

The Sussex Angler



Autumn
2010
Issue 4

News

Articles

Information

The Petworth and Bognor Angling Club Magazine

www.sussexangling.co.uk

Welcome to The Sussex Angler

Hello

I'm really excited about the next few months as not only are we running into my favourite time for fishing the rivers but we also have a couple of important and entertaining evening coming up.

Anglers Evening

On 23rd October we have secured Chris Holley a well known and respected angler to come and talk to us. I am also in the process of finding a second speaker for the evening and I'm sure an interesting evening is in store for us all. The event takes place at Yapton Village Hall and there will be a licensed bar. All are welcome so you can bring non club members along but please can you book in with us so we know what numbers to expect. You will find further details on the back cover of your magazine.

The AGM

Moving forward a month or so we have our AGM at The Lamb in Yapton. I think its really important that as many members as possible come along for what is normally an interesting evening. It also give you the chance to have your say with regard to the state of the club. Details are on the next page and this is of course for our members only.



Hurston Lane

Nelson and Tim have worked tirelessly to try and keep the weed under control in the carp pond in particular but your committee decided that more is needed. So around the time that you receive your magazine don't be surprised if you find that Hurston Lane is closed temporarily. We have contracted a company to remove as much of the silt and weed roots as possible. The work will take a week or so and the whole complex will be closed at least over that period and we might keep it closed for a while afterwards to settle back down. Nelson is also looking for some more stock for venue and we hope that we will be in a position to transfer fish in over the coming winter.

A Word of Thanks

I would just like to thank all those that work so hard to make our club what it is. Your committee spend a lot of time behind the scenes ensuring that things run smoothly. Tim has done a brilliant job in his first year as Membership Secretary. Nelson and Mick together with the bailiff and fishery management teams have made sure that our waters are in tip top condition and a pleasure to not only fish but just to visit.



Nigel Chapman
Chairman

Notices

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will take place
at
8:00 pm on 25th November 2010

The Lamb Public House Bilsham Nr Yapton

Please bring your Photocard as proof of membership

After the meeting the club trophies for 2009 will be presented and the evening will conclude with a buffet

Please submit any motions or matters for consideration in writing to the Club Secretary at least 21 days prior to the meeting.



Found at Walberton

If you have lost some line like this at Walberton, Nelson has it and would like to return it to you.

Seriously: There have been a number of occasions recently when Nelson has come across balls of line like the one pictured. It's not as if they have been found in the swims but they have been deliberately placed in the undergrowth around the swims. A couple of times Nelson has found them while strimming and they have resulted in a jam up of the strimmer which not only takes a long time to clear but can be extremely dangerous.

We all get tangles and we all have occasions when we have to strip line off and start again, but please do not just get rid of it at our venues, take it home and dispose of it properly. I really cannot understand anyone going to the effort of rolling up a ball of line and then taking the time to hide it in the bushes, when it's easier just to pop it in your bag or box and take it home.

So next time you have to strip some line off just think and take it home.



In depth - Petworth Park

Steve gives us some tips on ways to fish Petworth Park.

Despite the walk from the car park Petworth Park is one of our most popular waters with both match-men and pleasure anglers. I think the secret to making the journey acceptable is to think carefully how you are going to fish and stripping down your gear so that you concentrate on one or maybe two methods. If I do this I can certainly cut the weight down to half what I would normally carry.

I think there are four distinct ways to fish Petworth Park and in any given peg it is fairly easy to concentrate on just one method and come away having had a good days fishing. I'm only really familiar with about half of the lake from where we walk down, along the roadside bank and round behind the islands so I will concentrate on these areas. I'm not sure very many fish the park side bank. If you do perhaps you would like to tell us how you get on.

The Methods

Well I'm going to start by thinking about a whip (the match anglers are already jeering as they know this is one of my favourite methods).

Where will a whip work.

There are two areas I would target with a whip; the deeper water along the road bank, that's all the open pegs after the first few bushes along to about 4 swims past the concrete. All along here you have about 6 feet of water at 4 - 5 metres and you can catch roach, perch and skimmers all day long. You can also bring the better fish in particularly the tench and bigger bream. Because of this it is worth considering an elasticated top as well as a solid top, I have one with No. 3 elastic through it. This just gives you a little more to play with should you hit a better fish. The other place I would consider a whip is behind the bottom islands. There is a deeper channel of about 4½ feet running about half way between the bank and the island. Some of the better roach seem to sit here along with the crucians again I would carry an elasticated top.



Vince Herringshaw with a net of Petworth bream

The second method is a groundbait feeder, I would use this in any of the pegs round to the big tree before the islands. This tends to score at anywhere between 25 and 40 metres out. On arrival I would normally sit down for 5 minutes or so and you can often see tell tale signs of the bream. The



With Steve Simmonds

important thing is, once you have selected an area keep you feeder going tight into this area don't spread your casts around too much. I will very often 'band up' I use a band cut from a pushbike inner tube. It's heavy enough to stop the line when casting but if you do happen to hit something big that tears off, it can actually take line from behind the band. If this does happen don't forget to reset your distance before feeding again. For direction pick a feature on the sky line and use that as your target. I would normally put 5 - 8 feeders full of groundbait straight out before going out with a hook bait. There are plenty of the smaller roach and skimmers on this line as well so to avoid them I go for a bigger bait on the hook; a couple of grains of corn, a 6 or 8 mm soft pellet or a decent sized worm. Hopefully you can get the big bream going, these fish have been reported at just short double figure and if you can hold them a bag approaching 100 lb is on the cards.

The next method is the pole and this can be used virtually anywhere; close in on the first three pegs and you will often find good crucians, tench and plenty of roach. At 11 - 14 metres or on the shorter whip line from the rest of the pegs along the roadside to target the bream, tench, small roach and perch. On the whip line and close to the islands along the bottom for almost anything. Feed a little and often via a pole pot and fish pretty much any bait you fancy.

Finally in the areas where you would consider fishing a slightly longer pole line there's no harm in trying a waggler on a rod and line. Particularly if it's windy and you are struggling to hold a pole out, a rod and line is often the answer. Cast out beyond your chosen area and wind back to sink your line. Feeding can be a bit of a problem as you are probably going to have to rely on 'balling' in groundbait, but as long as you can throw accurately and far enough this is not a problem. You can also successfully feed either groundbait or loose offering with a catapult.

Whichever method you choose make sure you stick to it and;

- a. You will find that the walk back up is much pleasanter with less weight to carry.
- b. When you really concentrate on one method rather than thinking what to try next you'll be surprised at how much better you do with the method in hand.



Keith Hughes with a couple of typical Petworth crucians



Match Scene

We are now a few months into this seasons matches and the Match Secretary rounds up the highlights to date.

The season started back in May with a couple of matches at Petworth Park. We had our usual big turnout for the first match but then we haven't seen quite a few of those again.

We set Hurston Lane as the venue for the Wednesday evening still water series but unfortunately these were interrupted by the essential weed clearing that had to take place on the venue. The Wednesday evening river series again threw up a bumper weight for Rab Butler at Coultershaw from the same swim he was in last year.

Bethwins continues to prove a bit of an enigma and us match anglers are still to get a carp out of the lower pond. We have however had quite a few from the upper. This year I decided to go for an all out perch attack on both matches and I probably caught more perch in those two sessions than in all my previous years of angling (and I'm getting on a bit now). I had over 30½ lb of perch which probably averaged no more than 1½ oz each so I reckon that probably about 300 fish!

It was good to get on to Watersfield again and we broke the unwritten rule that we should fish the Arun from essentially the top of the tide down. We fished one

match across the bottom of the tide and everyone caught plenty of roach and dace, although no bream were caught.

On the inter-club front we have had a bit of a shaky start to the season with our 1st team finding it hard going in the Three Counties A league following promotion last season. Our 2nd team are finding their feet in the C league and are currently sitting mid table. The Rother proved exceptionally hard for most when the Rother Valley Shield was fished at Fittleworth. The river was very low and clear, however I have to report that Chairman Nigel has broken his Petworth and Bognor duck in the series with the weighing of a magnificent gudgeon.

Nigel is on a roll this season as I can now add that he has caught fish three matches in a row. However in the latest match he was lagging well behind a couple of his regular fishing companions; Roger and John.

We have seen a few new faces this season and we hope that they will continue to join us. We welcome new anglers and are always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone who would like to give match fishing a go. Details of all the matches are in the back of the handbook and on the website.

Match Secretary



Anglers raise well over £1000

A number of our anglers and friends took part in a charity match at the well known Framfield fishery recently. They've managed to raise well over £1000 so far and the money is still coming in. The money is going to towards the purchase of an outdoor activity centre for a residential home. If you would like to make a donation please contact Roger on 01243 512521



Webmaster - Les Heath about to take his fish to the scales



Organiser Roger Poole after a good day



John Wilson Snr out gunned by his son on this occasion



Tim Nudds shows off his catch to the camera

First overall was John Mott with 131 lb Petworth and Bognor angler Paul Ward was second with 110 lb and John Wilson Jnr. was third with 99½ lb.



Nil desperandum

Ray Stewart takes us back to the seventies and writes about a curious find that was to become a good friend to his father!

I can remember an autumn trip to the Rother many years ago when we had decided to venture up to the river a few days after heavy rain. We felt that the conditions would have settled sufficiently for the river to subside to its more normal levels. Arriving at Shopham bridge we eagerly surveyed the river from the bridge although very coloured the flow was down to a fishable level, although a little higher and faster than normal. We picked our way through the sodden fields and made our way upstream to the cut, on the way up we noticed several tree branches that had been washed downstream now coming to rest and creating new snags along the stretch.

Our favourite swim was quite impossible to fish but just upstream from it the high bank gave easy access to the water and an overhanging alder gave some decent cover so father decide to give the spot a go. I decided to go slightly further upstream and explore the shallows, to see if there were any grayling. After trying a couple of glides unsuccessfully, I looked up to see father's rod describing a nice curve against the skyline. Picking up the landing net I ran back downstream to offer assistance. Upon reaching the alder

I could see that father was snagged up in midstream this was strange as usually any hooked fish bolted straight for the submerged alder roots on

the near bank. Father explained that he had snagged something upon reeling in and the flow had carried the unseen obstacle out to midstream, whatever it was it was not stuck fast but was yielding very slightly against the current and pull of his rod. After much heaving and pulling father slowly gained some line and then we saw that he wasn't attached to a normal piece of debris but to some thicker fishing line. I suggested to father that if he could gain just a few more feet I could hand line it in. I eventually grasped the snagged line and started pulling, I eventually came across another set of end tackle, but this time not a light link ledger but a round sea fishing weight of around 4ozs, the sort with a hole in the middle and grip points on the side, this was followed by a tanglement of line and a couple of treble hooks. Cutting the gear safely out of harms way, I was able to concentrate upon pulling in the remaining line as there was definitely something quite hefty on the end. Then of all things a rod tip broke the surface, between us father and I hauled it up onto the bank. A complete rod and reel but the rod had a break just above the top joint and the reel was filled with mud and had stuck fast. Upon cleaning the weed and debris off, the fittings revealed a quality piece of fishing tackle, rather belied by the end tackle.

The rest of the morning was uneventful, and by lunchtime we were in the pub



by Ray Stewart

where over a pint we discussed our find. How had it got into the river, had the rod been hurled into the river after being broken, why the end tackle and of course who could it possibly belong to?

It was decided that we would clean the gear up when we got home and tell the club committee of our find. After rinsing the reel out with clean water and

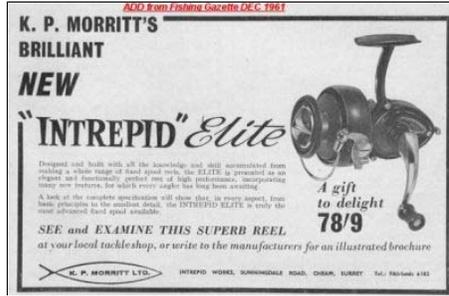
removing the cover it became obvious that it would need many

new parts, which was a shame as it was an Intrepid 'elite' a well respected model at the time.

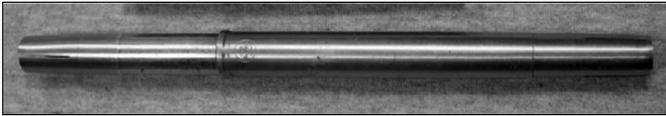
The rod had been a beauty, split cane with top quality fitting and inscribed on the butt section was that magic name 'Avon' strangely followed by 'Nil desperandum'. This could be restored by taking a little off the bottom of the top section, fitting two new ferrules, rewhipping and varnishing. We mentioned our find to the committee but over the ensuing weeks no claim

materialised so we never knew the start of the story or an answer to our questions.

What we did discover was that



An advert from Fishing Gazette Dec 1961 for an Intrepid Elite reel



A ferrule set perhaps similar to the one ordered by Ray's father all those years ago.

quite a lot of work was required to restore the rod to its original condition. We waited until the close season and first task was to cut back the broken section at the joint. This meant that we lost about 3 inches and had to

remove both the

ferrules. The diameters of the cane were measured so that new ferrules could be sourced not easy but a visit to our friendly tackle dealer

Tony in Russell Hillsdons saw

a pair of the correct size on order. When the ferrules arrived they were carefully fitted and set into position, new tip and butt rings were whipped on and the rod given a new coat of varnish. The rods action did not seem too unbalanced with the missing three inches, becoming as it were a 9ft 9in traditional Avon.

That coming season the 'new' rod saw many trips to the river, banking fish every time father took it along. 'Nil desperandum' remaining inscribed above the handle! We never did find out where it came from or the reason for the inscription and it still intrigues me to this day.

Ray Stewart



Club Spirit

I heard an amazing story the other week that just shows what sort of spirit we have in our club.

A club member who had been fishing at Walberton packed up for the day and went across to the car park only to find ... no car keys!

He hurried back over to the lake to search the swim he had been fishing (he knew that he had them when he arrived). When he got to there he found another angler had moved into the swim. They thoroughly searched but nothing turned up. Luckily our member had been with a friend who agreed to take him home.

When he finally came to pack up our angler finds the keys, not quite knowing what to do he consults with another member who volunteers to try to get them back to their owner. This member goes over to the car park, finds a car that matches the keys and then on unlocking the car finds some papers that point him in the direction of the angler who lives in Worthing. Our member actually lives quite close to Arun Angling so his original plan is to drop them off there with Tim as he doesn't know the road that the angler lives in.

However as he is driving out of Dairy Lane he comes across a supermarket delivery driver (you know the ones that do home delivery) and decides to see if he can get directions. A few minutes later armed with directions he's off to Worthing, but the directions are wrong, not to be outdone he then finds someone on the seafront with some maps on his phone and with a second set of directions tries again.

This time - success he finds the address but of course no one is in (if it had been me I would have been at the pub drowning my sorrows). Determined to get the keys delivered he find an elderly next door neighbour who agrees to take possession of the key and pass them on.

To me that shows the sheer perseverance and bloody mindedness that we anglers sometimes have to demonstrate in pursuit of our quarry. But someone that is prepared to put themselves out for a fellow member that they've never even met I salute you and I would like to think that all our members would think the same way - I hope so because I'm very very good at misplacing my keys and it's only time before I'm sure I am in the same situation! Oh! A final remark from our member 'I'm just happy that the other guy is happy to have got his keys back'



Notices

We are pleased to be able to offer Winter or half season memberships this year.

If you have any friends or relatives that are interested in joining the club then please let them know. The table below shows the fee structure. Winter membership will only be available by post from:

**Membership Secretary
The Old Blacksmiths Yard
Water Lane
Angmering,
West Sussex
BN16 4EP
Phone 01903 770099**

Or directly from **Arun Angling** at the same address.

Winter Membership Fees

Membership Type	Half Season
Full Adult	£48
Family (2 adults & 2 children)	£70
Senior Citizen	£25
Student	£25
Registered Disabled	£25
Junior (aged 12 - 16 inclusive)	£10
Juvenile (aged below 12)	Free
Associate (non fishing)	£2



Some Reflections on Barbel Fishing

Peter Foster continues with Part 2 of his barbel fishing exploits.

Second first barbel

Strange heading, but that's how I think of the first barbel I caught as an adult all those years after catching that first Kennet fish when I was a bold young whippersnapper. As mentioned in Part 1 of this article, I had been travelling regularly up and down the A27 in search of my first barbel since 1950 something. With the start of the 1996/7 season I had become even more determined. I had also become fixated on catching this 'second first barbel' on the float and had already had a couple of sessions when I spent some time trotting a piece of luncheon meat on Beat Two of Throop. When I did finally connect, it came as a bit of a surprise on an extremely hot sunny July afternoon.

I was using my trusty tench rod with which I had successfully banked tench to six pounds and match carp to eight. I coupled this for the first time with a closed faced reel which I had recently bought specifically for trotting; this was a mistake waiting to happen, which I was very soon to find out. I had been trotting a chubber float quite close in, down to an overhanging tree, for some time without success, when suddenly it disappeared. At first I thought it had been dragged under by weed or had snagged bottom, but I struck rather half-heartedly nevertheless, and was met, much to my surprise, by some heavy resistance which suddenly started to move. I'm sure many of you who have had the pleasure of catching barbel will recall your first, but this one was nothing like that first fish of forty years ago. There was so much power, I felt almost helpless, under-gunned as I was. To make matters worse, it wasn't moving directly away from me but was pulling furiously to the near bank about fifteen yards downstream. Poor barbel novice that I was, I couldn't really understand what was happening, but I just hung on for dear life and tried somehow to retrieve some line. The only way I could do this with the closed face reel was to employ a sort of pumping action, having to physically hold the line at times. By various means, I managed to get the fish closer to me so that it was actually under my feet - a situation I had never encountered before and a most bizarre one, in that I was trying to pull the fish out from beneath the heavily undercut bank on which I was standing. This new situation, combined with the fish's determined efforts to get further under the bank, resulted eventually in my losing my footing and sliding down the bank to join my adversary in the (thankfully) not too cold waters of the Dorset Stour. My sudden immersion up to the chest was not only a shock to me but to whatever was on the other end of the line, too, and resulted in the serendipitous outcome that the fish rushed off in the opposite direction away from the bank and out into the main flow. Now all I had to do was keep it out of the profusion of streamer weed! I've never tried wading and fishing at the same time before, so I was on a steep learning curve. However, I was determined not to lose this fish, as I'd been making the 125 mile round trip for nearly a year now in an effort to catch my first barbel since that day long ago on the Kennet. All I had to do was concentrate and try not to think of what that water was doing to the various contents of my pockets, which included a few credit cards as well as my Ringwood club book, not to mention the customary wad of tenners!



By Peter Foster part 2

Compared to what had gone before, the next part was relatively straightforward. I was now in control and the fish was tiring. I first had to reach my landing net and somehow hold it level almost with my shoulders before I could secure my captive. How happy I was, as I drew it over the net knowing that this battle was over and my ambition achieved.

Having at last netted the fish, I then faced the problem of how to exit the water. I hadn't seen anyone else for about an hour, and there was nobody nearby on either bank (a bit unusual for Throop), so I was on my own. It was only when I was trying to get a toe-hold, that I began to appreciate how undercut the bank was. Now it became clear how it was that my float had been nearly disappearing beneath where I had been standing, and I had set it to a depth of about six feet! I struggled for what seemed an age, but was probably only about three or four minutes, before I managed to drag myself out, clinging to a tuft of grass in one hand and a bunch of stinging nettles in the other (ouch). Next day I realised just how unfit I was - muscles I never knew I had ached to beggary.

Once out of the water, I was able to admire my catch. Unfortunately there was still no-one else around, so I would have to rely on the timer for the photographs. At first I thought I had caught a double (again the optimistic novice), but the scales showed 8lb 5 oz. Was I disappointed? Of course not. It was a splendid fish and a great adversary. I had proved I could do it, and now I had a new target to aim at for my next barbel session. The fish and I spent a few moments together at a spot where I could easily hold it in the water, while we both recovered. Eventually, strength restored, my former opponent swam powerfully and majestically away, leaving me alone with my thoughts and sopping wet clothes.



The 'second first' barbel if you look carefully you can see how wet I was!



Some Reflections on Barbel Fishing

Closer to Home

I'm not exactly sure how it was I discovered the Rother. I have this vague recollection of standing in SAS in Chichester about eight years ago and listening to John Medlow and AN Other suggesting I give it a try. I also remember that shortly afterwards, I think, I had a telephone conversation with Les Heath who was at that time the membership secretary of Bognor AC (as it then was) about barbel in the Rother. Whatever the circumstances, I joined the club and some time in July 2001 found myself all alone on the bank at Coultershaw. I wasn't very confident, I have to admit, as this was a brand new river to me and quite different from my limited experience on the Dorset Stour and Hampshire Avon. Walking the bank, looking at swims, I saw no-one else; the whole stretch was mine to choose from. I settled into a swim that later became a firm favourite. Imagine my surprise when just a few hours later I had a good take and was into a big fish that I was sure was a barbel. A couple of seconds later and I knew it was, as I caught a glimpse of it charging into the shallows on the opposite bank; alas, a bit too much pressure too hastily applied to head it off, and out came the hook. Damn, I thought, or perhaps it was some other suitable single syllable word appropriate to the occasion but not to the pages of the Sussex Angler. My first Rother session and within a couple of hours I'd hooked and lost my first Sussex barbel. It had only been on for a few seconds, but I'd seen it and knew from the evidence of my own eyes that there were indeed barbel in this river.

It took a few more sessions before I eventually landed my first Rother barbel, a fish of around eight pounds. A few more followed, all in the seven to eight pounds bracket, and all from the same swim. It was in December of that year that I caught my first Rother double, a fish of 10 lbs 4 oz, again from that swim (now you know why it became a favourite). This was said at the time by club officials to be the first authenticated double from the river. All these early fish were caught on luncheon meat.



The first Rother double



Part 2 Continued

A 'New' Bait

It wasn't until the late summer of 2004, that I discovered halibut pellets as a barbel bait. This happened while on a short holiday fishing the Wye at Bredwardine, where everyone but me, it seemed, was using (and catching) on pellets. Armed with a pack of halibut pellets and a ready tied hair rig purchased from Woody's of Hereford, I managed to blank on the Wye until the very last cast of the last session when (most ironically) fishing my last piece of smelly, warm luncheon meat, I connected with my first (and only) Wye barbel, a magnificent fish which equalled my personal best of 10-12.



My first and only Wye barbel just about ready to go.



At 12 - 12 this was a Rother record a very deep and chunky fish.

Back in Sussex I thought I'd try out the pellets and learn how to tie my own hair rigs! I don't know how many Rother regulars were using pellets at that time, but it wasn't long before I had my first pellet-caught barbel, and what a fish! I was fortunate enough to improve my PB from 10-12 (a weight I'd had three different fish at!) to 12-12, which was for a while the river record. Naturally I was overjoyed to beat my previous best and by two pounds as well. Looking at the fish as I drew it into the net, I knew for certain that it was a PB, it was so deep and chunky. I was especially glad, too, that a couple of the Rother regulars at that time were fishing just downstream of me that day, and were able to witness and photograph the fish; one of those witnesses was Pete Springate, who at that time was the river record holder, with a fish of 11-4. It was appropriate, I think, that three years later in February 2007, I had the privilege of witnessing and photographing Martin Eyres's record of 15-3, a fish subsequently bettered last season by Colin Bridger at 15-8 (still the biggest Rother barbel so far to my knowledge).

To Come

In the next instalment, there'll be some more about the Rother and maybe a few words (or more) about the Arun!



Tales from the Rod Room

**Almost reminiscent of Chris Yates's Tea Rooms Nigel tells us the story of ...
The last pike from the Garden Centre**

For many years I have always enjoyed a few pike fishing days every season but back in the nineties I would spend a lot of my angling time every winter in search of the biggest pike that I could find.

It was during this time and completely by chance that I was chatting to a couple of anglers in the tackle shop and the subject of pike fishing cropped up. They had been fishing a day ticket water for roach, bream and perch and found themselves having fish constantly taken by pike as they reeled in. Nothing unusual about that as any match angler will tell you, but these guys were insisting that the pike were huge. Hmm! I thought and took a few notes and sketched out a rough map.

It was early, on a cold October morning, just a few days later, that I found myself driving through Petworth following my map towards the lake that was about ten or twelve miles away. As usual I wondered if the water would be another 'Red Herring' or maybe this could be a real find, today would tell.

I found the water fairly easily from the directions the two anglers had given me and driving up the rough

track I saw the lake opening out in front of me. It was actually larger than I had expected, maybe two acres or more and but with very overgrown banks. I parked the car and walked to the closest swim from which it was possible to see the entire lake. There were only a handful of fishable swims and the whole place looked very neglected. A flaking, hand painted sign read 'Day tickets £5 collected on bank. No concessions.'

I chose the nearest swim to where I had parked with the thought that if nothing happened after an hour or so it would be easy enough to move. Twenty minutes later I was set up, fishing two rods, float ledgering half a mackerel soaked in fish oil on one and a small smelt on the other. Both baits cast to the edge of a tiny island in perhaps four feet of water. I sat back on my chair in anticipation and looked out across the totally calm lake, not a single fish could be seen moving. After an hour or so I drank a cup of tea from my flask and recast one rod into the slightly deeper water about twenty yards out, the other I baited again with a fresh mackerel and recast to the island. By half-past ten nothing had moved it was as if the lake was 'empty' and I wondered if yet



By Nigel Chapman

another fishless day was unfolding in front of me.

A little later I heard footsteps on the path behind me and turned to see a tall smartly dressed man approaching. He introduced himself as the owners solicitor and informed me that the owner had died months ago and the water should have already been closed. He said that a local club had netted many of the fish to stock their own waters but, 'Don't worry there may still be a few good fish and you will be the last person ever to fish here. Once the rest of the fish have been removed the lake will be drained and filled in - this entire site is going to be turned into a garden centre!' He wished me luck and turned, back down the path leaving me staring at what still seemed to be a totally fishless water. By lunchtime I had seriously considered packing up but something kept me there, maybe I would get just one chance.

I really couldn't be bothered to move swims. Later a dog walker came along and we chatted for a few minutes about the water. He wasn't a fisherman but told me that his son had fished the water many times in the past and had caught plenty of fish, but nothing very big. As the dog walker turned to leave I noticed the float dip on the

rod baited with a small Smelt. A few seconds later the float dipped again and the line slowly began to tighten. I picked up the rod, gently reeling in line until I felt the fish moving slowly away with the bait. As the line pulled tight I lifted the rod and struck, to my astonishment the rod was pulled hard into a huge arc by what was obviously a very powerful fish.

The pike surged away keeping close to the bottom as I piled on pressure trying to get the fish under control. It was very soon past the end of the small island and if the pike turned to the right I would almost certainly lose it in the overhanging bushes. Luck was on my side, at the moment when it was looking distinctly dangerous the fish turned away and moved into open water. I pulled hard on the rod as the fish took line from a tightly set clutch. This was the hardest fighting pike I had ever hooked and I started to become nervous, 'Don't lose it now' I muttered to myself. I eased the pressure on the rod as slowly it started to tire and swim grudgingly towards me. After a couple more minutes the fish was under the rod tip thrashing on the surface. I slid the landing net under the fish and lifted. This was a big fish and as I let the fish recover from its exertions whilst still in the water it looked huge.



Tales from the Rod Room cont.

Certainly well over twenty pounds. The hooks fell out in the landing net. I breathed a slight sigh of relief!

The dog walker witnessed me weigh the pike, 26lbs 3ozs and then took a few photos for me. That fish never stopped struggling. As I released the fish back into it's temporary home it quickly surged away and I knew it was time to

pack up and go. That lovely fish was a fitting way to close the history of this small lake. I hoped one day in the near future she would be moved to a new water and live out her life, growing into a real monster.

As I left a new sign had been placed by the entrance. It read 'Water closed. No fishing'.



Nigel with the 26lb 3oz pike from the lake which was to become a garden centre. We can see that he is having a job hanging on to it. We also almost have a smile from Nigel this time round!



Fishery Management

Nelson gives us a bit more detail about the Hurston project and some work party dates to put in your diaries

Hurston Project

As you know we have been working hard to keep the carp lake at Hurston free of weed. We have looked at a number of other options including chemical treatment and dye-stuff water shading none of which we felt were going to be viable options. Instead we have secured the services of Vernon (Vern) Cottingham who is a very experienced lake digger and maintainer. Conditions and timing are crucial and at the time of writing we don't have a firm date we just know that when the conditions are right we have to move fast.

The plan is to lower the water level so that he can get a digger into the lake. He will then take about 4 - 6 inches of silt off the bottom of the lake. This will take most of the weed roots as well. The material taken from the lake will be spread across the high bank. There is also some underwater landscaping planned. We then have to restore the water level which might take a while but if we get our timing right should not prove an issue. In order to do this safely and with the minimum of disruption I will be closing the entire venue for the duration of the works and then for a while afterwards. I might have to keep the carp lake closed for a little longer until the water levels are restored. After that I have earmarked (do fish have ears!) some stock which we can move into the lake this winter as long as there are no other issues. This further stocking should also help keep any remaining weed at manageable levels.

Work Parties

Yes those dreaded words, although I have to say that we have had good turnouts over the last year or so, so thanks to all those that attended. The contractors work above is only one aspect of the on-going management of Hurston and we of course have to keep our other waters up to scratch. So taking us up to the new season I have put the following work parties in place.

DATE	TIME	VENUE	WORK
16/1/11	08.30 - 12.00	Hurston	General Management
13/2/11	08.30 - 12.00	Hurston	General Management
20/3/11	08.30 - 12.00	Hurston	Strimming & Cutting back
11/4/11	08.30 - 12.00	Coultershaw	Strimming & Cutting back



Exchange Books

Alex Newton gives us a whistle stop tour around some of the exchange books we have and highlights a water or two along the way

Downton

This is my favourite exchange book, with three stretches of the Hampshire Avon, two close to the town centre and one further downstream. The borough stretch is famous for roach and fish in excess of 3lb have come from here. The next stretch consists of the Moot stream and Town stretch with dace, roach and chub as the predominant species. The final stretch is a little way south of the town and is known as Charford Lions, the stretch suffers from weed during the summer months but this dies back with the colder weather. The stretch produces some very good chub. If you want further information take a look at the March 2008 newsletter on the website.

Portsmouth

Portsmouth have a range of still waters and some river stretches all to the east of us roughly between Hayling Island and Southampton. Perhaps the most well known water in the Portsmouth book is Sinah Warren on Hayling Island. This is a large shallow lake with some big carp (20lb plus) and big bream, my best has been 13lb. There is also a good head of roach, tench, pike and perch. Not all Portsmouth waters are available on exchange so check before you visit.



Sinah Warren - Hayling Island available on the Portsmouth book.

Pulborough

Pulborough have stretches of the Arun and Rother that are adjacent to our own and quite similar in character. They also have about 3 miles of the tidal Adur, the Adur is renowned for its roach and bream stocks but you can also find dace, chub, perch and pike with a few hard fighting river carp as well. On the still water front probably their most well known water is the Goose Green complex which they have almost completely redeveloped over the last 5 years or so. This six lake complex has a wide variety of stock and conditions with something to suit most still water anglers.

Generally the site is well set up for less able anglers with car parks adjacent to five of the six lakes. They also have two further waters; one in Pulborough and one in Storrington, both can be considered as mixed fisheries and are ideal for juniors or someone who is just starting out.



With Alec Newton

Old Windsor



Albert bridge - Old Windsor

Fancy bumping into Chris Tarrant well it is quite likely that you could find yourself fishing next to him on the Romney Island stretch of the River Thames. This stretch produces good barbel and chub with plenty of roach, dace, perch and bleak. The bleak can be a bit of a nuisance and you need to sink your bait fast. A little further downstream is the Albert bridge stretch. Your unlikely to find barbel here but most other common river species and in good numbers. Old Windsor also have an interesting range of still waters to explore.

Worthing

Worthing have three stretches of the River Arun all below our Watersfield fishery. The Timberley farm stretch has produced some bumper catches of bream and is also popular with specimen anglers seeking out large pike, river carp and the occasional barbel. Worthing also have an attractive three lake complex called Laybrook not far from Goose Green. The lakes were obviously named by a student of English poetry being called Byron, Shelley and Milton. Shelley and Milton are linked by a narrow channel. The whole complex can be considered as a mixed fishery with carp, tench, roach and bream. There is also a head of predators and I'm particular interested in the perch which have been caught at around the 4 lb mark.



Worthing's Byron Lake

Availability

Martin Eyres controls our exchange books and his contact details together with the list of other exchange books we hold can be found on page 45 of your club handbook. There are plenty of waters to look at so give an exchange water a go when you fancy a change of scene and let us know how you get on. Next time round I will take a look at some of our other exchange waters.



Bird Life

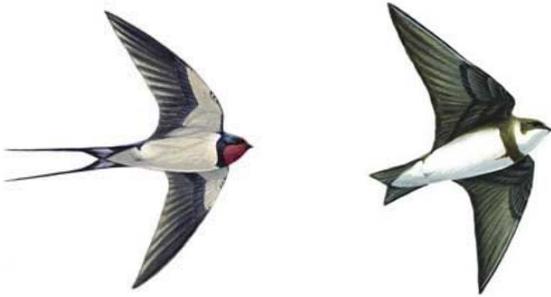
Club member and keen local ornithologist Terry Scragg gives his regular update

Autumn feeding frenzy

By the start of autumn most of the birds that arrived in spring will have started their long journey back to Africa. Prior to leaving they will have had to build up their fat reserves to provide the energy for migration. Species such as warblers, which are normally insect feeders, will have switched their diet to berries that are

weight during this feeding frenzy. Once we are well into autumn you may still see Swallows and Martins acrobatically skimming over water catching insects whilst they are still available. Both these species are aerial feeders so they do not have to 'fuel up' before they leave and can feed on the wing as they fly south. The amount of food that birds

As the days shorten, temperatures drop and food becomes more difficult to find. Birds need to eat more to survive in cold weather in order to build up their fat supplies which they burn for energy. This means feeding at an accelerated rate throughout daylight hours with the smaller species consuming as much as 30% of their body weight each day. If you are fishing at first light or in the late afternoon you will see increased activity, particularly among small birds, as they feed early in the morning to renew the energy lost overnight, and then again towards dusk as they 'top up' before nightfall.



The Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) on the left, the smaller Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) on the right. Also note the longer tail on the Swallow.

more common at this time of year, and may double their

can find before migration and the availability of food along the route are critical to their survival.

Enforced sociability

In winter you may also notice flocks of birds, including Long Tailed Tits, Treecreeper's, Nuthatches and Goldcrest's flitting through trees and shrubs as



Bird Life



The Sparrowhawk
(Accipiter nisus)

they spot predators such as Sparrowhawks. The more elaborate bird song we associate with springtime is absent in winter, being used to attract a mate and defend territory during the breeding season.

Warmth in numbers

The depth of the winter will have a direct relationship to a birds' survival, particularly the

smaller species such as Wrens who lose body heat quickly and have difficulty building up sufficient stores of fat to survive extreme cold. Flocks of birds may huddle together at night as temperatures drop as this behaviour conserves body heat. As many as 50 Wrens have been found huddled together in nest boxes in winter. These very small birds are susceptible in low temperatures, with severe winters such as the last one reducing their numbers significantly.



The Wren (Troglodytes troglodytes) often thought to be Britain's smallest bird. But in fact the Goldcrest mentioned earlier is smaller.

Terry Scragg

they search for food. These different species would not normally associate together, but cold weather drives them to become more sociable. This typical winter behaviour, working in flocks rather than individually, means that they have more chance of identifying food supplies. You may also hear them using a series of short calls to communicate the location of food supplies or uttering alarm calls if

Our illustrations again come from the excellent RSPB website:
www.rspb.org.uk



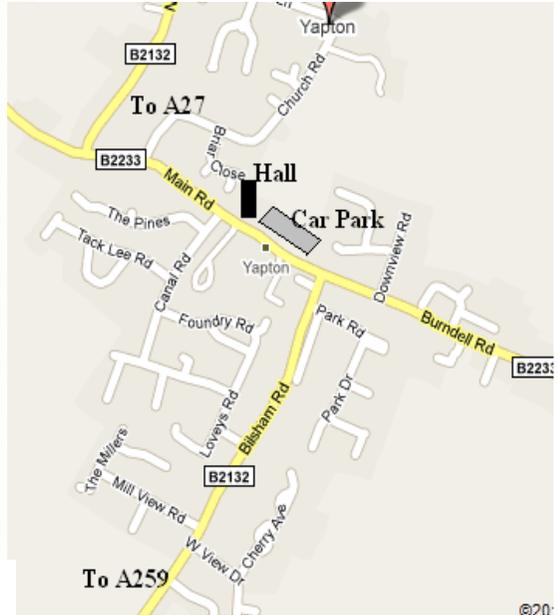
Angler's Evening with Chris Holley

Date	23rd October
Time	7 pm - 11 pm
Venue	Yapton Village Hall

Chris Holley is a well known and respected Wiltshire based angler and a consultant to Fox Tackle International. Chris grew up in South London where he spent his early teens fishing for Carp on the pits and lakes of Kent. But his real love and passion is for running water, with over 30 years experience on rivers. He specialises in the pursuit of Barbel and Chub with over 200 double figure Barbel to his credit and Chub to 7lb 10oz.



Chris Holley



Licensed bar provided by The Lamb - Bilsham

**Open to all anglers or even non-anglers so bring along your friends and relatives as well. So that we can gauge numbers please book in with Nigel on:
02392 412463**