



## Sussex Branch Newsletter



**JANUARY 2008**

### DAVID HOLMES

We cannot let this issue go without congratulating David on his valiant and brave efforts in foiling the robbery at his Post Office in Ditchling. No doubt most of you will have read the story in the "Argus", but David refused to hand over the money when threatened and then gave chase to the thieves, who were eventually caught.

Well done David – we are proud to have you as a member!

### PETER COCKWILL - OUR JANUARY SPEAKER

We welcome Peter on 17<sup>th</sup> January when he will "Broaden our Horizons". It is a welcome return for Peter who has entertained us well in the past.

### FLY-TYING COMPETITION 2008

Just a reminder:

This year's competition flies are:

**Novice:**

**Red Tag** – p. 36-7

**Soldier Palmer** – p. 156-7

One of each pattern on size 10 hook

**Intermediate:**

**Ascending Midge Pupa** – p. 138-9

Two flies on size 12 hook

**Open:**

**Ace of Spades**

Two flies on size 10 long-shank hook

Page numbers refer to "The Fly-tying Bible" where full tying details can be found.

Entries to be handed or sent to Paul Bond or Roy Gurney by **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

If anyone requires a copy of "The Fly-tying Bible", they are available from Andy Steer or Roy Gurney at the very competitive price of £10.

Peter Gathercole's "Fly Tying for Beginners" is also available at the same price.

### ANNUAL DINNER

The venue will be the **Dyke Golf Club** on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April**, subject to final confirmation – fallback date is 12<sup>th</sup> April. Full details and booking forms will accompany the next Newsletter.

Please make every effort to attend this highly enjoyable event – bring your ladies for an excellent meal and fabulous raffle!

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Some 28 members attended the AGM which passed without major incident – apart from the Chairman forgetting his report! Fortunately this was resolved without too much delay and there were no major items to report.

The new Committee bears a remarkable likeness to the old, but we welcome Richard Foster who replaces Peter Curry who has had to stand down for personal reasons. Your new Committee is:

Chairman	John Plowman
Vice-chairman	TBA
Secretary	Paul Bond
Treasurer	Roy Gurney
Competition Secretary	Paul Davis
Equipment Officer	Andy Steer
Members	Chris Croucher Richard Foster Peter Winder Ray Love Tony Woolnough Bill Smith

The Jonathon Glover Trophy for the member who has given outstanding service to the Branch was awarded to **Paul Bond**, our Secretary for some six years now, organising trips to the Game Fair, all in addition to arranging the high standard of speakers evenings and arranging the fly-tying courses.



A brief discussion was also held on the subject of the Branch Outing – there was overwhelming support for maintaining a Sunday date, and it was clear that cost was a major factor in the poor turnout last season. There seemed to be considerable support to return to Lakedown, but without the specimen lake, which will reduce the cost considerably. More on this later!

The AGM was followed by mulled wine and mince pies courtesy of Alan Middleton, a splendid Christmas cake made by Tony Keeley and a quiz, organized by our Chairman, John Plowman.

## Big Fish Competition 2006

We now have the results of last year's efforts and the trophies are awarded as follows:

### Peter West Trophy

(best rainbow from a Sussex water)

#### **Harry Atkins Blackwool Farm 10 lb**

Chris Croucher	Chalk Springs	9 lb 8 oz
Bill Smith	Lakedown	8 lb 8 oz
Steve Mustchins	Blackwool Farm	8 lb 2 oz

### Brown Trout Cup

(best brown from Sussex water)

#### **Tony Harrison Chalk Springs 15 lb 5 oz**

Harry Richardson	Chalk Springs	13 lb
------------------	---------------	-------

### Members Reservoir Plate

(best fish from Sussex reservoir)

#### **David Painter Bewl Water 6 lb 4 oz**

Jack Jupp	Bewl Water	5 lb 8 oz
-----------	------------	-----------

### Frank Darrah Trophy

(Bewl Pairs)

#### **Alex Rainbow & Chris Nunn 10 fish**

Chris Croucher & Ian Dunk	8 fish
---------------------------	--------

### Charity Pairs Trophy

(Bewl)

#### **Chris Croucher & Ian Dunk 16 fish**

Branch outing (Lakedown):

### Jimmy James Memorial Trophies

(Best bag)

#### **Bill Smith 14 lb 8 oz**

Peter Buss	10 lb 8 oz
------------	------------

### Plowman Trophy

(Best fish)

#### **Bill Smith 8 lb 8 oz**

### Trophy for Best Brown, Brook or Tiger

Peter Buss	Brown	3 lb 14 oz
------------	-------	------------

Presentations will be made at the Annual Dinner.

The results of the **Stillwater Challenge** were:

<b>Best fish</b>	<b>Chris Croucher 6lb 4oz brown</b>
------------------	-------------------------------------

<b>Best bag</b>	<b>Chris Croucher 24lb 5oz</b>
-----------------	--------------------------------

Ian Dunk	17lb 4oz
----------	----------

Gary Gwynne	12 lb
-------------	-------

## Free Videos

Paul Davis has sent the following note:

*Members might like to check out all the free fishing videos on Country Channel TV, e.g. the "Out of Town – Jack's Rod" tribute to Jack Hargreaves with Charles Jardine & the interview with NASF founder Orri Vigfusson.*

*Go to watch now on [www.countrychannel.tv](http://www.countrychannel.tv) and click on the search button*

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT LINES

In November 2007 I spent two weeks in Arizona which is a desert state with an average of just five rainy days per year—mostly in June/July. My wife and I spent one day walking in the desert and so we did not get lost we followed the bed of a dry river. The bed was mostly sand and the banks were home to cactus plants of varying sizes. Apart from a few birds there was no obvious animal life.

After about an hour along the river I saw what appeared to be a willow tree which is certainly not what you expect to find in a desert. The tree clearly had its roots deep into an underground aquifer and was thriving. In a further 200 yards to my surprise were several adult damsel flies which were flying over a small stream which was about a foot wide and at most 80 yards long. It just sprung out of the river bed and then disappeared back into it.

The fisherman in me took over and I just sat close to the water and looked in and as my eyes attuned to the conditions I saw my first nymph. It was perfectly camouflaged with the sandy stream bed and to me looked like a free swimming caddis. Next to become visible were four tadpoles (frog or toad). Nature never ceases to amaze me in the way life takes every opportunity to exist no matter how difficult the conditions.

The lakes and rivers that we fish must be similarly alive but perhaps we do not always appreciate the diversity.

Have a good New Year and let us hope that all our fishing trips are enjoyable and successful.

Tight Lines for 2008.

*John Plowman.*



*Tony Keeley cuts his cake after the AGM*

# Photographer captures trout's great escape

From Daily Telegraph Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007

By Richard Alleyne and Gary Cleland

The owners of a trout farm were left baffled when fish were going missing. But then a wildlife photographer caught their extraordinary escape route on camera.



Swimming against the current, the trout make their escape from the farm

He pictured the trout making giant leaps out of their pond straight into the metal feed pipe three feet above the water level. They then fought against the current for 30 feet until they reached the end of the eight inch wide pipe, which emerges underwater in a tributary of the River Itchen near Alresford, Hants.

The wildlife photographer Dennis Bright, 59, captured the amazing aerobic fish earlier this week at the trout farm. He said: "It was an incredible sight. Swimming against the current is instinctive for trout as they head up stream to spawn but they are doing a remarkable job getting through that pipe. They are jumping for freedom in large volumes but sadly I think their fate will be less than happy - there are otter, herons and many other predators feeding from the stream. I imagine the trout are quite stressed in the ponds because it is a free-for-all for predators. When birds come along the fish don't stand a chance."

David Riley, owner of Hampshire Trout Farms, said he would be extremely surprised if more than one or two fish were making it through.

He said: "I have been a farmer here for about 30 years and have never seen a fish make it to the other side but I know Dennis and if he says he has seen it I believe him. "November and December is the mating season in the river and it is natural for them to jump at waterfalls. It is not entirely impossible that they are getting through the pipe but if they do it would just be one or two. The pipe leads to the watercress fields which are only 150 yards long. If they were getting there in large quantities we would certainly see them. We already lose quite a lot of our fish to natural predators and I wouldn't like to think we are losing any more through the pipe. We do have a grill and deflectors that we can put on the pipe. Those that are not taken by otter or birds are used to restock rivers for sport."

The Brown Trout belongs to the same family as the Atlantic salmon. It is a medium sized fish, growing to 20 kg or more in some localities although in many smaller rivers a mature weight of 1 kg (2 lb) or less is common.

They prefer cold (15.5-18.3°C), well-oxygenated upland waters, especially large streams in mountainous areas.

Their diet includes invertebrates from the streambed, small fish, frogs, and insects flying near the water's surface.

## **Driven by instinct**

It is instinct rather than cunning that drives the brown trout to make their leap for freedom.

The fish will be trying to get upstream to spawn.

David Bassett, of the British Trout Association, said: "They will be thinking that water falling from the pipe is a waterfall leading upstream. Then they will follow their natural life cycle to get upstream."

Paul Knight, of the Salmon and Trout Association, said the fish would also be attracted to the pipe because it would be bringing in water full of oxygen. Mr Knight said: "They will follow instinct. I don't think they would be looking up at the pipe and thinking, 'Come on lads, let's go for it.'"

## Branch Winter Outing 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008 Chalybeate

Bill Smith has arranged a new date and venue for a winter outing. Although we have exclusive use of the fishery, there is a limit on the number of rods, so get your thermals out and hurry to book your place! Cost is £30 for a 3 fish ticket, with catch and release thereafter. Cheques to be made out to "FDG Sussex Branch" and sent to Bill as soon as possible at "Chanctonbury"  
New Way Lane  
Clayton, HASSOCKS  
West Sussex BN6 9PP

## Oak turnings From John Plowman

I spend a lot of my spare time wood turning when I am not fishing. For the last few weeks I have been using Oak and as a result I have a large quantity of Oak turnings. These are from timber that I have been seasoning for more than five years and are completely free of preservative and chain saw oil. They could be ideal for use in a fish smoker. If anybody would like some please give me a call and I will bring them along to a Thursday evening. Otherwise they are destined for the compost bin.



*Jim Harris receives one of his National trophies from Alan Middleton, Chairman of the Guild*

## BEWL AUCTION

The annual auction of tackle at Bewl Water will be held on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February** at 2 pm, viewing from 12 noon. Always a good event! Bewl FF hold their AGM prior to the auction.

## TYING TACKLE ITEMS

1. **Hooks** – a special offer from Mike's Tackle in Edinburgh for Pirhana hooks @ £1.99 per 100 ends on 15<sup>th</sup> January. Roy Gurney has details of the range and order forms – or he could send bulk order for members if required, saving postage costs.
2. **Tying kit bag** "Hobby Trolley" as used by Peter Buss – Roy has one available at £32 (rrp £64). Ideal as a mobile storage for tools and materials.

## GAME FAIR 2008

Don't forget to book your place with Paul Bond – application form was with last newsletter but more available if required.

## A UNIFIED VOICE FOR ANGLING

As you may know, the Branch is a member of the Angling Conservation Association. The ACA has decided to embrace the principle of joining with the other main bodies (Salmon & Trout Association, the National Federation of Anglers and the National Association of Fisheries and Angling Consultatives and probably the National Federation of Sea Anglers) to create a single body to voice the concerns of all anglers for the future of our rivers, sea and water management in general for the future, on the premise that the bigger the membership, the more likely we are to be heard. Many of you will be members of SATA and ACA at least, and the Branch is also a member of NAFAC (through whom we get our insurance cover) and we wonder how such an organization will operate. Will the individual organizations still continue, with an umbrella organization overall, or will we just subscribe to one organization which handles all aspects?

It would be interesting to have your views on this – after all, it your sport that is being threatened by pollution, so-called "freedom of the waterways" water extraction and many other problems. The time for discussion is now – not after a decision is made! Let us know your thoughts on the matter so that any concerns can be aired.

## Thought for the Day

John Perry spotted the following on a tourist notice board in New Zealand:

**"Seek the high hills and the sign of the tussock,  
Wade the swift stream to the sound of its music.  
Fish all the pools, the deep and the shallow,  
With fly and with lure for dream trout to follow.  
Climb through the bush and thread through the fern,  
Follow God's tracts and offer no harm."**

*G Petrie*

*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](mailto:roygurney@ntlworld.com)

**Visit our web site**

**[Sussexflydressers.org.uk](http://Sussexflydressers.org.uk)**