**West Wilts Fly Fishers Guild**

**River Frome Report November 2021**

The analysis below is based on returns received. If you have not submitted yours, please do and we will update the results. It is based on fish netted but members lost quite few too.

**Fly-Fishing Returns:**

* 12 members made a total of 44 fly-fishing visits
* Fly-fishing catch returns – 76 rainbow trout, 2 brown trout, 1 grayling (+10 chub, 1 dace)
* Average of approx. 1.8 game fish per visit – an increase on previous years

**Bank management:**

18th May to clear spring growth of nettles etc on footpath & access points beats 1 to 9.

7th July access clearing along beats 1 to 9

23rd August clearing access points on beats 1 to 9 prior to 2nd stocking

**Stocking:**

1st Stocking - 7th June **-** 120 12”/14” rainbows were stocked between beats 1 and 9.

This is timed when mayfly are hatching so there is ample food and to encourage the rainbows to rise.

2nd Stocking - 23rd August – 120 12”/14” rainbows including some ‘blue trout’ again beats 1 and 9.

As an end of season fishing boost for members.

The total cost of stocking was approx. £700.

Rainbows are stocked rather than brown trout so there can be no mistake with the ‘wild’ brown trout which must be returned.

**Thank You**

Thank you to the 17+ members who helped during the year with bank maintenance, access improvements and stocking etc; several members on more than one occasion over the year.

But with more help in 2022 we could open-up access past the Flume pool beat to beat 12 where there are clear runs and deep pools which have provided excellent fishing in previous years.

**Fishing conditions through the year:**

A dry cold start to the season and the river was low until heavy rain mid to late May meant that the river was too high and fast for the planned stocking on Tue 25th May so it was postponed for two weeks. There was a lot of rain through June, but we were fortunate that it stopped to give us a dry evening for our bank work session on 7th July. Through July the river remained higher and more coloured than usual for the time of year. August and September were dry so there was a significant drop in the river level which made wading easier.

# To check the level of the *Somerset Frome at Tellisford* prior to a visit go to the Environment Agency website:

# - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/station/3049>

The website shows a rolling four-day graph of the water level on The Frome.

**Fly hatches**:

* Grannom normally peak early April but as in 2019 & 2020 hatches were sparse this year.
* Olives were present in good numbers throughout the season
* Mayfly were later this year – they began appearing during the last week of May and from then until mid-June there were prolific hatches on most days from around 3pm to 7pm.

NB - If any member’s observations differ from the above, please let me know for the record.

**Fly-fishing tips for new members:**

Dry-fly fishing with mayfly and large olive patterns again proved very effective during the mayfly hatches in late May to early June but after this sub-surface fishing produced better results and members reported success with Pheasant Tail Nymphs, blue-flash damsel nymphs, Invictas, orange nymphs, gold beaded nymphs with some flash, tungsten beaded hare’s ears. olive nymphs, copper johns etc. The aim is to get a weighted nymph with an eye-catching feature (in case the water is a bit coloured) down quickly into the deeper runs & pools and inducing a take by lifting and hanging the nymph near the surface at the end of the run.

In September when crane flies are around dry Daddy-Long-Legs patterns have produced some end of season magic.

The most productive time of day through the season was mid to late afternoons, on sunny days.

The Pools on beats 4 (Kingfisher) 4 (High Bank) 7 (Oak Tree) and 9 (Pomeroy) were the most popular and held the stocked rainbows well through the season.

Being more adventurous and fishing further along our stretch can pay off as we know from past years that some good brown trout reside further downstream.

**River fly monitoring and Water quality testing:**

Five members undertook fly-monitoring training in June & July and we have registered two new fly-monitoring sites on The Frome – one upstream of The Packhorse bridge, at Langham Farm and one downstream on beat 10 at the ladder. The aim is to monitor once a month; uploading the data on six ‘key’ species & numbers found onto The National database. We have been fly-monitoring on The Frome since 2015. Prior to that (from 2006) it was done by the Environment Agency.

If members have suggestions to improve our river fishing experience, please email Roger -rogerhenderson@hotmail.com

Tight lines for 2022

Roger

River Frome Keeper.