



Sussex Branch Newsletter



JULY/AUGUST 2003

South of England Show

As usual, we were invited by SATA to share their plot at Ardingly, where we duly erected our gazebo, complete with three fly-tying benches and a splendid display loaned by the main Guild. Unfortunately, yours truly forgot on all three days to take his camera, so those who did not come will be denied sight of it!!

The first day was rather quiet, with fewer visitors than usual, partly due to the rearrangement of stands which meant less casual passers-by. Friday was a little better, but cut short by rain during the afternoon which sent the punters away early. Saturday came with a dismal weather forecast, which turned out to be entirely wrong, and the sunny afternoon meant a bumper attendance and frantic efforts by Tim Albright and John Plowman to keep up with the orders from visitors. Coupled with the sale of flies from the stock built up over the tying nights, the day's takings were the best ever for one day – making up for the paltry figures for the other two days!

Interest in joining the Guild was also high, and new recruits for the Branch may well come from this showcase event. It was a great pleasure to have visits from members of other branches from farther afield such as Worcester, Buckinghamshire and even Cumbria, as well as neighbours Kent and Surrey.

Another very welcome visitor was our old friend Kevin Clarke – great to see him back on his feet and looking well. Kevin hopes to rejoin this coming season, and we look forward to seeing him again on tying nights.

Another visitor was a lady who asked if we wanted any parrot feathers as she had saved them on the off-chance we would need them – they duly arrived by post a few days later! A similar tale was a couple who wanted to know all about “duck's arse” feathers as they were going to fish the Test and also kept ducks! Having given them a copy of the Newsletter with the article by Jon Beer, they promptly ordered a dozen CdC flies from Tim, and promised to let us have any from their ducks – especially white ones! It seems that for some unknown reason there is preponderance of drakes hatching nowadays, to the extent they have to be culled before all the ducks are worn out! Watch this space!

Many thanks to all who helped – as well as John and Tim, Brian Hendry, John Cooper, Jim Harris and Paul Daltrey all aided with demonstrations and/or setting up the stand.

The only problem was that the bonanza attendance on Saturday meant that yours truly could not get away till well after 8 pm as no cars were allowed in till the public had gone!!

RHG

Jim Harris does it again!

Once again our own Jim Harris has triumphed in the Guild's national competition – this time in the Pike/Salt-water Class, earning the judges' comment of “Neat crisp tying, each very much peas out of a pod”.

Hearty congratulations to Jim for keeping the Sussex flag flying high.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Oh, no!! It's that time again I'm afraid. I know it seems early, but subscriptions are due on the 1st September each year, and for once we are actually giving you notice in time!

Enclosed is a renewal form which please complete and return as soon as possible, with cheque made out to FDG Sussex Branch, to:

**Roy Gurney
7 Eldred Avenue
BRIGHTON
BN1 5EB**

BEWL CHARITY PAIRS

A reminder that this Branch competition will be held on **Sunday 28th September**. Organiser John Cooper advises that he has boats to spare – contact him now with your entry – a partner will be arranged for you if required. The event will, as usual, start with boats away at 9 am til 4 pm, with a 45 minute break for lunch and beer at about one o'clock. Weigh in at 4.15 pm. Cost of £35 is a little higher than normal to cover the donation to charity.

John's phone is **01903 813376**

MATCH v. OUSE VALLEY

As shown on the amended programme (see our website!), Ouse Valley have fixed a return match for the Gemma Winder Trophy which they won in 2001. Somehow they didn't get round to it last year for various reasons, but now is the chance for us to win it back!

The match is on **Saturday 13th September** at Bewl Water, team of six; three to fish boat and three bank in the morning, reversing places for the afternoon. Names urgently please to Jim Harris, who has bravely volunteered to organise this. His number is **01444 454965**.

Match v. Surrey Branch FDG



Chris Croucher receives the trophy from the captain of the Surrey Branch Team. Their organiser Wendy Partridge is on the left.



Some of the team with Pat Kerly. Left to right: Peter Watson, Jim White, Pat Kerly, Lee Redman, Paul Daltrey, Ian May, Peter Buss and Alan Middleton.

The annual foray against our old adversaries started most unpromisingly with a journey through torrential rain in parts accompanied by some spectacular lightning and accompanying rolls of thunder. However, by the time we had reached Avon Springs, the skies were clearing, the rain abating, and bacon rolls ready, courtesy of Pat Kerly, a Life Vice-president of the Guild. Six of our team of 12 were already in the area, having visited Avington and Dever Springs the previous two days – what understanding partners they must have, not to mention huge freezers!!!!

As usual, Surrey were eager to go, and retain the shield which they had held for the last three years. However, for once Sussex managed to find the “hot-spots” right away, and rods were bent within minutes of the walk-off. The biggest surprise was the size and quality of the fish. Avon Springs provided some of the best fish you could wish for. 48% were over 5lb and 4 fish limits averaging nearly 20lb.

Apart from the result, our man of the match must be Peter Buss who insisted on fishing catch and release all day! He had a dozen fish on, hooked and playing, but all seemed to have loose dentures and got away, bar one!

Detailed results were:

Sussex Branch – 38 fish for 174 lb 13 oz

Surrey Branch – 32 fish for 136 lb 11 oz

Best Bag – Ian May (Sussex) - 20 lb 10 oz

Best Fish – Lee Redman (Sussex) - 7 lb 5 oz

Lee also enjoyed great success on the river – some 15 fish!!

Many thanks to Chris Croucher for his organisation, greatly appreciated by our opposition. In turn he wishes to thank Alan Middleton for setting up the bacon butties with Pat!

Gavin Hunter (again)!

More success for our own junior champion – back in May Gavin and father Eric entered for the Thames Water Shield at Farmoor II, sponsored by Thames Water and Masterline, with proceeds going to the England Youth Fly Fishing Association. Gavin's nine fish for a total weight of 16lb5oz duly won the shield and replica and some good tackle. Great to hear Gavin is keeping up his high standards! Father Eric also fished, but his returns are a closely guarded secret!!



Ian Buss and Alan Middleton waiting to



The editor with his bag of three fish for 17lb 10oz.

Match v. Rother Branch FDG

A total of 24 fished the match at Chalk Springs on 1st June, eleven from Sussex and thirteen from Rother. Conditions were generally good for stalking with little wind to ripple the water. Sussex Branch retained the Sussex Cup, which we have won for the last five years, with an overall weight of 98lb12¹/₂oz against 54lb10oz for Rother. Individual prizes were awarded to Chris Croucher for the heaviest bag of 23lb (which he caught quite quickly) and heaviest fish a 6lb14oz rainbow, just beating Paul Daltrey's best of 6lb12¹/₂oz. Richard Moon, captain of Rother, was given a prize for heaviest bag of their team of 7¹/₂lb.

Overall individual results were:

- 1st. Chris Croucher 23lb
- 2nd. Paul Daltrey 14lb 9¹/₂oz
- 3rd. Bill Smith 13lb 2oz

Congratulations to Jim Harris, not only for picking a winning team, but for the fine organisation of the whole event. Thanks too to Chalk Springs for hosting the match and providing excellent fishing.

STILLWATER CHALLENGE

Chalk Springs was again the venue for this annual event which was greatly enjoyed by all who attended. The hot weather continued, despite the forecast which promised rain (and thunder!) although the humidity did bring about some heavy rain after the weigh-in. Despite this, the water temperature remained low enough for the fish to be active and, as usual in this spring-fed water, highly visible if not catchable!!

Anglers were into fish within minutes of the walk-off at 9 but as is often the case in these conditions, if you did not get your full quota in the first hour, it could be a great struggle throughout the rest of the day! By lunch-time some had "bagged up" with others struggling, and some smug looks were to be seen! Lunch itself was a superb barbecue, and thanks are due to Chris Croucher and his helpers, Lee Redman and Jim White for their hard work in producing a super spread.

Now for the result – a new name on the trophy!!

Best bag went to **Bill Smith** with 12 lb 14 oz

Best fish also **Bill Smith** at 7 lb 12 oz

Best Brown went to **Chris Croucher** at 6 lb 8 oz

The startling thing was the closeness of the top weights – Bill pipped Jim White by one ounce on the best fish, and their other three weighed exactly the same!! As consolation, Jim was given a bottle of bubbly (ostensibly to stop Bill from over-indulging!!)

Thanks to Chris for his fine organisation and to Chalk Springs for their support and hosting this event.



Chris presents Bill Smith with his Prize



Jim White receives his consolation from Chris

Chairman's Chat Lines

We are now in the season when all sensible anglers lie on the beach, but we have to go fishing. Our exploits with the Surrey Branch are no doubt recorded elsewhere in this newsletter. A vote of thanks to the organisers and to the fishery who must have taken a large "bung" to provide so many good fish.

A recent visit to Chalk Springs highlighted the perennial problem the outings organisers face. No shows at the last minute. This causes no end of embarrassment for the organiser having gone to all of the trouble to book the fishery. We may find that some of these doors will be closed to us in the future if we fail to fulfil our obligations. If you book up for an event then pay on time and turn up. It really is that simple.

We are approaching that dreaded day when your subscriptions will be due. Please pay these promptly. It makes budgeting for the following year so much easier. We hope to have recovered some of the financial losses incurred in the previous year despite unforeseen expenses such as our public liability insurance. The will be no increase in either the branch nor national subscription this year making the total still less than a day's fishing at one of our local fisheries. It has to be great value for money.

Preparations are already underway for the tying season which starts a couple of weeks earlier this year. A full programme of speakers is lined up and classes for all abilities. I look forward to welcoming you in September to another season of feather bending.

HOLIDAY COTTAGES WITH FISHING IN CORNWALL

Roy Gurney has some details of well-priced holiday cottages in Cornwall with access to some very good fishing. They are owned and run by a keen fisherman and Roy can't wait to go there himself (he had already booked elsewhere this year!). Wainsford Riverside Cottages on the Wainsford Estate can be found on the internet – www.wainsford.com where you can find all details, alternatively Roy has some brochures if you want one.

ASHBOURNE

A few editions ago we enclosed details of this lovely water at Penhurst, out Battle way. Your editor has only been able to visit a few times this season so far but has had some wonderful days there, even if his fishing was not up to the same standard as the superb fish!! Why not give it a try? Contact Roy if you want to try it out – Doug Chalmers would be glad to have some more members form our Branch if you like it!

On the right is a photo of yours truly tackling up at the fine lodge, courtesy of Eric Hunt who accompanied him at the end of March. Eric took a fine 4½ lb rainbow in his 4 fish bag, and I had a fine 3 lb plus hen brownie, duly released as it was the last day of the closed season!

Late in June, on a sweltering hot sunny day, not surprisingly having had no joy at all by 8pm, I spotted my first fish cruising; tying on a Stimulator and pulling it through the surface, a vicious take on the first cast by a 3-4lb rainbow. Immediately, with impeccable timing, I tangled my line round the rod, and although managing to get the fish to the net four times, it finally unhooked itself!! I'll be back.....!!



DON'T FORGET – FLY TYING RECOMMENCES ON THURSDAY 25th SEPTEMBER at 8pm at the Withdean Sports Stadium Clubhouse

Swale Branch Competition

Peter Buss reports: There were supposed to be 6 teams fishing this competition organised by Swale, but in the event only 3 teams bothered to turn up and one of those was a man short. It was probably the weather that deterred many from fishing, as it had been quite hot for several days with just an occasional thunderstorm to clear the air.

Early enquiries from fishery management and the daily return book indicated that the only place that fish were being caught consistently was around the two towers. And so it was to be; as soon as the boats were away they all headed for the towers, which were already quite congested. With a fairly stiff breeze blowing, the drift was quite fast, and my boat partner from Swale (who was on the engine) found he could not get his line down to a decent depth before the boat was over it. Halfway through the second drift he declared it was too uncomfortable to fish those conditions and chose to move to the cages. It was certainly quieter there, not so much wind and most of the mooring buoys vacant (that should have told us something!). There were some fish showing though, so on went the floating line, then the intermediate, then back to the Di7 which caught my first (and only) fish. On spooning it, it was completely empty!

During the lunch break it was confirmed that the closer to the towers you were, the more likely you were to catch fish, and if you could actually hold the boat in the lee and the shade of the tower, you was almost guaranteed to catch, as long as you got your flies deep enough. Rob Barden, the fishery ranger, said the regulars had been bagging up very quickly by marking the HiD line at 20ft and having a 15ft leader on the end. The temperature of the water at 35ft was a lot cooler than nearer the surface and perfect for holding fish.

Several people hooked more than one fish at once at this depth resulting in several broken leaders and lost flies. Eric Hunter had the unique experience of a fish on his point fly leaping behind his boat, while the one on his top dropper was leaping in front of the boat! He also had the experience of seeing his Swale boat partner lose not one, but two fly lines to a greedy propeller.

At the weigh in it soon became clear that Sussex FDG had completely trounced the other teams and were the only team to record no blanks. (Wasn't I Lucky?)

Unfortunately I don't have the actual weights or team scores as at the time I didn't know I was going to have to write this report, but I do know that many of the other teams' members failed to weigh in. I give the results of our team below and congratulate them on their success on winning all three available prizes.

Jack Jupp (capt)	Trophy for winning team.....	4fish
Tim Albright	Trophy for heaviest fish (9lb).....	8fish
Gavin Hunter	Trophy for heaviest bag (excluding heaviest fish).....	8fish
Alex Rainbow	8fish
Eric Hunter	2fish
Peter Buss	1fish

“CLASSIFIEDS”

The power of advertising!!! One item from the last issue was sold within 24 hours of posting, so we will continue with the experiment for a bit longer. Just ring Roy on 01273 506184 or e-mail at roygurney@ntlworld.com to place your ad.

For Sale

Several years' back numbers of *Trout Fisherman*, *Trout & Salmon*, *Fly Fishing & Fly Tying*, etc. Rather than throw them away, is anyone interested (You don't have to take them all!!). Ring Roy on 01273 506184

BFR Lamina 75 fly reel & spare spool (unused in box). No serious offer refused – ring Paul Bond 01273 420410.

Architectural Services – RIBA Chartered Architects . Contact Robert Saunders or Sue Elsom on 01273 727366 .

BARCOMBE EVENING

Due to the disastrous fishing conditions at Barcombe, it was decided to cancel this year's evening meeting at short notice. Apologies to anyone who turned up, but we e-mailed all those who have submitted e-mail addresses (or at least those given to the editor!) and telephoned a few who we knew would normally come. Hopefully Barcombe will start fishing again soon, but for the moment the water conditions are not allowing stocking.

ARLINGTON is apparently suffering from the heat too, with recurrence of gill disease – pray for cooler weather!!!

Gazebo for hire

The Branch has acquired a gazebo, 10' x 10' (or 3m x 3m if you have gone metric!) with four walls, two with windows. If any member wishes to use this for a week-end for a garden party, barbecue etc, it can be hired for a £10 a time donation to Branch funds. It goes without saying that it is subject to return in the same condition as it started. Contact Alan Middleton (in whose care it is) or Roy Gurney if you are interested – at least one member has taken advantage of this offer to date.

Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild

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