



Sussex Branch Newsletter



AUGUST 2009

Branch Outing to Meon Springs

Early on Easter Sunday ten of our members set off set off for Hampshire for a day's fishing at Meon Springs. By eight o'clock we had assembled at the fishery and were eagerly awaiting the long-promised bacon rolls and coffee. Unfortunately the bacon cook was still on holiday, so disappointment all round and we had to make do with coffee.

We weren't disappointed for long; the fishery looked delightful. The gin-clear water meant that our quarry was easy to spot and Tony Harrison could hardly wait. After a short briefing we set off to the two lakes and it wasn't long before we were into fish. With fairly easy fishing it was time to experiment with flies that some of us we would never think of trying and all methods were working.

By lunchtime most of the crew had caught their quota and we retired to the picnic benches for a leisurely lunch which included chocolate eggs to mark the occasion.

Not wanting to leave so early meant that some of us bought additional tickets – the pricing regime at Meon means that this is a good option with each additional fish costing £7. This was the signal for more experimentation with Bill Smith abandoning the blue flash damsels and instead using buzzers and dries, catching three more trout on three different flies. Having caught enough trout Bill moved on to giving casting lessons to a group of youngsters who were fishing for the first time – those trees must have crept up behind him when he wasn't looking and you can guess what happened!

Some tried the catch and release section of the fishery where the fishing was much harder but were still successful. The end of the afternoon saw Paul Davis and Steve Mustchin heading off for the chalk stream where we had been told there would be brownies. We didn't see them again on the day but they told us later that they had spotted a huge brownie living near one of the culverts in the stream but nothing they tried would entice a take.

A good, if easy, day's fishing with Brian Raw taking the prize for the biggest fish at a little over 5lb. Many thanks to Paul and Steve for organising the outing – one which we must repeat.

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, please send your Branch subscription only to Roy, quoting your membership number.

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 17th September with a guest speaker. **Tying nights recommence on 24th September.**

Tying Nights

With this newsletter, you will receive a copy of the tying programme for 2009-10. 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.

BRANCH TROPHY DAY

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

Duncton Mill

on
Sunday 18th October

Trophies for best bag, best fish, best brown etc. The cost is £40 for a 4 fish ticket and includes a buffet lunch. Remember, this is THE branch day when all the trophies are up for grabs!

Hooks for Carp Flies

Paul Davis has provided this brief resume of hooks for carp flies:-

There are numerous potential hooks out there that can be used for carp dries - either for the deer hair based biscuit/Bonio/bread-flake ones or for the Glo-bug yarn bread flies.

The best way to imitate a Pedigree Chum mixer biscuit is to use darkish Coastal Deer Hair (slightly more expensive than standard deer hair) on a size 10 Kamasan B981 - use a brown or tan thread - kevlar if you can get it.

Quite simply I always use a wide gape barbless hook in sizes 6,8 & 10, using the size of hook to 'match the hatch' - i.e. to match the size of the floating feed particles thrown in. The difference in all the models and makes you have read about hooks comes from the weight of hook. Actually you can get away with using quite heavy weight hooks such as those used for tying blobs (the dressing does actually hold up the hook - especially if you treat the fly with 'Watershed' from Hareline Dubbin Inc).

I tend to stick to Kamasan hooks for these pattern as they can be quite cheap but high quality and are tried and tested (around £1.50 for a packet of 10).

All hooks for carp fly fishing should be barbless (or at least barbed hooks with the barb crushed very flat). The downside is that barbless hooks are more expensive than barbed hooks - this is because during manufacture the barb is used as a holding point to bend the hook into shape. Therefore no barb means a more difficult (and costly) manufacture.

OK - here goes for a list of 'good' Kamasan barbless hooks for carp dry flies that I have tried and tested and can vouch for (and some other manufacturers' equivalents just in case you want to experiment).

LIGHTWEIGHT

Kamasan B911 (Barbless wide Gape) (£1 per 10)

MEDIUMWEIGHT

Kamasan B981 (Barbless Specimen) (£1 per 10)

HEAVYWEIGHT

Kamasan B775 (Barbless Carp Specialist) (£3 per 10)

Gamakatsu GP203 (Barbless wide gape specialist)

[NB: identical to the Kamasan B775 as Gamakatsu actually manufacture Kamasan hooks!] (£3 per 10)

Tiemco TMC 2499SPBL (available from their distributors, Fulling Mill) (£3.95 per 25)

The other cheaper alternative is to buy some barbed hooks and crush them:

LIGHTWEIGHT

Kamasan B160 (Sproat) (£2.45 per 25)

Hayabusa 751 Blobby/Nymph Hook (£4 per 50)

MEDIUMWEIGHT

Kamasan B982 (X-Strong Specimen) (£1 per 10)

Daiichi 1640 (£3 per 25)

Fulling Mill 31510 (Short Shank Special) (£3.95 per 50)

AUCTION 22nd October 2009 and provisionally 3rd November

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 1st October** in order that the catalogue can be completed and distributed in good time.

Continuation sheets for extra items are available from Roy Gurney. They are also available for download from our web-site www.sussexflydressers.org.uk

SALMON FISHING ON THE TEVIOT

We have received the following from **Ian Davies** regarding some excellent salmon fishing offered. Ian has provided fishing trips for some of our members to British Columbia in the past, with very favourable reports.

"For my sins I am a Tweed Commissioner and this Spring has been very difficult with no water to speak of. Just this last week we had a 7 foot rise on my own water which is on the river Teviot near Nisbet, so we are hoping that it will bring in some fish. We know we have sea trout in the system and the remaining lower Tweed nets reportedly took 500 sea trout in one haul recently. We had the Tweed Foundation doing research on our beat last week and among all the trout and parr they lifted out a lovely silver 6 lb sea trout.

In August I charge a nominal £25 per day per rod and we can fish 4 rods on the beat. I will provide a guide and personal assistance. We have a lunch hut as well. The £25 covers the cost of your first Salmon each day, though we ask for a £50 contribution for each subsequent fish caught by the same rod, which is the Tweed levy we have to pay for every clean rod caught salmon.

We have lets through the year, obviously with prices varying depending on time of year, but even in October and November we are only talking of £60 and £70 per rod per day. I have fishing available on three different beats as well. Last year my beat had over 70 salmon and 22 sea trout, outfishing many lower Tweed beats.

Please visit my website, www.bcfishing.co.uk which has some information about our fishing here and in **British Columbia, Canada**. To keep things in perspective, a week in July on the Tweed costs just over £1000. A September week with us in BC will cost from £1500 which includes your travel, accommodation and fishing licences; also, we will guarantee that you can catch 40 to 50 salmon!"

GETTING IN A KNOT?

Phillip Ellis has come across this website which shows a whole series of knots with animation to aid tying - http://orvis.com/orvis_assets/files/index.html.

Chairman's Chatline

Waterproof coats

I have tried PVC coats in the rain: they are waterproof but uncomfortable and create significant condensation on the inside. I have tried waxed jackets in the rain: they leak at the seams, become very heavy when wet and smell like a wet dog for days afterwards. I have tried the breathable membrane jackets in the rain: they leak after a few months' use.

After more than twenty years of rainy day soakings I have given up on so called waterproof clothing from fishing tackle specialists. For my current jacket I have turned to my other love - mountains. I searched the web for recommendations from hill walkers and mountaineers and found that the current best protector was clothing manufactured by the Paramo company. Most mountain jackets are in bright colours but the Paramo clothing range includes dark green. Since March of this year I have been the owner of a green Paramo Cascade jacket made by the Nikwax company. The jacket is breathable, uses a totally new waterproofing system and at around £200 is not cheap. So far it has performed well but not been tested in really heavy rain. I am off to have a look at the Himalayas this autumn so I will let you know how the jacket holds up.

I still need volunteers for the autumn show at Ardingly. Please give the Guild a day of your time for if we do not continue to enrol new members then the service your committee provides will not be able to continue with its present high quality.

Tight Lines

John Plowman.

Game Fair 2010

As you are aware, we were unable to arrange a coach party for the event in 2009 due to the venue being "up North". We are now advised that the 2010 show will be in Warwickshire – and sadly this is also too far to make a reasonable day trip. We would have start at about 4.30 am, and the cost would be much higher than in the past.

There is a possibility that Paul Bond could arrange a limited party to travel by mini-bus (with shared driving) so if anyone is interested contact him so that he can investigate further. Phone is 01273 420410 or e-mail paul.bond13@btinternet.com

Sussex Country & Game Fair Parham

At 86 years young (give or take a year!) Albert Horne flew the flag for the Guild at this event in July, for both days. Alan Middleton and Phillip Ellis manned the casting clinic.

Albert is looking forward to the start of the flydressing classes – his 33rd year with the Branch!

Stillwater Challenge 2009

Chalk Springs – 26th July 2009

Twenty members enjoyed a mixed day's fishing – not easy by any means, despite the sight of so many fine fish cruising around. Our hosts were as welcoming as ever and hopes were high as the weather behaved itself for a welcome change.

Once again Chris Croucher laid on a superb barbecue with Ian Dunk overseeing the cooking with great aplomb. Their hard work is greatly appreciated.

Best bag this year went to **Tony Harrison** with 4 fish for 14lb 13oz, with Chris and Ian neck and neck for runner-up, despite time off for cooking! **Chris** just managed it by 6oz with 12lb 12oz, but which also included the **best brown** of 4lb 8oz. **Colin Maslin** had the **best rainbow** at 5lb, and an additional prize, donated Ted How, went to **Peter Buss** for the **best blue**, at 3lb 7oz.

To give some idea of the quality of the winners, there were only six full 4-fish bags, one 3 fish, two 2 fish, six single and (including yours truly again) 5 blanks.

One or two felt they were on a catch and release ticket – Bill Smith landed one out of five – and John Plowman fished on after weigh-in, having had a similar experience. He reports as follows:

"I stayed on until 6pm. I had one very quick pull which I missed and then fishing a gold head hare's ear under the trees on the opposite bank saw a flash of silver as a fish turned and then grabbed my nymph and dashed off at considerable speed. At last!! I was using fairly fine tippet so did not put too much strain on the fish which ran into some soft weed whereupon all went slack. I cursed and retrieved my nymph. The hook had broken inside the body of the fly leaving me with a hook eye, a gold bead and a small section of dubbed hare's fur.

Why is it that on a difficult day everything goes wrong? Needless to say I never touched another fish. Such is fishing!"

Match v. Hastings F F

POWDERMILL – 4th July 2009

Once again we were treated to a very warm welcome and outstanding hospitality by Hastings Fly Fishers at their lovely headquarters at Powdermill Reservoir, Seddlescombe, in the far reaches of East Sussex.





Mary Stacey has kindly sent us some photos of the day – anyone interested in copies, let the Editor know and he will e-mail them on – or prints if you are still unconnected!



The full report and detailed results is still awaited, but suffice it to say at this time, the Branch managed to gain a surprise win over the hosts.



Editor's Note

This edition is rather “cobbled together” as we seem to have a lot to enclose in preparation for the new “season”. It is important that you let us have the completed forms back as soon as possible – please don't leave it till the last minute!

In addition, we also enclose a couple of important announcements from the Flydressers' Guild and from the Angling Trust. Please read carefully and consider if you can contribute in any way.

The Branch is a member of the Angling Trust, but it is essential that individual anglers also join to protect and further out interests.

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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

NEWS FROM THE GUILD

As you know, the Chairman of the Flydressers' Guild is our own Alan Middleton, who has given sterling service over many years both to our Branch and latterly to the main Guild. His untiring efforts have resulted in consolidation of the firm foundation of the Sussex Branch, followed by overseeing the development and improvement of the Guild to the current levels (and also finding time to act as fill-in treasurer as well!). He has made the following proposals which all of us should study carefully – and consider what you can do to maintain the fine work he has achieved with his team:

2010 and beyond

At the next AGM in November in accordance with the revised constitution there will be elections for some of the Executive Committee and officers. We now elect these representatives for a three year period. This year it is the turn of the Chairman and Treasurer. The good news for you all is that I do not wish to stand for re-election. If I were to stay on then I would be 67 years of age when the term of office expires, which in my opinion is too old. I will have been involved with this committee for over 15 years when the AGM takes place; long enough for anyone.

Over the past years we have made some substantial changes to the structure of the Guild. A number of initiatives have been set up and completed; a number have been started and yet to finish one of the overriding driving forces has been to provide the membership with “value for money”, by reducing the overall costs of the Guild and providing a quicker and better service to the membership. One of the major changes has been in the use of the internet in the way in which the Guild operates.

Now we can join on line via a secure web site facility; we can purchase goods on line and we have a forum for members to exchange ideas. This is a major improvement in our service, but it comes at a cost; it takes extra time to process these on line transactions; over 30 each week just in purchases, without e-mails requesting information and advice. All of these need to be answered, and promptly as the individual who makes the request now expects an instant response from the Guild as the communication is virtually instantaneous.

It is hoped to extend the range of equipment we offer to the membership, which I applaud, but do not forget that this is another job for someone. The goods have to be sourced, ordered, received, paid for and then dispatched to the membership. We have embarked upon an accreditation scheme for which we hope to receive national recognition, but here again it will take considerable continuous effort to provide the branches with the information they require, to monitor their progress, to ensure standards are uniform and the governing bodies are informed. It seems that every time we seek to

improve the lot of the membership we find a huge amount of work for someone to fulfil.

The Guild has always relied upon the efforts of a small number of unpaid volunteers to carry out its activities and this has kept the Guild in good stead for forty years, but I think the time has now come for something of a rethink. The officers of the Guild are all employed in one way shape or form, and usually over employed, just trying to make a living. To come home to a pile of e-mails and queries each day is not what these individuals really volunteered for. Folding and inserting 2000 pieces of paper into 2000 envelopes, sticking 2000 stamps and then carrying them to the post is hardly an enjoyable pastime. It is a long way removed from tying a few Montana nymphs at the tying bench.

What I would suggest you consider is that the mechanics of the Guild, the day to day paperwork, answering queries, sending out information, back copies, equipment, minutes of meetings, application forms should be carried out by one single individual. We need to centralise these routine activities so that the officers can carry out their more important duties, such as finding ways of recruiting and maintaining members. These functions need not be carried out by a member of the Guild but they do need to receive some remuneration for the effort. At the moment two major remunerations are paid by the Guild, the editor receives an honorarium and his photographic expenses and the membership secretary, historically, received an honorarium. Some time ago it was established that due to work load the membership secretary was unable to process all of the membership activities and these duties were passed on to the Chairman/Treasurer. Hence we had the makings of a level of centralisation. If, in particular, the mundane duties required of the Hon. Secretary and the Membership Secretary were combined together with the day to day management of the web site, then these officers would be free to perform other duties which would be more productive for the Guild. Hence a job structure is beginning to develop.

This administrator would be responsible for the following tasks:

1. *send out all membership reminders on time*
2. *send out all membership cards on time*
3. *maintain the membership data base*
4. *maintain the accounts spreadsheet*
5. *send out minutes of all meetings to those who should receive them*
6. *answer all e-mail, postal and telephone queries, diverting them to the appropriate officer as necessary*
7. *administer the fly dressing competitions*
8. *administer the John Watts competition*
9. *complete all orders for equipment.*
10. *administer the accreditation scheme.*
11. *update the web site promptly*
12. *organise attendance at shows*

13. *purchase all equipment*
14. *arrange display equipment and facilities at shows etc*
15. *review quotes for printing*
16. *check the print of the Flydresser*
17. *arrange committee meetings*
18. *arrange for printing, packing and posting of Flydresser*
19. *report to the Executive each month the accounts, stock levels sales, enquiries and other routine activities.*

This would not make any officer redundant as the following would need to be done:

1. *web site officer would need to ensure that web content is legal, appropriate and functional*
2. *membership officer would validate the data base and find ways of improving its efficiency*
3. *equipment officer would source new materials and monitor stock levels*
4. *Hon secretary would ensure that branch data is appropriate and accurate*
5. *Hon secretary would review policies and procedures of the Guild*
6. *Treasurer would validate the month end accounts*
7. *competition secretaries would set dates and patterns etc for each competition*
8. *an appointed officer would oversee accreditation system and liaise with accreditation bodies*
9. *Chairman would steer the Guild policies and procedures*

In order to carryout the functions of this administrator approx. ten hours each week would be required to be at computer or similar. This is the order of time which is spent at the moment.

What is required is someone with those ten hours available, a knowledge of basic computer skills and the willingness to work with a committee spread about the country. Most other voluntary organisations of a similar size to the Guild work in the way, the WTT being a case in point. It may be time to consider this approach to running the organisation.

The Guild equipment comprising of tables, displays, posters, back copies, membership cards, general stationary, printers (2), camera, bank accounts, correspondence would need to be stored at a central location, together with the stock.

If you have any comments, suggestions or indeed the urge to volunteer please let us know – preferably direct to the Guild (via the web-site) or to the editor, who will pass it on

ANGLING TRUST AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Angling Trust has announced a number of cuts to its central operations in Nottingham and Leominster. Despite widespread publicity and the distribution of half a million membership leaflets, the level of recruitment has to date, fallen below expectations. This shortfall, along with higher than expected costs, is threatening the viability of the Trust.

Of 4 million anglers less than 1% have joined the Trust – many more were expected to have signed up and, despite thousands of further members of former organisations due to renew in the remaining months of the year, the Board was not confident the organisation could continue to provide sufficient service to members without making savings.

This shortfall, added to difficulties created by the merger, presented a difficult situation which could only be rectified by reducing the overheads of the organisation. Consequently deep cuts have been made and a number of staff have been made redundant.

“These measures are necessary to balance the Angling Trust’s books. It is difficult to conceal the board’s disappointment in the response we have had from anglers. However, we expect to be able to continue at a satisfactory level of service.” Said Dr Stephen Marsh-Smith, the Trust’s chairman.

“More than ever before, angling needs representation at national level to continue the fight against pollution, inadequate legislation, illegal canoeing, poaching, predation and all the other threats facing angling today. Angling needs to have a strong body to promote our unique sport, increase participation and ensure that the whole business flourishes. For only £20 per angler, this can easily be done, but we need every individual angler to join as a member themselves, as well as their clubs and sponsorship from all those who benefit from the £3billion angling business. **Anyone can join the Trust today and ensure the sport is represented at a national and international level by completing an application form, visiting www.anglingtrust.net or calling 0844 7700616.**

Chief Executive Mark Lloyd stated: “Anglers need to imagine what the future might look like without a national body to represent their needs, and join the Angling Trust now. We have worked very hard before and after the merger to develop the national body but it seems that too many anglers think that others will support the cause for them. Anglers have to realise that having a central body representing their interests, protecting their angling and campaigning to ensure we can all go fishing tomorrow does require a commitment from everyone today.”