



## WEST WILTS FLYFISHERS GUILD

# WWFFG



Members of the Wild Trout Trust

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

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



**Next Guild Meeting - Wednesday 11th January 2017.**

Guild Meeting - November 9<sup>th</sup> 2016 .....

### **A Talk by Dr. Mark Everard - entitled 'Roach Fishing (based on a little science)'**

This was a presentation by an expert. A man who, perhaps despite his academic background, can not only talk the talk, but plainly also walk the walk, - as Paul Gascoigne (Gazzer) used to love saying when leveling venom at his detractors. After a little bit of 'mouse-hunting'; involving a technical hitch with his presentation program, Mark was easily into what he referred to as the 'long-trot' to his talk. To avoid slavish regurgitation of his spiel, I will just give a few of the more significant (at least to me) notes that I jotted down at the time. Brevity is the soul of what-not, and I hope these below give a suitable taster of the many

interesting points he mentioned about the roach. And in this order:- potential of 12 to 14yrs growth

- breeding after 3 (exceptionally 2) years
- cruciality of the system of 'recruitment'; many factors, but can be good and bad years in terms of successful breeding ie. alevins coming through
- plain old, good old bread is Mark's favourite 'go-to bait'
- cyprinoid - the roach is a member of the carp family
- its diet varies with age - plankton being a crucial necessity in its early years
- diet varies also, viz; roach tune into food availability in general, and this will vary with the Season - so this is a reminder to the angler to present an appropriately suitable bait for the prevailing circumstances
- can be caught on fly - large invertebrate, or fish fry, imitations
- float fishing is, in Mark's experience, devastating for Summer roach
- further tips followed on legering for the species; and bite detection
- current record rod-caught roach is 4lb.4oz; by Keith Berry, N.Ireland
- another great method is free-lining - 2lb line; spade-end hook
- Mark's 'go-to fly' is the GRHE; and Black Gnat, in that order
- GRHE also highly recommended for success with grayling
- Mark stressed that roach fishing requires 'searching the depths' as they will lie in certain layers - according to temperature/oxygen content
- 95% of roach fishing is Location (here direct reference was made to Richard Walker's 1953 book on Carp Fishing - his specimen angling mantra being, viz: Location; Baits; then Presentation)
- the roach is a shoal fish [the larger specimens being more solitary], but also a 'food fish' for many predators; fish, animals and birds alike - so the species has a high fecundity strategy ('loads eggs per female')
- in heavy, fast water, search for roach 'down the edge' and in 'any (known depressions' in the river bed.

I must say, for my part, I really enjoyed the session. I found his talk refreshing and it happened to re-ignite both enthusiasm and many childhood fishing memories I thought had

long gone. Then to meet Mark afterwards, and (like others present), to buy one of the several books he has written - autographed on the night - was a culminating pleasure. I suspect of course that it had lots to do with being introduced to angling (for roach and bream!) by a deaf, and adored Grandfather - on the beautiful country reaches of the Upper Thames at Purley, and the swift flowing sluice-streams of Mapledurham Weir. This just downstream of Pangbourne Weir in Berkshire.

We never achieved mercurial catches, nor approached emptying the river of roach - perhaps 10, maybe a dozen fish each in the keep-net if we were lucky. But on a Sunday morning (our usual outing day), in a small wooden boat I had helped him build over one cold winter, we were unleashed on the river. And it was pure bliss. Being a Sunday, Purley Church bells would distantly chime, carrying down-wind towards us in our moored boat. Sat there fishing, somehow (rather naughtily perhaps), this heightened the pleasure. In the face of Christian doctrine and their enclosed congregations, it felt perversely and inordinately comfortable and pleasurable to be free; unreachable, out there on the river. Spanish reed roach rods in hand; carrying old but much cared-for centre-pin reels amidst the occasional, very distinctive and resonating, almost waterlogged, chug of passing Thames launches. It felt like Heaven. So this, at the tender age of 8 or 9 was my 'bleeding' in the Gentle Art (as in maggot perhaps?) of Angling. I enjoyed it immensely. So I have an inkling that the New Year, and the chosen river, may find another hopeful on its bank-side, to sip again from this pleasant branch of our sport. As inspired by Mark's enthusiasm for this wonderful fish. *Courteney Fish*



### The Grand Raffles were drawn at our Guild Dinner

**The Winners are.....**

**First prize** (£100 Veals vouchers) .... **Jon Jonik**

**Second prize** (£50 vouchers) .....**Tim Pullen**

**Third Prize** (£25 vouchers) - .....**Stephen Keys**

**Alan Kerr** was named as Recipient of The Chairman's Award - The Vic Willcox Trophy.        Congratulations all.



## RIVERS MEETING REPORT.....

### **Rivers Meeting held on 3rd November 2016**

#### **River Frome Report**

Based on catch returns by five members and visits by the Guild river keeper.

- 5 members made a total of 7 fly-fishing visits
- Catch returns – 3 brown trout, 9 rainbow trout, (plus 7 chub, 1 perch, 1 dace)

#### **Bank management day Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb:**

Six members came down and we managed to carry-out substantial coppicing on beats 1 to 9 (Pomeroy) to let light into the river and encourage weed growth and to erect a new stile at Pomeroy. There was a write-up in the March newsletter - available on the Guild website.

#### **Bank management session 21st June:**

During this session we cleared a safe pathway through the (chest high) nettles down to the flume and opened up access to the river at the coarse fishing hotspots in preparation for the all methods week at the end of the month.

#### **All methods week 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> June:**

The purpose of this was to use coarse fishing methods on the normally fly-only stretch to get a better picture of the fish population prior to stocking. During this week no trout - brown or rainbow - were caught on beats 1 to 12 (Island Junction), despite some quite intensive fishing.

#### **Stocking - Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July:**

150 10"/12" rainbows were stocked between beats 4 and 9.

#### **Fishing conditions through the year:**

The Frome has been fairly low and accessible for wading as well as bank fishing throughout the season. A relatively warm and dry summer with only a little light rain compared to the spates The Frome suffered from in 2012. At times it would have benefited from a good downpour to freshen it up.

Fly hatches have been fairly reliable though (in the river keepers experience) not as prolific as in some previous seasons. The most notable hatches found along our stretch were:

- Grannom peaked around the middle of April
- Mayfly peaked around the last week of May
- Olives present in fair numbers throughout the season

#### **River fly monitoring**

This is conducted by the Guild as part of a national scheme to monitor invertebrates in our rivers. John Sheppard leads this for the Guild. Samples were taken on five occasions between May and September and the data uploaded to the Environment Agency's website to contribute toward building a nationwide picture of the health of our river-fly populations. The information has been in newsletters to help members with fly selection fishing The Frome.

#### **Water Quality monitoring:**

The Guild registered this year to be part of an international scheme for monitoring water quality in rivers. The first sampling and analysis has been conducted.

**The Flume:**

The Environment Agency has informed the Guild of its plans to carryout repair work on the flume and remedial work on the eroded bank and the island formed by the scouring of the riverbed below the flume (now 5 metres deep at the centre). The EA has provided the Guild with schematic plans of what they intend to do and have promised to keep the Guild informed. The work will start in February.

**Invasive species:**

Himalayan Balsam continues to spread exponentially on both banks. The occasional signal crayfish has been landed.

**Best wild brown trout:**

Caught by Jon Jonik on beat 16 - Sandbar on a mayfly pattern on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Photo in the June newsletter.

Thank you to all those members who were able to lend a hand maintaining our stretch of the Frome. Please look out for bank management dates in 2017.

**Our hope is more tight lines for more members next season.**

*Roger Henderson - Frome River Keeper.*



**LOOKING FORWARD.....**

**WEDNESDAY January 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 - Guild Meeting - 7:30 for 8:00pm**  
QUIZZING WITH JOHN & RICHARD - John Dixon and Richard Cripps have devised a very 'fishy' Quiz for us. Always a great night with lots of laughter! Make sure you don't miss it!



**FLY-TYING with Andy Greatwood**



**THREE THURSDAY'S - January 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> 7 - 9 pm** at The Shaw Hotel, Roger will email and remind all members. As in previous years there will be a nominal fee of only £1 per session to contribute toward the room hire. Newcomers to the art of Fly-dressing are very welcome. Andy will help us tie a fly which will catch fish!



## **BARROWS - Bristol Water Fishery**

After careful consideration it has been decided to permit fishing at Barrow tanks until January 31st 2017. This will mean that winter tickets priced at £14.00 (6 fish limit) will be available throughout November, December and January. Bristol Water Fisheries will continue to trickle stock the lakes during this period. Season ticket holders will be able to continue using their season tickets, without any additional charge, throughout this period as long as they have not met their annual catch allowance. They will also be restricted to a maximum of 2 fish per day from 1st December 2016 until the 31st January 2017.

On occasions recently there have been some very respectable bags being caught at Barrows including quite a few bag limits. As the temperatures drop, anglers should find that a team of small lures fished on faster sinking lines are effective.

The inflow on number 2 and the pipe on number 3 are still proving very popular although anglers fishing the infamous 'barrow mouse' are finding that the Bristol side of number 1 is fishing relatively well too.



## **FISH TAILS.....**

**Angler smashes British record when he takes 15 minutes, two broken nets and one maggot to land 34lb Rainbow.**

- **Michael Mitchell was hoping for a 10lb trout fishing in loch in Perthshire**
- **Caught a 34lb rainbow trout, breaking the British record held since 2003**
- **Thought to have escaped farm and enjoyed minnow and stickleback diet**
- **38-inch fish is now in freezer at tackle shop awaiting record confirmation**



It took 15 minutes and broke two nets in the almighty tussle to land this enormous trout but it was all worthwhile when the angler realised it set a new British record.

Michael Mitchell hooked the catch of a lifetime after it escaped from a fish farm and fed for five years on an endless supply of prey to reach an unprecedented size. The fisherman was hoping to catch a 10lbs brown trout using a maggot as bait when he hooked into the monster from the deep, which weighed a mighty 34lbs 12ozs.

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### **Fishing in cold weather conditions...**

*More space to fish plus the water is cool and well oxygenated!*

You can't deny it's definitely got cold all of a sudden! Winter is here! But don't underestimate the pleasure of fishing in November onwards on lakes and reservoirs. Wrap up warm and you can still get some great fishing. Days may be shorter and fishing often does not really kick in this time of year until about 11am, once any first frost has dissipated, but its all good.



## **FISHING TIPS**

Bear in mind great fishing can be had this time of year as Rainbow Trout are, after all, a coldwater fish. Last winter only 1/3 of the lake was fishable because of ice over the rest of the lake. A tremendous days sport was available even fighting fish as they darted under the ice! The techniques used were to fish slow and deep. Effective natural patterns are the Green Damsel with Blue Tinsel and Green Damsel Nymph which are always fishable flies, however, small patterns are deadly at this time of year particularly Bloodworms and Buzzers as the midge is the only fly that hatches 365 days per year!

It is only cold rain and hail which can push fish down in the water and stop feeding. Changes in weather conditions can often stimulate fish into feeding, because of changes in atmospheric pressure. Light rain or a warm shower on a cold day can trigger hatches of insects and get fish feeding. Sun can also trigger feeding on a cold or dull day. When there are no clouds and there is strong sun fish go deeper because they have no eyelids so get blinded by the brightness.



## Ultra-Violet - More Important Than You May Realise!

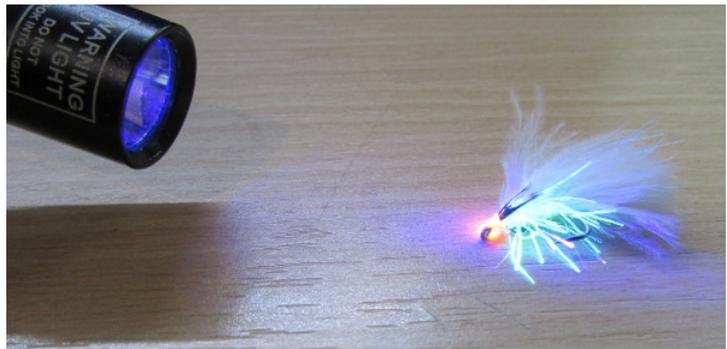
Now that the clocks have changed, our days are getting greyer and to the human eye it looks like the bright colours of summer have changed to the perhaps more drab days of autumn and winter. However for trout this is not the case. Trout have rods and cones in their eyes that are sensitive to UV and they use UV to see objects more clearly. As fishermen we can use UV and UV triggers in our flies or fly tying.

### *Proof Of The Pudding!*

The red head Cats Whisker JC Mini Lure, shown below, which is a stunning mini lure and works particularly well especially when light is poor.



When we shine a uv torch on a fly, we see it glow. This is because the uv is making the colour vibrate at a wavelength we can see in the same way trout use uv from the sun even on completely overcast days. Interestingly, UV is present in the water often until an hour after sunset



## GRAYLING FISHING DAY - Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**On the River Wylde at Eastleigh Farm, Sutton Veny, Nr Warminster.**

Twelve members of The Guild and The Wellow Brook Syndicate met together at 9.00am on a glorious November day - dry, sunny with light cloud and only the slightest breeze. The Eastleigh beats hold specimen grayling and brown trout but the slight colour to the water hindered direct fish spotting, so we had to rely on river reading skills. Full credit is therefore due to those who found the hot-spots. The best of the day (as far as is known) were Neil Keep who netted 7 grayling & 18 brown trout and Chris Winsor - 9 grayling up to 1lb + 5 more lost, in quick succession, all on Tungsten Hares Ear nymph. We are very grateful to Richard Cripps for organising the day and using his knowledge of the Eastleigh beats to put us in the best spots to get the most out of the day.

**The Guild's Photographic Competition** - The Ladies who attended the excellent Guild Dinner decided after long deliberation that the winner of this year's competition was **Jon Jonik**. This picture is of two swallows and a magpie on a wire. Well done Jon! He wins a bottle of wine and 'The Ron Long Memorial Trophy'. Thanks to all who entered this competition. Please try again next year!



### **Auction Items Unsold**

Due to the large number of items submitted, we weren't able to auction off over 40 lots which are now available to purchase at the estimated/guide price. The full list can be found on our website [www.westwiltsflyfishersguild.com](http://www.westwiltsflyfishersguild.com) in the members section under Downloads. If you haven't looked at the new website - now is a good time and the system will guide you through registration. There are rods, lines, fly boxes, fly tying kits/materials, and much more. Please email me with any offers [jfjonik@gmail.com](mailto:jfjonik@gmail.com).





On behalf of the Committee, we would like to wish all Members and their Families **A Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy, Prosperous New Year!**



HAPPY FISHING.....BOB....

PS Mike walks into a bar with a newt on his shoulder.

The barmaid looks at the creature and asks the man what he calls it.

'Tiny', answers Mike.

'Why's that?' enquires the barmaid.

'Because he's my newt' concludes Mike

Q: What do you call a reindeer with no eyes? A: I have no eye deer.

Q: What do you get from sitting on the ice too long? A: Polaroids!

Q: What's an ig? A: A snow house without a loo!

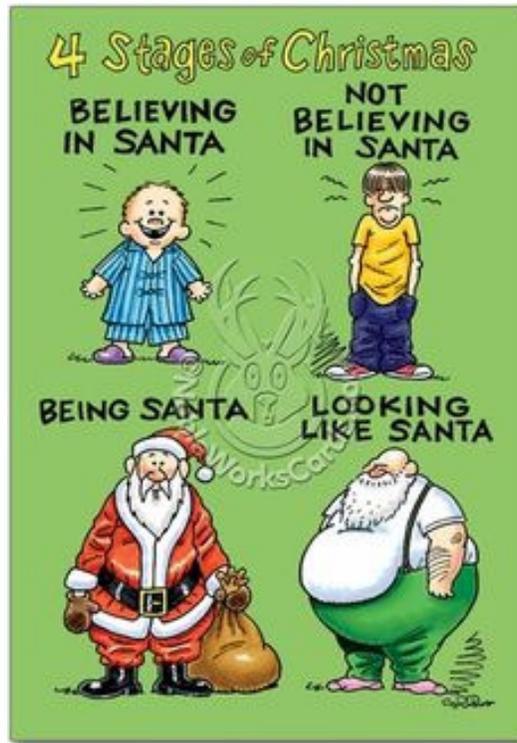
Q Whats the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet? A: The Christmas alphabet has Noel.

Q: What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus? A: Claustrophobic.

Noah started building several arks for various parts of animal kingdom. One was a split level job for all the fish - a multi-storey carp ark.



PPS



I am no cook. But I can follow the directions. Which said to let the bird chill in the sink for a few hours.

