



# Wild Trout Trust

## News Update Spring 2014

### eBay Auction, 4-13 March

A fantastic selection of lots including fishing, shooting, books, tackle and more with all the proceeds supporting the work of the WTT. Watch the WTT website for details or request a catalogue from the office. If you would like to donate a lot for the 2015 auction next March, please contact Denise Ashton: [dashton@wildtrout.org](mailto:dashton@wildtrout.org) / tel 07802 454157.

### River Habitat Improvement Demonstration Days, 6, 7 and 18 March

Contact Tim Jacklin via: [tjacklin@wildtrout.org](mailto:tjacklin@wildtrout.org) for details.

### Countryside Experience Day, 13 April

This will be held at Meon Springs Fishery, West Meon, Hampshire. Details at: <http://meonsprings.com/country-day/>

### RRC Conference, 7/8 May

To be held at Sheffiled Hallam University. Details via: [www.therrc.co.uk](http://www.therrc.co.uk) / 01234 752979.

### WTT Annual Get-Together, 7/8 June

This year's Get-together is in Buckinghamshire at Restore Hope, Latimer Park, Chesham with the River Chess Association. The outline plan for Saturday 7th is for talks in the morning followed by river walks and demonstrations in the afternoon. On Sunday, fishing will be available on the River Chess and surrounding waters. Accommodation will be available at Latimer Place near Chesham.

### WTT Three-Fly Challenge, 21 June

A fundraising fishing competition at Meon Springs Fishery, West Meon, Hampshire for a fund in memory of Pasco James, which is spent on practical work and advice on the River Meon. Test your angling skills, have a great day out and help to raise funds for WTT. Check the WTT website or contact Neil Mundy: [ncmundy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ncmundy@hotmail.co.uk) / tel: 023 9225 4886 / 07964 379988. Entries close 14 June.



*2013 winner David King (right) receives his prize Sage rod from WTT Director, Shaun Leonard*

### CLA Game Fair, 18-20 July

The CLA Game Fair is at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire. The Big One. Come and visit the WTT stand, say hello, renew acquaintances (and membership!) and enjoy the largest country event of the year. More information at: [www.gamefair.co.uk](http://www.gamefair.co.uk) / tel 0845 612 2052.

### WTT Conservation Awards Supported By Thames Water, 15 October

To be held at the Savile Club in London.

### WTT Annual Draw 2013

The Wild Trout Trust would like to thank The Peacock at Rowsley, Sage and Rother Valley Organics for kindly donating prizes and all those who supported the draw by purchasing tickets, enabling us to raise £2713.

The lucky winners were

- 1st prize: Mr R Sheilds, Derbyshire
- 2nd prize: Mr R Allen, Inverness-shire
- 3rd prize: Mr J Jukes, Leicestershire
- 4th prize: Mr E Wakeham, Somerset
- 5th prize: Mr C Couzens, Surrey

### Wonderful First Prize, WTT Annual Draw 2012

David Andrews won first prize in the 2012 WTT Annual Draw to fish the Derbyshire Wye and stay at the Peacock in Rowsley. In September last, in the heart of the picturesque Derbyshire countryside, David found peace and tranquillity roaming up and down the river banks in search of the elusive trout; sadly the trout remained elusive. However as David notes, "Although slightly disappointed not to land a fish, this prize is about more than just the fishing and I feel extremely lucky to have won it and enjoyed such an experience."



### Test & Itchen Association New Website

The Test & Itchen Association are delighted to announce the launch of their new website: [www.testanditchen.co.uk](http://www.testanditchen.co.uk)

### J77 Sea Trout Still Alive And Well

In a 2012 WTT newsletter, Dr Shona Marshall, biologist with the West Sutherland Fisheries Trust, told us about the progress of one tagged hen sea trout, J77. She was first tagged as a smolt in



2005 and has appeared again in the May 2013 sweep netting programme in the Polla Estuary, alive, well and still growing at over 25in long and 6lb in weight. J77 is thought to be ten years old and to have spawned several times. Shona and her team are very proud of J77 and encourage anglers to release such prize specimens.

### River Avon Habitat Enhancements, Fifield

As part of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's 'Wessex Chalkstream Project' which promotes understanding and conservation on the Hampshire Avon, Mike Blackmore was recently asked to help run a week of habitat enhancement work on the Avon at Fifield near Netheravon.

This section of the Avon was once managed by the famous river keeper and author Frank Sawyer. Regarded (by some) as the father of river restoration, Sawyer's championing of the Avon is legendary. During his employment as head keeper for the Services Dry Fly Fishing Association (SDFFA), Frank oversaw a restoration of the river from polluted, over-silted and no-longer capable of supporting trout, towards a productive flowing river with a clean gravel bed. Frank's 'Great Clean Up', although not a complete success, led the way for future generations to improve river habitat.

The SDFFA waters in the Avon Valley at Fifield bisect Salisbury Plain. So that works could commence, Mike had to spend a morning on an army base receiving an induction and a permit to work on MOD land.

Volunteers helped to introduce an abundance of woody debris into the river, kicking flow about to create a more pronounced



thalweg and helping diversify the habitat. One volunteer was a young soldier getting back into physical work after a gruelling 3-year recovery from being seriously wounded in an explosion in Afghanistan. Despite being exhausted by the end of the day he had a great time and was pleased with his work. His efforts were a testament to

the rehabilitation support provided by Help for Heroes and highlighted the therapeutic value of hands-on conservation work.

Wessex Chalkstream Project Officer Martin Antheunisse, and his assistant Lev Dahl, worked hard on the project alongside the Environment Agency's Russell Spencer, who also provided the funding. It should also be mentioned that Tony Wells of the SDFFA and the club's keeper Martin Brown, showed an admiral level of enthusiasm and understanding throughout the works.

By the end of the week, about 500 metres of river habitat had been enhanced for £1000 plus the cost of a few chestnut stakes (a bargain at 3 times the price). Frank would have been proud!

## Trout In The Town Update

WTT has been involved in an event to mark the official signing of Sheffield's Waterways Strategy document. The event "One Big River" will run throughout the week of 5-12 May in Sheffield. This will allow multiple local stakeholder groups to run educational and engagement activities in the local community to raise awareness of the processes affecting rivers, including urban areas. The event aims to reach 5% of the Sheffield population (around 27,000 people) through a combination of social and conventional media covering the live events and project messages.

The WTT hope to be involved with a similar waterways strategy in Manchester, looking to combine habitat advisory visits and practical training events to local groups.

Information on erosion and deposition that shape our river

channels, generating habitat niches for the flora and fauna of river corridors is now available on the WTT youtube channel at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFwznhWtQLg>

Finally, Russell Jobson of the Woodland Trust (Scotland) organised a great event on the relationship between woodlands, habitat and water management. Paul Gaskell gave a talk about the interactions between terrestrial and aquatic phases of river corridor habitats. Paul was also given the opportunity to explain the habitat works carried out in conjunction with the Pickering Fisheries Association (amateur winners of the 2013 WTT Conservation Awards).

## Conservation Update – The Only Way Is Essex!

In recent years, the WTT has helped to deliver in-channel habitat improvements specifically targeted at improving conditions for gravel-spawning coarse fish as well as our beloved trout. The requirement to meet Water Framework

Directive targets has driven the need for simple, cost-effective measures which enable damaged river channels to quickly recover. Demand for our expertise and training has sent us to some unusual locations, not least the recent River Habitat Workshop run by WTT's Andy Thomas on behalf of the EA for a team of Conservation Volunteers from the London Borough of Redbridge.



The Seven Kings Water cuts a straight route via several on-line lakes across a track of open land earmarked for gravel extraction and landfill to eventually flow into a network of underground culverts before discharging into the tidal Roding at Barking Creek. A trout stream it is not! Despite the lack of trout, this little stream had many great features just waiting to be unlocked, not least the rich gravel substrate with potential for other gravel spawning species.

In January, WTT's Andy Thomas along with Conservation Officer Francis Castro and his brilliant team of enthusiastic volunteers, worked hard to transform a 100m length of channel, installing a series of flow deflectors and brushwood cover, as well as a cover log designed to mimic an undercut bank. The transformation created much needed cover and habitat diversity but more importantly the Redbridge team now has the confidence, skills and understanding to help



maintain and improve the Seven Kings Water for wildlife... and who knows, maybe a pair of pioneering sea trout will one day find and utilize what is now some pretty good habitat.