

The Sussex Angler



Spring 2011

Issue 5

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The Petworth and Bognor Angling Club Magazine

www.sussexangling.co.uk

Welcome to The Sussex Angler

As I write this at the very end of 2010 I realise what a big year 2011 is going to be for the club.

New Water

I was very pleased to announce at the AGM in November that the club have taken on a major new still water. The water is situated about half a mile from our Storrington complex and we have decided to call it **The Granary**. Between now and when the water opens on 1st April there is lots of work to be done creating a car park with secure access, constructing a path from the car park to the water, putting up notice boards and constructing swims etc. But I'm sure it will be all completed for the start of our new year. We would like to know how you get on at the new water so we would ask that you sign in to the water and record your catches. There will be a record book alongside the notice board. You will be able to read more about our new water on page 22.

Hurston Lane

We were very disappointed when we were told by our contractor that having fixed the leak in the tench pond he was not going to be able to carry out the weed removal work we had commissioned in the carp pond until this coming spring. This did however allow us another chance to jointly consult with the EA and our contractor and after a couple of further site meetings we have come up with a revised plan. This now

involves the temporary movement of stock from and a complete drain down of the carp pond. This will make it much easier to finally get rid of the weed and silt that have plagued the carp pond over recent years. Although we have contractors to do most of the site work we are going to need volunteers to help with the fish movement. Nelson Keet and Ray Huskisson will be heading up the project team from the club and would really appreciate your assistance. Details of how to contact Nelson and Ray are on page 23. Also keep a look out for notices on the website or in the local tackle shops.

Hardham

At the moment everything is on track for us to be able to use Hardham again from the middle of June. We have certainly reflected this in the new handbook, however we are in the hands of contractors who do need to have the weather on their side so again keep and eye out for notices on the website and in the tackle shops.

As you can see 2011 is going to be a very busy year, with lots going on and lots to do!

Good Luck for the new season .



Nigel Chapman
Chairman



Club Locks / Security

We have had a number of instances recently where our combination padlocks have either been forced or broken off. We know that the locks do occasionally seize but our fishery management team regularly check the locks and replace any that are at all suspect. The most recent incident involved a lock that had only been in place for a matter of days.

This leads us to think that we either have poachers who are accessing our waters or some members do not understand fully how our locks work.

With regard to poachers we would ask all members to be vigilant on this front. If you see anyone that you feel should not be on one of our waters, please ask politely for their proof of membership. If they are unable to show you any proof of membership politely ask them to leave the venue.

FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY DO NOT GO BEYOND THESE ACTIONS

We have produced a quick guide to using our locks below:

1. Set the numbers to match the code. The lock code is on the inside front cover of your handbook and also on your membership card.



Note: Number set here is 7223 and is for illustrative purposes only.

2. Press the button on the base of the lock (as shown) to release the hasp. If the hasp does not release ensure the numbers are properly aligned.

3. When you have used the entrance please do not forget to replace the lock, close the hasp and spin the numbers.

If you do have problems with a lock and it is not working please contact Nelson on 07944 539077



Exchange Books

Alec continues his review of the exchange books we hold. And gives details of new ways of getting hold of them.

Godalming Angling Society

Our latest exchange book is really exciting for virtually any angler. We have now got the opportunity to fish Godalming Angling Society waters.

They have about 8 miles of the River Wey from Eashing to just south of Guilford. Some of these are 'natural' river sections while other are 'navigation' sections where the river has been partially canalised. The Wey offers all the normal river species along with specimen barbel, chub, and perch. There are also good grayling and



Not sure how it got its name but this is **The Drug House Swim on the River Wey**



Godalming's Johnson's Lake

trout on the Eashing stretch.

Godalming also have a wide selection of still waters. Those that know me will be aware of my interest in big perch so I think the stand out still water is Johnson's lake which holds both perch and crucian carp to around 4 lb put these alongside roach over 3 lb, tench over 11 lb together with some big carp and this 21 acre water is more than a little interesting.

Getting Hold of Exchange Books

We have decided that we will trial making some of our exchange books available through Arun Angling this year. This means that if they are available you will be able to pick up your exchange books from Tim as well as applying to Martin. On average we have four exchange books for each of our exchange clubs and Tim will hold two and Martin will hold two. If you decide to get your exchange books through Tim we would recommend that before you set out to visit him you phone to make sure he has your choice of book available.



By Alec Newton

Billingshurst Angling Society

Billingshurst have about 6 miles of the upper Arun all of which is non tidal. Alongside the river they also have a stretch of the Wey and Arun Canal. It is interesting to note that barbel were stocked into these upper reaches of the Arun in the mid 90's and are now beginning to show regularly particularly on their Oakhurst to Bignor stretch.. Other stretches boast chub and bream to 7 lb and carp well into the 20's. On the predator front there is a good head of pike with the best fish just topping the 30 lb mark, from my point of view not much on the specimen perch front but you can't have everything. Generally the access and parking is reasonable and there are no really long hikes to the river.

Billingshurst have a couple of stand out still water venues.

The two lake Malthouse complex is well known as a prolific fishery. Both lakes are around 5 acres in size and are well stocked with carp of all types and sizes along with tench roach, rudd and golden rudd. The lower lake also produces some specimen perch and eels.



One of Billingshurst's stretches of the River Arun. A bit tamer than the Arun we know but still contains plenty of good fish.



Malthouse lakes

Shillinglee is a typical Sussex estate lake and is renowned as a tench fishery. The fish are not massive so you are unlikely to break double figures, however there are a lot in the 6 - 8 lb bracket. Shillinglee also has some very good carp with the best being very close to 40 lb. There is a good head of quality bream that run to almost double figures and quality roach and rudd as well. In the winter Shillinglee has a bit of a reputation as a still water pike venue with fish around the mid 20's being regularly caught.



1976 A Drought Year part 1

Ray Stewart takes us back to the driest summer in 200 years and in part 1 fishes his favourite Shopham stretch of the Rother.

Back in the seventies the close season was a break for all coarse angling, river and lake alike from mid March through to mid June and most anglers dreamt of their first session of the new season on the '16th!

This was a time of checking tackle and making any refurbishments that may be necessary. A visit to the local tackle shop to investigate new pieces of equipment would also be on the cards and that new float or reel might just help capture the monster that had eluded us.

Work parties with weed clearing, swim maintenance and general tidying to make our waters a more enjoyable place were also the order of the day and then as now it was the same old stalwarts that turned up. As an angler I found them useful for finding that new swim and for observing how the fish behaved when not being assailed by an anglers bait. I remember the close season of 1976 well, the unusually dry weather had already made its mark, the soil was dry and hard and there was even talk about water rationing and stand pipes. The level in most reservoirs had fallen dramatically and our local gravel pits were no different, with water levels lower than had been seen before. The weed growth also seemed more than usual with many swims choked by surface weed in many places. We all began pondering what conditions would be like come opening day, or more to the point opening night, if the dry weather continued.

As the new season approached I began wondering

whether it would be better to start the new campaign on the river, as it was now apparent it would take more than a brief deluge to top the pit up to it's more usual level. Come the 16th and I did not have my usual desire to await midnight in my usual swim and I gave the whole affair a miss. However it was very difficult to suppress the urge to get fishing and later that week father and I were in the car headed northwards to the Rother. It was midweek and the season was already a few days old so angling pressure should be minimal. We pulled up at the Shopham Bridge and before taking any gear from the car we had a quick look, we had not seen the river for more than twelve weeks and had expected the worse. However as we leant over the stone wall of the bridge, we looked down upon a river that although low had a lot more water flowing through it than we expected.

It looked like we would have the stretch



Shopham bridge viewed from the south bank on the 'Shopham Up' side.



By Ray Stewart

to ourselves as there were no other cars around. We trekked along the path upstream stopping to survey various swims along the way we had decided to walk up to the second farm bridge at the top of the stretch and then come back downstream and fish the best looking swims. At the first of the farm bridges father followed the course of the loop whilst I decided on the cut I kept to the water's edge at the cattle drink the higher bank keeping my shadow off the water. By the small tree half way along the drink movement amongst the weed midstream caught my eye. The water was quite shallow here, less than a foot, but there was a deep glide along the far bank flanked on either side by the streamer weed. What had made the movement was unclear as it was shrouded by the weed that tented as it traversed the shallow water but it was traveling in the general direction of the deeper glide. Then I saw another fish in the clearer water, but it was a bit too far upstream to make identification possible, but both fish were quite large. I do not know why but my first thought was sea trout, it was entirely the wrong time of year, but I knew they frequented the shallows and used to pair up at spawning time. One thing is for sure when you come across a pair of decent fish like this your heart races and it becomes difficult to train ones thought processes in a logical manner, but that I had to do if I had any chance of success.

I set up my tackle behind the cover of the small tree I put on a short stubby avon float directly to 8 lb reel line, my shot directly beneath with a number 6 hook tied on to the main line, baited

with a large bunch of maggots. I had set the float at about eighteen inches from the hook. I had thigh waders on, so I crept upstream under cover of the cattle drink to a good distance above the fish and then waded across. I was well above the fish but I could see one of them still making it's presence known by the tell tale movements of the streamer weed. It was going to be a long trot and my float was hopefully large enough to travel the distance and remain visible. I introduced a small amount of loose feed into the water immediately above the deep glide to stimulate some interest and gently lowered my float into the trundling flow hoping it would not get caught up on route. The ploy was to hold the float back until it was almost upon the fish, the shot being all immediately beneath the float, the baited hook would rise to the surface and so avoid sinking into the weed. The float luckily kept its line bobbing along the surface of the deeper glide, until reaching it's station I then gave it free reign allowing the baited hook to sink into the flow. I must have got my judgment correct as after bobbing along freely for a couple of yards or so there was a swirl just beneath the float. I instinctively lifted the rod and met resistance then the rod arced over as the fish I'd hooked swam across the river, the other bolted immediately downstream to deeper waters. My fish had picked up weed on the line and the fight was far from over.

I waded downstream to the small tree where I had dropped off the tackle and collected the landing net, I was now directly opposite the fish which had moved back into the deeper water of the glide.



1976 A Drought Year cont'd

The line between the float and the fish was heavily weeded but apart from a few fraught moments when the fish found some twiggy debris the fight was a fairly brief one and I was soon slipping the landing net under the mass of weed that concealed my prize catch. I carried the weed laden net across to the cattle drink where I laid it in the shallow water to remove the weed revealing a very plump silvery scaled chub not a fresh run sea trout after all, but a chub and a pretty large one at that, certainly much the biggest one I had ever caught. I unhooked my prize and placed it in my keepnet set in the deeper water at the tail of the run. I felt that father had to see this fish so I set off across the field to where he was fishing the loop. I could see that he had just been joined by another angler who was carrying his tackle and had stopped for a chat.

When I arrived at father's swim I exclaimed "I've just caught a big chub, it's pretty large, the biggest I've caught, thought it was one of a pair of big sea trout though". "How big?" was the reply,

"Don't know I haven't weighed it yet". Everything was dropped and the three of us made our way to the cut. When we arrived at the cattle drink I pointed out where I had caught it, our visitor looked surprised mentioning that there hardly seemed to be enough water in the swim to make it worthy of consideration. I reached into the fishing bag for the scales and we walked along to the deeper water, both of them looking rather surprised as I lifted the net from the water revealing the catch inside. After setting and checking the scales we all weighed the chub at 6 lb 7 oz and then returned him straight back to the river, as he swam away I collected our witness details. The fish was however topped not once but twice that season, although neither fish broke the 7 lb mark. If however I'd hooked the other one well that might just be another story as I reckon he was the bigger of the pair!

Disappointment, initially because they were not sea trout and then being beaten not once but twice. A very memorable catch though and a great start to a season that will not be forgotten.

Ray Stewart



Dennis Howell who was appointed as 'Minister of Drought' in August 1976 only to be named 'Minister of Flood' a few days into September when the rains finally came.



Fishery Improvements

Although we will be concentrating our efforts on our Hurston Lane Fishery (see page 23), this does not mean that there isn't anything to do on our other waters. I have work parties planned at Coultershaw, Bethwins and of course Stemps Wood during the coming few months.

We have also made what I consider to be a very useful purchase for our on-going fishery management particularly on the rivers, with the acquisition of 'HMS Petworth & Bognor'. I haven't had the chance to try her out but I am reliably informed that she is unsinkable even if full of water. We will be using her mainly for river work on venues such as Coultershaw and Shopham as we already have boats available for Hurston and Stemps Wood. However she is very light and transportable for use on other venues.



Above is a picture of the boat we have bought. It is called a Newbourne Sniper and is about 8 feet long. If you would like to take a closer look or even have a go in it then all you have to do is turn up for the Coultershaw work party on 10th April. Dates of all the work parties we have planned are as below, also look out for notices on the website or in the local tackle shops.

| Date | When | Venue | Main Tasks |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Sun 10th April | Morning | Coultershaw | General Maintenance |
| Sun 8th May | Morning | Bethwins | General Maintenance |
| Wed 1st June | Afternoon | Hurston | Weed Clearing on Tench Pond |
| Sun 6th June | Morning | Stemps Wood | General Maintenance |
| Wed 28th July | Afternoon | Hurston | Weed Clearing on Tench Pake |
| Sun 15th August | Morning | Hurston | General Maintenance |

Nelson



Some Reflections on Barbel Fishing

Those anglers that fish the Rother or Arun regularly will know that catching barbel in West Sussex is not easy – or perhaps I should rephrase that to *finding* barbel in West Sussex is not easy.

We are not blessed with a fine head of barbel in either river, although I suspect that there may be far more in the Arun than in the Rother – trouble is, there is a lot more water in the Arun, which makes finding them even more difficult! Thus any barbel landed in Sussex is, in my opinion, an achievement to be proud of, but after gradually increasing my personal best, I began to hanker after something more; after several years of Rother fishing, I made it my goal to catch more than one fish in a session. Now I have to say here that it wasn't perhaps so surprising that I hadn't done this so far, as normally I only fish for three or four hours at most, so perhaps hadn't been giving myself the best opportunity. One of the benefits of living not too far from the fishery and of being self-employed is that you can often take advantage of opportunities to fish when these present themselves. Also, apart from the fact that I don't really have the stamina or the desire to fish long sessions, I find it easier to bear the blanks if you're not looking back on eight or nine hours without a fish (maybe if I fished longer, I might not blank so much, but then I have rather got into the habit of short sessions, and maybe it's a bit too late to change now).

So, one lovely summer's evening back in July 2006 found me, along with several other Rother regulars, down at 'barbel bend' hoping perhaps that this might be the occasion to achieve the elusive double of two fish in a session. I elected to fish a swim I'd never tried before – very snaggy with just a small patch of water to cast to. I tossed in a couple of pellets and a few moments later made my first cast. The pellet had barely touched the bottom when I had my first knock – encouraging, I thought. Even more encouraging was the steady pull I felt

followed by the rod hooping over as the fish headed for the safety of the tree roots. A spirited fight followed, but soon there was a splendid fish of 8 lbs 4 oz in the net. One of the other anglers who was still down at barbel bend did the honours for me with the camera and scales.



A splendid fish weighing in at 8 lb 4 oz



By Peter Foster part 3

No sooner had he gone back to his swim, than I had to call upon him again, this time for a hard-fighting young fish of 4lb 12 oz – encouraging to catch a young fish and also the smallest I'd encountered thus far on the Rother. I couldn't believe my good fortune; two fish in as many casts from the same swim! Would I be pushing my luck to try for a third with the double already achieved? Well why not?



The second in as many casts, a young fish of 4 lb 12 oz

Maybe I was pushing my luck, for the third cast produced nothing – I left it ten or so minutes and thought I'd try one more cast before moving on. Good decision. Pellet cast to the same spot – tap, tap - then a firm pull and into my third fish of the session – this one



Not quite a double but who cares when you've had three in a session . I even took my Polaroids off for this 9 lb 12 oz fish!

the biggest yet. A few moments later and a barbel of 9lb 12 oz was in the net. Once again my mate, Chris, did the honours – poor chap wasn't getting much fishing of his own done. We both couldn't believe what had just happened – three fish landed in quick succession all from the same swim in the space of just under an hour. To add to my amazement, as I was returning the last one, another swam past in the shallows just a few

feet away. I can't remember much more about that magical evening. I believe I fished on for a while, but really I'd had enough, so I actually reached the car park well before chucking out time for a change. I've fished the Rother many times since then, blanked on numerous occasions, and caught bigger fish, but I've never come close to matching that catch.



Some Reflections on Barbel Fishing

So to the 2007-8 season, one that started off in perfect fashion for me with a fish of just under ten pounds on opening day and finished on 14 March 2008 with an even bigger fish - a perfect end to the season. But what of those days in-between - how many barbel did I bank, and just how many days were filled with blanks?



The first fish of the 2007 / 2008 season, caught on opening day

The simple answer is 31 (not fish banked, but sessions blanked). Yes, 31 sessions devoid of barbel. As I've previously mentioned, nearly all of my sessions are short ones, lasting for only two, three or sometimes four hours, so 31 sessions probably equates to about 100 hours, which is not so much fishing time really (which is what I try to tell my wife when we make comparisons between how much time we spend on our respective hobbies). So ten barbel in 100 hours - that's one every ten hours - put like that, it doesn't sound so bad, but I did have to endure a run of numerous blanks, perhaps my longest ever. So, how did that long run of blanks end? I'm pleased to say on a high note - a very high one.

On the anniversary of Martin Eyre's fantastic record, exactly one year later on 23 February 2008, I enjoyed a special catch of my own. On this Saturday afternoon, I'd decided on a roving approach, no chair, just one rod, staying no more than thirty minutes in a swim, feeding just a few loose pellets and then having just a couple of casts in each. By five o'clock I was in my third swim, a pretty popular one where I'd had fish before. After one cast with no result, I made another - a bit further downstream and closer this time to the overhanging branches - well-positioned, I thought. After a few minutes, I felt some movement - just a couple of light taps. You know that feeling. Sitting there holding the rod, line between the fingers, anticipating another touch or that wrenching pull, perfectly focused - and then it happened - a sharp tug and contact was made, and didn't this fish pull? Straight off downstream, it headed and then, more worryingly, towards the opposite bank.



By Peter Foster part 3

Imagine the situation – the fish about twenty yards downstream by now in a very narrow stretch of river with overhanging trees all along the opposite bank – fish pulling hard, me tightening right up on the clutch, trying my best to keep it from taking any more line, but trying even harder to keep it from those branches and whatever was beneath them. But the fish was winning – the angle of the line showed that it was getting under those trees – I kept the rod really low, plunging it beneath the surface at times. Now what I had feared the most, happened – all movement stopped; the fish wasn't going downstream, wasn't moving to the opposite bank, wasn't going anywhere. Putting on more pressure was futile, so very carefully I eased the pressure – more a question really of letting the mono line contract – I kept it taut still but with very little bend in the rod, just hoping against hope that this would allow the fish to move out of the snag without also shedding the barbless hook.

To my immense relief, after what was quite a short period of time but seemed much longer, I felt some movement, so I wasn't snagged, and then the fish was out, moving back upstream towards me following the contours of the opposite bank. Again I sank more than half the rod, as I didn't want the line to get caught up in all that vegetation. I was growing more confident now as the fish came further upstream and was almost level with me, which meant that soon it would be in open water. I was beginning to gain some level of control, and gradually I began to bring it closer to the surface. Then I saw it – swimming parallel to the bank, as I determinedly dragged it upstream, its dorsal standing proud. I knew then that it would be mine, and not only that, but that this fish was the biggest barbel I had ever knowingly had on the end of my line. It made a couple more runs, but now that it was out in more open water, I felt much more confident. What I hadn't counted on, though, was that I didn't have my usual extra large landing net, as at the end of my previous session a few days earlier, I'd managed to almost destroy it having caught it in some brambles while climbing a stile at Shopham. Having blanked and been in a foul mood, I'd tugged a bit too hard and not only ripped the net but also bent the spreader block and rim. Not having had the chance to replace it, I was on this occasion using a smaller net, which although of specialist dimensions, was nowhere near as capacious.

So here I was, having brought the fish upstream prior to turning it to bring it with the current over and into the net, finding myself regretting those hasty attempts to retrieve my net from the brambles. Twice I drew the fish over the net and twice I attempted to lift it in the strong current, but the blasted net wasn't big enough, and I couldn't fit the fish in. Each time this lovely creature seized its opportunity to evade the net and head down into the depths again. Having made two attempts, I wasn't going to be foiled again (after all I'd had two practice goes), so at the third time of asking, I managed to successfully co-ordinate all my efforts, and the fish ended up in the net. There it stayed, resting in the net which I secured with a bank stick, while I took a few minutes to recover myself and regain some composure before ringing a friend who I knew was fishing somewhere downstream.



Some Reflections on Barbel Fishing



The 14 lb 3 oz fish caught on the 23rd February

Five minutes later, and the fish was photographed by my mate and duly weighed on his Reuben Heaton's, which showed I'd increased my PB by no less than 23 ounces, from 12-12 to 14-3. Fitting that I'd caught my best fish exactly a year to the day after Martin had his record, and what a way to end such a long series of blanks, encouragement for anyone who wonders why we do this crazy barbel-fishing thing. As if that wasn't reward enough, on the final day of the season,

in the last permitted hour on the Rother, I hooked another biggie. Although the circumstances were quite different, the struggle was just as intense. Fishing another familiar swim, although with fewer snags, the fish was hooked just a few yards downstream in mid-river. It made no attempt to head for the far bank but just held its place on the bottom, the way big fish often do. For what seemed like several minutes, there was hardly any change in the situation – I pulled as hard as I dare to bring it upstream while it doggedly maintained its position. Having recently caught that fourteen, I was totally confident in my set up, and was determined not to let the fish have any line. I was amazed at how much the eleven foot Peregrine GTi could bend. Eventually I began to shift the fish. This time there was no netting problem. The brand new Korum barbel spoon swallowed the 12-11 without any difficulty. A couple of photographs, and my season, which had begun so well, came to an end with a great big smile.



The end of season 12 lb 11 oz fish caught on the last day



Some Reflections on Barbel Fishing

Epitaph

I had been planning originally to also write something about my experience of fishing the Arun for barbel, but that will have to wait for another time, as I'd like to close this article by paying tribute to the man who took those photographs of that amazing triple and also of the big one. I'm sure most of you who knew Chris Humphry will already have heard the very sad news of his death back in November last year. Chris was a Rother regular who'd come to barbel fishing only recently after many years spent mainly on stillwaters in pursuit of carp. Chris loved the Rother and, living locally in Petworth, never tired of being on its banks, whether fishing or not, even on one occasion coming out especially to weigh and photograph a catch for me. I experienced his enthusiasm as he got to grips with running water and took on the new challenges of catching barbel. He cared about the Rother, its environment and its wild-life as well as the fish which he always treated with care and respect. Chris was a good fishing buddy to me and to others, and he will be sorely missed by all those who knew him. So I'd like to close this article with this memory of Chris and a photograph of one of his last captures.



Chris Humphry
8th April 1964 - 21st November 2010
A great fishing buddy

The Chris Humphry Trophy

We barbel anglers are renowned for knowing nothing about match fishing; however, to keep Chris's memory alive we are going to have a go at organising a charity match.

The date will be Sunday 17th July.

The venue will be Chris's beloved Coultershaw; however, if it proves really popular we might move onto Shopham as well, but meet in the Coultershaw car park at 2.00pm

Quite frankly; we haven't worked out the exact format yet, it might be best fish, or most fish or most species - we'll worry about that closer to the event. Just try and turn up and don't forget to bring your wallet with you as we will be looking to raise as much money as we can for charity.



Bird Life

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

The club's stillwaters are all highly fertile environments, full of nutrients which support a wide variety and quality of fish, invertebrates and aquatic plants these in turn attract large numbers of birds as they provide food, breeding sites and relative safety.

The most common duck you are likely to see is the Mallard, the male sports a bottle green head, yellow bill and grey-brown body. The female is a brownish-yellow colour which provides camouflage when she is hidden among vegetation incubating her eggs. The Mallard is the most successful and widespread duck because of its ability to exploit any type of freshwater habitat. It mainly nests in dense bankside vegetation, but also in trees. It feeds on

plant material and insects both on water and on farmland.

The Tufted Duck is also widespread. A dumpy shaped bird with a large rounded head. The male is black with a white flank patch and yellow eye. The female is a brownish bird with pale flanks. These are even more widespread in winter as considerable numbers of Scandinavian birds migrate to the British Isles. They can dive up to 2.5 metres, feeding on plant material, insects and molluscs.

waits for a fish to swim into view. Once a fish is spotted it extends its neck at lightening speed stabbing the fish and swallowing it in one gulp. Although the Heron is primarily a fish eater, it also takes grass snakes, frogs and young birds such as Mallard chicks and ducklings. I have witnessed a Heron swallowing whole a Mallard chick with its neck bulging as the live chick was gulped down!



Male (left) and Female Tufted Duck
Aythya fuligula

The Grey Heron, is commonly seen standing motionless at the edge of reeds in shallow water with its long neck retracted as it

Less common is the Great Crested Grebe and likely to be seen only on larger stillwaters. An elegant bird, with a slender brown



Bird Life



Great Crested Grebe
Podiceps cristatus

body, a long upright white neck and a dark crown. It is famous for its extensive courtship display in spring as the male and female birds perform an elaborate ritual prior to mating. The young are regularly carried around on their parents' backs as they are vulnerable to predators including Pike. The Great Crested Grebe is predominantly a fish eater, although it also feeds on insects and molluscs, and even vegetable matter.

One of the most common birds on our stillwaters is the Moorhen. We have nesting pairs at Walberton and Hurston lane where they nest on the islands. There are also pairs at Bethwines, they will be nesting close to the lake as they tend not to travel far once they have established a territory. There is also a thriving population along the Chichester Canal where they can often be seen alongside their larger and more aggressive cousins Coots.

Although you are unlikely to see them on our club waters every year Ospreys visit large stillwaters and reservoirs in Sussex, both in spring as they stop off to feed as they make their way north, and again in late summer on their return journey to Africa. If you have never seen one of these magnificent birds you will not mistake it as it dives from a great height



Osprey
Pandion haliaetus

Our illustrations again come from the excellent RSPB website if you want to see or learn more visit www.rspb.org.uk

Terry Scragg



~ Our Rivers ~

River Arun

We have two sections of the River Arun totaling 2.5 miles of bank. The Arun is particularly renowned for some massive bream catches over the years. However recently it has been getting a reputation for its specimen barbel, carp and pike. Pleasure and match anglers also report plenty of good mixed bags of smaller fish.

Hardham

Our northernmost stretch of the Arun and with reasonably civilised banks. The Hardham stretch starts in pasture land before entering a section with trees on the far bank. Eventually we move into a section with trees on both sides of the water and final section is reed lined on both banks. There are a number of noted bream pegs along the Hardham stretch and the fish seem to frequent the same areas year after year. The roach and dace can be found virtually anywhere and a big stick or Avon float fished on a long rod is an enjoyable way to find them. For those more interested in specimen fish there are carp, barbel, chub and of course some big pike. Hardham has plenty to offer any river angler and the results are well worth the walk.



Watersfield

Whereas Hardham can be described as civilised the river shows its wild side at Watersfield. Depth and flow can vary greatly from swim to swim. In general terms the top section starts relatively shallow gets deeper and then shallows up again. The mid section is very difficult to fish due to a combination of reeds and low lying ground, although there are a few really interesting swims to be found. The lower section



tends to dry out on the inside in places as the tide falls but find the deeper glides and you will be in to some serious fish. Virtually at the end of our stretch there is a gem of an inside line gravel run. Roach, dace, perch, and small chub can be caught all through with bream liable to show virtually anywhere.



~ Our Rivers ~

River Rother

We have 4 sections of the Rother giving us almost uninterrupted access from Coultershaw Mill in the west through to the bottom end of the Fittleworth fishery which is a couple of miles above the confluence with the Arun.



Coultershaw Mill Approximately 1 mile in length and favoured for barbel but has quality chub, carp, pike and roach.



Shopham Approximately 1¼ miles above and below the bridge. Noted for good chub and silver fish catches with the occasional barbel.



Coates Almost 2 miles of the south bank. Offers plenty of opportunities to both the pleasure angler and specimen hunter.



Fittleworth Just over 1 mile of both the north and south banks. A good stretch for trotting with plenty of dace and roach, also produces the occasional net of big bream.



~ Our Still Waters ~

We have 10 individual waters on 6 still water fisheries ranging from the beautiful Estate Lake at Petworth Park to tranquil farm ponds at Bethwins and Stemps Wood. Our own 3 lake complex at Hurston Lane offers a range of opportunities with a match-style pond, a tench and crucian pond and a carp pond with some sizeable specimens. The Chichester Canal provides a good alternative particularly during the winter months.

New for 2011 we have The Granary a bit of an unknown as yet but we know it contains some good sized carp and perhaps a couple of surprises!



Bethwins Farm

Situated near Chiddingfold, Bethwins Farm offers two attractive ponds in a tranquil setting surrounded by woods and farmland. The Lower Pond contains good sized carp to 15 lbs, together with a lot of perch. The Upper Pond has a good stock of tench and some decent sized carp to 10 lb. This is a great spot for a day “away from it all” in beautiful un-spoilt surroundings.

Stemps Wood

Stemps Pond (left) is stocked with common carp, crucians, tench, roach, rudd and bream.

Cart Pond (right) is stocked with carp, roach, skimmer bream and provides good year-round sport!



Chichester Canal

We enjoy several miles of fishing on Chichester Canal. Good mixed bags of roach, rudd, perch, tench and skimmers can be supplemented by the occasional large bream or carp. In winter the canal basin becomes one of the prime spots as it remains ice free for all but the hardest winters and is particularly noted for its pike in cold weather.



~ Our Still Waters ~

Petworth Park

This glorious 7 acre lake set in the picturesque grounds of the Petworth Park Estate holds a good stock of tench, bream, and crucian carp. Pole, waggler or feeder tactics all prove productive and with light but regular feeding mixed bags exceeding 70 lbs are not uncommon. Bream are generally in the 3 lbs to 6 lbs bracket with some fish approaching double figures, the tench go to 5lbs and crucians to 3lbs!



Hurston Lane Our Hurston Lane fishery has 3 distinct waters.

Due to the planned refurbishment of the carp pond there is likely to be some disruption to the fishing at Hurston during 2011.

Tench Pond This holds a good stock of tench to 6 lb and crucian carp in excess of 2 lb with plenty of roach and rudd and a few perch. You can be sure of bites pretty much all day every day.



Carp Pond There is substantial refurbishment and re-stocking planned for the carp pond during 2011. Currently the stock consists of carp to 20 lb together with perch to at least 2 lb and a good head of rudd.

Match Pond Contains plenty of silver fish and small carp The stock and layout suit a match style approach but this pond is not the preserve of match anglers, with many pleasure anglers taking advantage of the extensive stock.



~ Our Still Waters ~

Our New Water - The Granary

New for the 2011 - 2012 season we have acquired a stunning new water which is situated close to our current Hurston Lane fishery.

The Granary is approximately 2 acres in size and set in peaceful farmland. We concluded the negotiations for this water in the very late Autumn of 2010 and as some work would be required to make sure that access and the surrounding were up to our normal standard and matched the potential of the lake we decided that we would not open the water until 1st April 2011.



We did have a chance to have a very brief fish on the water at the end of 2010 and a good number of carp were caught to around 10 lb but we know that there are fish close to 20 lb in the water. We also spotted a good head of silver fish, mainly roach but there could be some rudd as well.

As this is a new water to us and indeed has not been seriously fished for a number of years we would ask that members co-operate and fill in the catch book which will be located at the venue. This will help us build a picture of the stock. Of course if you have your camera with you we would also be delighted to have any photographs of fish that you catch. These can be sent to:

webmaster@sussexangling.co.uk

When you send in pictures please give us a few details about yourself and how you fished your session.

We are confident that you will enjoy The Granary and look forward to hearing how you get on.



Hurston Project

In our last issue we gave details of what we hoped to do at Hurston during the Autumn. Unfortunately this did not go to plan as we had problems with a leak on the tench pond.



The new outlet to the stream

Our original plan was to simply lower the level on the carp pond to allow the machinery in to dredge out the silt and weed roots. Upon further reflection and discussions with both the EA and our contractor it has been decided that the best way to tackle the weed problem is to completely drain down the pond and then remove the silt etc. This will of course mean that we have to temporarily move the fish from the carp pond and the current plan is to relocate them to the match pond - possibly netting off

the bottom bay end of the water and using this as a fish holding area. In order to do this we are going to need quite a bit of help. We are hoping that we can enlist some of the students from the Fishery Management section of Sparsholt College but we are also going to need some willing club members. Exact dates have yet to be agreed but Ray Huskisson and I will be coordinating the club effort in association with our contractors.

If you think that you will be able to help, bearing in mind we are most likely to require assistance on week days rather than at the weekend then please contact

Nelson Keet 07944 539077

Ray Huskisson 01243 814539

We have also taken the decision to reinforce the bank between the match pond and the stream and we are looking to do this alongside the work on the carp pond. One area will be reinforced with metal and then back filled and another will be reinforced with woven wooden hurdles. The picture to the right shows one of the areas we will be reinforcing where the stream in the foreground is coming very close to the match pond behind.



Interested In Joining The Club?

You can join the club or renew your membership on the spot at the following Tackle Shops

Aldwick Angling, Bognor **01243 829054**

Arun Angling, Angmering **01903 770099**

Havant Angling, Havant **02392 450700**

Tidal Angling, Pulborough **01798 873790**

Tropikoi Angling, Bognor **01243 842660**

A Membership Application Form and further details will be found with this magazine. You can also apply by post to our Membership Secretary (see form). Membership packs are sent by return of post. Give Tim a ring on 01903 770099 if you have any questions or need assistance.

Don't forget your photo's

Membership Fees for 2011 - 2012

| Membership Type | Full Season | Half Season |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Full Adult | £84 | £52 |
| Family (2 adults & 2 children) | £130 | £80 |
| Senior Citizen | £42 | £26 |
| Student | £42 | £26 |
| Registered Disabled | £42 | £26 |
| Junior (aged 12 - 16 inclusive) | £20 | £10 |
| Juvenile (aged below 12) | Free | Free |
| Associate (non fishing) | £2 | £2 |

New members join early for next season

If you wish to start fishing before the start of our membership year then new members can take the opportunity to fish from 1st March 2011 once they have joined. Your membership will still run to 31st March 2012.

This gives you **13 months** fishing for our normal annual fee.