



# Sussex Branch Newsletter



May 2015

## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to man the Branch Stand at the South of England Schools and the South of England events. They take place at the South of England show ground in Ardingly. You get free entry into the show ground on the day, with a chance to have a look around the show, when not demonstrating.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the branch Chairman Tony Woolnough via email:

[tony@fishways.com](mailto:tony@fishways.com)

## Massive pike taken on fly

*By Angling Times*

*Fish Catches*

17 April 2015 15:19



At least 35lb - and quite possibly a forty - John's pike.

John Crampton had the surprise of his life when his tiny fly intended for trout was taken by this enormous predator.

Experts estimate that the shock specimen weighs between 35lb and 40lb as unfortunately John didn't have any scales with him during a session at a trout water in Yorkshire.

It's believed to be one of three big pike that are known to local anglers that are part of the private trout fishing syndicate that's in operation at the 27-acre venue and it's a fish that smashes the Rotherham-based all-rounders previous best that stood at 20lb.

"It absolutely blew me away as all I could compare it to size wise was a Labrador," John told Angling Times.

"By the time I'd got the better of the fish a crowd of local anglers had built up behind me and as soon as it came up into the clear water in the shallows they all gasped and I couldn't repeat some of the things that were said because that's the sort of impact it had.

"It's such a shame that I didn't have any scales with me, but to be honest my main concern was to get her back as quickly as possible because the female fish that was four feet in length, was clearly carrying spawn."

John beat the fish with a 7-weight rod, a 5lb leader and a size 14 Fritz fly and it's a capture that further proves the big pike potential of trout waters across the UK.

"This is clearly a huge fish and just goes to show there must be dozens of other venues like this around the country that hold massive pike that so many people don't even know about," said AT columnist Paul Garner.

Angling Times head of photography Mick Rouse has not only photographed more big pike than most but he's also banked his fair share of huge pike and he was blown away by John's surprise capture.

"There's no doubt that this fish should be in the upper 30lb range if not touch touching 40lb with a girth like that," said Mick

## Darrah Pairs Competition 2015

On a fine, dry and cold Sunday with a north-east breeze blowing nine boats set out to fish Bawl Water for this year's Frank Darrah trophy. This year I was pleased to see four anglers who were new to the event.

As many of you know, Bewl is now an “Any method” fishery. It is popular at weekends with East European anglers throwing spinners but I was surprised at just how many there were. As I queued to collect our tickets I realised that I was probably the only native English speaker. The catch record of the previous week was not good with the cold wind moving the fish down in the water and there was little evidence of surface activity so with various densities of sinking lines we started to fish.

When we met up for lunch it was obvious that we were all struggling. Experienced anglers whose names are engrave on the trophy several times were failing to catch and it was only the odd fish that had come to the boat.

By weigh in time our poor results were all too obvious: eighteen anglers- eighteen trout! The worst catch since I have been organising the event. Most of us were experienced reservoir boat anglers but under these conditions we all found it difficult. Did the spinning fisherman spoil it for us? I doubt it but I would like them to be given some lessons on fishing etiquette. Twice during the day my boat partner, Steve Mustchin, and I had a boat motor straight across our drift so ruining any slight chance we may have had of catching. Our tempers were not improved.

Finally, my congratulations to the winners who again were Ray Love and David Painter with a total catch of five trout. Runners up were Colin Rann and Michael Brayne with four. I will not embarrass the others except to say that fourteen only managed to catch nine in total!

John Plowman

### *Chairman’s Chat*

Occasionally we get appointed to design a fish pass where there are other requirements to be met, which, on first inspection, appear to be incompatible. A recent contract involved designing a fish pass which would also retain the existing flow gauging facility and pass gravel through the system.

On investigation, it turned out that a flow gauging weir was obstructing the gravel which was building up and cascading down through the existing fish pass downstream of the bridge, blocking the pools and forming a shoal in the river upstream of the weir. Comparing velocities over the weir with coarse fish swimming speeds, I concluded that fish could ascend the system as existing. The Client disagreed (thanks!).

Further investigation revealed that the road bridge over the channel had a waterway area of 46 sq. m and the design flood (once in 100 years) was 6.7 cubic metres per second. So the velocity during times of flood would be 0.146 metres per second. No wonder that gravel was accumulation, the “normal” velocity should be about 1.0 metres per second; otherwise silt and gravel would drop out of the flow and accumulate. In addition the entrained river channel was also found to be over wide. Rivers decide what channel width they need and erode to make it bigger or deposit gravel and silt to make it smaller, ie Regime Theory; which is a scientific name for common sense.

So what to do – we had been awarded the contract ! After much head scratching, it was realised that the flow gauging weir had been in service for over 30 years and therefore frequency of various flows had been established, so why continue flow measuring ?

So we bit the bullet and designed for: entraining banks within the channel and through the bridge, reducing the entrained channel to the “natural” width, removed the flow measuring weir and provided rock ramps in the now open channel.



**Looking upstream towards the bridge, lower weirs buried**



**under transported gravel.**

**Upstream of the weir, showing the shoal by the measuring weir.**

I am now awaiting the Client turning this Option down – now you see why I don’t smile much !

I will keep you posted re developments.

Tight lines

*Tony W*

### **The Results of Our Spring Auction**

On the evening of Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015, we held our first Spring Auction at our usual Patcham Community Centre venue. Largely as a result of some excellent work in communicating and publicizing the event by Andy Steer, Roy Gurney, Tony Woolnough, Bob Burbridge, Peter Neave, Tony Katz and others, we were able to attract 52 potential bidders.

Our auctioneer, Mike Humphries, used his great skill, experience and plenty of humour to extract the maximum amount for each auction lot, and we ended the evening having taken £1,902 on the night. The club takes 10% commission on all sales. So the benefit to the club (before costs) would normally have been £192.20. However, I 'am delighted to be able to tell you that because of a number of donated auction lots, and others where we earned 50% commission, the actual contribution (before costs) was £523.95. Take away auction costs of around £80, and you are left with a contribution to club funds of around £445. When this figure is combined with the contribution from the autumn auction (£370), you will see that this financial year our club has benefitted to the tune of £815.

Over the last 5-6 years, our two annual auctions have raised over £5,00 towards club funds, which, for a small club, is an amazing figure, and one of which everybody who has been involved in our auctions should be justifiably proud.

An auction of this size and complexity does not just happen, it takes a lot of volunteers to make it run smoothly and successfully. For the spring auction, we made a conscious decision to limit the auction lots to 280, and in so doing was completed by 9.55pm, and everybody had paid, collected their goods and left by 10.15pm, which will give you an idea of how well everything went. So I would like to thank personally, and also on your behalf, for all their help, support and hard work on the night the following (in alphabetical order):- Paul Bond, Ray Bond, Ray Burt, John Cooper, Nigel Duckworth, Paul Davis, Roy Gurney, Jim Harris, Brian Hendry, Ray Love, David Painter, Bill Smith and Tony Woolnough. A BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL.

Special mention and thanks to Ray Love and David Painter, who made teas and coffees available to all during the viewing period and which was a great success and very well received.

Special mention and thanks to those members and former members who prefer to remain anonymous, but who donated items to the club.

Special thanks to our auctioneer (and President of the Fly Dressers' Guild), who so generously makes the round trip from Hertfordshire to help and support our club.

My final thanks are reserved for those club members who came along and in some cases brought friends, or if unable to attend, encouraged others to come along – many thanks for all your support.

Tony Harrison

## Salmon Fly Tying Workshop

It is not often that you get the chance to attend a Salmon Fly Tying Workshop here in Sussex, so when Alan Middleton floated the idea of running an all day workshop at Patcham on a Saturday, it is not surprising that there was a lot of interest.

Alan came up with a programme that would involve the group tying 2 patterns, THE BULLDOG, which is a built (or married) wing Salmon fly, and the JUNGLE HORNET. You may well ask, who on earth would give up a Saturday to tie 2 flies, that none of us will ever fish with, and the answer is 9 of us! (Bill Black, Paul Bond, Ray Bond, John Cooper, Paul Davis, Wayne Duerden, Peter Neave, Dave Walker and yours truly).

The club had booked room 2 (where we have the speakers) and by 8am it was set up conference fashion. Alan had made up individual materials packs for each of us, containing all the materials needed to tie both flies. So full of optimism, we kicked off at 9am, helped by the fact that we were tying in natural daylight.

We started with the Bull Dog, which Alan broke down into 4 distinct stages. The body was split into 3 stages, with the wing and topping being the 4<sup>th</sup>. At the beginning of each stage, we would gather round Alan, whilst he tied. It is all about attention to detail and accuracy. Paul Bond summed up it up well having spent 50 minutes tying the rear 1/3 of the body (1/2"), when he said "normally in this time I would tied 20 buzzers!"

By mid morning all of us had completed the body, and now came the 'fun' part the built wings. Alan explained that built wings on the size of hook (1.0) normally involved a total of 24 wing fibres. The Bull Dog has a yellow and black wing (we used Condor substitute) divided into strips of 4 fibres (ie 4 yellow fibres joined to 4 black fibres, to 4 yellow, to 4 black, to 4 yellow to 4 black). Difficult to explain, but the Bull Dog picture accompanying the article shows it clearly.

The building process (or marrying) is when you waggle the fibres together, and as if by magic they join together (a bit like Velcro). Sound easy? Well to watch Alan doing it, it was! The fun and games came when we tried to do it. This is where the accuracy and being organised comes into play again, because fibres from the left side of the quill will only marry (or zip together) with fibres from the same side. Despite a few hiccups within 45 minutes all of the group had 2 wings of married material ready to attach.

Now comes the tricky bit! Once again, Alan made it look easy. You take both wings, holding the ends in each hand, and using a 3<sup>rd</sup> hand tie them down, having first waggled them to create a V. I know most of us do not have 3 hands, so you let go of one end, put a loop of thread over, and grab the loose end before the wing collapses!

Believe it or not, by 2.30pm all of us had completed our version of the BULL DOG, leaving us enough time to tie the JUNGLE HORNET, which was achieved. All of us there had a brilliant day.

None of it would have been possible without Alan's generosity of spirit and consummate teaching skills. When not demonstrating he would continuously walk around offering each of us endless encouragement and helpful tips. More over the day was fun, with loads of humorous stories and anecdotes.



On behalf of Alan's 9 students, we owe a very big thank you to Alan for putting together such a fun, informative and unique day, and a big thank you to the club for paying for the room and providing some of the materials.

Post Script. The picture accompanying this article is of Paul Davis's beautifully tied Bull Dog. Most of the flies tied that day ended either in a clear acetate paperweight or picture frame, which makes them a little bit special. Alan's own flies were framed and signed, and donated for auction to raise funds for a charity representing injured service men and woman.

Tony Harrison



Paul Davis's Bull Dog

## Cinderhill Trouting Syndicate

Cinderhill Trouting Syndicate has 6 lakes on the edge of the Ashdown Forest and welcomes new experienced or novice members.

Great fishing in secluded surroundings.

Junior and Mature courses are run by Licensed Coaches together with Branch volunteers.

At £280.00 for 25 visits and a 4 fish catch limit – probably the cheapest trout fishing in S E England

Membership is subject to members joining either the Salmon & Trout Association or The Angling Trust.

Please contact:

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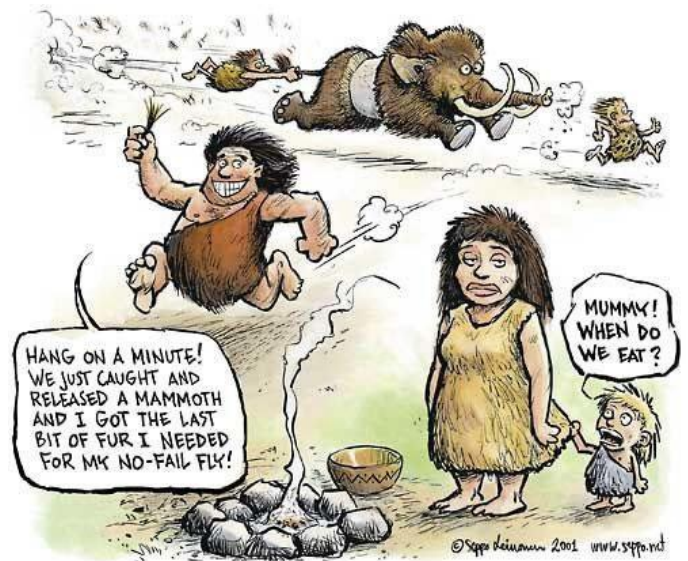
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*Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild*

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