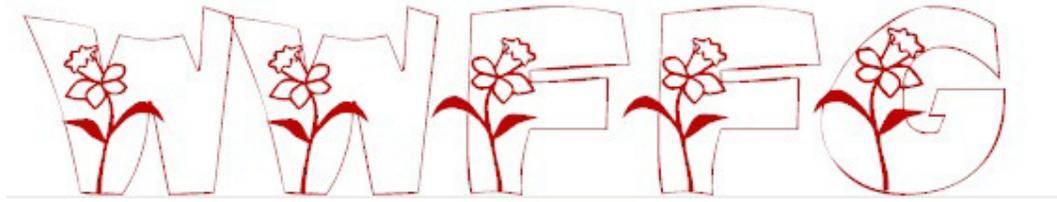


# THE WEST WILTS FLYFISHERS GUILD



Members of the Wild Trout Trust

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

## MARCH 2014 NEWSLETTER

**Guild Meeting** - Wednesday March 12<sup>th</sup> - Speaker Chris Muscat - Wessex Water  
We enjoyed a high membership attendance.

### The Rime of The Ancient Mariner - 'Water, Water, Wessex-ware'

(Or Lessons to be Learned if you don't have proper respect and regard for our great resource 'Water' and all its interdependent creatures, to which it gives Life.)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, all three of them, knew a thing or two about 'crossing' Nature. He wrote this great, classic poem, and published it in 1798. I had uneasy flash-backs to this poem, when at 1958 (hours) our speaker Chris Muscat outlined Wessex Water's strategy and practice on how they were managing our region's precious water resources. In the poem, in a nut-shell, the Ancient Mariner shoots a hapless (maybe 'flap-less') albatross at sea, with his cross-bow, whilst it is seeking refuge and rest on board his ship. And then the brown-stuff hits the fan - with some velocity, nay ferocity! The wind drops, the ship becomes becalmed and guess what - they run out of drinking water! Ironically so, with so much of the maritime variety around them. 'Water, water, everywhere; Nor any drop to drink!' And the resulting punishment upon the Mariner by a superstitious and rattled crew - 'Instead of a cross, the Albatross about my neck was hung'. One person's 'take' on this poem is that (and I quote) it can be taken as a moral parable on the sanctity of life and the interconnectedness of all things and events. Not so very wrong, in my opinion. [Here a brief pause: ....Sorry, from a quick glance round the curtain-edge, I rather thought I saw a small white 'removal' van outside?]

But I make no excuse. Because every time Chris mentioned bore-holes, and the distinct possibility that Wessex may need to sink even more in future (because it

was the easiest, most economic means of obtaining high quality water) to supply a forecast future demand for new housing etc. etc. - I wanted to sling a decaying, slimy, and very 'humming-high' Albatross around Wessex Water Chief Executive's neck. And he would certainly not be allowed to use any ameliorating smelling salts, so typical of life-style in S.T.Coleridge's time.

In so doing, ie. the bore holes abstraction, Wessex Water are killing our rivers. And all interdependent creatures, life-forms and pursuits attaching to those rivers. And all animals and birdlife that merely drink from their waters. The West Kennet river has virtually disappeared underground. How many will follow if this blind doctrine is to be the norm?

Chris Muscat is Distribution Systems Manager for Wessex Water plc., one of the ten regional water and sewerage businesses in England & Wales. It is one of the most efficient such businesses, and consistently the most profitable. YTL own it now, and have bought it for the long-term. He explained that the need for proper, clean drinking water 'sprang' from Dr John Snow [well, he represents the frozen stuff] and the 1854 London Cholera epidemic - which centred around the contamination of 'drinking-water' from the Broad Street Pump within the City. Wessex Water now deal with our region's water supply from Source to Tap. They have 1.3 Million customers. Sampling and monitoring checks for water quality are very high priority, understandably, and, now, so is vigilance over its security - including an armed 'response force' to negate any terrorist threat to our drinking water. Further developments are in course, like the Integrated Water Grid now being laid (as we read) between Bournemouth /Wessex networks, and maybe Exeter. I enjoyed the talk overall.

Chris is a gentleman and a nice person, but I do have serious worries that Wessex have not thought out the Big Plan, the bigger picture. How are they (and the other Water Authorities) going to cater for all the thousands and thousands of proposed new homes; the increasing immigration and population of the UK, without killing off the rivers we love?..... And the wild-life with it. (Don't mention the Albatross.) Forgive me, they seem to be soldiering on, blinkered, with no long-term plan. Cripes!! Just looked outside, fears allayed, its not a white van, .....but hang on,....Oh Noooooh! it's a blue Wessex Water van! Coming to take me away, away. I can recognise these vehicles a mile off. The dreaded Orwellian 'Thought Police' have tumbled me. To do just penance and servitude, no doubt, for foolishly speaking out against the great God Commerce ('Profit', Finance, Mammon) whatever you'd like to call it! Please note my views are not necessarily those of the management.

Just creeping quietly away now to lay down in a darkened room. Maybe to the sound of restful, running water. ....Anyone know where one gets hold of a rancid Albatross, nowadays? Apart from round its ankles? *Barnacle Bill*

## 2014 WWFFG Annual Membership Renewal - Fees

Guild Social Membership Only:- £40

Guild Joint Social Membership Only :- £45

Guild and River Fishing Membership :- £110

Coarse Fishing Subs:- £60

Your **membership subscriptions** were due to be paid by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014. If you have not already done so, could you please send your cheque (payable to WWFFG) to **Mr. Mike Harris, 3 Rhymes Place, Bath, BA1 7AG**, as soon as possible. Many Thanks

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**OBITUARY                      John Edward Sturgess                      1925 - 2014                      RIP**

John was a founder Member and stalwart supporter of the WWFFG since 1981  
A keen Fly Fisherman, fishing locally and also loving Ireland and Scotland.  
We learned, at Johns Memorial Service, that John had a passion for Chess too, and was a Chess Champion, chosen to compete for the England Chess Team, and was still playing right up to his death, in his local Clubs and also often via his computer. John was a True Gentleman, indefatigable, humorous and modest, a joy to be with.  
He will be sorely missed.

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**BAR SKITTLES.....**"Just to remind all members that the Guild's 2014 Skittles Evening takes our usual venue - place on **Friday 11th April** at the **White Hart, Atworth.**

This informal there will be and Top Team. As usual, food will range of tasty and £5.50 per head - the menu is at:



event is always great fun, and prizes for Top Chap, Top Lady, be provided - the pub does a value-for-money suppers at

<http://www.whitehartatworth.co.uk/index.php/restaurant> (skittle alley menu)

Spouses and partners are very welcome.

If you would like to come along, please let Malcolm Bond know at [malbond1@btinternet.com](mailto:malbond1@btinternet.com) or 01380 871427"

## FIRST GUILD COMPETITION OF 2014. - **Bushyleaze!** - BOOKED!

Our Guild Outing is set for SATURDAY 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014, we will meet at the **LECHLADE Lake Lodge** at 9:00am to purchase our fishing ticket. We then proceed to **Bushyleaze Lake** which is a further few hundred meters up the road.

A full day ticket will cost **£32:50 for 4 fish**. If we can get 10 fishermen or more we would get a 10% discount! This is a great lake to fish, so let's hope we get fair weather and a good turnout! Start fishing for the **Henderson Trophy** from 9:30am to 4:30pm weigh-in at the lakes' lodge. Wading is permitted.



### Bushyleaze Trout Fishery

- 22 - acre lake
- minimum stocking size of two pounds
- good amount of four-to-six-pounders
- regular stocking of double figure fish
- stocked with Rainbow and Brown Trout

### **Rules to abide by:**

#### **FLY AND FLY FISHING TACKLE ONLY.**

1. **ALL FISH MUST BE KILLED, NO CATCH AND RELEASE.** Any fish landed under 2 pounds need not be counted towards bag limit, so long as the fish is handed in at the lodge on your departure.
2. Only ticket holders are allowed to fish and only one non-fishing guest per angler.
3. All cars to be left in the car parks.
4. All fish are to be weighed and recorded at the lodge on leaving.
5. Fishery staff hold the right to return foul hooked fish.
6. Fishing on the river is strictly between the marked posts.
7. There must be no damage whatsoever to trees and wildlife.
8. **CLOSING TIMES** may vary and will be displayed on the notice board.

**Postal Address: Lechlade and Bushyleaze Trout Fisheries,  
Lechlade, Gloucestershire, (Sat. Nav. GL7 3QQ) Tel: 01367 253266.**

## INTERESTING POINT.....

Chris Holt reminds us that - petrol engine trials will be conducted on **Blagdon Lake** during the 2014 / 2015 season.

For details and prices check out this website.....

<http://www.bristolwaterfisheries.co.uk/news/petrol-engines-on-blagdon-lake/>

### Bank Management on The Frome Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb

*Gerry Tinson trimming a twig - that's the one Maurice always gets caught on.*

*Keith Johnston with bow saw in the distance*



We continued downstream from the point we reached last year - the stretch down to the flume and the beat beyond (see photo) which we initially opened up in 2012 and where some good fish were caught last year during an evening Mayfly hatch. We removed trip hazards, cleared over-arching branches and subsiding boughs so it is now possible to walk each stretch without getting rods tangled or being forced to the edge of the bank. We also removed several ash trees, recently blown down, which were completely blocking the track past the flume.

Last year it was freezing, this year the sky was heavy with rain so particular thanks to Gerry, Maurice, Keith, Rod and Andy for their optimism and fortitude. The improvements made will make it much easier when we need to clear a path through the soft growth in the summer. Both stretches will be chest high in nettles by July so we'll be putting out a call for members with petrol strimmers.

*Roger & Jim*



It's the Environment Agency Rod Licence renewal time again on 1<sup>st</sup> April for the next 12 months. Good to see there is no price increase again this season!

£27 for trout & coarse (concessionary £18).

£72 for salmon & sea trout (concessionary £48)

As you know you can pay online at .....

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk/rodlicence](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/rodlicence) Or call 0844 800 5386.

LOOKING AHEAD.....Make a note in your diaries.....

**Wednesday April 9<sup>th</sup>** - Guild Meeting - Speaker - David Wolsoncroft-Dodds - on the subject 'Fly-fishing for Pike'.

Richard Cripps will give a short introduction on 'Bugs & Grubs' which he will be presenting at the May and June Meetings. Richard will lead a hands-on session on the river Frome at Langham Farm (William Arney's) at the June Guild Meeting.

**Friday April 11<sup>th</sup>** Skittles with Buffet Night (Book with Malcolm).....

[malbond1@btinternet.com](mailto:malbond1@btinternet.com).

**Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup>** Inter club competition at **Sutton Bingham** (Book with Gerry T.)

**Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup>** **Chew Boat Competition** - Five boats booked. Limited seats available (Book a seat now with Gerry T.) .....[Geraldbtinson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Geraldbtinson@hotmail.co.uk),

*At the May Guild Meeting - Professional Rod builder Roger McCourtney will talk to members about building your own rod. He will advise on specifications which members will need to consider if they plan to participate in the rod-building sessions later in the year.*

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### River Flies

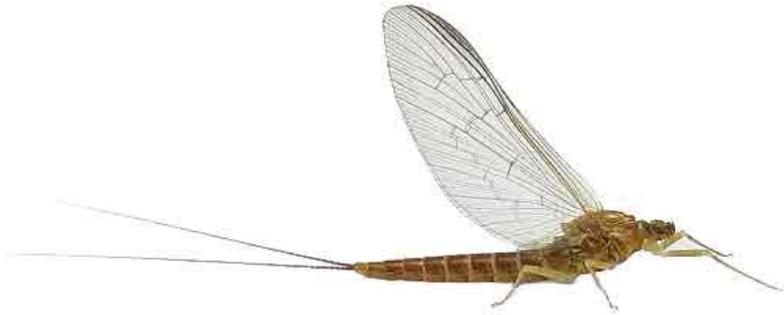
April sees some big disparities between the Wests milder winters where often superb fly fishing can be had on Spate Rivers in Wales during March and April compared to the rest of the UK.

The Large Dark Olive (Baetis Rhodani) will be appearing, often in large numbers between 11:30 and 2:30. Although we have hatches of LDO's all year round, they will become more spectacular and will really move trout. March Browns (Rithrogena germanica) will still be hatching until the end of April up North! The first of the

Stoneflies the Dark Stonefly and Grannon Sedges will start hatching through April.

### Stillwater Flies

Buzzers will hatch every day, early season green and black patterns work really well and there is still sporadic feeding on fry going on in our stillwaters.



**Large Dark Olives (LDO's)** hatch all year but start becoming prolific in March and April. The fly is approximately 1" long from head to tail (25mm) with the body about 3/8" long (11mm). LDO's are the largest of the Baetis family in the UK. Nymphs live in riffle areas of rivers and streams where they live in the sand and gravel beds, darting about. They feed by scraping algae from stones and other structures under water or by gathering organic detritus from sediment.

There are typically two generations per year. Over wintering nymphs emerge in Spring and a second generation develops for emergence in the Summer. Nymphs dart about, hence their name 'agile darters'

### Established colour combinations of flies used on stillwaters

**Green/Lime & Black** - the contrast helps visibility so is the best combination at depth. Ubiquitous examples include the *Montana* - effective at all depths from surface to very deep, including the lake margins - and the *Viva* - "the most successful lure of past decade" and credited by Iain Barr for his winning a competition in 2009. Also *Tadpole* and *Booby* tyings.

**Green & White** - a key combination e.g. tied *Cats Whisker* or *Booby* style

**Red & Black** - e.g. *Montana* - a good early season searching pattern, also a proven *Cats Whisker* combination

**Orange & White** e.g. *the Persuader* - designed by John Goddard to attract stillwater trout at a distance.

**Pink (Coral) & Black** - apparently a top colour combination in 2008

**Yellow** & **White** - e.g. *Cats Whisker* - No1 Reservoir fly/lure (Trout Fisherman magazine's analysis of returns.)

**Olive** & **Black** - A recommended damsel representation tied *Cats Whisker* style

**Orange** & **Black** - a *Cats Whisker* tying recommended for small stillwater fisheries. It's a simpler choice for the river fisher according to W.C. Stewart (described as the apostle of upstream fishing) in his book - 'The Practical Angler' first published in 1857 and reprinted 16 times over the following 100 years up to 1950:

"In practice it has been proved beyond doubt that a **black**, **brown**, **red** and **dun**-coloured fly, used together, and varied in size according to circumstances, will at any time kill as well, and even better, than the most elaborate collection arranged for every month of the year. If trout are at all inclined to rise, one or other of the above will be found inviting as these comprise all the leading colours of which insects generally are"

Doesn't sound as if he'd have much time for a Pearlycatsfritz Blob !

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## NEW MEMBERS

The Committee and Members would like to welcome Richard Arney, David Griffiths, Peter Marshall-Bailey and Donald Reid to the West Wilts Flyfishers Guild. We look forward to meeting them at our Competitions and Social Events.

HAPPY FISHING.....BOB

PS.

A man goes to the doctor and says: 'Doctor, there's a piece of lettuce sticking out of my bottom.' The doctor asks him to drop his trousers and examines him. The man asks: 'Is it serious, doctor?' and the doctor replies: 'I'm sorry to tell you, but this is just the tip of the iceberg.'

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When NASA started sending up astronauts, they quickly discovered that ballpoint pens would not work at zero gravity.

To combat the problem, NASA scientists spent a decade and \$12 billion developing a pen that wrote at zero gravity, upside down, underwater, on almost any surface including glass and at temperatures ranging from below freezing to 300C.

The Russians used a pencil.