



WILD TROUT TRUST SUMMER 2014

News

ANNUAL DRAW 2014

To be drawn at 7pm, Tuesday 9 December 2014 at The Thomas Lord, West Meon, Hants. Tickets are available via the enclosed order form or from the shop on our website. Thank you for your support and good luck!

FIRST PRIZE

Kindly donated by Sage – A Sage One 9ft 4-weight rod, worth £669.

SECOND PRIZE

Kindly donated by The Peacock at Rowsley & Haddon Fisheries, worth £575 – one night's accommodation in a larger double/twin room for 2 people with 3-course dinner and buffet breakfast, plus 2 high-season tickets to fish the Derbyshire Wye.

THIRD PRIZE

Kindly donated by The Wild Trout Trust, worth £250 – A day of quality fly fishing for wild trout at a location in the south, midlands or north of England, accompanied by your chosen WTT Conservation Officer.

FOURTH PRIZE

Kindly donated by Orvis, worth £215 – a 9ft, 5wt Orvis Clearwater Frequent Flyer Travel Fly Rod.

FIFTH PRIZE

Kindly donated by Phoenix Lines, worth £150. The Standard Line – Trout. A 30-yard fly line made of the purest, finest silk.

THE SUN REALLY DOES SHINE ON THE RIGHTEOUS...

The WTT Annual Gathering 2014 was held over the weekend of 6, 7 & 8 June on the banks of the River Chess in Buckinghamshire, together with the River Chess Association (RCA) and the excellent support of Thames Water and Affinity Water. We had an absolute blast, not least because we were spoiled by glorious weather despite a forecast that threatened sporadic stormy deluges.

Friday 6 June saw a dozen locals and WTT members assemble for Anglers Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) training, courtesy of the Riverfly Partnership. Piquancy was added to the day in that the course leader, Allen Beechey, was being assessed as an ARMI trainer. The delegates enjoyed the day, as did Allen after he'd been given his trainer stripes by RP Coordinator, Ben Fitch.



IN THIS ISSUE

News and Notices pages 2–3
Annual Gathering front, pages 4–7
Staff Updates pages 8–11

Other News pages 12–15
Conservation News pages 16–19
Merchandise page 20

WHAT CAN WE DO WITH YOUR DONATION?

WTT is blessed by many generous donations throughout the year, sometimes on a multiple scale (e.g. donation of lots for our annual auction), sometimes as rolling annual donations or sometimes just as one-offs.

We strive to ensure that we use well whatever monies we gather, including your donations. Recently, we have again benefited from a donation from Butts Brewery of Hungerford who give us 5p for every bottle sold of their superb Barbus beer. Last year, we were overjoyed with £316 from Butts but this year that rose to a delightful £487. What might that buy? It will buy one of our

southern Conservation Officers, Mike Blackmore, a pair of virtually bullet-proof Cordura chesties and keep him dry for a good few years.

That, of course, could mean that WTT's other southern Conservation Officer, Andy Thomas, has no such chesties and has to make do with his leaky old breathables. Not so. Thanks to a very kind donation from Gresham Anglers, following a talk to them by Denise Ashton, Andy too will be kitted out with new, super-dry chesties.

This seems like good, practical use of your money, making life better for our rivers and their trout. Thank you all and please keep those donations coming in.

AUCTION REPORT AND RAFFLE

The auction held in March was our biggest (260 lots) and most successful (£57,668) yet. Thank you to all the very generous donors and bidders for making it such a success.

The auction is very important in a number of ways. Obviously, it is a tremendous source of funds for us and all the publicity around the auction helps to raise the profile of the WTT to a wide audience. Another important benefit is that it shows the enormous diversity of wild trout fishing that is available, often at reasonable cost, and gives access to otherwise exclusive fishing. The auction is now so successful that often we receive comments that the lots go for high prices; this is true for some (but not all) lots – it is a fundraiser after all and our donors are delighted to see their fishing day raise a good amount for the Trust. However, over a third of lots sell for less than the guide price, with a good number sold to postal bidders. Please don't be put off from bidding – there is no real pattern to the price each lot achieves in the auction, some years you can win a lot at a good price. The point to remember is the way that both the eBay and postal bidding works: you place a bid for the maximum you want to pay, but the bidding starts at the reserve and only goes up when someone bids against you. If your competing bidder's maximum bid is lower than yours, you win the lot at whatever point the bidding stops, which will be at or below your maximum bid.

In addition, we are now raffling fishing days, again thanks to our generous supporters who donate days. This is complementary to the auction, being another way that we can both raise money and give access to otherwise exclusive fishing that is not available as day tickets. We will offer a range of fishing from chalk streams to small spate



Tim Jacklin sporting his Cordura chesties, modified for chainsaw use. Recent donations will allow Andy Thomas and Mike Blackmore to look equally fetching.

Auction report and raffle continued from page 2.

streams across the UK. The tickets are £10 each, but only 50 tickets are sold for each fishing day so the chance to win is much better than a normal raffle; you buy ticket(s) for the day you want. Tickets are sold via the website shop or by phoning Christina in the office. We will run a number of raffles through the year, and hope to include grayling fishing in the autumn. Members will be emailed with the details a few days before the tickets become available and tickets will be on sale for a month or so. Please let Christina have your email address if we don't already have it so that you will be included in the advance notice – office@wildtrout.org. If you would like to donate a fishing day, please contact Denise – dashton@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
- J Vater Oxford
- Guy Beech, Wadhurst
- D S W 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

DIARY DATES

Friday 18 to 20 July 2014

CLA Game Fair

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire
Visit the WTT stand and enjoy the largest country event of the year.
www.gamefair.co.uk or
tel. 0845 612 2052.

Sunday 5 October 2014

Burton-on-Trent 4th Game Fishing and Fly Tying Festival

Burton Town Hall
10 am – 5 pm
For details contact Ray 01773761645,
email: fliesbywendyg@homecall.co.uk
or visit website: <http://www.burton-on-trentgamefishingandflytyingfestival.co.uk>.

Wednesday 15 October 2014

WTT Conservation Awards

Savile Club, London.

Saturday 25 & 26 October 2014

Grayling Weekend

The Haddon Estate, Derbyshire
The Haddon Estate has kindly offered us grayling fishing again this year on 25 & 26 October 2014. There are 15 places available each day. Please contact Christina via: office@wildtrout.org to book a place for either or both days.

Until 31 July priority will be given to members who have not fished a WTT Grayling Weekend before. The cost will be £35 per person per day which is payable on confirmation of a place.

Saturday 7 & 8 February 2015

British Fly Fair International

Stafford
www.bffi.co.uk or tel. 01782 388382.

March 2015

Wild Trout Trust Internet and Postal Auction

A fantastic selection of lots including fishing, shooting, books, tackle and more, with all the proceeds supporting the work of the WTT.

March 2015 – Keep an eye on the website for details www.wildtrout.org. If you would like to donate a lot please contact Denise Ashton via dashton@wildtrout.org or tel. 07802 454157.

Friday 5 to 7 June 2015

WTT Annual Gathering

Ribble Rivers Trust, based at Waddow Hall, Clitheroe, Lancashire
More details will follow but please get the dates in your diary.

THE SUN REALLY DOES SHINE ON THE RIGHTEOUS...

Annual Gathering report continued from front page.

The Saturday is the real meat in the sandwich of a WTT gathering, a day of talks, river walks and an evening supper. The morning saw a series of some simply outstanding talks introduced by WTT Director, Shaun Leonard, who described the good stuff WTT had done in the previous year and plans for the year ahead. WTT is maintaining the pace of its Advisory Visits, reaching new areas but also filling in gaps on rivers between previous advisory work. There is still an extremely high rate of conversion of advice to practical application in, or by, the river which is the real acid test of what WTT does. What's been very noticeable is the increase in delivery of practical demonstration events where WTT Conservation Officers get in the river with a diverse range of local interests to show them some of the (simple?) techniques we extol to make life better for our rivers and their inhabitants. In 13/14, WTT's influence spread geographically from the Isle of Wight to County Tyrone, and from Norfolk to Galway. WTT's website, as a hub of information dissemination, appears to be a really good success, attracting over 17,000 unique visits and around 20,000 information downloads per month.

But WTT's year hasn't been all roses – Shaun highlighted ever-increasing competition for funding in the world of aquatic conservation and staff changes, including the departure of Ben Tysler and our Conservation Officer, Gareth Pedley (see the piece on Gareth on page 9).

The year ahead sees WTT continue to focus on its day job of providing high quality advice and practical help at tremendous value for rod licence money through the EA, for the benefit of our rivers and their trout. We're going to expand our Trout in the Town group, recruit a new Conservation Officer in the north, deliver an ambitious project with Thames Water on Rivers & Wetland Community Days and write a book on trout biology and ecology to complement the range of WTT's other information media.

The second talk of the morning came from Nancy Young, Biodiversity Officer



with the EA, who extolled the many benefits of partnership-working. Nancy highlighted the work that she has done with WTT in the Colne catchment where, over two years, practical demonstration events have involved over 200 volunteers from 60 organisations, all pulling together to make life better for our streams and rivers. These events have crucially been actively supported by the local water companies (Thames and Affinity), taking lunch breaks to spread word on water usage and drain misconnections.

Allen Beechey, Chilterns Chalkstreams Project Officer with the Chilterns Conservation Board, returned to the stage to describe the work of his project. The Chilterns has a number of magical but abused chalkstreams, subject to historical and modern-day modification, over-abstraction and pollution. The iconic water vole has made a significant recovery in the Chilterns, especially on the Chess, driven by habitat improvements and control programmes on mink.

Construction of HS2 may well impact heavily on the Chilterns chalkstreams; there are fears that some streams, such as the Misbourne, might even disappear, draining along the newly built tunnel tube!

Roger Wotton, Emeritus Professor at University College London, gave a brilliant and riveting talk on the value of exopolymers in streams. Exopolymers are everywhere, from the slime protecting the skin of our trout, through to the stuff that grows on submerged rocks, making them slippery. Roger's talk drifted through the deep oceans and the Adriatic before coming right back into the Chess where the faecal matter of a host of invertebrates is bound by exopolymers and sinks to the river bed to act as food for scavenging invertebrates and aquatic plants.

Jon Grey of Queen Mary University of London described his fascinating line of research, using isotopes of carbon and nitrogen in a fish's tissues to rebuild the food chain of which it is a part. He needs no more than a scale or other



support the Third Sector, including WTT, in maintaining and enhancing aquatic habitats.

Paul Jennings of RCA completed the morning round of talks, outlining the issues facing the river and what the Association is doing to help. Paul's belief is that abstraction is the single greatest threat to the Chess; whilst on our weekend the river was flowing strongly (and holding some great wild trout!), an extended dry spell sees the river disappear in many places. RCA works hard with its local water companies, acting as a scrutinising, critical 'friend'!

After our 'morning' of talks (which over-ran by 75 minutes, such was the questioning!), we walked the Chess to look at its beauty, some of its issues and the work that RCA have been doing. Despite the obvious presence of sewage in the river (ironically the result of extremely high groundwater levels), the invertebrate community looked really healthy, with big numbers of *Gammarus*, olives and cased caddis.

Continues on page 6.



body piece to analyse what that fish has fed on in its past. For example, Jon is able to recognise from his analyses trout that have been to sea or ferox that are either cannibals or char feeders. Jon is keen to apply his work to establish whether the feeding niche of triploid stocked trout differs in any way from that of diploids or wild trout.

Richard Aylard of Thames Water, a

long-time WTT supporter, presented a dramatic picture of recent droughts very nearly reaching a point of crisis where water supply to London would be under the direction of the Government's COBRA committee rather than the water companies! He described the challenges of a sewerage system much of which is Victorian but also pledged Thames Water's drive to



Annual Gathering report continued from page 5.

Saturday evening's informal dinner was a culinary triumph, courtesy of caterer *par excellence* and birthday girl, Jenna Gray (a Kiwi who didn't seem to know about the All Blacks v England test match – can it be true?). The oil for our supper came courtesy of Butts Brewery at Hungerford, another top class WTT supporter (see the piece on how you can drink Butts beer and donate to WTT). And to top off what had been a splendid day, WTT President, Charles Rangeley-Wilson, gave a simply superb and fascinating talk on The Acclimitisation of the Salmonidae in the Antipodes (or, how trout got to Tasmania).

The Sunday of WTT gathering weekends usually involves fishing and we were blessed and thankful that so many Chilterns fisheries offered up water for our guests, plus some as far afield as the Great Ouse, Glocs Coln and Pang. The bright sunshine made fishing tricky, but James Wishart took a 20in wild fish from a Chilterns stream – possibly 3½ lbs – is this a WTT Annual Gathering record?

Our venue for the gathering was Restore Hope at Latimer, near Chesham. It is a perfect meeting venue, incredibly well-equipped and welcoming. Restore Hope's Director, James Ray, offered these words to WTT...

"I hope you enjoyed your time at Latimer Park this weekend – it's a special place and I know many of you were inspired by the natural beauty. In case you were wondering, the vision of Restore Hope is that people everywhere will experience kindness and find hope for the future as a result of our activities and input. We use our facilities, the countryside and our message of hope to try to bring about lasting change in the lives of children and families – especially to benefit the most helpless and vulnerable in society. The charity has countless examples of significant change and positive influence over recent years and is well supported by a group of loyal and committed volunteers.

Restore Hope is a Christian organisation – inspired by Jesus Christ – and is committed to promoting the transformational message of living life by his example. However, whilst we are a faith-based organisation, we are not faith biased and seek to connect with people of all



faiths and none. We love people and are not motivated by attention or accolade for our work, rather we hope that our input will educate, inspire and support others who will, in turn, multiply the effect of this work in their own way.

So if you were inspired and would like to help out, please contact us and join in, or just get on with it wherever you are!

We hope to see you again, please keep in touch or support us via our website: www.restorehope.org.uk."

It's always good to see existing WTT members and those yet to become members at our Annual Gatherings. The 2014 event was out of the top drawer. We'll try to make the 2015 gathering a worthy match, at Clitheroe, Lancashire,

close to the Ribble, on Saturday 6 & Sunday 7 June 2015 – keep an eye on the WTT website for more information.





MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA – TIM JACKLIN, WTT CONSERVATION OFFICER

Habitat Demo Day, River Roden

The River Roden, a tributary of the Severn near Shrewsbury, was the venue for a demonstration day of practical habitat improvement techniques this March.

Over 20 people turned up and pulled on their waders to gain practical experience that they could take away and apply on their own waters. The delegates were from angling clubs, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, a land agent and the Environment Agency Fisheries

and Operations Teams. The day began with a walk and talk along the bank with WTT's Tim Jacklin, highlighting the good and bad aspects of river habitat and what could be done. The techniques demonstrated included soft revetment with brushwood to provide bank protection and excellent juvenile trout habitat, hinging small trees into the margins of the river and making "tree kickers" – dense tree crowns anchored at the river edge to provide instant

cover. The latter provided a valuable lesson in how good hawthorn is for this technique, but how hard it is to get it to where it's required! Many thanks to the Environment Agency for supporting WTT to provide these days and to EA staff Adam Joseph, Chris Bell and David Carrington for organising the day and to the landowner Chris Leighton for access to the river.



River Roden demonstration day.

UPDATE FROM THE NORTH – GARETH PEDLEY, WTT CONSERVATION OFFICER

Following an Advisory Visit undertaken to the Lumley Burn, Nr Chester-Le-Street in Co Durham, the recommendations of the follow-up report have been initiated by Wear Rivers Trust (WRT), with technical assistance from WTT.

This was a brilliant collaborative effort with the day organised by Steve Hudson, Project Officer for Wear Rivers Trust and involving two days of volunteers from Northumbrian Water and later assistance from Bournmoor Conservation Group. This project nicely complemented previous litter-pick days organised by WRT on the Burn and is an excellent example of how partnership project delivery can be achieved involving volunteers.

Volunteers who, incidentally, soldiered on despite an onslaught from insatiable biting black-flies of the *Simulium* genus.

This Lumley Park Burn project was one of several workshop days that WTT will be involved with in the north of England, both as assistance to clubs and Rivers Trusts, as well as Water Framework Directive-funded workshops for the Environment Agency, demonstrating the trend for greatly increased river habitat improvement activity that is occurring on upland rivers. This trend is also mirrored in the number of requests that are coming in for Wild Trout Trust Advisory Visits across the north. Many northern clubs are now approaching the trust for advice on how or improve their native trout populations through habitat improvements in a move away from stocking. Great news for trout!



Gareth Pedley.

Sad news for WTT – Gareth Pedley, our most northerly Conservation Officer, is leaving us this summer to take up the post of Catchment Fisheries Manager with Eden Rivers Trust.

The tale of Gareth's departure brings mixed feelings for me. Gareth joined WTT in September 2011 in an exciting collaboration with Eden Rivers Trust (ERT) that saw him divide his time between WTT and the River Eden Restoration Strategy. I am gutted that WTT should lose him but equally delighted for Gareth that he has landed a plum job, joyfully advertised by ERT (with tongue firmly in cheek) as "the best fisheries job in the world"!

Without doubt, Gareth has wild trout in his blood, embodying what WTT is about. He has brought his passion and expertise to our group and our cause and has played an excellent role in re-energising WTT's work with clubs and landowners across the north of England. I have known Gareth since he was a lanky student and have enjoyed watching his vocational journey – we will miss him hugely at a professional and personal level.

All that said, there's some happiness: WTT's close ties with ERT continue and for sure we'll work closely with Gareth in his new role, contributing to the wild trout jewel that is Eden.

WTT is working hard to gather funding for a new northern Conservation Officer; we aim to have good news before long.



Volunteers learning valuable practical skills on the Lumley Park Burn.

UPDATE FROM TROUT IN THE TOWN – PAUL GASKELL, PROGRAMME MANAGER

As well as developing links with potential urban partners in the Midlands/Leicestershire area, Trout in the Town has been strongly engaged with the Catchment Based Approach movement in both Yorkshire (Don Catchment) and Lancashire (Douglas Catchment).

In addition, the production, ratification and launch of Sheffield's official strategy for managing its waterways (from green infrastructure, habitat & water quality, community engagement and sustainable approaches to flood water management) has seen significant input from myself as the

representative of the WTT. To mark both the ratification by cabinet and the official signing of the strategy – along with the River Restoration Centre's annual conference – a week-long series of events were organised and held in Sheffield, christened "One Big River Week", the aims of the waterways strategy chimed notably with the themes of people and urban waterways that were prevalent in this year's RRC conference. Many local volunteer groups contributed commemorative activities – and were able to promote their events and profiles via a central website that also carried core messages to residents

in the local community (<https://sites.google.com/site/sheffieldonebigriver/home>). Additionally, I've been developing some great projects in North Yorkshire (Thornton Beck) and Derbyshire (Derwent) as well as delivering Mayfly in the Classroom training to Hillsborough College and even providing some remote assistance to Lochaber Rivers Trust in their delivery of Mayfly in the Classroom in Scottish Schools.

Paul Gaskell 07919 157 267
pgaskell@wildtrout.org

UPDATE FROM THE SOUTH & WEST – ANDY THOMAS & MIKE BLACKMORE WTT CONSERVATION OFFICERS

In the last few years, the demand for WTT help to provide practical training in river habitat management and improvement techniques has rocketed. The success of our River Habitat Workshop programme has been largely down to the national financial support provided by the EA and also down to local EA officers such as the inspirational Nancy Young and Rob Pearson to help make it happen.

This spring's programme of events saw Mike Blackmore and Andy Thomas providing support for EA teams on planned events such as the 'Loddon Rivers Week'. Two days were spent in helping local volunteers to introduce shape and form to a newly dug, sinuous channel on the Upper Blackwater in north Hampshire. This project was overseen by Karen Twine and Matt Drew of the EA, alongside volunteers from the local nature reserve as well as staff and volunteers from the Wildlife Trust and Blackwater Valley Project. Lots of good work was achieved and great fun had by all.

A week later saw me (Andy) on the banks of the little Rye Brook in Surrey, a tributary of the River Mole. A two-day workshop was planned in partnership

with the land owner, Mrs Daphne Burnett and staff and volunteers from the Surrey Wildlife Trust; Jo Heisse oiled the 'consenting and permissions' wheels and a 100m section of channel was

transformed. As well as pulling out a small weir and pegging in brush bundles to eroding banks, the use of a 5 tonne excavator demonstrated the value of having low banks with boggy margins



Securing large woody debris.

rather than vertical cliffs, a legacy of past drainage work. Two low, flat berms were created and plants transplanted from nearby ditch systems to kick-start the recovery.

Our final fling of the River Habitat Workshop season came when we spent six long hard days working on rivers in the Colne catchment with Nancy and Rob. I say six days, in fact it was three for me and five for Mike – he has youth on his side after all! I should also mention at this point that friend of WTT, Luke Kozak, and even the Director himself pitched in on a couple of days. For a ‘soft-handed’ pen-pusher Shaun certainly knows how to swing a fencing maul! (Director’s response: “All lies – I only know how to split chestnut posts with a maul.”)

One day was spent working with the EA Operations staff for this area, which was both informative and challenging. Exchanging views on river maintenance and management techniques, whilst working up to your waist in water with professionals who have priorities for protecting people’s homes and land from flooding, was extremely valuable and hopefully everybody went home with some new skills and knowledge.

During this six-day feast of in-channel activity we managed to create improved habitat on the three sites on the Colne, two on the Misbourne with two good days work completed on the Bulbourne at Boxmoor. Of more importance was the fact that we worked with, trained and hopefully enthused at least 120 workshop delegates, ranging from local volunteers to full-time professionals employed in conservation.



Luke Kozak, working with WTT’s Mike Blackmore, points out the scouring work of LWD on the River Gade.



Creating new habitat with a brushwood mattress in the Colne catchment.

Action for the River Kennet – Redd Training Day for Volunteers

The WTT joined this wonderful organisation for a day’s training of volunteers. ARK has a fantastic 100 volunteers involved in a variety of aspects of river work. A number of the volunteers have shown an interest in becoming fully trained redd spotters, an important role for

monitoring wild trout habitat and areas of improvement.

Andy Thomas of the WTT joined Harry Forbes of ARK in the training session which, held on 29 January, was scuppered by the swollen river Kennet which was not giving away any of its secrets. Instead Harry and Andy chatted

to the enthusiastic volunteers about redd locations, importance of monitoring and the ecology of the brown trout.

A really good morning of partnership work and sharing of information.

MAYFLY IN THE CLASSROOM PROJECT – SUE SCOTT

In January this year I took over from Ben Tyser, who began rolling out this project with huge enthusiasm and success previously. Building on Ben's good work has been great fun; I have had wonderful opportunities to visit a number of schools across Hampshire, Sussex, Middlesex, Kent and Dorset where smiley faces and excited children take on the care of the mayfly they find in local rivers and streams' beginning the process of understanding the importance of biodiversity in our beautiful waters.

Additionally I have had the opportunity to support and learn from existing project-providers who continue to inspire children with the MiC project covering Scotland to the South of England. Partnership-building has

continued through links formed with Rivers Trusts and organisations across the UK; I have met and spoken to some very enthusiastic education-providers and their success is wonderful.

This year we have put together a MiC box, which can be reused year after year in schools. If you are a teacher or have contact with your local school and feel they would benefit from our project please do let us know.

Could you support us by volunteering in your local school?

The WTT is really looking to try and offer MiC in as many schools as possible; however we will need more pairs of hands to make this possible! This project lends itself to a committed local contact and could be a fantastic

way for someone with a keen interest in teaching or ecology to support their local school. The time-commitment would involve just one day and a little time chatting on the phone! The WTT would like to support an army of volunteers who could go into their local school to support our project and have a fantastic, fun day! What could be nicer, a day at the river with youngsters exploring what lives beneath our waters and how important these tiny bugs and beasties are to maintaining healthy ecosystems. Training and expenses would of course be covered; if you would like to be involved, or find out more please contact Sue Scott on 07585122163 or email sscott@wildtrout.org.



All the equipment needed in a box.



Simple and reusable!

WORLD FISH MIGRATION DAY 2014



The Wild Trout Trust was a partner in World Fish Migration Day 2014, a one-day global initiative to create awareness and improve public understanding of the importance of open rivers and migratory fish.

Free migration for fish is crucial to achieve healthy fish stocks. While most fish are migratory to some degree, some species like salmon, sturgeon, trout, dourada, shad, lamprey, giant catfish and eel migrate thousands of kilometres to complete their life cycles. If they can't migrate, the population will die out. This has happened with many species in different places around the world already.

In many regions of the world, like in the Mekong river basin, millions of people rely on migratory fish as a food source. We have built so many barriers in rivers that it is very hard for migratory fish to reproduce. In the current situation, migratory fish are threatened and fish stocks are declining rapidly around the world. They are particularly threatened by barriers such as weirs, dams and sluices; built for water management, hydropower and land drainage.

On 24 May this year, there was more than 200 events arranged by local organisations around the world, starting in New Zealand, following the sun and ending on the west coast of North America. World Fish Migration Day brought global attention to the need for open rivers and free routes for fish migration, delivered international press coverage and developed a global petition to be presented to politicians worldwide. For more information see www.worldfishmigrationday.com, follow World Fish Migration Day on Facebook, and Twitter @WFMD2014.

FLOODING AND DREDGING

Successive winters of truly extraordinary rainfall have led to unprecedented flooding in parts of the UK, most recently causing disaster for people on the Somerset Levels and elsewhere in southern England, with much ill-founded criticism of the Environment Agency and calls for river-dredging.

We were concerned at the apparent lack of objectivity and balance in the debate and the looming danger that dredging could become widely applied to our rivers, doing more harm than good and undoing the decades of improvement work since dredging was last thought to be the universal panacea. So, WTT worked with a group of NGOs in support of the CIWEM report, Floods and Dredging – a reality check, available through the WTT website (www.wildtrout.org/news/floods-and-dredging-water-engineers-view). We provided a number of case studies illustrating the possible consequences of dredging through accelerated movement of water through the catchment and habitat destruction. WTT's video Unintended Effects of Dredging is good viewing through our video hub at www.wildtrout.org/content/video-hub.

WTT's Tim Jacklin wrote most eloquently on the topic in the 2014 edition of our *Salmo trutta* magazine (p38), concluding that 'ruining rivers by dredging will set us back decades, waste millions already spent on fixing the damage done previously and, crucially, not help alleviate extreme flooding such as we have seen this [2013/14] winter'.

FOOTNOTE: On 17 June 2014 the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Parliamentary Select Committee published their report on the Winter Floods 2013-14. It was very disappointing to see the Committee Report call for more dredging and a relaxation of regulation on watercourse maintenance without any apparent recognition of the potential for environmental harm. The report does note that dredging 'should not be seen as an all-purpose solution' but it is worrying that so many years of work and so much funding will be wasted if dredging does become a widespread tool in river maintenance rather than looking at land management practices as a major contributor to flooding in catchments.



The product of unconsented dredging of gravels on the River Lowther, Cumbria. This river should enjoy the highest level of conservation designation, being a Special Area of Conservation for salmon (photo by L Greasley).

INTENSIVE REMOVAL OF SIGNAL CRAYFISH (PACIFASTICUS LENIUSCULUS) FROM RIVERS INCREASES NUMBERS AND TAXON RICHNESS OF MACROINVERTEBRATE SPECIES.

A paper published this year in the journal *Ecology and Evolution* (Moorhouse et al. *Ecology and Evolution* 2014; 4(4): 494-504) describes a study involving the experimental systematic removal (and humane dispatching) of signal crayfish in two tributaries of the Thames.

The experiment used standardised trapping methods for both crayfish and invertebrates in a 100m reach over a 4 month period to determine if there was an inverse correlation between the catch per unit effort (CPUE) of crayfish and both the count and taxon richness of invertebrate samples. Trapping was also undertaken through 90m sections of each river upstream and downstream of the crayfish removal sites in order to ascertain the effect of the removals on nearby crayfish movements. Control sites were also used where crayfish were trapped but not removed.

The results showed a fivefold increase in macroinvertebrate numbers at

the lowest crayfish densities. This result is consistent with expectations that crayfish predation pressures are a principal limiting factor on the presence and abundance of macroinvertebrate species. The study also suggested that crayfish densities and distributions within the study reaches were partially compensated by crayfish migrating from outside of the section.

Whilst the study offers a ray of hope for fisheries plagued by signal crayfish, it should be noted that the trapping regime was relatively intensive (a pair of traps every 5m within the trapping reach) and as yet no evidence is available to determine what effect the sudden ceasing of trapping will have had on the remaining crayfish population.

The suggested immigration effect of the trapping could support the old mantra that nature abhors a vacuum. Also worth considering is the fact that traps usually exclude the smallest juvenile crayfish, which are otherwise often prey for larger crayfish. Could these fac-

tors contribute towards a population explosion if trapping were to suddenly halt?

With this question in mind, fishery managers thinking about intensive trapping as a method of controlling signal populations should carefully consider if they have the appropriate resources to continue such efforts long-term.

There is further crayfish trapping research ongoing, led by Paul Stebbing at the CEFAS Weymouth laboratory who is working with EA, Angling Trust and local groups to look at trapping methods and their efficacy on capping crayfish numbers in several study stillwater sites in England.



Signal crayfish. Photo: Chas Spreadbury.



The next generation!

WILD TROUT IN THE PEAK DISTRICT

Ashbourne Fly Fishing Club was formed in the 1920s by a group of sporting gentlemen to enjoy wild trout fishing on some beautiful waters in one of the most picturesque parts of England, Derbyshire's Peak District.

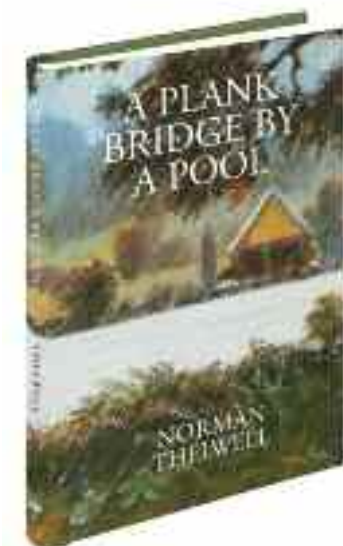
The club has fly fishing for trout and grayling on the River Henmore and the Bentley Brook, both being tributaries of the River Dove. Anyone interested in joining please contact Chris Wooliscroft on 01335 342754 or visit the website www.ashbourneflyfishingclub.co.uk

BOOK REVIEWS

A Plank Bridge by a Pool by Norman Thelwell

£20.00, ISBN 978-1-907110-51-1, hardback, 200 pages, Medlar Press 01691 623225 www.medlarpress.com

I remember as a boy having a poster on my bedroom wall, a cartoon depiction of a scene of riverside chaos, with children swimming, diving, fishing and falling backwards in fear and awe of a huge pike on the end of the line. The artist was Norman Thelwell, internationally renowned for his cartoons, particularly of horses and horse riding, and it was a nostalgic delight to see that scene reproduced in this book. What may not be so widely known is that Norman Thelwell was an angler and a passionate countryman. In this book he describes a ten-year project to create a pool with boathouse and islands, started when he moved to Heron's Mead in Hampshire in 1959. The book is full of delightful stories and observations of wildlife, profusely illustrated with superb black-and-white drawings. First published in 1978, this edition has been re-set and re-designed, all the artwork has been re-scanned and it includes a new section of colour paintings and a note from the author's son, David, who grew up at Heron's Mead.



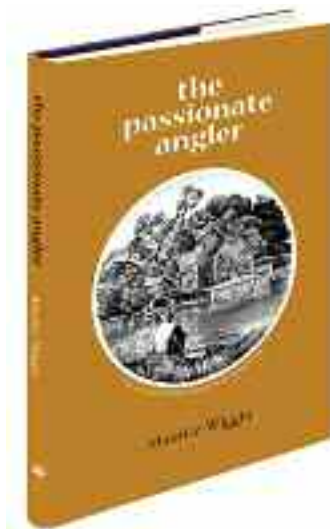
The Passionate Angler by Maurice Wiggin

£18.00, ISBN 978-1-907110-49-81, hardback, 176 pages, Medlar Press 01691 623225 www.medlarpress.com

Maurice Wiggin was born in Bloxwich in 1912 and began fishing at the age of six in the 'black depths of pit pools among the towering slag heaps' of the Black Country. His description of these humble angling beginnings resonates with my own formative experiences on the mill lodges and canals of Lancashire.

Of course, people who are starved of streams become connoisseurs of canals, unlikely though it may seem to the more fortunate. We would cycle our behinds into blisters to reach a particularly well-spoken-of cut... When we got there it was never any better than the canals at our doorstep.

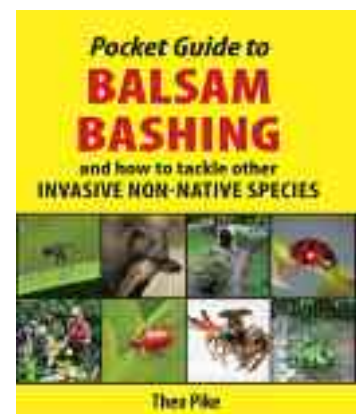
Wiggin was a highly respected journalist and the angling correspondent for *The Sunday Times* for ten years, also publishing 12 books. His self-deprecating humour and down-to-earth style shine through in this book, regarded by many as his best on angling. Like his friend Bernard Venables, to whom the book is dedicated, he was an all-round angler; happy fishing for everything from chub to salmon. *The Passionate Angler* was first published in 1949 and has been out of print for many years; this new edition, beautifully illustrated with scraperboard drawings by John Pézare, is a welcome addition to the Medlar angling classics series.



Pocket Guide to Balsam Bashing and How to Tackle Other Non-Native Invasive Species By Theo Pike

£7.99, ISBN: 978-1-906122-62-1 96 pages, colour illustrations, Merlin Unwin Books, 01584 877456 www.merlinunwin.co.uk

Theo Pike will be known to many as the author of *Trout in Dirty Places*, the definitive book on the renaissance of wild trout fishing in urban locations, and as the Chairman of the Wandle Trust. His latest book is a practical guide to tackling one of the most common problems afflicting our urban (and not-so-urban) rivers: invasive non-native species. Although the species found in and alongside rivers will be of particular interest, the guide covers over 40 species found in the UK, lists actions that volunteers can take and provides useful contact lists. These species destroy crops and forestry, dump silt into rivers, sabotage drains and electrical infrastructure, cut off access to beautiful places, and drive native rare and iconic species to extinction. And they cost us all a lot of money – at least £1.8bn to the UK economy each year. How can you help stop this expensive and dangerous slide towards global blandification? Read this book and then roll up your sleeves!



A CALL TO ALL KEEN GRAYLING ANGLERS IN THE UK, THIS SUMMER.

PhD project 'Assessment of adaptive genetic variation for management and conservation of European Grayling'.

The objective of the study, jointly funded by Manchester University and the Grayling Research Trust, is to assess genetic variation of immune relevant genes within different Grayling populations in the UK. Building on previous study work to help understand and maintain grayling population's specific genetic diversity, discussing the

issue of stocking and looking at the origins of broodstock.

The author's request: "At the moment, I am planning the sampling of grayling during the coming summer season, starting in June. I cannot do a lot of sampling myself and therefore depend on anglers contributing samples to the project. The procedure is very simple. I am taking swabs from the mouth and probably the skin to get DNA material. Additionally I require a fork length measurement of the fish. The rivers I am

interested in sampling are the following: Yorkshire Derwent, Ure, Pickering Beck, Wylfe, Dee, Irfon, Severn, Wye, Clyde, Eden, Itchen, Aire, Dove and Hampshire Avon.

If you are interested in assisting in sampling grayling in any of these rivers during this summer, I would be happy to send you a sampling kit with the necessary material. I highly appreciate every help!"

Please contact Vanessa at: jana.v.huml@stu.mmu.ac.uk

STORM DRAIN TO TROUT STREAM – ANDY THOMAS

With a bit of luck and a following wind, by the time you read this newsletter we should have completed the first phase of a river enhancement in the centre of the village of East Meon in Hampshire.

This particular project has been a long time in development. The initial push for trying to improve this impoverished section of the Meon came from local resident and WTT member, Nigel Brooks, culminating with the offer of some financial support via the Meon Valley Partnership, hosted by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA).

So what are the issues that need to be resolved? This photograph is probably all that is needed to explain the problem. A quintessential 'chocolate box' Hampshire village straddling what should be a wonderful little chalkstream, but actually is a concrete-bottomed, vertical-sided storm drain!

How will we create a stream with improved ecological value and aesthetic appeal in such a difficult environment? Our inspiration has come from one of the projects entered in our annual WTT Conservation Awards. The superb enhancement carried out on the River Somer in Midsomer Norton won an award in 2011 and using some of the design concepts to create a naturalistic low-flow channel within the confines of the existing concrete and brick channel was our chosen way forward.



Existing channel at East Meon.



River Somer in Midsomer Norton.

Storm drain to trout stream continued from page 16.

The next step was to consult with the good people of East Meon and form a partnership with the progressive East Meon Parish Council. An article was written for the Parish magazine, and owners of local properties given the opportunity to discuss the project with the project team.

An important step in designing the project was to fully test the design against any possible additional flood risk. Flood modelling was carried out and we were delighted to find out that our ideas for creating a new low-flow channel did not significantly increase the risk of the river coming out of bank. Connecting rivers with adjacent flood

plain is often a key objective in improving river ecology but in a heavily developed village or town this obviously isn't an option. To finally make sure that everybody in the village had an opportunity to hear about the project, we also gave a presentation at the annual Parish Forum in April.

Armed with our new found knowledge on flood risk we produced a design and applied for our Flood Defence Consent from the EA, which was duly granted. A key element of the design is to ensure that the low-flow margins will be stable under high-flow conditions. The key design criteria for creating a new meandering low-flow channel is to build marginal gravel shelves that can be planted up with a

range of attractive and biologically-valuable emergent plants. To ensure the shelves remain stable in heavy winter flows, we are proposing to bond strategic stones to the concrete bed with short steel pegs to give lateral strength to the outer edge.

So armed with a budget courtesy of our good friends from the SDNPA and with the help of Park Authority volunteers we are all set to bond large stones to the bed, backfill with imported gravels and kick-start the green revival by planting a range of chalk stream emergent plants. I'm hoping the residents of East Meon will love it – I know the trout will.

LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY TEMPERATURE NETWORK (LUTEN) – M JOHNSON & R WILBY

Water temperature is critical to aquatic life. For instance, the body temperature of cold-blooded organisms (including fish and invertebrates) is controlled by the environment. Consequently, their growth, development and behaviour are all depend on water temperature. With evidence that river water temperatures are rising due to climate and land-use change, there is growing concern about the long-term impact on freshwater ecosystems.

The Loughborough University Temperature Network (LUTEN) is an array of 40 temperature sensors installed within the Rivers Dove and Manifold in the Peak District National Park. Each sensor logs the maximum, minimum and average temperature every 15-minutes, with the longest records beginning in March 2011. These data reveal much variability in water temperature throughout the year, as well as between different river habitats. For example, some reaches in the middle of the Dove have summer water temperatures above 25°C whilst spring-cooled sites downstream attain maximum temperatures of less than 15°C.

The monitoring has coincided with several periods of extreme weather, including the hottest year on record and severe drought (2011), and the wettest

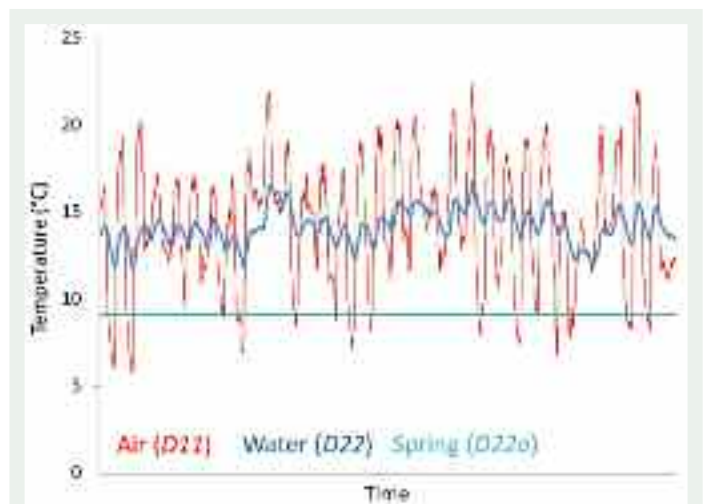
year on record (2012). The records also cover the extremely cold winters of 2011 and 2012 (when air temperatures dropped below -8°C) and the extremely wet winter of 2013. We have also discovered that after some heavy summer rain storms a thermal 'shockwave' can travel downstream behind the peak flow. This can change water temperatures by a couple of degrees in a few minutes.

Installation of parts of the network was kindly supported by the Wild Trout Trust and we are grateful to local land owners who have granted access. We hope that LUTEN data will raise awareness of the risks posed by rising water temperatures to river health plus assist with the sustainable management of the Dove and Manifold. To this end, LUTEN is contributing to national research into the effectiveness of shading by bankside vegetation at reducing water

temperatures.

Further information about LUTEN and associated research, including an interactive map of monitoring sites and photographs are available at: www.luten.org.uk.

In addition, the entire temperature data set, which currently consists of over 8.5 million measurements, is freely available at the website along with summary statistics for each year and site. We hope that by sharing the data in this way it will become a useful resource for schools, other researchers, and those who care about the long-term health of these two rivers.



Graph of the air temperature, water temperature and groundwater spring temperature in Dovedale, on the River Dove, Peak District.

MEDLOCK UNLOCKED

The River Medlock is a river in Greater Manchester that has been ‘modified’ to within an inch of its life, including the ignominy of being hidden under the car park of Manchester City’s Etihad Stadium (N.B. the author of this piece is a United fan).

In Clayton Vale, for the last century, 300m of the river has flowed through an extraordinary lining of Accrington

bricks. But now, the Environment Agency has led a partnership with Manchester City Council, Groundworks and the Irwell Rivers Trust to breathe life back into this reach of the river, illustrated clearly below. WTT hopes to contribute to the official opening event of the Clayton Vale project in September with a demonstration of urban fly fishing, courtesy of our Conservation Officer, Paul Gaskell. Paul could catch

fish from a puddle, but this might test his skills to the full!

More information on the Medlock project is available from Oliver Southgate at the Environment Agency (oliver.southgate@environment-agency.gov.uk) and there’s a short piece on the BBC News Science & Environment pages at www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment.

ATLANTIC SALMON TRUST/IBIS SALMON STOCKING CONFERENCE, GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 2013

This international conference sought to bring scientists and fishery managers together to look at the practicalities and science of salmon stocking programmes. Twenty-two speakers spoke over the two days to an audience of 150 people, highlighting work from the UK, Ireland, Iceland, Sweden and North America. WTT was represented at the conference by its Director, Shaun Leonard; here are some of his bulleted take-home messages...

- think holistically in fisheries management; stocking should never be the default;
- it’s vital to identify the factors impacting salmon and to address those since no amount of stocking will overcome issues such as poor habitat or water quality (the same applies to trout stocking programmes!);
- stocked fish survival is invariably poor compared to wild fish and habitat enhancement (in its



The River Medlock, locked in!



The River Medlock unlocked!

Storm drain to trout stream continued from page 18.

- broadest sense) is surely more effective;
- let's not confuse ranching with restoration/enhancement stocking. Ranching involves stocking out hatchery-reared fish which anglers might go on to catch. Ranching can work (e.g. Ranga, Delphi) but there are risks to any wild stock and it works only as long as the stocking goes on;
- examples of successful stocking programmes, other than for ranching, are few and far between (non-existent?). Even where rivers have recovered and are stocked (e.g. Taff, Tyne, Teifi), the vast bulk of fish are not from the hatchery but are the product of wild colonisers;
- even huge-scale stocking programmes (e.g. Connecticut River, up to 9 million juveniles stocked per year), at vast expense, do not work. Closer to home, science has shown that the Spey

- hatchery, producing up to 2m juveniles per year, has contributed 0%-1.8% of the annual rod catch;
- there is a big body of evidence to show that hatchery-reared fish can increase maladaptation in a population, inhibiting the recovery of the wild population;
- wild broodstock schemes (WBS) – the more successful you are with your WBS, the greater your chance of completely changing the genetic make-up of your population;
- stocking “risks undermining the very thing you are trying to protect”.

Videos of the presentations from the conference are available on the Loughs Agency/IBIS website at <http://ibis-eu-know.weebly.com/nov-2013---salmon-stocking--glasgow.html>.

Much of what was discussed in Glasgow chimes with WTT's views on stocking. Our thinking and the science informing it, is laid out on our website www.wildtrout.org/content/trout-stocking.



The future.

RIVERFLY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE SPRING/SUMMER 2014 – BY BEN FITCH, ARMI COORDINATOR

I am incredibly excited to have taken over as Anglers' Monitoring Initiative Coordinator (ARMI) for the Riverfly Partnership.

My first involvement with the ARMI came in 2009, as a Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Riverfly monitor, and I became coordinator of that group in 2011. In 2012 the group evolved into an ARMI hub and I gained accreditation as a Riverfly Partnership tutor. This experience has enabled me to hit the ground running as ARMI Coordinator, which is essential in a year that will see the national launch of the online Riverfly database, the expansion of the hub network and the delivery of at least 38 ARMI workshops across Great Britain and Northern Ireland; that's a minimum of 456 newly certified Riverfly monitors. I am regularly travelling the country to meet as many local ARMI groups and RP tutors as possible and I will be at the CLA Game Fair, from the 18 to 20 July. Please do come and say "hello", I will be

representing the Riverfly Partnership as part of the Salmon & Trout Association stand. You can also contact me directly with Riverfly Partnership and Anglers'

Riverfly Monitoring Initiative enquiries; my email is ben@riverflies.org



Ben Fitch collecting river fly.

MERCHANDISE

All 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



Wheatley fly boxes

12 compartments and a foam lid at £30 or the Double ripple foam inner at £19 + £3.20 p&p



Fulling Mill Evening Rise Fly Selection

£9 + £3.20 p&p.



Car stickers and mugs

Car stickers – £1.50
Mugs – £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.



CDs

- 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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