



Sussex Branch Newsletter



MARCH 2005

END OF SEASON SOCIAL

Don't forget the "End of Season Social" on the last night, **Thursday, 14th April**. Refreshments and a light buffet will be provided, and the presentation of trophies for the tying competitions will be made. All attending will pay £2.00 fee to cover overheads, and a small premium for any bottled/canned refreshment required.

BAZ REECE – 17th MARCH

Our guest speaker this month is our old friend Baz Reece, England Fly Fishing Team member and former chef who is now keeping law and order. Baz will be demonstrating how easy (?) it is to fillet and prepare your trout and cook imaginative dishes with them.

OUTINGS AND EVENTS

Get your entries in for the various events as soon as possible so that the organisers can get on with the organising! Don't just assume they know you are interested – bookings have to be made and agreed with the fisheries. Also teams can only be selected from those who advise the organiser they are available – don't assume that you will be chased for your presence!!

RICHARD HORSFIELD

We were treated to a light-hearted but very illuminating insight into the work carried out by the fisheries scientific officers of the Environment Agency. His presentation was very well received by the forty or so attending and we look forward to hearing more from him on other aspects in the future.

LAGOON BAIT AND TACKLE

for all your fishing needs at

327 Kingsway, HOVE, BN3 4LD

opposite the Hove Lagoon Boating Lake – for all queries phone us at 01273 415879 or

e-mail at lagoon@talk21.com

Or log on to our website – www.lagoonbait.co.uk



Stockists of all fly-fishing tackle - including trout, bass and pike

Try before you buy any rod – just bring your reel and line to try your choice in the lagoon opposite

VIDEO LIBRARY

As you may know, but for those who don't, we have a collection of videos for loan to members. These are in the custody of **Jim Harris (phone: 01444 454965)** who generally brings a case full on tying nights. Some of these belong to the Branch, and others are on loan from members for the benefit of others. Therefore if you have any you no longer require, or are prepared to loan to the Branch, please let Jim have them.

LIST OF TITLES IN VIDEO LIBRARY

1. New Season Tactics (Horsey/Owen/Winram)
2. Trout and Fly Fishing (Embry – USA)
3. Go Fishing – Carp and Trout (Wilson)
4. Spring River Tactics with Malcolm Greenhalgh
5. Modern Fly Fishing Tactics Vols. 5 & 6 (Wothers)
6. Advanced Fly Casting Techniques (Michael Evans)
7. Formula for Success : Trout (Swisher/Borger/Hafele) *
8. Go Fishing – Reservoir Trout Fishing (Jackie Charlton/Bob Church)
9. Dry Fly Reservoir Techniques (Horsey) *
10. How to Succeed on Reservoirs – BOAT (Horsey) *
11. Stillwater Flyfishing Vol II (Ogbourne) *
12. Stillwater Flyfishing Vol I (Ogbourne) *
13. Catch and Release (Paul Young) *
14. Tips on Fly Patterns, Tactics, etc. (Horsey/Owen/Evans) *
15. Modern Flyfishing Tactics Vol IV (Wothers/Gwilym) *
16. The Flyfishers' Guide (Wothers/Gwilym/Evans) *
17. Float Fishing (Ivan Marks)
18. Fly Fishing Vol. I (Arthur Oglesby) *
19. Small Stillwater Stalking Patterns/Techniques (Winram) *
20. How to Succeed on Reservoirs – BANK (Horsey) *
21. Innovative Fly Tying Techniques Part 1 (S & G Jones) *
22. Innovative Fly Tying Techniques Part 2 (S & G Jones) *
23. Atlantic Salmon Fishing in Russia *
24. Fly Fishing Paradises – Costa Rica, New Zealand etc. *
25. The Galway Experience, Lough Corrib and Small Loughs *
26. Go Fishing – Pike and Trout (Wilson)
27. Fly Tying (Mackenzie-Philps) *
28. While Stocks Last (Paul Young) *
29. Belize – the Fly Fishing Fantasy
30. Angling Experience – Irish Mayfly and Spring Salmon Fishing
31. Modern Flyfishing Tactics Vol.3 (Burgess)
32. Modern Flyfishing Tactics Vol.2 (Burgess)
33. Tackle and Tactics (Horsey/Winram/Pawson)
34. Go Fishing (Wilson)
35. Fly Fishing (Charles Jardine and Chris Dawn)
36. Guide to Fly Fishing
37. Sinking Line Techniques (Chris Ogbourne)
38. Catch Your First Trout (Michael Evans)
39. Tying and Fishing Caddis (Sedge) Flies (Burgess)

BRANCH FLY-TYING COMPETITION.

Last chance to enter – make sure you get your entries in to Paul Bond, Alan Middleton, Roy Gurney or other member of the committee by:

Thursday 31st March

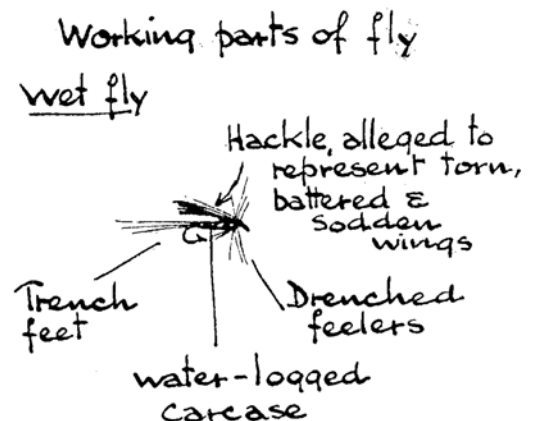
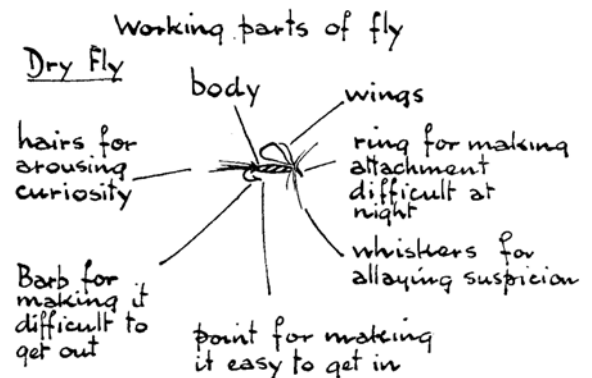
This date is absolutely final, as judging will be carried out in time for presentation of trophies and prizes at the “end of term” social on **14th April**.

The patterns and recipes were shown in the November newsletter – contact Roy Gurney if you need a refresher.

“THE FLY TYING BIBLE”

As mentioned in the last newsletter, it has been decided to use Peter Gathercole's “The Fly Tying Bible” for the Beginners' and Intermediate courses starting next September. It is, however, a valuable reference for all tyers, not just those on courses.

The Branch now has a stock at the very special price of **£10.00 per copy** which applies to **all** members, not just those on the courses, so if you want a copy, contact Roy Gurney as soon as possible. Copies will be available on tying nights for you to see and buy.



River Teviot 2004 Season Review

Nisbet and Monteviot beats.

The 2004 season has been remarkable for a number of reasons. The Spring started off with lots of promise, a lot of fish were seen, but few were hooked or landed. The river looked in good shape all through the spring and prospects were good right through into May and June.

From mid June onwards we had virtually no rain until September. The results were grim, the river dropped and dropped. It was so low below the Nisbet bridge that there were large flocks of gulls gorging themselves on fry, a fact passed on to the Tweed Forum who were unaware of this juvenile predation.

The usual predators were still about, the Cormorants, the Otters, the Goosanders, the Kingfishers and the occasional Osprey. Probably as a result of these, the trout and grayling didn't rise freely at all through the summer, though good numbers of fish were taken on wet fly, but rarely above 10 inches. Theory is that the bigger (and wiser?) fish were in the deep pools staying away from harm.

Some work was done on the Nisbet beat in the summer months to try and provide extra lies and improved oxygenation of the water, since backwaters were becoming green and unpleasant. These have subsequently proved to be a great success, all from one morning's work by two people! One lie that was created provided a nice summer salmon and two other fish later in the season. It is planned to do more work of this nature in the coming months ready for the 2005 season.

It is a fact that during most of our fishing season the river is at a lower than normal level nowadays, so we are making efforts to improve the fishing in low water conditions. In this way we hope to provide good fishing throughout the year.

By August we were despairing of the river conditions, local farmers were reportedly pumping out over a million gallons of water per day to irrigate their potato crops which was severely compromising an already difficult situation. In 2003 we didn't have any significant rainfall through the Autumn until the end of November. With conditions already worse than 2003, what could we hope for?

September brought rain and fish aplenty, who says miracles never happen! The fishing got better and better with good catches on the Nisbet beat through from September to end November. Every week to 10 days we'd get a little freshet which brought the river up time and again, each time drawing in more and more fish until the pools were getting too full. Who would think that we'd be complaining that you couldn't lift off to cast without pricking a fish because there were so many in the pools! It's true, I went to one pool, had four casts and pricked a fish each time, even though I was being careful, I had to walk away and find a bit of fast water to try and pick up a fish moving through, it doesn't always work, but sometimes.....

Word travels fast and we were fishing with full beats through October and November. There were quite a lot of coloured fish, but also good numbers of fresh fish constantly moving through the pools. In terms of fish hooked, it was about 3 coloured to one fresh fish, which in November isn't a bad ratio.

One thing, which we have noticed this year, is the size of the fish. From May right through to November there have been a lot of small grilse of 3 to 5 lbs in weight. These fish have run in all conditions high and low, often providing the only salmon sport in an otherwise very low river. We haven't seen these fish before, so where have they come from? Did the nets scoop these target fish up previously? Who knows, but they were always bright silver and fresh, often with sea lice. We hope that this trend continues as it provides some good sport when summer fishing for trout or sea trout.

The trends of smaller fish continued and in the autumn 90% of all the fresh salmon caught were between 7 and 9 pounds in weight. They were all in good condition looking more like 'Springers' than Autumn fish. A few bigger fish were caught, but usually they were quite coloured, so were carefully returned to the water.

The Salmon season has now finished. Mid season we were facing all sorts of disasters, but mother nature responded and brought us water and the water brought us the fish. We have now had two seasons without the drift nets, we have now had two record seasons. One swallow doesn't make a summer, but maybe two can give us cause for optimism?

Walking along the river bank, now it is December, has all the signs that there has been a huge influx of fish and many redds have been cut. The spent salmon are everywhere, their race run, their work complete. Hopefully they have spawned to build on the resurgence of fish that we have seen these past two seasons. Our main danger now comes, as usual, from man himself! Abstraction is our biggest enemy here on the Teviot, however, even that is changing, albeit not until October next year. Abstraction will be controlled for the first time following legislation through the Scottish parliament. Hopefully when a river drops below a certain level, then all abstraction will stop to preserve our fragile river ecosystem. Maybe farmers will be encouraged to dig small reservoirs that can fill up in the winter and provide water in the summer. This is what the farmers in the flat areas in France have done for generations.

Tweed Forum, a liaison body formed to find solutions to enable the wider community to all survive together has a tall order, but now there is no choice, we have to do it!

The Grayling season is now well under way and good catches are being had on our own Nisbet beat. Although river levels are low at the moment this seems to favour the Grayling. Fishermen are being careful not to disturb any areas of redds where the salmon can still be seen spawning. Already a fish has been returned which if weighed accurately may have tipped the scales to a new Scottish record! If only.....eh! Fish above two pounds are common and the beat lends itself to the grayling, usually to be found in the faster riffles, maybe only one or two feet deep.

In summary then, an outstanding season has been enjoyed, even though most of the action this time came from the last few months. Next year? Prospects are very good and we are hoping for a lot more spring fish. Before then, there's still the best of the Grayling season to enjoy, so don't pack away your small trout rods yet! Bookings for the Nisbet beat salmon fishing are filling up rapidly, largely due to the success of 2004, so if you have a mind to come and join us, call sooner rather than later.

For brochure or more information contact Ian Davis on 01835 850788 or e-mail imcdavis@aol.com

Alternatively visit their website www.bcfishing.co.uk

Editor's note:

If you make a booking please make sure you mention the Sussex Branch Newsletter – the Branch receives a generous donation for each booking!

FOR SALE

A 5' X 4' CAR TRAILER, COMPLETE WITH TAILBOARD AND LIGHTS AND TARPAULIN COVER - £110 O.N.O. CONTACT ROY GURNEY ON 01273 506184

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT LINES

By now you will have received your list of outings for 2005 and a daunting list it is. We feel that there is something for everyone's tastes. All we ask you to do is select which events you wish to attend and complete the appropriate slips. Post then off with post dated cheques and the job is done.

This year we shall not be attending the South of England Show as the S&TA will not be present. Cost at these events is becoming a problem for organisations such as ours where we do not trade on the stand. The main Guild is involved at the Game Fair and uses it as the main public relations exercise for the year but it costs the total revenue from the raffle just to finance the stand. This is apart from the time given up to be on the stand for 3 days.

We have some other shows which we hope to attend in the summer and we shall be asking for volunteers when we have the final details. The first of these is the Kent Country Show at the Detling show ground. This is a little out of our patch but I am sure that we will reap the benefit of the Guild being represented there. The Swale Branch will be manning the stand and I am sure they would be pleased to see any of you who care to go to the show. The show takes place on 8th and 9th of April and full details will accompany the next *Flydresser*.

As this year's tying session comes to an end we are already planning next year. We have decided to use Peter Gathercole's *Fly Tying Bible* as a course book for most of the sessions. The book is simple and concise with clear instructions and top quality pictures. We would welcome any suggestions as to the format of the classes in an attempt to make the course more user friendly. Please let us have your views.

Don't forget our final evening event - no diets that night!

TRAVEL RODS

A number of members have either bought or expressed interest in the new range mentioned last newsletter. If you want to try one, contact Roy Gurney who has one of each to demonstrate.

The three models are:

9' four-piece #6/7 weight @ £60

8' four-piece #4/5 weight @ £60

7' three piece #3 weight @ £50

and all come with a zip-top cordura carrying tube; for a limited time the 7' comes also with a free fly-line!

BIG FISH ENTRIES - 2005

We already have the first entries for both small water and reservoir rainbows which augur well for this season. Don't forget to get your entries in to Paul Bond, Roy Gurney or any committee member – just remember date, weight, where caught and a witness. **This year the closing date is 31st October for all fish.** The categories are:

1. Best fish from Sussex reservoir (includes Bewl)
2. Best fish from Sussex water
3. Best Brown from Sussex water
4. Best Brown from Sussex reservoir or river.

LAGOON BAIT AND TACKLE

You will note that this edition (and last month's) has been sponsored by our local tackle shop. Peter Winder has asked us to remind you that to obtain the discount offered, you should identify yourself as a member to the staff serving you – even if you wear a Branch sweater it might not be recognized!!

Also, if you have specific requirements or questions on tackle or tying gear, ask for Peter and he will give you every assistance.



COME AND JOIN US AT ASHBOURNE IN JUNE!

Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild

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