

WILD TROUT TRUST
AUTUMN 2014

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News and Notices New President Conservation Awards

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### AUCTION REPORT – DENISE ASHTON

#### Wild Trout Trust fundraising auction

The 2015 auction will take place 3-12 March 2015, on eBay and by post.

This is a huge fundraising event for us and perfectly timed for booking some interesting fishing for the upcoming season. We expect to have over 200 lots again, mainly UK fishing but also books, art, flies, tackle and fishing holidays abroad. The UK fishing includes some top class days on highly exclusive beats that are not available anywhere other than the WTT auction. Some lots are guided, either by professional guides who support the WTT by giving their time, or by local experts who will share their love of their home water with you. Whilst the focus is on wild trout fishing, there are plenty of days fishing for other species with fly or bait - bass, pike, roach and grayling days are all included. The non-fishing lots will again feature an art work by Sam MacDonald, who also

provided the cover shot for Salmo Trutta in 2013. Sam is a generous supporter and an amazingly talented artist.

The 2013 online illustrated catalogue is still available on the website, along with a map of the fishing lots. Take a look at the website to get some idea of what is generally on offer. New lots are always being added, but many are repeated year by year, thanks to our generous donors. The catalogue for 2015 will be posted to all members in mid-February. If you don't want to use eBay, then try a bid by post — many postal bidders win lots every year.

New lots are always very welcome. Many clubs and syndicates find it is a good way to recruit new members, and to support us in kind rather than cash. If you would like to donate a lot, or would like more information, contact Denise Ashton on dashton@wildtrout

.org or 07802 454157

# PETER LAPSLEY'S BEQUEST TO THE WTT

Peter Lapsley, one of fly-fishing's most formidable writers, columnists and fly-tyers, bequeathed his entire fly-tying kit to the Wild Trout Trust requesting that it be auctioned, the proceeds to go to the Trust whom he supported right up to the day he died.

The fly tying kit will be on display on the WTT stand at the BFFI in Stafford on 7/8 February 2015.

The kit will be sold via a SEALED BID AUCTION. Bids will be opened at 2.30 pm on Sunday 8 February 2015 at the British Fly Fair International.

Full details of the kit (including photos) and the auction process are available on the WTT website

If you have any queries, please contact Denise Ashton dashton@wildtrout.org or Tim Jacklin tjacklin@wildtrout.org.





#### **DIARY DATES**

#### Friday 7 November 2014

Vitacress Chalk Stream Headwaters Forum

Sparsholt College, Hampshire.

#### Tuesday 9 December 2014

Wild Trout Trust Raffle Draw Thomas Lord, West Meon. Join us for a drink at 7.30 pm for the raffle draw. Prizes include:

- A Sage One 9ft 5wt rod, donated by Sage.
- Accommodation and dinner for I night, plus fishing for two people at the Peacock at Rowsley on the Derbyshire Wye, donated by the Peacock at Rowsley and Haddon Fisheries.
- A day of fishing accompanied by a WTT Conservation Office, donated by the WTT.
- A 9ft 5wt Orvis Clearwater Frequent Flyer Travel Rod, donated by Orvis.
- A 30 yard Standard Trout fly line made from finest silk, donated by Phoenix lines.

To buy raffle tickets look at our website www.wildtrout.org.

#### ENVIRONMENT AGENCY: NEW ONLINE SERVICE TO SUBMIT CATCH RETURNS



The Environment Agency has launched a new online service for salmon and sea trout anglers to submit their annual rod catch returns. It's free, is mobile-enabled and has added features over the old paper form. For more information go to website:

www.gov.uk/catch-return

#### Wednesday 15 October 2014

WTT Conservation Awards Savile Club, London.

#### Saturday 7 & 8 February 2015

British Fly Fair International (BFFI) Staffordshire County Showground, Stafford.

The WTT will have a stand at this show - come and join us! For more details, look at our website www.wildtrout.org, or www.bffi.co.uk or tel. 01782 388382.

#### Tuesday 3 to 12 March 2015

WTT Auction eBay and by post.

The WTT's annual fundraising auction will be held on eBay and by post. Details of the auction, including the 2014 catalogue, can be found on www.wildtrout.org.

#### Friday 5 to 7 June 2015

Wild Trout Trust Annual Get-together Waddow Hall near Clitheroe.

Lancashire.

Join us for our Annual Get Together on the banks for the River Ribble in Lancashire, in association with the Ribble Rivers Trust.

Accommodation will be available at Waddow Hall - for more information go to www.wildtrout.org.

#### LOST MEMBERS

We have lost touch with the following members as they have moved and we do not have a current address. If anyone can help, please contact Christina via: office@wildtrout.org. Thank you.

- Thomas Goddard, Dorchester
- · Geoffrey Hopton, Hay on Wye
- Richard Hunter, Perth
- J Walton Newcastle upon Tyne
- Bill Latham, Salisbury
- A L Carter, Hereford
- M R D Yates, Wallingford
- Ian Treaowell, Chichester
- I Vater Oxford
- Guy Beech, Wadhurst
- D SW Lee, Sheffield
- Andrew Blair-Smith, Chulmleigh
- Mark Hancox, London
- · R J Smith, Camberley
- John Griffiths, Chepstow
- Thomas de la Mare, London
- Jamie Stewart, Matfen
- Ian Morris, Oswestry
- Douglas MacAdam, Glasgow
- · Ian Gregg, Penrith
- James Gout, Madrid
- Alan Dean, Troon

#### JON BEER IS THE WILD TROUT WILD TRO TRUST'S NEW PRESIDENT



on Beer is well known in the fishing community for his journalism which reflect his love of wild trout and fishing, but his background includes writing poems and plays for the BBC and teaching. He has a been a tremendous supporter of the WTT for many years in his role as Vice President, and in that role has given some very amusing talks and starred in the WTT DVD 'Rivers: Working for Wild Trout'.

Outgoing President Charles-Rangeley-Wilson said:

'It has been a real privilege watching the Wild Trout Trust grow from humble but enthusiastic beginnings to become the professional, busy and much indemand outfit that it is today. The Trust does great things for river conservation, supported by dedicated, professional staff and a passionate membership. I'm so proud to have been involved. I've done my time now, at the coal face in the early days and more recently as President. It has all been fun. But it is

time for me to step aside. I wish Jon good luck, knowing that I'm handing over the role to someone who will serve the Trust brilliantly. So long ... and thanks for all the fish'

WTT Chairman Edward Twiddy said:

'The WTT President has always played a very important role in promoting and representing the Trust and the lot of wild trout across the UK and more widely. Jon has been bringing the pleasures of wild trout fishing, and the human zoo that is attracted to streams and lakes around the world, to audiences for many years. People and the attitudes that we bring to our lives together will make or break the habitats that wild trout rely on. Jon will ensure that we see ourselves with the due mixture of reflection, determination and ridicule that makes it possible to succeed whilst enjoying ourselves.'

## 2014 CON

#### Judges report

dozen great projects this year; how to choose between them?

The scoring system that we currently adopt aims to recognise a wide range of the gamut of characteristics one would ideally have in the 'perfect' WTT conservation scheme. This goes at least some way towards providing a platform for comparing highly disparate projects. For instance, a project that scores more modestly in the area of community engagement may score more strongly in its specific impact on wild trout. However, to reflect the more specialised and constrained situations of (often) large-scale works subjected to competitive tender versus the much more rounded aspirations of many partnership-based projects (a good example would be works done in river corridors by wildlife trusts); it seems sensible to group 'Professional' projects separately from "Partnership" projects. In addition, it would be unfair to insist that the more limited means of keen fishing clubs or small 'friends of' groups should compete with these much largerscale undertakings. Consequently, the WTT seeks to also recognise 'amateur' projects as well. Finally, it has become increasingly apparent that there are individuals who just seem to make disproportionately large personal contributions to the state of rivers in the British Isles. To this end, as with all the 2014 awards, the generous sponsorship of Thames Water also allowed us to award a token of admiration to a 'Wild Trout Hero'.

Whilst it is genuinely impossible to convey the range and depth of important details of each project, much less give an adequate characterisation of the genuine "feel" and full scope of each piece of work; the following should hopefully at least give something of the flavour of each of the 2014 entries. Grouped by category - but in no particular order otherwise - please take

### UT TRUST SERVATION AWARDS

a moment to appreciate a small slice of each of the 2014 entries to the WTT conservation awards.

# PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY, VYING FOR THE AWARD FOR AN OUTSTANDING HABITAT ENHANCEMENT SCHEME



#### RIVER AIRE: OVE ARUP AND YORKSHIRE WATER

This project shows a really top quality solution to the problem of a large weir in the absence of the potential to remove the structure. As well as producing a bypass channel that will be passable to a range of species, significant high-quality new habitat has also been created. In this respect, the project far surpasses the constrained benefits of a "bolted-on" engineered fish-pass. Backwater areas as well as riffle and meander habitat add greatly to the value of these works.

## RIVER MEDLOCK: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY/GROUNDWORK/ MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL (JOINT WINNERS)

A mammoth undertaking that, on first glance, belongs in the "technically unfeasible" category. In the region of eight million, famously robust, Accrington bricks lined what used to be the bed of the River Medlock for kilometres on end. The net result was a perfectly smooth and symmetrical water chute of almost zero ecological value. Involving school classes in designing the aspirational features of a revitalised river corridor along with tireless work through groundwork, the City Council and the community at large - this project is a real blueprint for how the impossible can, with enough drive and ambition, sometimes be attained.



#### RIVER WYE (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE): FIVE RIVERS LTD.

A near military operation (including winning the hearts and minds of local residents through continual onsite engagement) where a caterpillar-like sequential progress was orchestrated such that only small portions of the public park space was fenced off and inaccessible at any one time. Each completed section was immediately opened to the public and the works even included an additional meander construction at no additional cost (including surveying and design). Leafleting of local residences explained the project and Five Rivers boss Jason

Lovering hosted groups of local school kids to explain the life of their local river during works to regenerate a more natural geomorphology in what was previously a heavily modified artificial channel.

#### RIVER KENNET: EASTRIDGE ESTATE AND WINDRUSH AEC (JOINT WINNERS)

Maintaining the ability to inundate wetland meadows of conservation importance - whilst reclaiming energised stream flows through physically varied channels - was a significant challenge for this project. The solution included the retention of sufficient vertical head by

#### CONSERVATION UPDATES

installing a series of gravel riffles in place of individual impounding structures. Innovative project management structures tightly controlled project costs and new wildflower meadow habitat, spawning riffles and submerged structural cover combined to great

effect. A fish pass of deceptively simple design proved technically very demanding during construction due to water-level control constraints that led to bricks being laid in waist-deep water. Formal visits for others faced with similar challenges allowed the

techniques employed to be disseminated. A video has been produced and the WTT will seek permission to host this as an example of the successful approaches adopted.

# AMATEUR CATEGORY, VYING FOR THE AWARD FOR AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO WILD TROUT CONSERVATION

#### WINDRUSH AND SHERBORNE BROOK: COTSWOLD RIVERS TRUST

High quality spawning riffles are in short supply on much of the Windrush system due to historic dredging, so the installation of fantastic gravel ramps (combined with innovative provision for livestock watering that will greatly reduce the potential for poaching and overgrazing of the riparian zone) is a great boon to local trout populations. Improved connectivity between the river and floodplain has resulted in great benefits to water meadow habitat, nutrient and sediment supply reductions – and also to potential flood risk attenuation.

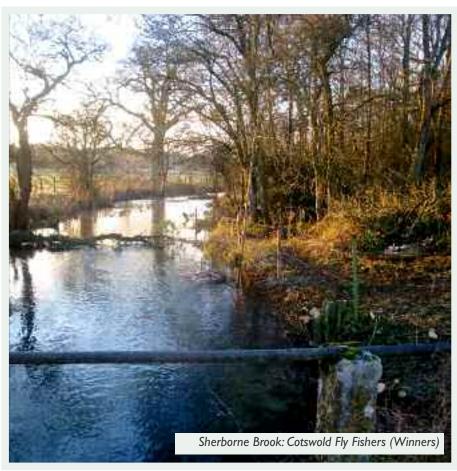
#### SHERBORNE BROOK: COTSWOLD FLY FISHERS (WINNERS)

A combination of simple, low cost activities - coupled with similarly pragmatic monitoring of the attendant impacts of these undertakings – allowed the club to demonstrate benefits to macrophyte and fish abundance, reddcount increases and notable physical changes to the channel through substrate-sorting and scour-pool creation. The club also undertakes Riverfly monitoring to maintain vigilance on pollution impacts - as well as a potential means to gauge beneficial impacts of habitat works. Grazing exclusion, woody debris installation and canopy management were the primary activities in conjunction with landownerengagement. Joining forces with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust also allowed the fishing club to directly

incorporate benefits to water vole populations. The ongoing maintenance of current measures and associated sustainability of improvements have been explicitly incorporated into the club's rolling program of habitat management — with evening talks to anglers providing education and inspiration to adopt habitat management as a means of sustaining wild fish populations as an alternative to artificial stocking.

#### RIVER GUASH: GUASH FISHING CLUB

Canopy management and use of the arising material allowed the club to redistribute stream-bed material to create patches of clean spawning gravel as well as areas of accumulated silt in what was previously a uniformly silt-coated channel substrate. The club report increased utilisation of this new spawning substrate by resident wild trout and the brash materials used to locally "pinch" flows is also providing good cover from predation.



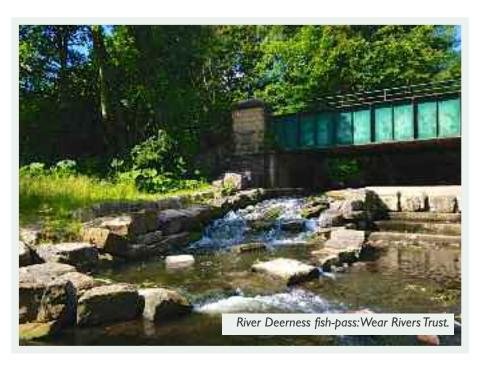
#### PARTNERSHIP CATEGORY

#### RIVER DEERNESS: WEAR RIVERS TRUST

A previously polluted post-industrial tributary of the River Wear, the Deerness, was identified by Wear Rivers Trust to have the potential to be transformed into one of the most ecologically productive tributaries of the whole Wear catchment. The main reason identified for its low status was the series of barriers that interrupted both the transport/redistribution of riverbed material as well as the free migration of fish between specific habitat-types crucial for successful progression between each stage of their lifecycle. This project is notable for its strategic and extensive establishment of baseline monitoring conditions as a means to establish the impacts of the programme of extensive improved connectivity through a variety of innovative means.

#### RIVERS BRUN AND CALDER: URES PROJECT, RIBBLE RIVERS TRUST (WINNERS)

A really inspiring project with near foolhardy levels of ambition given the constraints of the heavily-developed, urban river corridor. As well as the straightforward significant measured increases in trout numbers, the project was notable for the degree of community engagement that was central to its progress. Vocational training qualifications were used both to improve employment prospects for some participants alongside a means of generating a sufficient volunteer workforce to undertake various conservation works. The scoring system for the Conservation Awards makes provision to recognise both the innovative raising and spending of funding/resources in order to maximise value for money. Just two out of many examples of this in the URES project were, firstly, the procurement of the best contractor prices/skills via conversations held in a genuine fleshand-blood social network (i.e. the pubs of Burnley) and, secondly, the use of man-made materials to introduce ecological and geomorphological function into an artificial channel.





#### DORSET WILD RIVERS: DORSET WILDLIFE TRUST

A really large range of chalk streams and winterbournes in Dorset (including very significant lengths in many cases) benefitted from a whole variety of activities from narrowing, wet-woodland creation (including planting of 8000 trees), log-jam installations, tree-hinging (including hundreds of trees in single reaches), re-meandering of channels, river-bed heterogeneity improvement, mid-channel island creation etc. etc. etc. Watercourses included: Piddle, Frome, Dorchester Mill Stream, Hooke, Wraxall, South Winterbourne - in combination impacting on the Stour Valley, Allen, Tarrant and North Winterbourne. This project was pipped at the post by a single point by the winning efforts in Burnley.

#### EDDLESTON WATER: TWEED FORUM

A tributary of the River Tweed, Eddleston Water, was estimated to have lost around 1/3rd of its entire length as a result of the artificial straightening of its channel that was carried out in the early 19th century. Historical mapping, co-ordinating negotiations with complex contemporary land-owner arrangements and very large-scale reestablishment of natural planform of the river was combined with headwater woodland planting, wetland creation and the instigation of a robust hydrological monitoring program that will enable impacts on downstream flood risk mitigation accruing from interventions to be quantified. This is yet another hugely ambitious and highly commended project.

#### WILD TROUT HERO AWARD

#### MARCUS WALTERS: RIVER PEFFREY

The River Peffrey is a river draining Ben Wyvis and ultimately discharging into the Cromarty Firth within the inner Moray Firth. The river was historically moved to the side of its flood-plain and locked in place via the planting of deciduous trees that consolidated constructed flood banks. A project to show the potential gains that can be made within constrained channels via relatively low-tech interventions that increase the amount of ecological and geomorphological process within such channels has been driven to an enormous degree by Marcus. Showing great ingenuity in "getting things done" and also deliberately taking in a very diverse range of reference material sources in order to design and install great quality, highly functional structures

are great coups attributable to Marcus' dedication and passion. The notoriously exhausting works to control Rhododendron, Japanese knotweed, Snowberry and Himalayan balsam infestations have been carried out and a program to block poorly-designed forestry drainage channels will augment the creation of a huge buffer-strip of new deciduous woodland that will replace the riparian conifer plantation that was previously degrading the catchment. The results so far have been, even to Marcus, surprisingly impressive; with substantial shifts in stream-bed substrate scour and deposition along with early indications of increased salmonid fish densities (coupled with the creation of significant areas of lamprey habitat).



#### Awards ceremony

WTT's Conservation Awards event is always an excellent opportunity for members and guests to get together to celebrate the outstanding achievements of amateurs and professionals alike in habitat enhancement for our rivers and their wild trout.

2014 is an exciting year in that we presented new awards for An Outstanding Habitat Enhancement Scheme, an Award for an Outstanding Contribution to Wild Trout Conservation and the Award for a Wild Trout Hero.

We've seen more applications than for many years and applications of an excellent standard, reflecting the great work being done in our rivers by governmental organizations, consultants, contractors, the rivers and wildlife trusts and our voluntary sector such as angling clubs. The judges' report gives more detail on all our wonderful entries.

Huge thanks again go to the Savil and Fly fishers Clubs for hosting us on the night, to Dr. Jenny Mant of the River Restoration Centre who headed our judging panel and to Thames Water for helping us make it possible.

One thing that's true about river mending: we will not run out of material to work with any time soon. Already look forward to 2015.





Winner of Award for an Outstanding Contribution to Wild Trout Conservation (Amateur category). Cotswold Flyfishers for Sherborne Brook (Richard Aylard of Thames Water on left, Trevor Cramphorn of Cotswold Flyfishers middle and Shaun Leonard, WTT Director)



Joint winner of Award for an Outstanding Habitat Enhancement Scheme (Professional category). Environment Agency, Manchester City Council and Groundworks for the Medlock project.





Joint winner of Award for an Outstanding Habitat Enhancement Scheme (Professional category). Eastridge Estate, Windrush AEC and Environment Agency for Eastridge Estate project.

#### **CONSERVATION AWARDS**



Winner of Award for Partnership Project. Ribble Rivers Trust, here with new WTT President, Jon Beer, for Burnley URES Project.



Charles Rangeley-Wilson, retiring WTT President, handing over the role to Jon Beer.



Marc Bale of Sage receiving the Bernard Venables Award from Charles-Rangeley-Wilson.

## GARETH PEDLEY: FULL-TIME WTT CONSERVATION OFFICER

t's really good news that WTT now has its first full-time Conservation Officer based north of the M62. Gareth Pedley has been part-time with WTT since September 2011 in a successful partnership with Eden Rivers Trust, but, from November 2014, Gareth will be with us full-time, based near Penrith. Gareth will work with government agencies, rivers and wildlife trusts, fishing clubs and landowners across the far north of England and into the Borders and Central Belt of Scotland.

This full-time post will allow WTT to push on with work in the north. Even in

a part-time capacity, Gareth was able to produce around 1/3 of all our advisory visits in 2014 out of the north-west and north-east of England.

In addition to his three years with ERT/WTT, Gareth comes with excellent pedigree: a degree in fisheries from Sparsholt College in Hampshire, great grounding as a river keeper with Warren Slaney at Haddon Hall in Derbyshire and five years as fisheries technical officer with the EA in the north-east.

Gareth is contactable on gpedley@wildtrout.org and 07500 870583.



### MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA – TIM JACKLIN, WTT CONSERVATION OFFICER

ne of the first jobs I did with the Wild Trout Trust back in 2008 was a walkover survey of the chalkstreams of North Norfolk for the Anglian Sea Trout Project, a partnership led by WTT and funded by the Environment Agency. This survey identified numerous barriers to fish migration and areas ripe for habitat improvement and led to a number of projects during the intervening years. These have been reported in previous newsletters and can be found on our website under the Projects tab. One site however seemed to be an intractable problem: Bayfield Lake on the River Glaven.

Situated in beautiful parkland in the shadow of a Georgian hall, the estate lake was formed in the C18th by damming the river. Subsequent work in late Victorian times created a bypass around the lake to reduce siltation, but the channel was entombed in a bricklined culvert over 700 metres long. Since that initial walkover in 2008, plans were developed to bring the River Glaven back to the surface for the first time in over a century and in September this year the project was finally realised. The result is a naturalised, meandering river channel 1.2 km in length, with over



thirty gravel riffles suitable for trout spawning and a similar number of deep pools. The channel re-connects the River Glaven with sections upstream and downstream of the lake allowing free movement of fish.

To say it was a long haul is a huge understatement. Numerous factors had to be considered including bats in the

culvert, flood risk modelling, archaeology and landscape, flow splits and abstraction licences and working within a conservation area. At times it felt like I would never see any light at the end of the tunnel! It was very much a team effort and thanks are due to landowners the Combe family for their permission and patience, Richard Hey

#### STAFF UPDATES



Continued from page 7 for his river design expertise, River Glaven Conservation Group for championing this river and its ongoing restoration, Norfolk River Trust for funding the delivery through the Nine Chalk Rivers Project (Catchment Restoration Fund), Norfolk Coast Partnership (AONB) for support with funding applications, the Environment Agency for funding the early stages and the contractors, A. & V. Squires Plant Co. Ltd.. An article describing the project in more detail will appear in the next Salmo trutta magazine.

Although the above project has taken up a lot of my time, other work I've been involved in recently includes practical visits with Waltonian Angling Club on the Derbyshire Derwent and with Severn Rivers Trust on the Afon Dulas, in both cases introducing woody





debris. Similar work is planned in the near future with Peak Forest AC on the River Noe in Derbyshire. Consents have been obtained for removal of a dilapidated weir on the upper Witham and for habitat improvements on the upper Welland, so watch this space for progress reports.

On the Dunston Beck in Lincolnshire, I have been working with Matthew Parr of the Environment Agency to mitigate some dredging works carried out recently. This stream is fed by groundwater from a limestone aquifer and has great potential if the instream habitat were more sensitively managed. Matthew's liaison with the landowner resulted in the provision of an excavator for a day, which with WTT supervision created some low marginal shelves in the over-wide channel.

On the Staffordshire Blithe, I have been working with South Staffordshire Water (SSW) and the Environment Agency to improve fish passage at a weir owned by SSW. The EA have been monitoring the existing fish pass but have seen very few fish movements. The

reason is thought to be the lack of depth at the downstream side of the pass, so a simple notched pre-weir has been constructed to raise water levels. The monitoring will continue to see if this improves the function of the fish pass.



### UPDATE FROM TROUT IN THE TOWN - PAUL GASKELL, PROGRAMME MANAGER

This summer I are be mostly moving house and having a baby! So apart from finally moving house (II months after selling our previous abode) and the arrival of Theo Elliott (8lb 3oz on the Avons!) - what has been happening on planet Trout in the Town? Well, in no particular order, some highlights of this summer would certainly include revisiting sites of previous Himalayan Balsam clearance in Sheffield and photographing some wonderful wildflower vegetation that has replaced that infestation.

On a much larger scale, the fantastic community launch event for the brilliant efforts on Greater Manchester's River Medlock - where removing 8 million bricks to change a 100% constructed, artificial channel is being successfully carried out - was wonderful to take part in. The kids really seemed captivated by the fly tying and tenkara session that I ran with Tom Bird for the launch on the invitation of Ollie Southgate (Environment Agency) and Dave Barlow (Manchester County Council)





#### STAFF UPDATES

Continued from page 9

Big congratulations also to Mike Duddy for being named as winner of this year's Fred Buller Memorial Award by the Angling Trust at the CLA Game Fair for his work on the TinTT affiliated project "Action Irwell" in Salford.

The breathtaking progress that the Wandle Trust is now making in South London on weir removal, habitat creation, road-dust/sediment interception (a subject close to my heart following my previous academic research to characterise the impacts of road runoff on the streams into which road runoff is discharged) is spectacular to behold.

(http://urbantrout.blogspot.co.uk/2014/0 9/rise-of-wandle.html).

There was also another great launch event of a project that I've been contributing to steadily over this year — The Douglas Catchment Partnership — a second contribution of Trout in the Town support on Wigan's River Douglas which will hopefully strengthen and improve the future prospects of existing habitat works we helped Paul Kenyon and team to achieve in recent years. This included provision of Mayfly in the Classroom resources and future support as well as helping to design and develop the objectives that the Catchment-wide project will achieve.

On a more worrying note, I've been involved with the aftermath of several pollution incidents on the urban River Don system. One such site I had happened to sample as part of a walkover survey conducted with the Living Don Partnership that Trout in the Town belongs to, run by Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust. These incidents are reminders that our urban rivers are still continually at risk from accidental spillages from industrial premises and the developed-environment more generally.

I have also continued to add short video blog style content to the online video library that can be accessed variously through the WTT youtube channel and also the "Video Hub" on the main WTT website (http://www.wildtrout.org/content/video-hub).

Additions over summer include 3 of the presentations from this year's Annual Get Together on the River Chess and a short video showing the fish surveying work of the ongoing study on recovering sites damaged by dredging on the River Don system. The surveying is being carried out by Hull International Fisheries Institute and the site has benefitted from extensive and innovative Ranunculus planting methods developed by Dave Woodhead of SPRITE, Sheffield's "Trout in the Town" project. The summer also saw me hosting a visit from wildlife film-maker Jack Perks who is endeavouring to capture all of Britain's freshwater fish (some of which may disappear in the not-distant future) on film

(http://www.wildtrout.org/blog/sheffield-beneath-waterline)

As for a forward look, I have been very encouraged by discussions and site visits that I've been having in the Midlands with Waterside Care groups with some promising potential to offer useful TinTT support in that region. Similarly, I have some advisory visit work booked in for Stoke-on-Trent's in the very near future as part of the local Catchment Based Approach project.

Watch this space for ongoing developments and let me have any suggestions for new local branches of Trout in the Town via pgaskell@wildtrout.org and 07919 157 267.



### UPDATE FROM THE SOUTH AND WEST – ANDY THOMAS WTT CONSERVATION OFFICER

Several projects have been successfully tackled during the summer months with the completion of the first phase of channel improvement work on the River Meon in East Meon.

Mike and I were ably assisted by WTT stalwart Nigel Brooks and an army of volunteers from the local South Downs National Park Authority. The wonderful thing about working with voluntary groups is that it is often a catalyst for identifying other project opportunities. There is no doubt that getting our sleeves rolled up and working alongside a wide range of volunteers, many of whom arrive with precious little knowledge about rivers, provides us with a great platform for getting our messages out about sustainable river management and maintenance.

In September we were asked to partner up again with the Arun Rother Rivers Trust to design and supervise the construction of two shallow backwater habitats that would also provide safe drinking opportunities for livestock. The lack of low-flow refuge areas during bank-full spates has been identified as a big issue on rivers like the Western Rother. Although backwater habitat is not always associated with trout conservation, providing a diverse range of depths and flow patterns nearly always helps to encourage a wide range of aquatic plants, invertebrates and juvenile fish; which in turn directly benefits our hungry trout!

As a trusted partner with a strong track record for delivery, we are often asked to use our 'no-nonsense' approach to ensuring that rivers are improved and fish populations protected. The Solent and South Downs Team of the EA are currently sponsoring us to project manage a proposed new fish pass on the River Hamble. This is a very exciting project that fits with our aims and objectives under the South Coast Sea Trout Action Plan. It's early days yet but site meetings with potential contractors have been arranged and tenders submitted. If successful, this project will build on improvements carried out by the EA downstream and



potentially open up 15 kilometres of high quality spawning and nursery habitat to migrating trout for the first time in hundreds of years.

Early autumn will signal the green light for delivering a long list of River Habitat Workshops down here in the South East. As well as our usual angling club PVs, this autumn we will be running workshops with Essex Wildlife Trust and Epping Forest District Council, London

Wildlife Trust, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Ouse Adur Rivers Trust, Test Valley Borough Council and Andover College to name just a few.

I should be worried about my poor old back and dodgy knee but the truth is I just can't wait to make new contacts and secure friendships that will ensure that our network of trout and habitat management enthusiasts continues to grow.



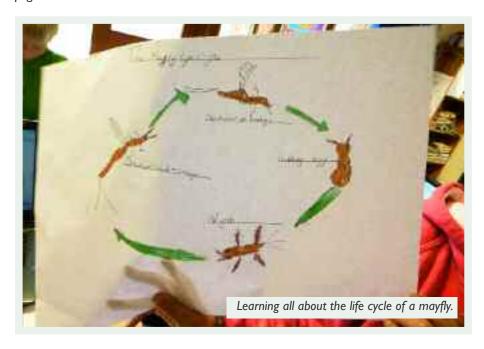
## MAYFLY IN THE CLASSROOM PROJECT – SUE SCOTT

ver the school year of 2013 to 2014, we estimate around 1000 children, at Key Stage I or 2, were involved in our Mayfly in the Classroom project across the UK, which is amazing! A HUGE thank you must go out to all our partners who work so hard in promoting educational projects such as ours to so many early years children – a very important starting place for the future of our rivers.

If you know of a school in your local area that would like to be involved in our project please do contact Sue Scott (details below).

In the summer newsletter we made a request for anyone who would like to volunteer their support with running a project at a school local to them and I am delighted to say we have had some kind volunteers come forward, which is wonderful and will hopefully spread the project further. Please do contact Sue

Scott on 07585122163 or email sscott@wildtrout.org if you would like more information, or visit our project's page on the WTT website.







#### NIGEL HOLMES



Very sad news for the world of river conservation and restoration of the sudden death on the riverbank in early October of Dr. Nigel Holmes. Nigel has been a huge force for good in aquatic ecology and conservation for many years: aquatic plant expert, river mender and founder of the River Restoration Centre. Nigel's new book, Rivers, coauthored with Paul Raven, is reviewed elsewhere in this newsletter.

#### BOOK REVIEWS

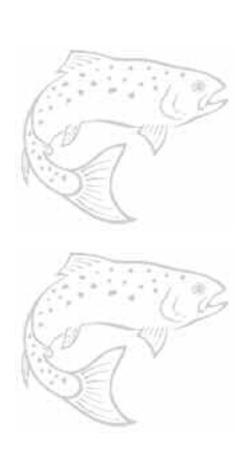
## Rivers by Nigel Holmes and Paul Raven

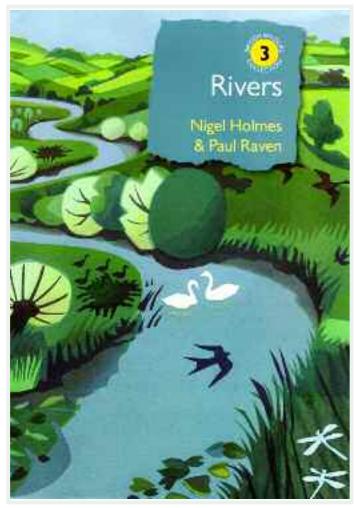
£35, ISBN 978-0956490254, hardback, 432 pages, No.3 in British Wildlife Collection Series, British Wildlife Publishing, tel 01865 811316 www.britishwildlife.com.

This review was written before the sad news of the death of one of the authors, Dr. Nigel Holmes.

Rivers is a weighty tome – quite literally, scaling 3lb loz on my kitchen scales – which reflects the quality of the publication: 432 pages with over 300 colour photographs. Of equal quality is the writing, coming from two highly respected river ecologists. Nigel will

remain a well-known river rehabilitation consultant, aquatic plant expert and founding member of the River Restoration Centre whilst Paul was Head of Conservation and Ecology at the Environment Agency. The book includes chapters on the post-glacial formation of our rivers, man's impact upon them, assessing river health, aquatic and riparian plants, invertebrates, river animals and caring for our rivers once again, plus there are case studies comparing three very different rivers: the Meon, Dee and Endrick. As you would expect from the authors' backgrounds the chapters on plants and assessing river health are particularly strong. This is an authoritative but highly readable book which is essential reading for those involved with rivers in a professional capacity, but also for the naturalist, conservationist, angler and layman alike. Review byTim Jacklin.





#### GAME FAIR 2014.

TT shared stand space at the CLA Game Fair, Blenheim in July 2014 with Aquascience Ltd and Severn Rivers Trust.

Our stand majored on activities for kids - fly tying, colouring, model making and a 'River Monsters' display - aiming to bring life and fun to the stand, drawing in children and their parents to hear our conservation messages. Despite the odd (very) heavy shower, the weather was generally excellent and we tried valiantly to keep our area busy; we had pulses of activity, especially on the Friday and Saturday morning, but other periods of great calm. Fisherman's Village was widely thought to be very quiet, though other parts of the Fair seemed as busy as ever. Maybe it's a reflection of tough times for angling?

A highlight of the event was the raffle ticket sales' efforts of a great team, headed by Nigel Ash that raised over £1000. Despite enormous persistence,

Nigel failed with one notable passer-by, the (then) very new in post Secretary of State for the Environment, Elizabeth Truss, MP. Nigel tried to convince the Minister that she would win the Sage rod he

thrust in her hand; it was apparent that the Minister had no change...

Huge thanks are due to the team of volunteers who helped us throughout: Nigel Ash, Chris (the smaller) Glover, Kris (the considerably larger) Kent, Phil Prowse, Patrick Lloyd, Jon Beer, Dennis Moss, David Fraser and Vaughan Lewis; Don Burgess again helped us all get through the tough times with his peerless Freeminer beer.







#### LODDON AND LYDE RAFFLE WIN – JONATHAN GREY

measly tenner for the chance of a day's fishing? I'd just spent more on two pints of dubious Aussie ale in Perth: Genius, pure genius from those clever bods at the Wild Trout Trust. Pinning a date down was more problematic than the purchase of my raffle tickets and selection of my choice of rivers from the WTT online shop. I'd plonked for the Lyde & Loddon, partly because I'd heard tall tales about them at the WTT annual shindig earlier this year, and partly because I couldn't quite believe such waters existed on the fringes of Basingstoke!

Finally, as the season was waning but the Indian summer was keeping a steady stream of sedges emerging on my river (the Darent) at least, I arranged to meet my host, Charles Carr, and start on the Lyde then move on to the Loddon. The only tell-tale sign that we were effectively in the M4 corridor was that of red kites wheeling overhead! I had been promised a challenge on the Lyde - shallow water, lots of overhanging branches, high straggly bankside veg and I wasn't disappointed. There were plenty of fish to be seen and plenty of fish saw me too! While rises were not particularly forthcoming, sight fishing with a small Rhyacophila nymph was great fun and I was soon into some sparsely spotted, plump and pugnacious Lyde trout.

We shared lunch and a beer on a wooden bridge over the Loddon, and sat as only Peter Pan anglers can, dangling our wadered legs over the edge and watching a shoal of minnows weave over the Berula and gravels. The beat of the Loddon I fished was an eclectic mix of chalkstream characters, each twist and turn throwing up something new. Some bend pools were dark and mysterious and my fly was inspected suspiciously by looming chub. Some glides between stands of crowfoot were classic, iconic, and finally yielded a trout

Loddon and Lyde story continued.

or two to the dry fly. Others confused me — I've never waded a gin clear river alongside dense stands of Phragmites before. But it was all glorious fishing and unfortunately it was over far too soon. I'll be keeping a keen eye out for the next round of river day raffles for next season. Cheers WTT!



#### TRIPLOID BROWN TROUT

TT has spoken at two recent events in the north-east of England on the issue of triploid brown trout, in response to local concerns about their possible impacts in rivers. This piece is the gist of WTT's input.

An ever-increasing library of science indicates that there is enormous genetic variation in wild brown trout populations, not only across the British Isles (e.g. McKeown et al 2010) but also within individual river systems (e.g. the 2009 Dart study by Griffiths et al). The general notion is that that variability confers on trout populations adaptation to local conditions and, with a huge genetic "tool box" born of this variability, likely adaptive solutions to change e.g. from changing climate.

We know too that farmed brown trout in Britain are quite genetically similar (the product of a handful of original sources) and they are genetic aliens in the wild. Domestication on farm also makes these fish poorly adapted for the wild, but if they do somehow survive and are fertile, they can interbreed with true wild fish. In these cases, the "hybrid" young are much less fit for life in the wild and the natural productivity that would have arisen from wild x wild breeding is lost. Continued stocking with fertile brown trout can exacerbate this situation over time, though whether it happens or not is very unpredictable.

It also seems the case that stocking with fertile trout (or salmon) to support wild populations simply doesn't work where there are wild fish. If the

conditions are right and fish can naturally (re)colonise a river, they very likely will do so. If the conditions are not right and whatever the issues are that make those conditions not right are not addressed, no amount of stocking will work. We can look at small-scale hatchery-type schemes (even on benign rivers like the Wylye or the Itchen) right through to massive scale operations like the Spey, the Tyne, on Funen in Denmark or the Connecticut River in Maine and the message seems the same: the contribution to the river and rod catches from hatchery origin fish, even where the adults originate from that same river, is very small to non-existent. Oft-quoted examples like the salmon stocking programme on the Ranga in Iceland work because there is only (at best) a vestigial wild population, unable to sustain itself because of a lack of spawning habitat. The rod-caught fish are the product of ranching: this is effectively a "put-and-take" fishery - if

the (very expensive) stocking stopped, so would rod catches.

WTT is not against stocking – we recognise that many clubs would fold if they could not stock.WTT is not a protriploid lobby. However, the very real risks for wild fish highlighted above, mean that we should not stock with fertile trout. Our position paper on trout stocking on the website carries a few recommendations:

http://www.wildtrout.org/content/troutstocking

Triploid brown trout are not the perfect stock fish: they are perhaps 10% dearer than diploids and there may be issues around availability and they may still cause issues for wild trout through competition, disease transference, displacement but they do not bring with them the risks to wild fish of genetic interference. The work that has been done at Stirling University (Preston et al 2014), on the Itchen (Riley 2013) and previous work by the Game & Wildlife



#### OTHER NEWS

Triploid brown trout continued.

Conservation Trust indicates that triploids are not smolt-eating machines, they don't move with the spawners to hoover up all the wild fish eggs, they don't wander any more than diploids and they rise (if anything) slightly better than their diploid counterparts.

The EA's Trout & Grayling Strategy means that in England and Wales, from I

January 2015, clubs can only stock with triploid brown trout or fish from wild broodstock schemes. The latter are fraught with issues and in all probability; they will not be the solution to more fish in the river.

The risks from fertile, stocked trout are undoubtedly loose change in the context of the huge challenges that our trout are facing: climate change,

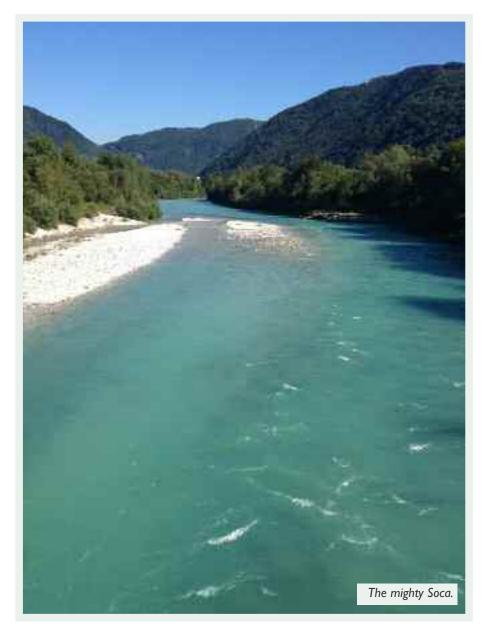
abstraction, water quality, land management, river modification and so on. But (and this is a big but) fishery managers and fishing clubs can only do a limited amount to influence these bigpicture issues. What we can all do now is eliminate the risk to our wild trout from interbreeding with farm reared, fertile stocked trout — when we stock, it's with infertile triploids.

## THE INTERNATIONAL TROUT MASTER CLASS, SLOVENIA, AUGUST 2014

ugust 2014 saw people come Atogether in Tolmin, Slovenia from seventeen countries, from as far afield as USA and Iran, for the first ever International Trout Master class (ITM). This week-long event set out to inspire the next generation of trout conservationists, very largely privately funded by Rene Beaumont of the Continental Trout Conservation Fund. WTT supported the attendance of two British students, Matt Penny and Tom Bird, together with another UK charity, **Action for Conservation** (http://www.actionforconservation.or g/); this is their story of the event.

The story of Tolmin, its angling club, the Soca River and the incredibly close tie with the marble trout (Salmo marmoratus) might well be known to seasoned WTT members and trout fishers. We arrived knowing only a little about these things but the importance of the river and its trout to the people of Tolmin became ever more apparent as we went through the week. It should also be that the way the fishery is managed gives lessons for trout fishery management across the world, including the UK.

Day one of the ITM saw us introduced to the conservation success story of marmoratus, a success built on close cooperation between the scientific community, represented by Dr. Alain Crivelli and Dr. Ales Snoj and the Angling Club of Tolmin, with a crucial role played by vet Dusan Jesenek who heads the practical application of that science. They are using the very latest scientific techniques to restore genetically pure marble trout populations that have been introgressed by non-native, introduced



brown trout. They have a large fish farm (and are building an even larger one) that holds genetically pure marble trout broodstock held in complete isolation to try to avoid domestication. Any stocking to the river from these broodstock is as eyed eggs, again to attempt to reduce domestication. Stock manipulation like this might not be everyone's cup of tea, but the Club and their scientific advisors felt it essential since some of the wild populations of marbles had been reduced to handfuls in number by a range of factors, with no chance of colonization from downstream because of impassable barriers. Angling income is estimated to be approx. 5 million euros per year; this, combined with the great foresight of the Angling Club, drives the success story of the Soca. This day too we saw our first marbles, electric fished from a Soca tributary as a demonstration.

Day two provided talks (including WTT's Director, Shaun Leonard) that outlined the range of factors impacting rivers across Europe and what's being done to try to make life better for our rivers. The scale of dam building (for hydropower) is beyond our wildest dreams (nightmares?) - hundreds of huge schemes are planned or under construction across Europe. There's a crazy paradox in that in some countries (e.g. Spain) big dams are being taken down and put up on the same river at the same time! This day we also heard the extraordinary story of Iceland's giant trout of Lake Þingvallavatn from former Icelandic Foreign Minister, Össur Skarphéðinsson. It's a tale of the

devastation of a trout population as an unintended consequence of a dam construction at the mouth of the lake.

Day three saw some excellent presentations from Spain, France, Slovenia and USA. Alfonso Soria outlined the work in Spain of the NGO Rios con Vida, which is very similar to WTT, run on an absolute shoe string. The show was stolen by John Zablocki, formerly of Trout Unlimited in USA, now with The Nature Conservancy. John managed to weave Kenny Rogers and Mike Tyson into a compelling story about the need to reframe ecological issues and the conservation debate to fit the audience. He outlined the successes won in Nevada by stressing to farmers the gains in water and grass for their cattle from rewilding their creeks; the ecological bonus for the creeks has been huge.

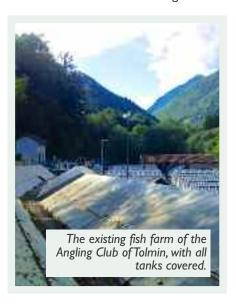
Day four was an eclectic mix of talks from the Lar National Park in Iran (with its giant brown trout), through WWF's work with Alpine rivers, how to win money for conservation work and finally, the importance of connecting conservation messages with the mass media. Hans van Klinken (the creator of the Klinkhammer) regaled us with an inspirational talk on his work developing fishing in British Columbia and included some spectacular footage of salmon taking dry flies.

Our last day, day five, was the chance for the students to tell their stories and what they had gained from the week.

So, what did we gain from the International Trout Master-class? We gained friends across Europe and beyond, more information in a week

than was imaginable, an experience of an extraordinary river and its conservation and bucketful's of inspiration to bring back to the UK for the conservation of our own rivers and their trout. Our down time allowed us to fish the incredible Soca and its tributaries tough but awesome. Many thanks to WTT for putting us on a plane and getting us to Tolmin, to Rene Beaumont of the Continental Trout Fund for running the whole show, to Gasper Jesenek of Soca Fly for a brilliantly organized week and to the people and Angling Club of Tolmin for hosting us so perfectly.

P.S.WTT's Salmo journal 2015 will include articles from a number of the ITM contributors, including the story of the Angling Club of Tolmin and their marbled trout. The full version of Matt and Tom's tale is on the Action for Conservation through its website: www.actionforconservation.org.







#### RIVER DUN – A POINT TO START

Simon and Amanda Goddard had an amazing opportunity to own a little piece of the Dun and make a real difference to the wild trout habitat in what was a neglected and tired stretch. Mike Blackmore, WTT Conservation Officer, went to see them offering advice on how to proceed and with the help of family and friends they have made tremendous progress - this is their story..

We had an offer accepted for the purchase in July 2013 of a neglected piece of land which included a stretch of the River Dun and immediately started to make plans regarding the restoration of the river.

Faced with impenetrable banks and river because vegetation had grown unchecked for about thirty years, it was hard to see the full extent of what needed doing. However plans included clearing the river, felling trees, cutting and mowing the banks, widening the river and creating an inline pond to the side of the river.

Shortly after our offer was accepted, but before we gained title, we visited the Game Fair and met the team at the WTT, became members, and immediately arranged a site visit with Mike Blackmore to give us some guidance.

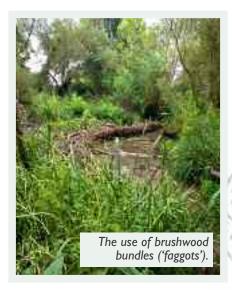
The visit and subsequent report regarding our river, along with the information on the WTT website was invaluable and certainly started our education on how to manage a piece of

"Our first catch!"

river. As result of the input of the WTT, we dropped several of our original plans, and set on a modified course of action. We had a far better idea of how to improve the health of the river.

After agreeing the action plan and benefiting from a practical site visit by Mike, the hard work began to restore the river and create a chalk steam we could be proud of!

So far the river has been cleared of fallen trees, and debris, as well as far more light let in by extensive felling of surrounding willow trees and scrub. In addition the use of faggots in strategic places has aided flow in sluggish, wide expanses of water. Large woody debris was left in position where it was helping



the health of the river.

Extensive trapping of crayfish and the control of mink has started to significantly reduce their numbers. Although we are aware of the debate that surrounds both forms of control, as the numbers were out of control we believe this is a worthwhile exercise to give the fish a better chance to breed and survive in all their stages in the future

Initial signs of improvement are encouraging as water flows are far better, and where there was little gravel and plenty of silt, the river seems to be cleaning itself, albeit slowly. River fly monitoring has begun but too early to report anything meaningful. There appears to be a better stock of fish and

the only fishing trip this year yielded three brown trout. All returned safely to the river.

The future is eagerly anticipated as more works are scheduled and no doubt we will be calling on the expertise of the WTT again to ensure we continue to low in the right direction. There is a long way to go, but the journey is exciting and rewarding!



#### **NEW MERCHANDISE**

## T-shirts from Eat, Sleep, Fish

Pete Tyjas - Devon Guide, editor of the excellent online free magazine: Eat, Sleep, Fish (ESF) and supporter of the WTT – is donating all the profits from selling ESF Tee shirts to the Wild Trout Trust.

The Tee shirts have the Eat, Sleep, Fish logo on the front, the Wild Trout Trust logo on the right sleeve and the words 'Dry Fly Addict' on the back. They are only available in blue at the moment. Price is £19.99 plus £2.00 postage and packing for delivery in the UK.

Go to the Eat, Sleep, Fish website to purchase and to read the latest of edition of this excellent not for profit magazine (and no adverts!)

http://eat-sleepfish.co.uk/content/2014/09/eat-sleep-fish -t-shirts

Our HUGE thanks go to Pete Tyjas for his tremendous support to the WTT.

## Rod measures and length/ weight cards

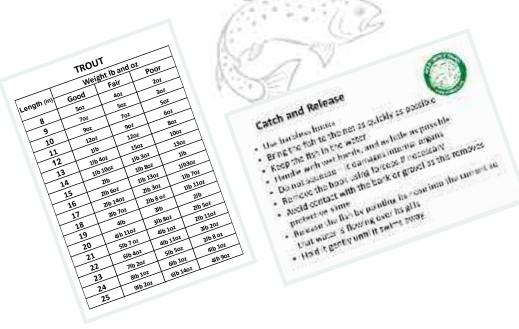
The WTT encourages catch and release, with careful handling of fish before a quick return to the river, but many anglers want to know 'exactly how much does that fish weigh?'.

Now you can calculate the weight quickly and easily with the WTT rod measures and length / weight cards. Simply stick the measure on the lower section of your rod (it is self -adhesive), measure your fish, assess its condition (good, average or poor) and look up the weight on the length / weight card, which is waterproof and designed to fit in your pocket. And it's all in good old fashioned inches and pounds!

Measures and cards are available on the WTT website or call the WTT office to place your order. Only £3.00 per set!







#### **MERCHANDISE**

II WTT merchandise can be ordered via the Shop on our website at http://www.wildtrout.org/; by sending your order and cheque to the WTT Office; or by debit/credit

card over the phone - call the WTT Office on 023 9257 0985. All postage prices are for the UK, please enquire for overseas.

**Snowbee Fishing Shirt** £39.99 + £3.20 p&p sizes M, L, XL, XXL

**ORVIS** fishing cap £15 + £3.20 p&p one size





#### THERE IS ALSO SOME **EXCITING NEW** MERCHANDISE ON PAGE 23



Car stickers and mugs Car stickers - £1.50 Mugs - £9 + £3.20 p&p



**Fulling Mill Evening Rise** Fly Selection £9 + £3.20 p&p.



Fold-out chart Freshwater name trail (a guide to animals found in streams and ponds) £3 + £1.50 p&p.









- The Uplands River Habitat Manual £10 + £2 p&p
- The Chalkstream Habitat Manual £10 + £2 p&p
- Urban Rivers Restoration Guidelines £10 + £2 p&p
- Rivers Working for Wild Trout£10 + £2 p&p

#### **Paperbacks**

- Simple Guide to Caddis Larvae -£6 + £1.50 p&p.
- Guide to the Adult Caddis Flies or Sedge Flies -£3.80 + £1.50 p&p.
- Guide to the British Stonefly (Plecoptera) families - £3.80 + £1.50 p&p.
- A Pictorial Guide to British Ephemeroptera (Mayflies) - £15 + £2.50 p&p.
- The Wild Trout Survival Guide -£10 + £2.16 p&p.



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