



Sussex Branch Newsletter



OCTOBER 2006

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

AUCTION 2006

Our annual auction is to take place on **Thursday 16th November**. As you may know this is a significant source of income for the Branch, as well as being an opportunity for you to dispose of all that surplus tackle, or equip yourself with some of the great tackle bargains to be had.

In order that the catalogue can be prepared in good time, please ensure that any items you wish to sell are detailed on the enclosed forms and returned to Roy Gurney by **6th November at the latest**.

On the night, all are welcome, so bring along your friends as well as your wallets!

N.B. The date of the auction on the printed entry form is incorrect – it IS the 16th !!!

John Watt Competition

This year we were able to enter only one team, due to holidays and other commitments, and many thanks are due to Chris Nunn for his hard work in organizing everything.

A full report will appear in the "Flydresser" in due course but suffice to say that Chris and his merry men – Alex Rainbow, Harry Richardson and Andy Gibbs – acquitted themselves well on a difficult day. The winners were Lakeland with 30 fish and Edinburgh were runners-up with 27. The rest of the field were very close and Sussex came 5th or 6th with 21 fish. Alex was top gun with 8, Chris had 5 and Andy and Harry 4 each.

Let us hope that next year we can enter our usual two teams and, who knows, regain that trophy.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

If there any of you who have still not coughed up your subs – **DO IT NOW!!!**

I repeat that if you don't pay up promptly (i.e. by mid-October), the "Flydresser" will not be sent to you. The "mid-October" period of grace is granted to allow for those who pay on tying nights which started again on 28th September

IMPROVING OUR RIVERS

Tony Woolnough kindly sent this report on how efforts are being made to improve our rivers for fishing. He will give us a talk about the whole subject later in the season – something to look forward to.

RIVERMAIN, RANDALSTOWN WEIR, CO. ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND

Dollaghan Pass and Counter

In the spring of 1998, the Fisheries Conservancy Board of Northern Ireland commissioned Fishway Engineering to design and supervise construction of a fish counter on the River Main at Randalstown, Co. Antrim in order to provide data for fisheries management. See Figure 1.



Fig. 1 – Randalstown Weir (Before Fish pass)

The counter was to count salmon, sea trout and dollaghan trout. Dollaghan are a sub-species of brown trout only found Northern Ireland. They spend the growing phase of their live cycles in Lough Neagh, migrating to rivers to spawn. Migration takes place during march to October and smolts descend to the Lough during April and May. Dollaghan can grow up to 10kg in weight, due to the rich food source in the Lough. See Figure 2.



Figure 2 – Dollaghan Trout

The counter was to operate at all flows at which fish were to migrate and should reject signals from downstream migrating kelts and smolts. The range of flows at which between 16% to 84% of the total upstream migrations of dollaghan occurs, as a percentage of the long term average river flow is from 10% to 130%.

To provide a safety factor, a design fish of 300mm long swimming in water at a temperature of 5°C was chosen. Under these conditions, a dollaghan can swim at 1.7 metres per second for about 40 seconds. Higher water temperatures and larger fish would swim faster.

The fish counting systems available include resistivity and infra-red.

Infra-red systems work on the principal of interference of infra-red light beams from diodes placed on the wall of the fish pass and picked up by receivers opposite. The resulting silhouette image is used to count and estimate the weight of the fish. This system was not suitable for this site as it depends on fish passing through a narrow channel that would not contain sufficient water to take the design flow.

Resistivity counters use the lower electrical resistance of a fish (compared with water) to disrupt the “balance” of an electrical field established by a system of electrodes over which fish pass. The design river conductivity was taken as 440µS. This figure was determined by studying six years worth of conductivity readings for the river. The counter is also linked to a conductivity probe that continuously monitors the river and adjusts the instrument accordingly.

The site chosen for the counter was Randlestown weir, a long masonry structure 2.4 m high, built over 100 years ago on a natural rock shelf to provide power for a nearby flax mill. Recently a modern hydropower station had been built containing a smolt and kelt bypass system and the necessary control gates etc. Dollaghan had been having difficulty ascending the weir where they were vulnerable to the local poachers who regularly took large proportion of the run.

To ensure that fish crossed the counting electrodes and were able to ascend the weir, it was decided to combine the counter with a fish pass. The landowners abstraction licence only allowed power generation when river flows exceed 2.78 cumecs (cubic metres per second). To monitor this flow the pass system was designed to accommodate this flow when the river was just at weir crest level.

The weir crest was levelled with concrete to ensure that the majority of the flows were concentrated at the pass. The levelled weir crest was shaped to change the coefficient of flow to ensure that more water was discharged at the same river level and hence flooding not exacerbated.

The fish pass was of the bottom baffle type 2.7m wide, to give a mean water velocity of 1.4 metres per second. Electrodes were placed at the top of the pass on a crump crest where a smooth laminar flow is required for counting and flow measurement. Two 1.0m attraction weirs with adjustable stop logs allow for maintenance and flow adjustment. Rubber strips have since been fitted to the baffles at the top of the pass to prevent damage to downstream migrating fish.

A shield protects the pass from floating debris and together with covers gives a measure of protection against poachers. Signals from the counting electrodes are passed to an on site instrument and computer for analysis and recording. A modem linked to a mobile phone allows for remote interrogation of the system. See Figure 3.



Figure 3- Completed Project

Since the counter was commissioned in late summer 2001, over 1500 fish have been counted on their upstream migration, now safe from the attentions of poachers and delays ascending the weir.

Tackle Fair –Worthing Date correction

Inevitably, yours truly got the dates wrong again! The programme date is wrong and this will be held on the **15th October** and not the 22nd – we will be having a demonstration stand, so any volunteers contact me on 01273 506184. However, there is the possibility of a change of venue so look out for the notices in the “Friday Ad” etc.

BRANCH EQUIPMENT OFFICER

We are pleased to announce that we have recruited
Harry Richardson

as our new Equipment Officer and he will be only too pleased to take your orders for clothing with our Branch logo or the main Guild logo, or other items which may take your fancy. The following items are currently in stock (subject to prior sale) but new orders only take a week or so.

Sweatshirt with branch logo – green	£18
ditto - red	£18
Polo shirt with branch logo - green	£12
ditto - navy	£12
Caps with branch logo - green/buff	£10
FDG cloth badges	£2.60
FDG enamel badges	£2.50
Wheatley aluminium fly-boxes	£7
Multi-tools (similar to Leatherman)	£5
“Fly-tying Bible”	£10
“Fly-tying for Beginners”	£10

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

As the fishing season comes to a close and our tying evenings begin can I take this opportunity to welcome all new members of the Guild. The Sussex Branch has long been one of the more successful Guild groups thanks to the enthusiasm of its members and the activities of its committee. It is only by the members' efforts to recruit new tiers that we can continue to flourish and keep fees down.

The tying programme for this autumn and winter has something for everyone so don't be shy and don't worry if sometimes it appears that your fingers are too big and your scissors cut everything that they shouldn't. Perfect flies are to be admired by yourself and by other anglers but in truth, the fish don't seem to mind if the rib is too wide or the wings are too long.

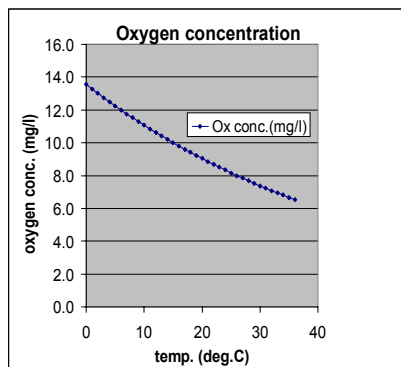
John Plowman

OXYGEN

John Plowman explains water oxygen levels

As the warm weather of summer gives way to shorter days and cooler nights we can anticipate water temperatures to fall. Oxygen dissolves more readily in cold water than in hot so as the trout push the cooler water over their gills more oxygen passes into their blood. This increase in oxygen in the blood allows the trout to become more active as the oxygen and blood glucose combine to provide the energy for the muscles. So all us anglers look forward to a few weeks good fishing before winter sets in.

The graph below shows how dissolved oxygen changes with water temperature. A temperature fall from 22 to 8 deg. C (72 to 46 deg. F) gives a 24% rise in oxygen.



SUBSCRIPTIONS REMINDER

Don't delay – ensure your continued receipt of the “Flydresser” – it will not be sent to you if you haven't renewed by the end of October.

CHANGE OF PROGRAMME Thursday 9th November

This is scheduled as a tying night, but we have been fortunate in getting **Mick Hall** from Australia to visit us, hot from the British Fly Fair at Stoke-on-Trent on 4/5th November.

Apart from being a great personality, Mick talks about fly-fishing in Tasmania, the most popular patterns and then ties them. He also has a fantastic series of ground-breaking pictures of mayflies and all sorts of bugs from that same area.

Don't worry about “missing” whatever fly was planned for that night – your class leaders will juggle the tying programme accordingly.

DUNCTON BRANCH OUTING

24th September 2006

An excellent turnout of some 21 hopeful members found it a hard slog to find fish. The water temperature at Duncton has been high since late Spring and it was in excess of 20 degrees on Sunday. This meant ten members weighed in a total of 13 fish, only winner Ray Love, Peter Winder and Jan Suppel managed to get a brace each. Tony Keeley generously donated a bottle of brandy as a prize, and the three prizes were shared between Ray Love who had top weight and best fish (5 lb 8 oz) with Peter Winder and Richard Lewin sharing best fish, each of 3 lb.

It was great to see Peter Winder back on the bank recovering well from his recent set-back

A big thanks to Chris Croucher for yet another great “barby” (but don't mention the burgers!) – also to Bill Smith for stepping in to organize the day at short notice.

One piece of good news – Martin Fleetwood of Duncton Mill Fishery has offered a two fish free ticket to anyone who failed to weigh in on Sunday. Those who fished on after the weigh-in are eligible only if they did not catch. Please contact Bill Smith (phone 01273 845173) who will make the necessary arrangements. The list he has (as at end of competition) is:

I Dunk	T Harrison
J White	P Bond
R Pollard	D Albrow
I Everest	T Keeley
I Foster	S Chow

(and of course himself!)

South of England Autumn Show and Game Fair

30th September – 1st October

This might be in line for a prosecution under the Trade Descriptions Act, as although a successful event in its own right, Game Fair it wasn't. True there were a few (one at least) gun dealers and some clay pigeon shooting, but the fishing section

consisted only of us and the casting demonstration and instruction. Salmon & Trout Association were again conspicuous by their absence – one wonders if they really want to gain members and serve anglers. Despite this, we were able to provide joining details to several potential members – how many more might there have been if SATA had provided a stand?

Of course the main point of our presence was to fly the Guild flag, although the weather nearly had us flying the gazebo! Having watched the weather forecast with some apprehension we set up on Friday and hoped the stand would still be there on the Saturday. Our fears were unfounded, and the day was not too bad – windy and threatening but the rain did not come till after close of play.

We started well with yours truly having brought along a huge amount of tying kit and materials – but no vice!! A frantic call to Jim Harris had the “vice squad” rushing to the rescue with a loan of his, enabling him to practice tying with one eye for the first time. Brian Hendry gave a demonstration of salt-water fly tying, with his boxes of many patterns on display, which created a lot of interest. There were several interested visitors, despite the blustery conditions, which caused us to face away from the pathway – the wind would otherwise have caused havoc with the materials!

Sunday provided us with even more prospects of ending up at Gatwick, and we were relieved to find the stand intact. Jim Harris took Brian’s place (I did remember my vice this time!) and we tried to tie in what were very trying conditions, getting worse as the day wore on. We did once again have some very interested visitors, and over the two days, have a number of prospective new members who we hope will join us.

Come mid-day, come the rain – and it came down in stair-rods. The wind, which had been strong all day so far, gathered even more strength after the rain and Jim and I spent the afternoon leaning on the back wall to reduce the strain on the guy-ropes and pegs, and holding down the poles at times to avoid total disaster (which did indeed strike the neighbouring stand of the casting demonstration, it blowing down while we could only look on whilst hanging on to our own for dear life). At least the wind dried the tent off so we could pack it dry!!

Despite everything, it was a very enjoyable event, and highly recommended for a fun day – even better when the sun shines! Let us have some more volunteers over the next season of shows – you’ll enjoy it.

CONFERENCE ON INVERTEBRATES

Who will watch the small things that run the world?

One of our new members, Dr Paul Davis, who works at the Natural History Museum, has advised of a seminar to be held on 9th November at the Museum’s Flett Theatre, which might be of interest to some members.

Britain has a long tradition of natural history. Generations of amateur naturalists, in particular,

have played a key role in accumulating knowledge of our flora and fauna. Such knowledge is vital to conservationists, and is increasingly important as we face the challenges of accelerating environmental change. However, there are concerns that the natural history tradition is slipping away. Many factors have been blamed for its decline:

urbanisation and a diminishing sense of connection with the countryside, decreasing leisure time, children playing computer games instead of playing outdoors, the loss of nature studies and field trips from the school curriculum.

As well as accounting for the majority of our native biodiversity, insects and other invertebrates are critical to the survival of many other species – either as pollinators for plants, or as food for birds and other animals. They also do much of the work that keeps ecosystems functioning – contributing to decomposition and keeping soils in good condition, for example. Invertebrates really are ‘the little things that run the world’ in the words of E.O. Wilson. They also provide excellent indicators of environmental change. Freshwater invertebrates have been used for many years to monitor the water quality of rivers, and changes in insect behaviour and distribution are now being used to monitor climate change. Entomology has long been at the heart of natural history study, for good reason.

If the next generation of natural historians, and invertebrate specialists in particular, is to be inspired, nurtured and supported, many factors will need to be considered. This conference brings together representatives of many relevant constituencies: the media, the education sector, publishers, specialist societies and conservation charities, amongst others, to explore the solutions as well as the underlying problems.

Anyone interested can get a copy of the provisional schedule from Roy Gurney.

Attendance of the conference is free, and lunch and refreshments will be provided. However, delegates are requested to **confirm in advance** that they will be attending, to assist registration on the day.

Contact: **Oliver Cheesman** (oliver@dipsacus.org)
Chairman, Invertebrate Link (JCCBI)

Invertebrate Link (JCCBI) is the UK forum for organisations concerned with the conservation and study of invertebrates.

Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers’ Guild

Chairman: John Plowman 01825 762975
Secretary: Paul Bond 01273 420410
Treasurer: Roy Gurney 01273 506184

Editor: Roy Gurney, 7 Eldred Avenue, Brighton
BN1 5EB

Phone: 01273 506184

Fax: 01273 881209

E-mail: roygurney@ntlworld.com

Visit our web site
Sussexflydressers.org.uk

