I was wading to a depth around 4 inches above trouser belt level) and started my battle with the wind and rain again - the rain by now was coming at me horizontally!! I don't recall how many times the line I tried to cast simply flew back into my face - but I kept battling on and then at 11:15 - yes - off it went again but this time with even more power.

This second fish, I was convinced, was a double figure salmon. I think it took me to near the end of the backing line (around three times) before I had it finally under some control. Kathy did the honours and put the net under it once I finally had it within a couple of feet from the bank and YES the superb second Sea Trout was landed.

By then the water was rising at an alarming rate - the level had risen by at least 6 inches within the hour that was I was fishing - yes sadly this was our last session on the river and the last day of our trip.

Back at the fishing lodge the river keeper weighed the two fish and recorded them in the returns log.



Sun ray shadow

A truly wonderful and memorable day on the Tweed fishing for Sea Trout.

7lbs. Sea trout



8lbs, Sea Trout



*Below is the second fish - it was actually really silver as you see from the landing net below but the weather was by then so dark and grey that it reflected that lack of light in the photo above. The wonderful big black spots. Classic Sea Trout.*



*John De Cesare*

# THE WILTSHIRE GAME & COUNTRY FAIR

Bowood House, Calne. SN11 0LZ

Saturday & Sunday September 23rd & 24<sup>th</sup> - 10.00am - 6.00pm.

## A large Country Fair with three action packed arenas

Activities include a fishing workshop.

Adults: £14. Over 65's £11.50. Children £4.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY ELECTRO-FISHING SURVEY  
of the SOMERSET FROME in 2016**

**Report published July 2017. The full report can be found on the WWFFG website.**

**The Report will be discussed at our Rivers Meeting on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at Shaw Hotel.**

4 sites on the Somerset Frome were surveyed by the Environment Agency Sampling and Collecting Team between July and August 2016 as part of the National Fish Monitoring Programme. The sites were:

- 1) **Blatchbridge** - upstream of the town of Frome
- 2) **Longhouse Farm** - downstream of the town of Frome
- 3) **Tellisford** - on beat 5 of WWFFG water
- 4) **Snarlton Farm** - the bottom end of WWFFG water

**Tellisford site results** (converted from m.m. used by the EA)

Brown Trout - 8 caught up to 14" (Average 8")

Rainbow Trout - 13 caught up to 12"

Chub - 37 caught up to 16"

Dace - 25 caught up to 9"

Perch - 4 caught up to 10"

Eel - 1 caught at 19"

Roach - 10 caught up to 7"



**Of the Tellisford site the report says:**

The eroding nature of the river at this location has reduced the effective fishing area in recent surveys by approximately 15m, to the extent that only one large refuge area for fish remains. Therefore, it is intended to enlarge the survey length in the future to include an additional glide below the current site. The current site is a swift flowing section of the Frome comprising one long deep glide with shallow riffles to the top and bottom of the site. There is little tree cover throughout the section other than marginal overhang and as a result beds of Ranunculus are present

in abundance within the watercourse. Results were generally in line with expectations for this location. Chub (37) and Dace (25) featured as the most numerous species in the catch, with chub having the highest biomass at almost 60% of the total catch. This reach is regularly stocked during the spring and summer with both brown adult triploid (sterile) and rainbow trout for angling interest, which is reflected in the overall catch for these species. No barbel were caught at this site in 2016, despite 1,000 being stocked in 2013 as part of the Bristol Avon restocking programme. The fish stocked were juveniles (18 months old and known as 1+ fish). Barbel have been caught at this site in previous years, with a maximum number of 7 in 2007 (no barbel were caught in 2010 and 2013).

#### **Overall summary of the four sites surveyed on The Somerset Frome**

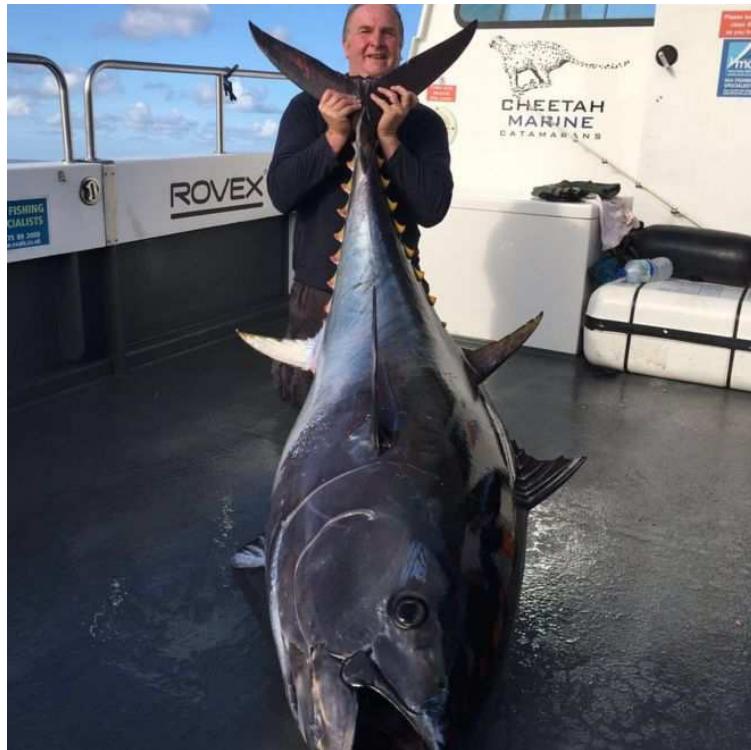
- 11 species of fish were recorded and a total of 831 (excluding minor species such as minnows and 3-spined sticklebacks) fish were captured
- Roach were the most widespread species, being recorded at all 4 sites
- An average total density estimate of 22.75 fish per 100m<sup>2</sup> and biomass estimate of 2,364.16 grams per 100m<sup>2</sup> were recorded across all sites
- Roach were the most numerous species, whilst chub had the highest biomass.

#### **Planned actions by the Environment Agency**

- The Environment Agency will continue to re-survey the section of the River Frome affected by the pollution incident in 2016, in order to assess the recovery of the fish stocks and guide future re-stocking needs.
- The Environment Agency plans to re-stock the River Frome through Frome town centre with juvenile 1+ dace in late 2017 as a result of the pollution incident in 2016.
- There are reported issues of water level fluctuations in the River Frome through Frome town centre, which are also reported further down the catchment in the lower reaches. The Environment Agency is investigating this, in the hope that the source can be identified and improvements made to prevent future environmental harm as a result of the fluctuating water levels.
- The Environment Agency is currently considering options for Welshmill Weir and St. Leonards Weir in Frome to improve fish passage and therefore increase the resilience of the local fish populations to changing environmental conditions. This will be a long term project.
- Due to the strong angling interest on the river, opportunities for project development should be considered in order to restore and/or maintain good fisheries habitat. The Fisheries Improvement Fund, which is managed by the Environment Agency, could be a good opportunity to develop partnership projects in the catchment.

**Next survey - Summer 2019**

Looks like we'll need a bigger tin! Fisherman, 48, spends two hours reeling in a giant 7ft 7in tuna fish which weighs a record-breaking 500lb



A huge bluefin tuna weighing about 500lb has been caught in Welsh waters off Pembrokeshire.

Andrew Alsop, 49, spent two hours and 15 minutes to bring the 226kg "monster" in after it was accidentally caught during a fishing trip from Neyland.

Mr Alsop described it as the "fish of a lifetime".

He returned the 7ft 7in (2.3m) tuna, which is an endangered species, to the water afterwards.

In a Facebook post, Mr Alsop, from Rhoose in Vale of Glamorgan, wrote: "Well what a day!!

"I caught a fish of a lifetime today after a 2hr 15min pain locked battle on my own...

"This bluefin tuna is now the biggest fish ever landed from Welsh waters."

"I'm hurting now," he added.

BBC NEWS

## **Why the price of salmon is soaring... and the reason may put you off this wonderful fish for life**

- David Cosh travelled to Kola peninsula in northwest Russia to fish for salmon
- But retiree came away feeling it was a journey he should not have had to make
- In Scotland where he lives, Mr Cosh owns a 1.75-mile stretch of his own river
- Over 20 years his annual salmon catch has dwindled from 900+ to less than 30

Last month, David Cosh travelled 2,500 miles to the Kola Peninsula in north-western Russia to fish for salmon. While the trip was a success, the retired businessman came away feeling it was a journey he should not have had to make.

Because back in Scotland where he lives, Mr Cosh owns a 1.75-mile stretch of his own river.

Situated on the west coast, until recently the Doon had a reputation as one of the most iconic salmon rivers in the world.

Indeed, the 72-year-old's beat runs under the famous bridge, the Brig o' Doon, at Alloway, immortalised by Robert Burns in his poem Tam O' Shanter and featured on the back of a Bank of Scotland £5 note.

'I have records for my beat that go back 20-odd years that show that in 1995 we caught 960 fish,' he says. 'By 2015, the number had fallen to just 27 – and it was the same last year. In Russia I caught more than that in a single week.'

This year the number of salmon taken on his stretch of the river will be zero. The reason is simple – Mr Cosh has closed it to anglers, feeling he can no longer charge fishermen for the chance to catch something that simply is not there.

He is in no doubt what is to blame for its decline – the hundreds of salmon farms that have sprung up in sea lochs and estuaries around Scotland's beautiful west coast, polluting the water.

*Taken from The Daily Mail*

## **Warm winter puts stocks of salmon at their lowest ebb**

Salmon stocks have fallen to record lows in British rivers because of a warmer winter, experts believe. The Salmon & Wildlife Conservation Trust said the number of juvenile salmon leaving the Frome River in Dorset for the feeding grounds in the North Atlantic in 2017 was half the ten year average and the lowest number ever recorded.

Nearly 10,000 young salmon - or smolts - usually leave the Frome in the Spring but this year only around 4,300 were counted. Poor numbers of salmon from the 2015-16 spawning season have been observed in many rivers across England and Wales suggesting it could be a national rather than local phenomenon..... *DTel. September.*

# **Don't just sit in the House; go outside and enjoy nature!**



## 'LOCH CHEW' MONSTER

A Spectacled Caiman native to the Amazon and South America has been found alive on the shores of Chew Valley Lake on the first week of August. This Alligator was 2 feet long and was found open-mouthed and hissing on the bank' I wrestled with the caiman for at least an hour before help arrived ! (well...er...no...that's a complete lie!) Fisheries Manager John Harris managed to net the reptile and has returned it to an Animal Sanctuary.

So on a hot autumn day fishing Chew from a boat and not catching very much, my advice is not to put your legs over the rowlocks and dangle your toes in the water to cool off as I have done in the past. Apart from the odd 40 pound pike lurking in the depths there could be a 'Loch Chew Monster' ready to take a snap. (I can hear a refrain of that JAWS music getting louder!)



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## WWFFG Photograph Competition

Reminder for **The Photo Competition** - send entries to Alan Kerr and Robert Eadie so they can be displayed on our website and in the Newsletter.

## **Match The Hatch!**

The coming weeks will see hatches of Large Dark Olives, Pale Watery (*Baetis fuscatus*) *in rivers*, Blue Winged Olive & Sherry Spinner (*Ephemerella ignita*) *in rivers* and Pond Olive (*Cleon dipteron*) *in small still waters*.



**HAPPY FISHING....BOB**

### **Petrol Perks?**

A petrol station owner in Ireland was trying to increase his sales, so he put up a sign that read, 'Free Sex with every Fill-Up.'

Paddy pulled in, filled his tank and asked for his free sex.

The owner told him to pick a number from 1 to 10....

If he guessed correctly, he would get his free sex.

Paddy guessed 8, and the proprietor said, 'You were close.'

The number was 7. Sorry. No sex this time.'

A week later, Paddy, along with his friend Mick, pulled in for another fill-up. Again he asked for his free sex.

The proprietor again gave him the same story, and asked him to guess the correct number.

Paddy guessed 2. The proprietor said, 'Sorry, it was 3.'

You were close, but no free sex this time.'

As they were driving away, Mick said to Paddy, 'I think that game is rigged and he doesn't really give away free sex at all.'

Paddy replied, 'No it's genuine enough Mick.'

My wife won twice last week.'