



Sussex Branch Newsletter



JULY/AUGUST 2008

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

With this newsletter you will find enclosed (or attached if by e-mail) renewal forms for both branch and main guild subscriptions, which are due on 1st September. Please let the Treasurer/Membership Secretary have your subscription right away, to avoid “chasing” and to ensure the Branch (and Guild) remain solvent! If you pay the Guild direct, remember to send your Branch subscription to Roy as well.

Please note 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 meeting nights, which start again on **18th September** with a guest speaker. **Tying nights recommence on 25th September.**

MICHELHAM PRIORY

The Country Show and Game Fair in this lovely setting was blessed with better weather than the forecasters predicted, and was a thoroughly enjoyable event. We were situated alongside our friends from the Salmon & Trout Association (but we forgot to bring the cup along to rub the salt in the wound!) and although attendance seemed down on previous years (there were a lot of other attractions in Sussex and Kent that week-end) we were pleased to meet several potential new members who we hope to see again in September.



Many thanks to the team who set-up, manned and dismantled the stand – everything went like clockwork!

18th SEPTEMBER 2008 CHANGE OF SPEAKER

Due to unforeseen circumstances, our September speaker, Denise Ashton of the Wild Trout Trust, has had to postpone her visit to **5th March 2009.**

Fortunately, the **Environment Agency** have at short notice kindly taken the spot and **Lawrence Talks** will give an illustrated talk on the **Fisheries Strategy** for our region, and answer any questions you may raise.

Branch Outing - Albury Estate Fishery (Vale End) Sunday 31st August

A friendly fishing event has been organised at Albury's Vale End. No pre payment is necessary – just pay the bailiff on the day. However if you are interested please contact Paul Davis – 01306 621157 or p.davis@nhm.ac.uk before the day so that he can send you the details and arrangements for the day. The more members, the more enjoyable it becomes – so please do come along and experience one of the south's most picturesque fisheries and see if you can tempt the rainbows in one of the two lakes or winkle out a butter-fat brownie from the Tillingbourne chalkstream.

BRANCH TROPHY DAY

Don't forget – let Peter Winder have your entry form **now** for this outing to:

Lakedown Fishery
Swife Lane, Broad Oak, West Sussex TN21 8UX

Sunday 21st September

Trophies for best bag, best fish, best brown etc. The cost is £42 for a 4 fish ticket and includes a first class buffet lunch. Remember, this is THE branch day when all the trophies are up for grabs!

ASHBOURNE

Once again we were given a warm welcome by Doug and Roy at this lovely venue. Some new attendees were very impressed by the setting and especially the fine fighting rainbows which gave great sport. The browns that were caught were all duly released – and beautifully marked fish they are!

The barbecue lived up to all expectations and the afternoon session for those who had not bagged up in the morning was something of a blur for some of us!

As ever, Peter Buss kept us all in fits with his endless fund of anecdotes and we are all looking forward to next year – book early!!!

Editor's note:

I went to Ashbourne a few days later and found Ian May there as a guest of Peter Buss. It was a great pleasure to meet up with the other half of the double act that was our famed beginners' team of instructors who is now happily settled in France – he was over here for the Goodwood Festival of Speed. He sends his best regards to all.

ACA

As advised in the last newsletter the Branch donated a fly-box containing a range of flies tied by members (lot no. ALM8). Here are some rather bad photos of it:



Many thanks to the donors of flies – Tim Albright, Alan Middleton, Brian Hendry, Jim Harris, Tony Harrison, Steve Mustchin, John Plowman and Peter Buss – I hope I haven't forgotten anyone!

Chairman's Chatline

How do dry flies sit on the surface of water when they are heavy enough to sink?

The small particles of which all matter is made are called molecules. e.g. water, air, carbon. In solids these molecules hold together and in gases they keep them apart. For us as anglers the interesting behaviour happens with liquids, particularly water. Water molecules are weakly attracted to each other (scientists call this cohesion) and sometimes they are attracted to other materials (scientists call this adhesion). Put a drop of water onto a waxed surface: the forces of cohesion are greater than the forces of adhesion. The result is that the water rolls into a ball on the wax. Do the same thing with a paper tissue and the forces of adhesion are greater than those of cohesion: the water is quickly pulled into the tissue. On a large surface of water the cohesion forces hold the surface together and provide a kind of skin. A small object will sit on top of this "skin" provided that the forces of adhesion are less than the forces of cohesion in the water. The floatant we dress our dry flies with ensures that the adhesion forces are very small and our dry fly floats. Insects such as pond skaters use this effect to walk on the water surface. Try this experiment for yourself. Thoroughly clean and rinse in water a flat glass surface (an upturned tumbler will do). Dry with clean paper towel. Then pour on a small layer of water so that it rests on the glass without falling off the edge. Get some alcohol (meths, surgical spirit, after shave or a very strong rum or vodka). With the handle of a spoon place a single drop of alcohol in the middle of your clean water. Alcohol breaks the cohesion forces in water and you should see the water pull back rather like the parting of the Red Sea!

Tight Lines

John Plowman.

“Connect with the Countryside”

This show is targeted at 10 year old school children with the aim of showing them how our countryside provides them with much of their needs both commercially and in recreation. It gives them an insight into everything from farming to fly fishing.

Richard and John Foster together with Brian Hendry and myself made up the FDG team for the day. The children are guided around the show in small groups and were spending ten minutes or so with us. This meant that we only saw each group once which meant we could tie just one pattern all day without the children noticing.

Brian had produced a small display showing the nymph stage of some of our common and recognisable insects each with its corresponding adult. Richard and John were tying tadpole lures and salt water shrimps while I concentrated on daddy-long-legs (using the children to tie the legs for me).

The weather was cool but mostly dry and a successful day was had by all. I was told at the finish that 2500 youngsters had visited.

John Plowman

Game Fair 2008

Paul Bond would like to give a personal thank you to those who supported the Game Fair trip, enabling a departure both there and back on time. Also to record that the trip raised enough for a start to next year's rod raffle with a Greys M2 rod and Wychwood reel.

Next year is at Grantham and although it is possible it would mean a 5am departure – not met with glee by all travelling on the day – so its likely back south the year after.

Jim Harris enquired about organising a trip to the British Fly Fair and it is feasible again with an early start.

On a humorous note Tony Woolnough won a case of beer (which he promptly gave away all bar one to half the coach party) in the coach raffle and said he would jump under the coach if he drew Bill Smith's name out! He then did just that - pulled Bill's name out, but did not jump under! Many thanks are due to Paul for organising this most successful outing which is now a regular event on our calendar when the fair is in the south.

AUCTION 23rd October 2008

The earlier date for our annual auction seems to have met with general approval, so with this newsletter you will have entry forms for your items to put into the auction - please return these as soon as possible and in any event by **Friday 2nd October** in order that the catalogue can be completed and distributed in good time. Continuation sheets for extra items are available from Roy Gurney.

Match v. Surrey Branch

Avon Springs – 22nd June 2008

The weather was good, but like the rest of this summer, windy - many thanks to Mike Wheeler for supplying the bacon rolls to start the day.

Sadly our opponents were only able to muster five anglers so to even things up (we had our full complement of twelve) the best five bags from each side were taken to count. The final result was Surrey taking 16 fish for 67lb 8oz (with one angler blanking) against the Sussex total of 20 fish for 86lb 11oz.

Best bag went to Eric Bradley of Surrey with 20lb 10oz and Mike Wheeler of Sussex had best fish of 6lb 12oz.

Thus once again we retain the trophy for another year, and hope next year's event will see full teams for both sides.

Stillwater Challenge 2008

Chalk Springs – 20th July 2008

As usual Chris Croucher had this well organised – even to the weather which was good, but windy. Chris has acquired a tea/coffee urn for use at events (where there is power laid on), and we thank Chris for all his hard work and to Ian Dunk who helped with the barbecue. Thanks also to our hosts, Chalk Springs, who kindly donated a 4 fish ticket as a prize. There were a total of 19 members fishing and the results were:

Neil Batchelor and Ian Dunk shared **best bag** each with 10lb 15oz and received a bottle of wine and half a day's fishing each, as well as sharing the polishing of the trophy!

Third was **Jim Harris** with 4 fish for 10lb 2oz and **best fish** of 3lb 2oz.

Peter Winder had smallest fish of the day (1lb 5oz) and **Ray Bond** was delighted to receive a bottle of wine to mollify him for the only blank of the day!

SOUTH OF ENGLAND SHOW

A very successful event – the weather forgot to spoil it and it was one of the busiest ever, though the site of our stand meant that we did miss the mainstream of visitors. Despite this we had some 30 new contacts who evinced interest in the Branch, and we are hopeful they will join us in the new “season” starting in September.

This year was also the first time we were over-subscribed with volunteers - I had to decline the services of a few members who will certainly be accommodated at Michelham Priory or the Autumn Show if they are available. Those newcomers taking part will testify that it is a rewarding experience and good fun – plenty of time to see the Show too. Many thanks to all for their help and support.

Tying Nights

With this newsletter, you will receive a copy of the tying programme for 2008-9. The Beginners and Intermediate courses follow a general theme covering the various tying techniques but it is not sacrosanct and if you want to sit in on any particular class (for instance you just want to brush up on hackles) feel free to do so.

Similarly the "Advanced" programme is flexible – not everyone wants to follow the programme and tie flies they will never use (unless once again it is the technique that you want to master) so don't be afraid to ask for help or instruction for whatever YOU want. Only with your input can we cater for your needs – Paul puts in a lot of work in formulating this programme and would welcome any suggestions from members as to how it can be improved for the more proficient tiers.

Outing To Woodington Fishery (1st June 2008)

A select few decided to make the trip to this venue new to the programme. Woodington Fishery is near Romsey, easily and quickly accessible from Sussex thanks to the M27, comprising 4 trout lakes, about a mile of chalk stream (the river Blackwater, a tributary of the Test) and a large complex of coarse lakes.

The group met at the extensive tackle shop and café, 'HQ' for the fishery, where free tea and coffee awaited us. After sitting on the patio gossiping and heckling (well Bill Smith anyway) the worm-drowner on the peg in front of us, we set off to the trout lakes.

We had all opted for a 'gold' ticket – a 2 fish limit on the specimen stalking lake and then catch and release for the rest of the day on the rest of the lakes and river. The specimen stalking lake wasn't as clear as normal and the owner (John) said that the floods the previous week (bank holiday of course!) had meant that the river had burst its banks and become about 100yds wide only 5 days before, so the reason for the colour in the water was obvious.

Wayne Duerden was first in, but fortunately the new rubber hooks he was testing for Partridge worked a treat, as they did several times more that morning. By late morning everyone who wanted their two fish limit had it. The fish came to a variety of tactics but mainly imitative nymphs of one type or another. The smallest fish weighed in at around 4lb and all were fin perfect, really hard fighting specimens. The only one not to catch their second fish was Tony Harrison, not because he couldn't, but because he was on a mission. A double had presented itself to him and it had Tony's name on it. He prowled the lake like a vulture over a dead cowboy – which pleased the owner as Tony eroded the grass to the point where the owner didn't have to mow that day!

We headed back to the café for lunch. Those of us who had read the instructions had ordered a nice hot meal to the envious ribbing of those who had brought sandwiches.

The afternoon saw everyone on catch and release and chasing selective fish who were feeding either on the surface or high up in the water. The lakes have excellent hatches, and today was no exception, which meant that the fish were by no means going to be pushovers. Steve Mustchin was a study in patience – or was it that his cursing at the missed takes everyone was suffering was less audible than everyone else's?

I did try the river but it was still out of sorts and nothing was rising and visibility was poor although I did see a nice grayling which I spooked with my shadow. However the river looks superb for a spot of wild fishing and maybe mayfly time would be superb.

By late afternoon everyone had caught their fill and we retired to the patio again for more free teas and coffees and giving helpful advice to carp fishermen!

Everyone agreed what an excellent venue this was, with superb the facilities and an excellent range of fishing (even carp on the fly is possible). We must come back again next year.

Paul Davies

Match v. Hastings F F POWDERMILL – 6th July 2008



Beautiful - if that isn't the word that flashes across your mind when you first see Powdermill reservoir at Seddlescombe then you must be dead! Powdermill Reservoir is the home of the Hastings FFC, and if you want to know about the club or the fishing then you can't do better than visit their superb website at www.hastingsflyfishers.co.uk - in fact if you go to the news page and scroll down there is a report with over 100 photos of this very event. Curiously, the Branch has never fished against the Hastings club or even been on a recent outing to the reservoir which they run so superbly. To rectify this obvious error the committee have set up an annual competition for the "Powdermill Trophy" whereby the two clubs compete for the trophy in a team competition.

Expectations were high as the teams met at the lodge, and not just about the fishing as most people hoped the nice start to the morning's weather would hold and confound the forecasters. In fact the competition was affected by the weather but more of that later! After the initial pleasantries and a mix up on the numbers in our team, each side fielded twelve enthusiastic members.

The competition was run on the same model as the *Troutmasters* final whereby half the day is spent bank fishing and the other half spent boat fishing. Who does what and when is decided by a draw. There was an extra twist in that each boat team would be made of one FDG member and one Hastings member.

I was drawn to be in the boat first so can only give a slight bias to the morning's events. All the boats set off to their favoured spots under the one manpower engine on the oars! The locals had indicated that the reservoir fishes better at anchor than on a traditional drift but that was academic because the fish were not playing ball. All the boats struggled and we tried everything but apart from a few perch that came to minkies on sinking lines there was absolutely no interest. To make life more interesting, the wind picked up to what can only be described as 'brisk'. Unfortunately rowing boats are not easy to handle in a 'brisk' wind and at one point, one boat, rowing for the dock, was actually being blown in the opposite direction, amid a cloud of rather interesting language, sweat and tears!

The morning session ended and both boat and bank anglers headed back to the lodge to weigh in, have lunch and swap over. The timing for lunch couldn't have been better as the heavens opened during the break. The boats hadn't performed as expected as not a single fish was landed and to prove how unpredictable fish can be the bank anglers landed 28 fish with our very own Ray Love leading the pack.

As football pundits say, it was a game of two halves and the second half saw the successful 'bankers' headed for the boats and even more testing conditions than the morning 'boaters' had experienced as the weather had deteriorated. Now in addition to the constant nasty wind came squally heavy showers. The only consolation was that the wind kept the clouds on the move and the rain couldn't settle in but came through in pulses. One particular monsoonal downpour tested our waterproofs to the limit and during this the most amusing sight presented itself in front of me. One of our members who will remain nameless (as long as the £5 notes keep coming Bill) came past me in what can only be described as a squelch. I have seen people who have fallen in and remained drier!

The fish paid no regard to the weather but even so the fishing wasn't quite as easy as it was in the morning. I did eventually work out a semi-successful tactic (very small - 16s - imitative patterns) and I managed to winkle out 3 fish. These fish were fin perfect powerhouses, fighting like demons all the way to the net, and you would be convinced that they were fish three times their size.

The end of the match was heralded by the arrival of lovely sunshine, the wind dropping and a gorgeous smell wafting across the reservoir. Who needs a whistle or klaxon to end a match when the smell of sausages cooking works so much better! This isn't a new technique but simply the Hastings team and their family and friends had turned up and put together the most magnificent post match meal and BBQ to revitalise our spirits!

Remarkably only 2 fish were caught on the boats against 43 from the bank:

Best Total Bag
John Noble (Hastings FFC) 6 fish for 9lb 5oz
 Best Fish
Tim Stacey (Hastings FFC) Rainbow 2lb 2oz
 Best Bank Bag
Ray Love (Sussex FDG) 5 fish for 8lb 12½oz
 Best Boat Team
John Noble (Hastings FFC)
 & **Richard Foster** (Sussex FDG) 1 fish for 11lb 12½oz
 The overall tally for the 12 anglers on each team was a forgone conclusion:

Hastings FFC	34 fish	55lb 9oz
Sussex FDG	11 fish	17lb 14½oz

It is at this point that I really have to thank all the Hastings crew (members of Hastings team and all those friends and family who helped) for this meal and the superb competition but in particular Mary (for organising everything and having to deal with me in the run up to the event) and to Vic for superbly managing the reservoir.



John Plowman presents the cup to Tim Stacey

Regardless of the result this event was never just about the silverware. It was always about making friends and forging a link with another like minded club in our own county. The social event at the end certainly cemented the friendship and brought the excellent day to an end. I can safely say, without fear of contradiction that I have never taken part in a more friendly competition with such wonderful people who really understood the spirit of fishing. Roll on next year!

Paul Davis



Tony – thought you were a fly fisherman!!!

Match v. CRAWLEY F F CHALK SPRINGS – 10th August 2008

Once again we were blessed with good weather, though wind was a problem hindering those anglers trying to target fish.

Tony Kaatze of Crawley organised the day, which saw twenty four anglers fishing, with ten from each team to count.



The victorious Sussex Branch team

The Sussex twelve managed to net 33 fish of which 30 were to count for a total weight of 89lb 13oz, with no-one blanking. Crawley had 23 fish for 61lb 1oz from their 10 counting anglers, which meant Sussex took the honours (and the trophy).



Bill Smith receives the cup from Tony Kaatze

Best bag went to Paul Bond with 4 fish for 13lb and best fish (his one and only) to Andy Steer with a fine 10lb 1oz rainbow.



Andy receives his prize for best fish



Paul takes the prize for best bag

The prize for runner-up for best bag also went to Sussex in the person of Ian Dunk



Ian Dunk gets his too as runner up

Many thanks to Tony for his fine organisation and to Crawley FF for supplying tea and coffee all day - what a pity more of his team did not stay for the presentation as he had put in such a lot of hard work on their behalf.

Possible Tying Competition

Tony also floated the idea that perhaps we have a fly-tying competition between our two “clubs” during the winter season. Your committee will look into this and keep you informed – any ideas from you, the members, would be gratefully received!!

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