



**THE FLYDRESSERS' GUILD**  
**Sussex Branch**  
**Newsletter**



**NOVEMBER 2010**

**Auction 2010**

Hope you all enjoyed the first of our auctions for tackle – now for the BIG one for flies, fly-tying and books etc., the catalogue for which is either attached or enclosed, depending how you receive this. Don't forget – **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November.**

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

There has been a bit of confusion over the role of the Branch in receiving subscriptions for the Main Guild. As from 1<sup>st</sup> October, all new members have to join the Guild direct in order to conform to the Data Protection Act. The initial subscription is £18, payable by cheque or on-line and we are currently talking to the Guild to see if they will accept our Application Form if we send it to them so that the initial payment can be made via Branch, meaning only one payment. Subsequent Guild subs would be made direct by standing order (for £15) or cheque or on-line (both £18).

Existing members should complete a standing order for the sum of £15 payable on the date of renewal (on your membership card) and send it to your bank. It seems that payment through the Branch will not be accepted in future (though we are still trying!).

The renewal date of Branch subscriptions has been changed to 1<sup>st</sup> October and is now a flat £12 for ALL members (or £15 for family membership).

There are still a few members whose subscriptions are still outstanding so please ensure you renew with the Guild and let Roy have £12 for your Branch membership. If you do not renew with the Guild promptly, you will be struck off the Guild list – no more “Flydresser” or insurance cover. Also, please remember that to be member of the Branch you must be a member of the Guild.

We rely on your subscriptions to maintain the level of service – speakers, outings, newsletters, etc. Any queries – ask Roy Gurney (he is not too happy either!)

**Jonathon Glover Trophy**

This trophy is awarded annually to a member who has given outstanding service to the Branch. The last three winners are not eligible, and they are Bill Smith (2008), Chris Croucher (2006) and Paul Bond (2007). Nominations, please, to John Plowman, Paul Bond or Roy Gurney as soon as possible – voting slips will be issued later with the short list. The trophy will be presented at the AGM on 16<sup>th</sup> December

**CHARITY PAIRS 2010**

This years competition was fished in quite trying conditions with a strong north-east wind and very bright sunshine, so the expectations at the start of fishing were not very high. So it proved, with 16 fishing, only 22 fish were caught but it proved to be the closest finish for a few years. .

A gallant effort by Chris Nunn and Bill King with 6 fish in the boat just failed to beat Terry Grigg and Stephen Hardy, also with 6 fish, by just 3 ozs. .Let's hope we can get revenge on North Kent next year.

Can I thank everyone who took part. The end result, with the help of the raffle for fly display stands made by Bill King, and donations by Steve Mustchin and Ray French, meant that £150 went to the winners' chosen charities. Let us try to beat that next year.

Thus Ray and Bill win the Branch trophies for this event which will be presented at the annual dinner next April.

Name	Branch	Fish	Weight
Ian Dunk & Chris Croucher	Sussex	1 2	11b 12oz 4lb 6oz
<b>CHRIS NUNN</b> <b>BILL KING</b>	<b>SUSSEX</b>	<b>3</b> <b>3</b>	<b>3lb 11oz</b> <b>5lb 11oz</b>
John Plowman & Steve Mustchin	Sussex	0	
Ted How & Paul Daltrey	Sussex	0 1	 11b 12oz
David Painter & Ray Love	Sussex	1 1	11b 8oz 11b 11oz
Ray French & Bob Shaw	North Kent	0 3	 5lb 10oz
<b>TERRY GRIGG</b> <b>STEVE HARDY</b>	<b>NORTH KENT</b>	<b>3</b> <b>3</b>	<b>5lb 5oz</b> <b>4lb 4oz</b>
Terry Hood & Keith Allen	Unattached	0 1	 11b 6oz

**Last call for the Big Fish Entries**

Get your entries in by 31<sup>st</sup> December to Paul Bond or Roy Gurney. Some big ones are still being caught, and the portents are for a very tight finish to the season.

# Fly Fishing for Mahseer

By Howard Dodsley



Last February whilst in India I was lucky to be invited to fish for Mahseer on a stretch of the River Cauvery. This is not one of the commercial beats that are so heavily bait fished that it makes fly or lure fishing very difficult. The fishing camp is not far from Mysore. The fishing is responsibly controlled and unspoiled.

Although I went with the intention of pursuing the mighty Mahseer with the fly rod I did try bait fishing and had a fish of 12lbs which gave a heck of a scrap. Lure fishing is also allowed and can be very productive as the camp host proved when I netted his 30lb Golden Mahseer from the coracle.



This was a particularly difficult week on the river for catching the larger fish - however I did persist with the fly and in the heat of the afternoons spent time tying nymphs and baitfish patterns which were a success. No monsters but Mahseer and Rohu up to 2lbs are wonderful sport on light gear. I'll take along extra strong fly hooks next time as these fish can chew up and straighten trout hooks with ease. The fishing camp is situated right next to river giving easy access and there is some lovely fly water to be explored close by. The accommodation sleeps up to 4 anglers at a time. It is basic, clean and the chef serves up great, freshly cooked meals. The camp owner is a great host and is also a very keen angler with good boat skills. He is also very much involved with local

wildlife projects.



*Howie with a beauty  
(but where did you get that hat?)*

I spent a week there and can't wait to get back. I have been offered more fishing for January and February 2011 and can take up to 3 anglers at a cost of about £120 each per day, inclusive of accommodation, food and fishing (not including travel). Anyone seriously interested please contact me through the FDG or email :

[howie@flyfishingsussex.com](mailto:howie@flyfishingsussex.com)

There is also some footage on [www.youtube.com/flyfishingsussex](http://www.youtube.com/flyfishingsussex)

## Chairman's Chat

Trout fishing is a wonderful pastime when time spent doing not very much is interspersed with a few minutes of activity. I had won a free day at Bewl in the monthly draw so accompanied by Steve Mustchin on a wet and windy day in early October I did my best to catch a trout. Now, I have caught many trout from a boat at Bewl over the years, but this day was to be different.

We had been fishing for about an hour when I saw a large bird being chased by a crow. My first reaction was "Buzzard" but as it came closer the white feathers on its underside confirmed "Osprey!" For the rest of the day over the main bowl at Bewl Steve and I were entertained by the osprey swooping down on the water with talons extended. I was catching trout on dry flies and the osprey obviously could also see the sub-surface fish but despite several attempts we did not see the bird catch anything.

No doubt the osprey was on its way south to Africa having spent the summer in Scotland or perhaps Rutland. Wherever it was from I was glad and privileged to have had a brief view of such a magnificent bird.

In terms of catching fish this past season has not been one of my best so the presence of the osprey made it a season to remember.

Tight lines

John Plowman

## Feeling the Pinch

As you carefully offer up your hook into the vice, the pinch of those precision jaws closing securely around the shank is a defining moment in the tying of any fly. So you can imagine my surprise and disbelief when, on clamping a chunky size 8 into my Snowbee Waldron vice there was an unnerving (and rather loud) snap sound as the top of one jaw literally cracked off!

OK I know just what you are thinking: 'The idiot didn't adjust the jaws correctly in the first place putting too much strain on them!' well yes, I can see that would be the first and most obvious conclusion however, the vice has worked flawlessly up till then. I am sure I know the degree of pressure (and no more) required to hold a hook securely and I had previously just tied forty similar flies of the same pattern and with no ill effect. So, was this user error or a possible metallic fault, who knows?

Either way the answer is somewhat academic because after a quick call to Snowbee UK I was in receipt of an unconditional apology from the management and two brand new replacement jaws were in the post winging their way towards Crawley absolutely free. Oh, and by the way they even enclosed a prepaid envelope so I could return the broken parts for analysis. There was no inquest as to how this could have happened or blame apportioned to me, just a swift and professional resolution. Now that is what I call service!

I have been the fortunate and happy owner of my Snowbee Waldron vice for a year or so now and have always been impressed with it's build and delighted with it's performance in every situation and now I have experienced a taste of Snowbee customer care and service, I can add yet another level of satisfaction to my list.

*Mike Guest*

## New Category for "Big Fish"?



*3 lb 10 oz bass from Adur estuary, Shoreham*

This fine bass by Howard Dodsley raises the question whether we should have a category for salt water fish amongst our trophies. Any comments?

## Fly Tying Competition 2010

On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November Alan Middleton will be demonstrating and advising on the competition flies – both the main Guild competition AND the Branch. To encourage entries for both competitions we have chosen the same patterns, as described in the enclosure in the last "Flydresser", and also detailed on the Guild website [www.the-fdg.org/tying.htm](http://www.the-fdg.org/tying.htm), where .pdf downloads are also available. The references are to the edition of the "Flydresser" in which the patterns are featured:

<b>Beginners (Novice)</b>	<b>The Professor</b> (Summer 2010)
<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Skating Caddis</b> (Summer 2010)
<b>Open</b>	<b>The Professor</b> (Summer 2010)

In addition, in view of the great interest shown on tying nights, we are introducing a new trophy for the Branch (which also doubles for the Guild):

<b>Saltwater/Pike</b>	<b>The Atomic Anchovy</b> (Summer 2010)
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*A matched pair of each pattern is required, and your entries can be doubled up for entry to both Branch and Guild competitions.*

## Match v. East Sussex S&TA

Sunday dawned still and fine and promised well. However a cold northerly breeze developed and the temperature was kept to a reasonable level only by the bright sun (when it didn't hide behind cloud!)

Coltsford Mill has superb facilities, but unfortunately were also hosting a wedding, thus limiting our use of them. A welcome cup of coffee to start the day, and then fishing till 12.30 when we all retired to the "Diamond" for a very good lunch. Well fortified, we then went back to the bankside till weigh-in at 4.30.

S&TA had some difficulty in raising a team (partly because the Branch had got in first and recruited a number of their members) and so five volunteers for the Branch team ended up on the "other" side! Sadly only one of them (Brian Raw) managed to get his four fish, the others failing to land a single one! As Geoff Taylor chose them, we can't be accused of fiddling the selection! With only two blanking on the Branch team, the result was rather a foregone conclusion, but how do the same guys get all the really big fish? Chris Croucher (7¼ lb) was pipped by Ian Dunk (8 lb) for that honour, with Ian having the best bag at 16¾ lb, though Chris with only 3 fish still managed 12 lb. Steve Mustchin, Tony Harrison & Peter Winder each took 4 fish, and Bill Smith & Jim White 3 each. Altogether, the Branch managed 25 fish for 66½ lb, so retaining the trophy.

For the S&TA Michel Olszewski had two good fish for 6 lb and Peter Langton managed one of 1¼ lb, giving a total of 7 fish for 16¼ lb, plus Brian Raw's.

The intended presentation after was slightly marred by the inability of yours truly to remember to bring the cup, prizes for the best bag and fish, and his camera – par for the course, some say!

S&TA will be out for revenge next year when they host this very enjoyable event.

## Grayling Fishing at Wherwell

The start was auspicious! I phoned the office on the Friday to see make sure everything was OK – lucky that I did as they had us in the diary for Saturday, we were all due to come on the Sunday. A raft of phone calls later and only four of us could make the new date (apologies again to those who were going to come). It seems this is a regular occurrence when booking with the office on the telephone and not confirming it in writing. At least I know for next year! The intrepid and flexible four were myself, Brian Raw, Steve Mustchin and Tony Harrison. We were all on time and looking forward to the day and had all of the beats available to us, which was more water than we could ever hope to cover and so set off in different directions with the aim of meeting back at the hut at 12.30 for lunch.

The next bit is my personal account of the fishing as I didn't see another soul until lunch! As I set off on one of the carriers, the weather was sunny and the sun was low, casting long shadows across the water – one of which was mine as I walked downstream. To combat spooking the fish I kept as far away from the water as possible and also as low as I could. The water level was average for this time of year with the majority of the carrier only 1 to 2ft in depth and crystal clear, meaning the fish were super cautious. A heavy footfall, or even the suspicion of a shadow, and the fish were darting for cover under the vegetation on the banks.

I found a couple of deeper pools and by casting an upstream weighted nymph (a tungsten beaded shrimp imitation) brought 3 small grayling to hand. I wanted bigger fish so I continued to search out a better shoal. Eventually I saw a shoal of about a dozen fish, the smallest about 1½lb and the largest about 2¼lb. These fish were in about 1 foot of water and were unbelievable spooky and I stalked the group for about 2 hours on my hands and knees. It was clear that a plop from a weighted nymph caused immediate panic in the shoal and they would shoot off upstream at high speed, however a dry fly drifted over them passed by unmolested, but didn't spook them. The secret seemed to be an unweighted nymph cast a long way upstream to ensure that it had sunk to 'fish level' by the time it drifted through the shoal.

Unfortunately if the nymph passed through the group without a take, as I retrieved to recast, it would again cause panic in the shoal and they would shoot off upstream. Eventually, after crawling around casting for what seemed like minutes but was actually hours, a fish from the middle of the shoal shot forward and engulfed my nymph. A spirited fight ensued – grayling are really excellent at using the flow of the river to put maximum pressure during the fight, and whilst the fight isn't fast and furious like a reservoir rainbow it is a tactical battle of wits as each turn of the fish, when it uses its big sail-like dorsal fin to catch the current, creates a solid battle. Eventually the fish was in the net and it was a beautiful fish of around 1¾ lb, not a 'two' (which is always my personal target when grayling fishing) but it didn't matter. For those who don't fish for grayling, the

bigger fish are quite fragile souls and they often give their all during the fight. It is important that you give them plenty of support, the right way up and facing upstream until they swim away strongly – the fish that I caught took 15 minutes to recover – twice as long as the fight to land it!

A catch up with everyone over lunch revealed that everyone had caught – although some 'brown spotted grayling' had been connected with. This is inevitable when you are fishing blind in some of the deeper runs and pools. The best was one accidentally caught by Brian in the bigger weir pool by the car park.

The afternoon saw the change from bright conditions to more cloud with occasional rain and blustery wind. This didn't affect the insect life as a very sporadic hatch of Iron Blues began ("Iron Blue" is an angler's term for 3 species of upwings, - but as a bonus they prefer to hatch on cold wet blustery days especially in October). A change to a small Parachute Adams brought another two small fish to the dry fly, and a lot more missed. The technique wasn't the typical upstream dry fly used on chalkstreams but a short downstream cast followed by paying out line to allow the fly to dead drift at the speed of the river. By carefully paying out line a zero drag approach was achieved and this was much more successful at tempting these wary fish.



Overall everyone had an excellent day with fish coming to hand, not in vast numbers but with enough to create interest throughout the day. As many of you know I am a massive Grayling fan and a nice Grayling glinting in the lovely orange tones of an autumn sun with the wonderfully marked fins radiating their magnificent colours is enough pleasure to keep me coming back again and again.

*Paul Davis*

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