

NEWBURY ANGLING ASSOCIATION



Founded 1878

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AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2021

Welcome to the first issue of what we intend to be a quarterly newsletter. We hope you find it useful and interesting. Two points of housekeeping to start:

1 – We intend to publish this and future newsletters on our website and Facebook sites, but to ensure you do not miss any future editions of this please email to us so we have your address at enquiries@newburyangling.org.uk

2 – Please also contact the editor via the same address should you have any ideas for what you would like to see in the newsletter, or wish to submit any content for consideration for future editions. We'd love to share descriptions and pics of recent catches, and also photographs and memories you may have of yesteryear,

(NOT SO) MUDDY LANE



Following years of pressure from NAA and our financing of quick-fixes on a track that does not belong to us, in September the owners resurfaced Muddy Lane to provide what they believe will be a permanent solution to the pot holes that have often rivalled the size of the lakes. NAA have been asked to make a financial contribution to the cost. The Committee is waiting to see how permanent - or otherwise, the surface proves to be when the winter weather arrives before making any commitment.

In order to give the surface the best chance of surviving, PLEASE KEEP TO A MAXIMUM OF 10MPH when driving. It is a shame that we have lost the passing-place in the middle which has been commandeered for drainage purposes, but we're sure that our member's, gallantry will overcome the inevitable mid-lane meetings without resorting to road rage.

AROUND THE LAKES

NEW RULES

Members will already have been made aware of two new regulations passed by democratic vote of the Committee in September. We appreciate not every member will agree with these changes, but we would like to take this opportunity to explain the rationale behind their introduction.

- (1) **AN IMMEDIATE BAN ON ALL WADING IN THE LAKES** – This was introduced because of the increased number of bailiff reports of anglers entering the lakes to clear snags, drop baits and even to wade out to fishing positions. As well as the clear danger of the health and safety of our members, some damage was seen to be caused to banks and the decision taken to prohibit all wading. Yes, we realise some wading does take place to attempt to free snagged fish, but in future cases please phone a bailiff for assistance. (numbers on permits). We also appreciate that it is fashionable for some carp anglers to have their picture in the drink with their catch, but this is also now prohibited.
- (2) **DECISION MADE TO ALLOW 2-RODS (FOR SPECIMEN PERMIT HOLDERS ONLY) AT WILLOWS BETWEEN 1ST NOVEMBER 2021 AND 1ST MARCH 2022** Anglers of Willows will know it becomes much harder to catch fish compared to the warmer months and so the presence of anglers falls to just a handful of die-hards in winter and on many of our daily inspections, the lake has no one fishing at all. We understand the benefit of this in relieving the pressure on what is possibly our most popular lake, however, being of shallow depth, and containing a large number of fish, it is more prone to predation by cormorants (and even potential fish-napping) as the fish have no areas to hide. By encouraging more anglers on the banks we hope to discourage both. We understand this may be an unpopular decision for some and stress that this is initially for this year, with a review to be conducted in the Spring with regards to future years.

NOTICE BOARDS

Weather-proof notice boards have been ordered and will be installed in the car parks at Widmead, Rawling's Retreat and Bellwood in the coming weeks. These will be Perspex-fronted and big enough to contain 6x4A4 sheets. It is envisaged that these will contain such information as:

- Descriptions of the lakes, with general details of the species found and successful fishing methods, geared particularly for the benefit of new members.
- A fish-welfare section giving advice and recommendations suitable for the well-being of the resident fish. Again, this is aimed at helping inexperienced anglers, but will be relevant to all.
- Emergency contacts/health and safety advice.
- A reminder to anglers of the regulations that bailiffs and other regular inspectors of the lakes most often find breached.
- We would like to keep the boards up to date with pictures of recent catches to boost the ego and inspire others - please send yours to enquiries@newburyangling.org.uk

ON THE CANALS

ENBORNE (1)

We are delighted to include the following article by Chris Plumb, one of the most experienced of NAA's many seasoned anglers. Thanks Chris!



When it comes to fishing the K&A canal – I tend to be fixated on one species – perch! I can't think of a stretch of canal around Newbury/Thatcham where the prospect of a 2lb+ stripey (or something even bigger) isn't a real possibility and our stretch at Enborne is no different.

The 2 more popular beats are upstream and downstream of Guyers Lock and they differ quite a bit in 'character'. The downstream stretch runs from Guyers to Egypt Point where it joins the Kennet proper. Known colloquially (at least amongst anglers) as Dogsh*t Alley – and the frequent footfall of dog walkers, joggers and cyclists means fishing from the towpath here is not without some jeopardy at times – just last season for example I looked around to see a dog with its head buried deep in my tackle bag – no doubt trying to get at my lunch! And not a murmur of an apology from its owner! Thankfully The Canal & Rivers Trust (CRT) are installing fishing platforms along here which will be an enormous aid in keeping your gear off the towpath.

Upstream of Guyers lock is calm and serenity in comparison. In recent years the club has secured the angling rights to the south (ie NON towpath) bank which can only be accessed via a locked gate (using your NAA key). This beat, up to Higgs lock is a popular match stretch – so it always pays to check your permit if you're planning a pleasure session here – especially at the weekend.

Upstream of Higgs the angling rights continue to Benham lock – though this is largely 'uncharted territory' and if you're looking for seclusion from other anglers – the place to explore. However angling is from the towpath side again – though it's not as busy as further downstream.

I only fish here from Oct- March (it has a closed season) mainly to avoid the boat traffic – and my approach – following a KISS principle (!) nearly always involves float fished lobs. On DS Alley – it's a

case of finding swims with some kind of feature on the far bank – a bush, overhanging tree, brambles in the water etc – and casting as near as you dare to these. A couple of years ago the CRT caused controversy along the whole length of the canal with a ‘scorched earth’ policy in removing alleged ‘hazards to shipping’ and most features (many of which had gone unmolested by a barge for decades) got grubbed out. Thankfully – many features are starting to grow back and the CRT now adopts a minimalist approach to bank clearance.

Upstream of Guyers is a different story – most swims face a bank of common reed on the opposite bank – and again for the perch it is a question of getting a bait as tight as you can to these reeds. This does make this stretch less ‘peggy’ with the chance of a decent fish coming from many differing swims. Up from Guyers is also less affected when the river is in flood, I’ve known downstream of the lock to be the colour of milky coffee after heavy rain whilst upstream was as clear as gin!

My biggest perch from the Enborne K&A canal stretch comes in at 3lb 10oz – caught as recently as

February of 2021. [See blog entry.](#)



However, over the years many other species have fallen for my perch tactics with DS Alley providing the greater variety. Jacks will always take a lob and are a more of a nuisance on inappropriate tackle though would no doubt provide good sport on light spinning gear. Also in residence are chub, tench, half decent roach and there’s even the chance of a river carp - all of which have turned up in my landing net in the past decade or so. The tench potential is one I haven’t fully explored. My late friend Paul and I once had 4

between us (he had 3 I had just the 1!) on a cold late November afternoon some years back so targeting them in the summer is probably well worth it. Finally, the match stretch – reportedly - has a peripatetic shoal of bream – though I have yet to meet their acquaintance!

ENBORNE 2

On Sunday 3rd October, Newbury Angling Associated held their annual charity match in support of Help for Heroes on their stretch of the Kennet & Avon Canal at Enborne. The following report made it into the following week’s Newbury Weekly News:

Taylor catches prize at angling match

NEWBURY Angling Association held their annual charity match in support of Help for Heroes on their stretch of the Kennet and Avon Canal at Enborne.

Twenty-three anglers took part in the five-hour competition, grateful that the torrential rains of the previous day had passed.

All participants caught fish, with Dave Taylor winning with a catch of 14lb 11oz of mainly perch and roach.

Colin Woodley came second, weighing in 11lb 3oz.

These included a number of good perch over the 2lb mark, though, as is usual in fishing,

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one angler lost a specimen estimated at over 3lb at the net.

Other section winners were Dave Smith and Adey Icke, who competed with a party from Shipston Angling Club.

After the match, Taylor was presented with the splendid Help for Heroes shield over a meal and social at The Lamb Inn on Enborne Road.

A raffle was held with prizes donated by Thatcham Angling, Tadley Angling, Angling Direct, Linnear Fisheries and Drennan International of Oxford, as well as members

of the association.

Organiser Smith was proud to announce that £859 had been raised for Help for Heroes, a figure in line with each of the seven previous years the match has been held in this format.

Fishing this stretch and others of the canal and River Kennet, along with nine local lakes, is restricted to members of the Newbury Angling Association, first established in 1878.

For membership enquiries to participate in future matches or to pleasure fish for a wide range of species, visit newburyaa.org.uk

ENBORNE 3



We are obliged to the Canal and River Trust who are building seven fishing platforms for our exclusive use on our stretch upstream of Guyers Bridge where the towpath has previously been too narrow to fish.

We'd love to hear of any catches made (or indeed not made!) from them via:

enquiries@newburyangling.org.uk

We have expressed our thoughts that boats will use them as mooring points to the CRT who have pledged to fix 'no mooring'

signs in due course. We are also concerned that the stages will be very slippery in the wet/ice. We will assess this in the months ahead, but in the meantime, please be particularly careful using them in such conditions.

TO THE RIVERS

The Crays

I was fishing the Kennet at Brimpton recently when a man passed me with a dustbin strapped to his back. You see all sorts on the rivers, so after an exchange of pleasantries I did not challenge him. Half an hour later he was back, and the bin was heaving full of large, grotesque crayfish. I was appalled. Turns out I had the pleasure of meeting Andrew Leech of the Artisan Fisherman Ltd of Thatcham who is fully licenced to trap and trade in crayfish. A lovely man, he estimated his barrel contained around 300 crayfish averaging, say 8-inches long. He said he returns every 2 or 3 days to empty the traps and hence removes an average of 1,000 crayfish per week in the 'season' and estimates he'd had 15,000 out of our half-mile stretch of the river this year so far!

15,000! I was appalled. I knew that as an invasive species signal crayfish were a problem, but had no idea of this vast scale. Otters and cormorants quite rightly get the blame for fish predation, but I can't help thinking that the biggest issue for decline in native fish numbers is actually the crayfish: I can't believe there is a single fish egg left in the water with this level of crustaceans to support. You will see one of my photos shows a female crayfish with a large number of eggs on its tail, and am alarmed to read on Wiki that every crayfish can have a lifespan of up to 20 years! Oh, and as you might know, their burrows (or up to 2 metres) can seriously erode banks.

As a result of this chance meeting, I have today written to the Angling Trust, Environment Agency, Inland Waterways Authority and Natural England asking for confirmation of what action they are taking. I'll let you know what replies I get in the next newsletter...



Signs of the Times

There are a number of areas on both rivers and canals that we have identified as having insufficient, and in the case of Avington - no signs, to indicate that we have private fishing rights. With this in mind we have ordered 15 metal signs which we intend to erect in key areas including Speen Moors, Guyers Bridge, Hambridge Canal and Avington. Hopefully this will help keep some of the Herberts who are not members off our waters.

PRIVATE FISHING Newbury Angling Association

For membership enquiries visit
www.newburyaa.org.uk
or look us up on Facebook

PUZZLE OF THE QUARTER

This feller was landed at Willows an hour after dark, about a foot from the bank on single corn. The fight was modest and the fish was particularly well behaved on the unhooking mat. What is it? It has no barbules and the facial features of a crucian, yet the body of a common, though the picture does not show the details of the fins or allow a count of scales along the lateral line. The lantern (and camera flash) were not great. What do you think it is? Four revered members of the NAA have been approached and the voting is currently a common (2 votes), crucian (1 vote) and FI (1 vote).



The catcher was rather hoping it's voted a Crucian as it came in at 3lb 10oz!

ON THE BANK

We thought it would be interesting to send a roving reporter to the banks to find out about some of our members. On an unseasonably warm Sunday afternoon on October he met:



BOB & JANE AT KNOTTS

How long have you been members?

Bob – 30 years or more

Jane – This is my first year

Why have you chosen Knotts today?

We love Knotts, but we had hoped to fish Bellwood, but all the best swims were taken.

What have you caught so far?

Nothing yet -we've only just started.

What is your favorite fish?

Bob – It's barbel – they're hard-fighting torpedoes!

Jane – It always used to be tench, but I'm slowly being converted to carp.

What was your best fish from a NAA water?

Bob – It's probably 'Simon', a 32lb common from Collins. But then I did have a 24½lb pike a few years ago from Speen Moors.

Jane – A 12lb 5oz barbel from Aldermaston on a krill boilie: on my first cast as a NAA member!

Do you think a newsletter would be a good idea?

Yes, not everyone is on-line to pick up the news and it would be very helpful for new members.

JORDAN & DAREN AT BELLWOOD

(only Jordan is pictured to protect members as Daren was fishing topless in the sun and was sporting a tattoo displaying a football club not condoned by the Editor!)

How long have you been members?

Jordan – My Dad has been a member for a long time -he's gone to get the shopping - but this is my first season.

Daren – I'm on a day-ticket but I'm definitely going to join.

Why have you chosen Willows today?

We like the close parking!

What have you caught so far?

Jordan -Mirrors of 15lb 8 and 12lb – oh, and 2 bream. I hate bream!

What is your favorite fish?

Jordan – Mirrors! Their skin feel nice to the touch.

What was your best fish from a NAA water?

Jordan – a 22lb 6 carp at Bellwood – on my debut!

Do you think a newsletter would be a good idea?

Daren -Yes, it would be good to keep up to date. I'd like to see pics of what people are catching and what methods/baits are working.



DOUGIE'S WHOPPER!

Below are a few pictures of fish caught from NAA waters to get the ball rolling on picture submissions for the quarterly newsletter.



Above is a pike caught from an NAA Stretch of the Kennet a couple of years ago, when the river was coloured and pushing through.

They do not have to be big to be beautiful and important to the captor. The small carp below was a home-grown Bellwood fish which probably only weighed about 4 lbs, but was fin perfect and had the potential to go much larger. The other picture of the pike, below, just demonstrates the superb camouflage markings of the species.

Hopefully, these pictures will inspire others to submit photographs to demonstrate the wide range of species NAA waters hold. Tight lines to you all. *Dougie*



RICHARD'S RAINBOW

A few weeks ago, I was walking the River Kennet stretch at Aldermaston when I came across a lone angler. A very friendly chap, and we spoke long about fishing like you do, and I watched him catch a lovely rainbow trout. 'It's not as big as the one I caught last week,' he said. 'I've sent a picture of that one to the Angling Times'.

A few weeks on, and to my delight, I saw the man and fish in the November 2nd issue of the magazine.

Congratulations, Richard. Thoroughly deserved, and we hope it's not long before we have the pleasure of seeing a pic of you and that elusive barbel in the angling press.



“NO BARBEL YET BUT WHAT DO I CARE?”

Richard Goswell – 5lb 8oz rainbow trout

“I’VE been targeting a stretch of the River Kennet at Aldermaston lately, having not fished it for years. I’ve been hoping for barbel, but with the weather being bright and sunny whenever I’ve visited, I haven’t had much luck.

“However, on my first session I had a 3lb rainbow trout, followed by one of 4lb several days later, then this one, weighing 5lb 8oz, on my latest trip.

“Two of them came on pork luncheon meat, and one on a bit of cheese paste.

“So, no barbel yet, but what do I care? That challenge is still to be met.”



Fancy landing your own rainbow? I did, and landed this 5lb-er a few days after. A decent fish, but not worthy of national fame like Richard’s.

WHAT3WORDS

Those of you who are app-savvy will doubtless know of What3Words, which has divided the world into three-metre squares and given each a unique random three-word identity. It's really useful for identifying swims when fishing in remote areas.

But did you know the name of the square outside of the mobile loo on Rawlings' Retreat:



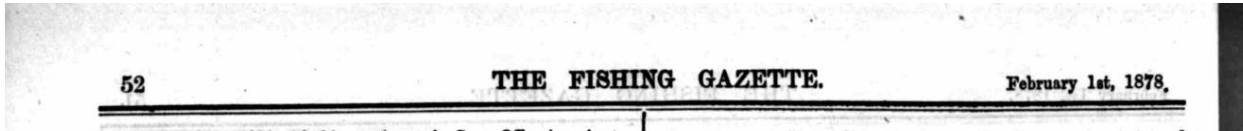
Inner.system.motion! They couldn't have planned it better – what a great job!



NAA ARCHIVE

As you will know from our badge, The Newbury Angling Association was founded as long ago as 1878, a year which saw Disraeli as prime minister and the first performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore*. Inevitably, the NAA has seen many, many changes in this time. We are looking at the possibility of creating an archive with as much of the story as we can gather, along with pictures where possible, of the venues and fish of the past. Should you have any goodies ticked away with that old split-cane rod in the attic, or even like to help with the project, please make contact via our email address:

enquiries@newburyangling.org.uk. We can't complete this without your contributions. To start, we have recently visited Newbury library to look at their records which includes several hundred newspaper and magazine articles. As a teaser, if you would like to know what the following magazine and other newspapers wrote about us in the nineteenth century ...



... then send us your email address so we can send you a copy of the next newsletter!

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

We hope you enjoyed this first attempt at a quarterly newsletter. Thank you so much to Chris and Dougie for their contributions.

Don't forget: to ensure you receive all future editions directly, please email us at:

enquiries@newburyangling.org.uk

We'd love to hear from you at the same address with your pictures and stories. It will be a dull newsletter without your content, so please don't be shy! Also, we'd love to share any tips for winter fishing at any of our venues.

Have a great autumn, and we hope to see you in the winter.

THE EDITOR



