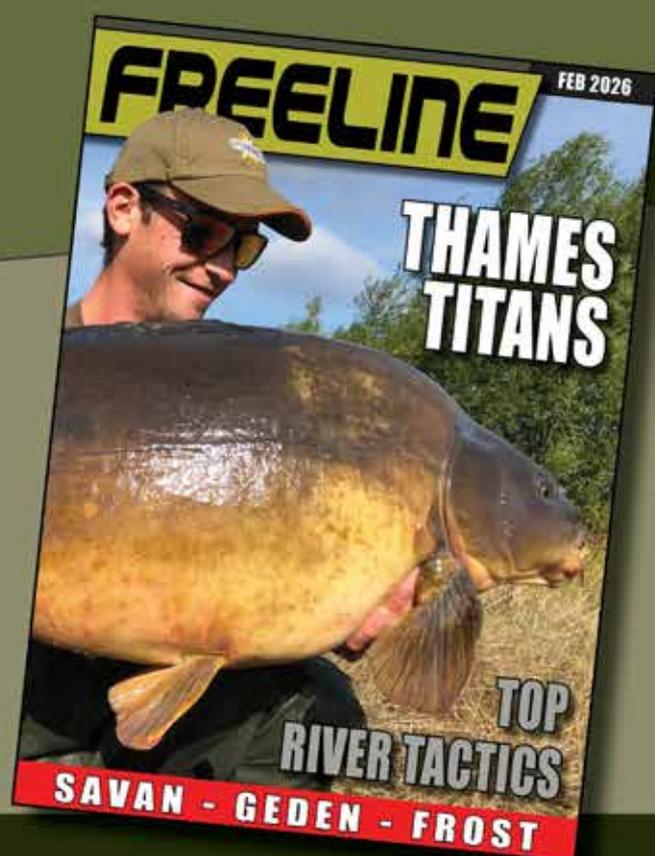


# FEBRUARY ISSUES OF **BIG CARP** & **FREELINE** MAGAZINES - FREE HERE:

[www.freelinemagazine.com](http://www.freelinemagazine.com)  
or [www.freelinemagazine.co.uk](http://www.freelinemagazine.co.uk)



**TOM STOKES - CASTER CARE**  
**TOM MAKER - NATURALS MIX**  
**OSCAR THORNTON - LONGER RIGS**  
**SCOTT SWEETMAN - SIMPLE D RIG**



**AIDEN SAVAN - THAMES TALES**  
**ASH GEDEN - THE CHEESE**  
**DAVID WALLEN - ALL ABOARD**  
**MIKEY FROST - NEVER ENDING**

**ADVERTISING AT REALISTIC PRICES**  
[info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk)

**Over 42,200 email subscribers**

# BIG CARP READERS TOP TENS !!

## TOP 10 DAY TICKET CARP WATERS

1	BLUEBELL LAKES
2	LINEAR FISHERIES
3	SANDHURST
4	FARLOWS LAKE
5	COKING FARM
6	NORTON DISNEY
7	OAK LAKES FISHERY
8	BERNERS HALL
9	CEFN MABLY
10	CROMWELL

## TOP 10 FRENCH HOLIDAY VENUES

1	IKTUS
2	ABBAY LAKES
3	CRETE LAKES
4	BRITTANY FOREST
5	GIGANTICA
6	RAINBOW
7	THE AQUARIUM
8	DREAM LAKES
9	FISHABIL
10	RIBIERE

## TOP 10 BAIT COMPANIES

1	MAINLINE BAITS
2	STICKY BAITS
3	DYNAMITE BAITS
4	CC MOORE
5	TARGET BAITS
6	NUTRABAITS
7	DNA BAITS
8	URBAN BAITS
9	DAVE MALLIN BAITS
10	GOODZ CARP BAITS



## TOP 10 END TACKLE COMPANIES

1	ESP
2	KORDA
3	FOX
4	THINKING ANGLERS
5	GARDNER
6	TRAKKER
7	BANK TACKLE
8	NASH TACKLE
9	CARP ONLINE
10	AVID

## TOP 10 CARP FISHING BRANDS

1	DAIWA
2	SHIMANO
3	REUBEN HEATON
4	SOLAR
5	JAG
6	FREESPIRIT
7	FOX
8	TRAKKER
9	CHILTERN RODS
10	KUDOS

## TOP 10 CARP TACKLE SHOPS

1	JOHNSON ROSS
2	THE TACKLE BOX
3	YATELEY ANGLING CENTRE
4	ANGLING DIRECT NORWICH
5	POINGDESTRES
6	KESWALLS
7	ANGLING DIRECT BIRMINGHAM
8	ANGLING DIRECT SIMPSONS
9	TACKLE UP
10	ANGLING DIRECT CHELMSFORD

## TOP 10 ICONIC CARP LAKES

1	REDMIRE
2	YATELEY
3	WRAYSBURY
4	SAVAY
5	FOX POOL
6	HORTON
7	CASSIEN
8	LINCHHILL
9	ROACH PIT
10	JOHNSON'S RAILWAY

# BC

BIG CARP: 355 FEB 2020

# UNLOCK MORE CARP

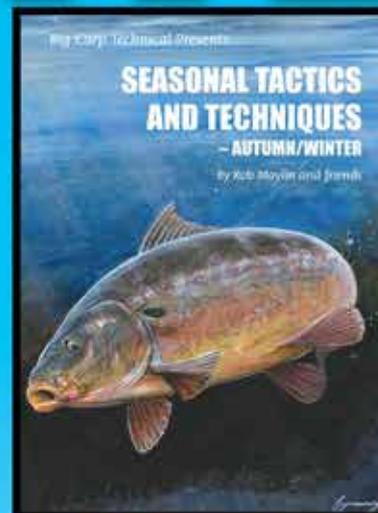
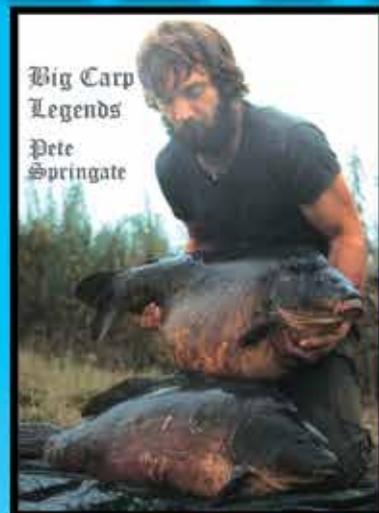
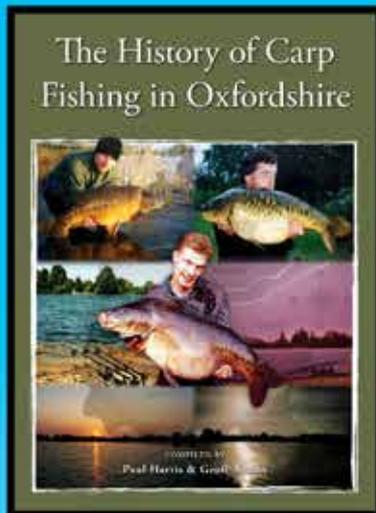


# THORNTON SWEETMAN

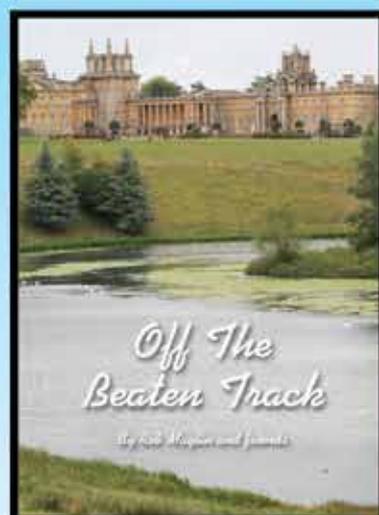
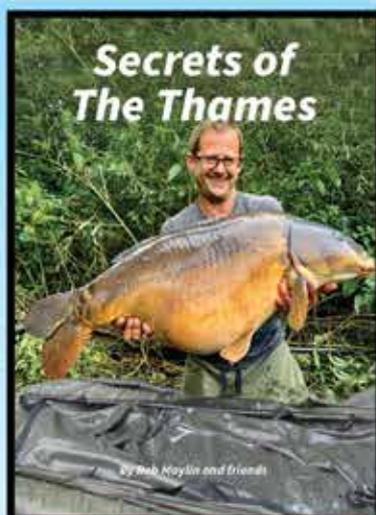
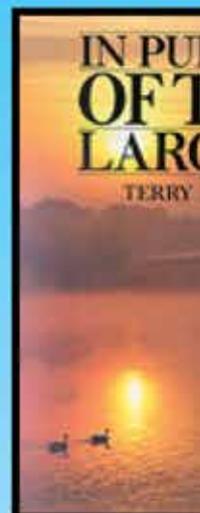
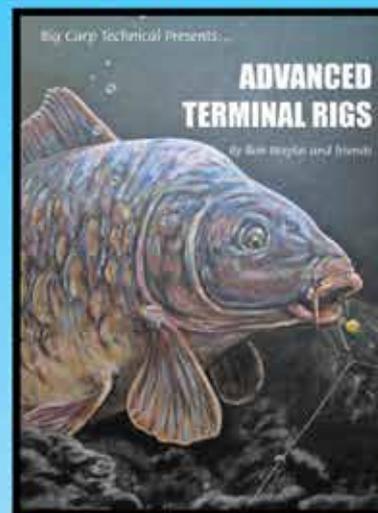
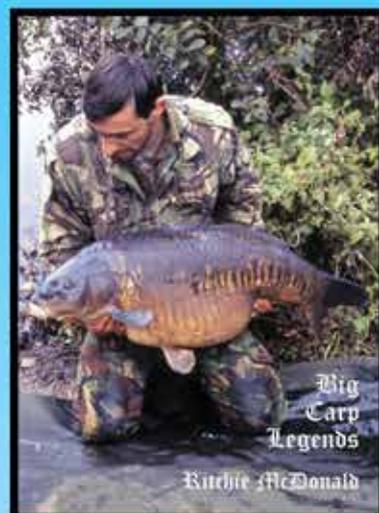
# MAKER STOKES

FULL OF UK STORIES, TIPS AND CATCH REPORTS

# WINTER

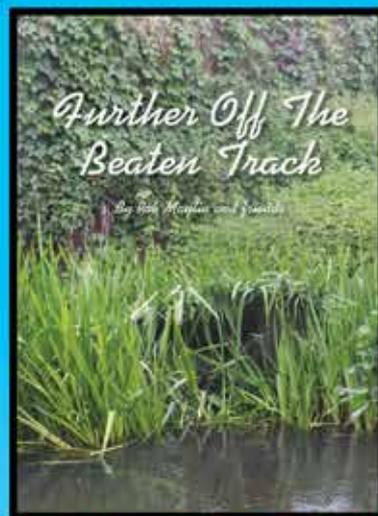
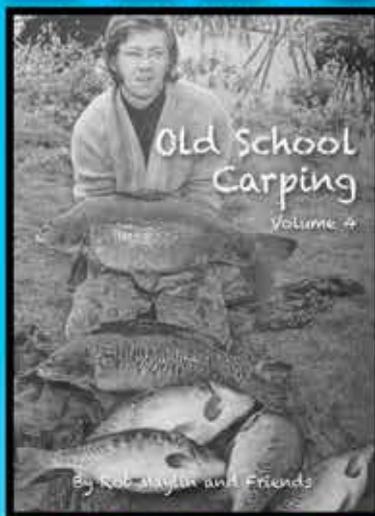
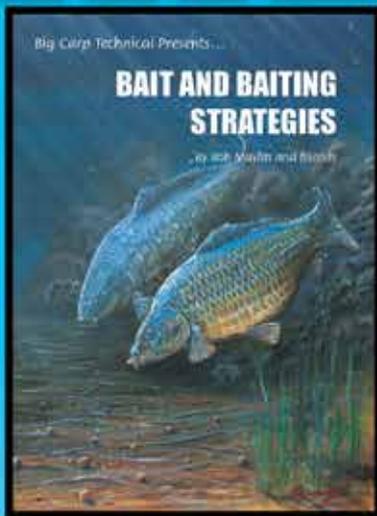


ORDER ONE OF OUR BEST SELLERS A

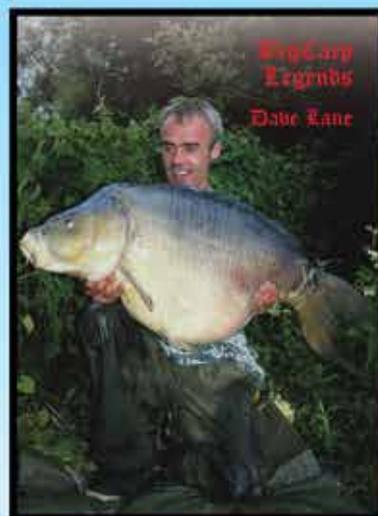
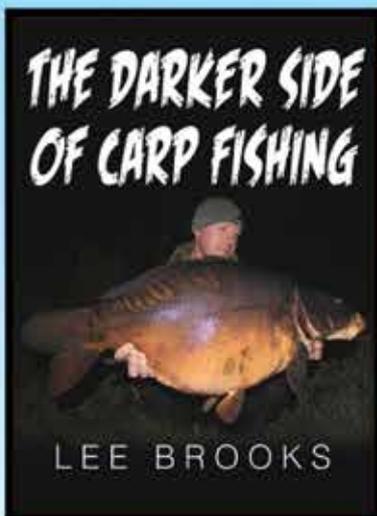
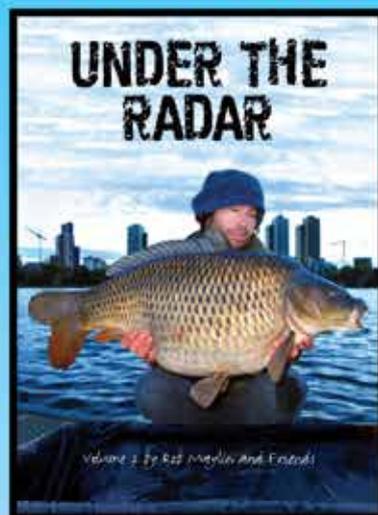
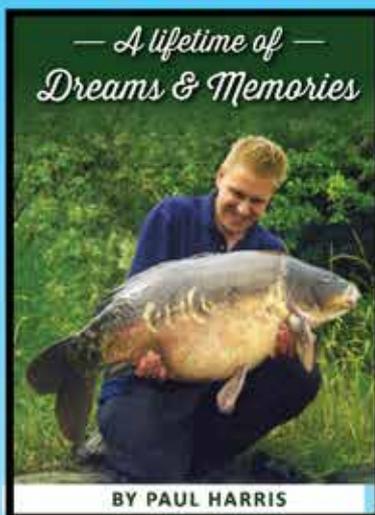
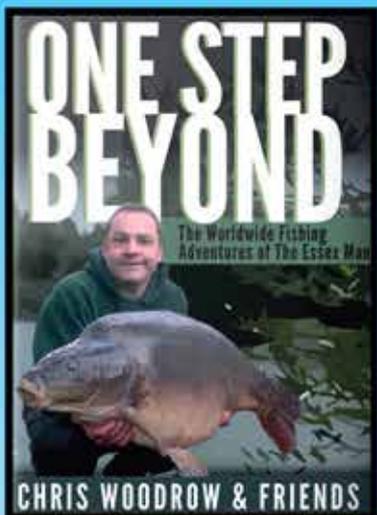


NEW BOOKS: [WWW.C](http://WWW.C)  
NEW AND OLD BOOKS: [WWW.EBAY.C](http://WWW.EBAY.C)

# READING



AND BE PREPARED FOR NEXT SEASON



[CARPBOOKSONLINE.COM](http://CARPBOOKSONLINE.COM)

[CO.UK/USR/RARECARPBOOKSUNLIMITED](http://CO.UK/USR/RARECARPBOOKSUNLIMITED)

# CONTENTS

Editor/Publisher  
Rob Maylin  
Bountyhunter  
Publications  
44 Herbs End  
Cove, Hampshire  
GU14 9YD

07768 731425  
info@bigcarpmagazine.  
co.uk

Design & Production  
James Harrison

Advertising Sales  
Bountyhunter  
Publications  
mobile 07768 731425

BIG CARP 355:  
February 2026  
Not to be stored or  
reproduced by any means,  
in any form, without the  
written permission of  
the publisher. Failure  
to obtain permission to  
reproduce material may  
result in legal action.  
Articles that appear in Big  
Carp Magazine are the  
property of Bountyhunter  
Publications and may be  
used in other publications  
as they see fit.

© Bountyhunter  
Publications 2025



Front Cover:  
Martin Locke with his  
UK 68lb mirror



Well winter didnt seem to hang around for long. Locally it froze for about a week and since then it's been temperatures in the high singles and even touching 10 degrees!! There seem to be plenty of anglers out enjoying these unseasonably mild conditions and the carp, on the whole, are playing ball. There could be some record weights coming this spring if the carp have fed all winter!!

We have another packed edition for you this month with a whole host of top tips and advice from some of the best anglers around. Then we have a great new mini series from Rich Hogg who's been targetting the canals and having consistent success. So many carp have escaped into our river and canal sections but they still get over-looked. if you're looking for a new challenge maybe a local river or canal could be worth a shot!

**8. SHOCKLEADER**



**26.TAC-TEC**



**34. CATCH REPORTS**

**56. ADAM REED**



**60. DAN BARBER**

**64. DARRELL PECK**



**68. ELLIE GILHOOLEY**

**78. OSCAR THORNTON**



**84. RICH HOGG**

**100.SCOTTSWEETMAN**

**108. TOM MAKER**



**112.TOM STOKES**

**GREAT AD  
DEALS**

BIG CARP and FREE LINE ADVERTISING PRICES SLASHED!  
SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING NOT AS EFFECTIVE?

Want to grow your business? We can put your products in front of a massive new audience. Email me at [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk) or call me 07768731425 for the latest deal.

I promise you its cheaper than you think. Both magazines are FREE! Our readership is HUGE!

Join me in the UK's favourite carp magazines with over 40 years of experience in carp fishing publications.

Rob Maylin

See both magazines FREE here - [www.freelinemagazine.com](http://www.freelinemagazine.com)

**Big Carp** *Promotions*

OAK LAKES FISHERIES SOUTHMINSTER

# Oak Lakes Fisheries



[www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk](http://www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk)

Here's a selection of some of Oak Lakes' cracking carp



There's still plenty of carp coming out with the m

# Oak Lakes Fisheries



[www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk](http://www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk)

Here's a selection of some of Oak Lakes' cracking carp



Wild winter we've had - get yourselves down here!!

**SHOCKLEADER**

**CARP  
BATTLE  
DATES  
OUT NOW  
- £20K IN  
PRIZES  
TO WIN**

For the first time ever, we're running the Carp Battle Pairs Tournament - an all-out, two-angler team competition where strategy, skill and stamina collide.

The prize? A whopping £10,000 in cash for the champions, and a total prize fund worth £20K up for grabs!

DATES & FISHERIES - QUALIFIERS:

Q1: 24-26 Apr 2026 - Linear Fisheries

Brasenose 2 (16 pairs)

SOLD OUT

Q2: 2-4 Oct 2026 - Linear Fisheries Oxlease Lake (20 pairs)

2 SPOTS REMAINING

Q3: 13-15 Nov 2026 - Berners Hall Fishery The Res (16 pairs)

PLENTY OF AVAILABILITY

Q4: 23-25 Apr 2027 - Linear Fisheries St Johns Lake (18 pairs)

PLENTY OF AVAILABILITY

GRAND FINAL :

10-13 Sep 2027 - Sandhurst Lake (12 pairs)

CASH PRIZES:

1st Place - £10,000 CASH

2nd Place - £2,000 CASH

3rd Place - £1,000 CASH

Plus:

Free Entry to Grand Finale.

Tournament Biggest Fish Award worth £1,000 in sponsor prizes.

Qualifier Trophies: At each qualifier, three pairs who secure a place in the Grand Finale will receive exclusive trophies as lasting keepsakes

of their achievement.

Grand Finale Trophies: magnificent trophies worth £2,000 will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, 3rd place, and for the Tournament's Biggest Fish.

TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

A total of 12 pairs will advance to the Grand Finale (GF).

Q1 - 3 GF spots

Q2 - 3 GF spots

Q3 - 3 GF spots

Q4 - 3 GF spots

Each qualifier will be divided into sections.

The best ONE pair per section will advance to the GF.

QUALIFIERS ENTRY FEE: £550 per pair.

You can secure your spot with a £200 deposit - the balance is due no later than 3 weeks before your qualifier.

Spaces are limited.

Full rules and ticket details in the comments.

Fish hard. Win big. The battle is on

# FISH HARD. WIN BIG.

THE BATTLE IS ON! THE BATTLE IS ON! THE BATTLE IS ON!

## DATES & FISHERIES

- **Q1:** 24-26 Apr 2026 - Linear Fisheries: "Brasenose 2"
  - Limited to: 16 pairs
- **Q2:** 2-4 Oct 2026 - Linear Fisheries: "Oxlease Lake"
  - Limited to 20 pairs
- **Q3:** 13-15 Nov 2026  
Berners Hall Fishery  
"The Res"
  - Limited to 16 pairs
- **Q4:** 23-25 Apr 2027 - Linear Fisheries: "St Johns Lake"
  - Limited to 18 pairs
- **GF:** 10-13 Sep 2027  
Sandhurst Lake
  - Limited to 12 pairs



PAIRS TOURNAMENT 2026/2027

**£13K  
CASH  
PRIZE**

## CASH PRIZES

- 1st Place - £10,000 - CASH
- 2nd Place - £2,000 - CASH
- 3rd Place - £1,000 - CASH
- Tournament Biggest Fish - Prizes from sponsors worth £1,000

## PRIZES

- FREE GRAND FINAL FOR QUALIFIED PAIRS
- TROPHIES IN FINAL WORTH £2,000
- TOTAL PRIZE FUND: £20,000

## INFO

- ENTRY FEE: £550 per pair
- Cash payout applies only if the event is fully sold out.

# The Big Social

at



**SUFFOLK  
WATER PARK**



**27th March**

for 48 hours on the Big Lake

[www.goodzcarpbaits.co.uk](http://www.goodzcarpbaits.co.uk)

**ORCHID**  
**SOCIAL**  
**13TH- 15TH MARCH**

**LIMITED TICKETS**

**BBQ, BEERS, PRIZES AND BIG ORCHID CARP!**

**MEET THE TEAM**  
**SEE THE CHANGES**  
**CATCH SOME LEGENDS**



# TED HAPPY AND HEALTHY



Fans of Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing were delighted as Bob Mortimer shared a touching update on Ted, the much-loved dog who has become a fan favourite. Now 15 years old, Ted is “knocking on a bit” but remains happy, healthy, and very much part of Bob’s life.

Ted continues to join Bob and Paul Whitehouse on their riverside adventures, sometimes strolling alongside them and, for longer walks, riding comfortably in a pram — ensuring he never misses the serene countryside moments that have charmed viewers over the years.

The update reassures fans that Ted remains one of the show’s most heartwarming highlights, bringing humour, companionship, and quiet joy to every episode. His enduring presence is a reminder of the simple pleasures and loyal friendships that make the series so beloved.

# ADDICTIV' BAITS CHALLENGE

FROM OCTOBER 24 TO OCTOBER 31, 2026

Entry fee: €1000 per team of 1, 2 or 3 people

Entry: £865 per team of 1, 2 or 3 People

2 rounds of 68 hours, including  
1 rest night and 1 meal provided



**FISHABIL  
LAKE**



Registrations & information:  
[contact@addictivbaits.com](mailto:contact@addictivbaits.com)

## PRIZES

-  1st place: €6,000
-  2nd place: €3,500
-  3rd place: €2,000

-  Biggest fish: €500
-  Smallest fish: €250
-  Biggest catfish: €250

+ Many other prizes to be won



**Fine quality fishing tackle  
since 1857**

[www.reubenheaton.com](http://www.reubenheaton.com)

For more on Reuben Heaton, Sportscale & RH brands  
call 01455 293000 or email [info@reubenheaton.com](mailto:info@reubenheaton.com)

Join Reuben Heaton on Facebook for all our latest news

**REUBENHEATON**



**EAGLE  
CLAW**

**EAGLE CLAW**  
**TROKAR**

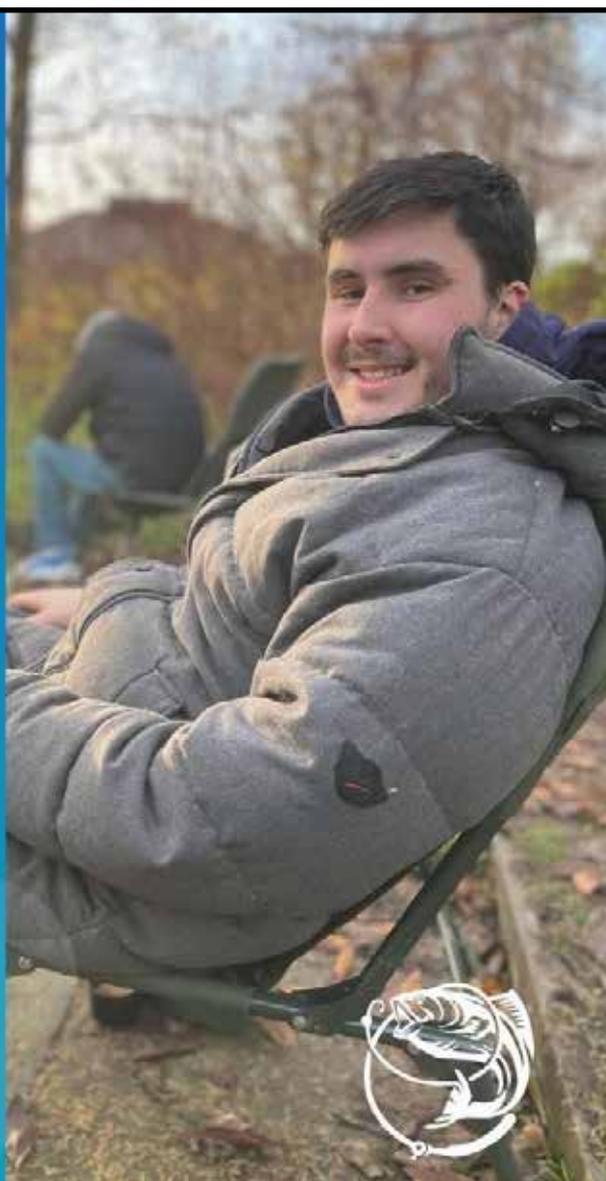


**Exclusive distributors for eagle claw**

# WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR FISHERY?

“Fishing with Tackling Minds relaxes my mind and makes me feel at one with nature, whilst allowing me to feel a real sense of achievement when I catch a few fish.”

Jagan



**W**e're currently Tackling Minds team across looking for Greater Manchester and volunteers Lancashire. Find out more to join the <https://www.tacklingminds>.

org/job-vacancy/volunteer-angling-coach/Not all heroes wear capes! At Tackling Minds, we are committed to supporting individuals with mental health challenges through the scientifically proven benefits of fishing. But behind every session, every smile, and every success story, there's a team of incredible volunteers driving this mission forward. Their dedication, even in challenging weather conditions, is a testament to their commitment. Rain, hail, shine, or snow, they show up, ready to make a difference. We wouldn't be where we are today without them.

Due to increased demand for our services, Tackling Minds is looking for volunteer anglers who share our passion for passing on the benefits of fishing. Our Volunteers: Make a Real Difference to Peoples' Lives

Give Back to the Community  
Gain New Skills  
Feel Really Valued & Appreciated  
Meet New People  
Enjoy being a part of our Team  
For those who meet our criteria, Tackling Minds will fully fund your Angling Coaching courses, which include a recognised coaching qualification, First Aid Certificate, Safeguarding Training, and a DBS check. If you're interested in becoming a volunteer, please fill out our short online application form <https://www.tacklingminds.org/job-vacancy/volunteer-angling-coach/>

Once completed, we'll be in touch to invite you to one of our volunteer open days, where you can meet the team, see the life-changing work we do, ask any questions, and discuss your onboarding process to join your very first session. We can't wait to welcome you to the team!  
Tight Lines for Healthy Minds

# **BLUEBELL WEBSITE UPDATED**



## **Welcome to Bluebell Lakes**

Based in Peterborough, Bluebell lakes is one of the most prestigious carp waters in the UK.

All of our 5 Mature Carp fishing lakes provide the specimen carp angler with a large choice of swims to catch big carp ranging from 10lb to mid 50lbs.

Have you seen our website? Head over to our website for rules, lake info and everything you need to know about a trip to Bluebell Lakes.

Last year we revamped our website with a fresh new look. Head over for the latest info and news  
[www.bluebell-lakes.co.uk](http://www.bluebell-lakes.co.uk)



## THE #1 FRENCH CARP FISHING VENUE

2 VENUES · 6 LAKES

OVER 4,000 CARPS

Average weight 35–42 lbs

Carp record 80 lbs+

Grass carp up to 80 lbs+

Koi carp up to 46 lbs+

Catfish up to 260 lbs+

Sturgeon up to 250 lbs+

ONLY 43 SWIMS

Across 6 lakes

240 acres of exclusive carp fishing

Huts · Safari tents · VIP swims

Carp fishing shop · Bar & restaurant

Tackle rental · Bungalows

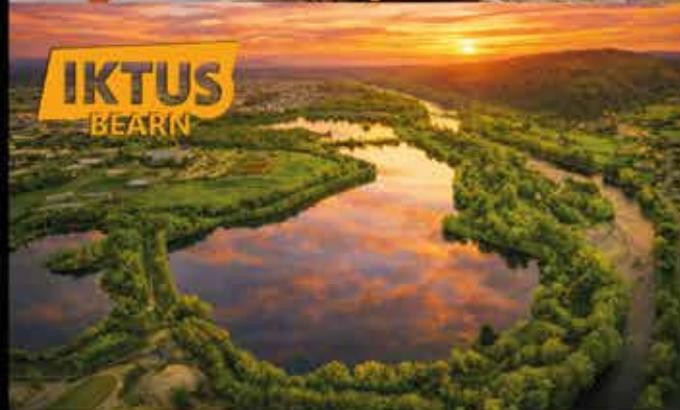
Professional bailiff team - 7 days a week

 +33 6 44 35 96 35

 Iktus Béarn  
Iktus Corrèze

 @iktusbearn

[www.iktus.fr](http://www.iktus.fr)



# ROBBIE BRIERS JOINS THE ESP TEAM

Recently voted Carp Angler of the Year by @cypography followers, Robbie @robbriers needs little introduction regarding his standing in big carp circles.

Based in Greater Manchester, with a demanding full-time job, Robbie still finds time to put maximum effort into tough campaigns on tricky, high pressured venues miles from home.

He has amassed a tally of

hugely impressive carp from a number of different venues and has recently been focusing on a demanding day only lake with some incredible captures.

We're delighted to welcome Robbie to the ESP team and look forward to showcasing a few of his captures in 2026! Which just leaves us to say, Happy New Year and tight lines for '26!



# CHILTERN RODS NOW BUILDING SOUTH COAST RODS



We are please announce that we have recently been approached by South Coast Rods, who have asked us if we would offer a custom build option for their products. We agreed this would be a great idea and look forward to offering our customers an additional range of high-quality carp blanks that can be built to any specifications you require. We can offer various options regarding the handle, guides, reel seat and whippings etc so drop us a line and I'm sure we can build the rods of your dreams .

<https://southcoastrods.com/>

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE



**Venue:** The Lodge, Horseshoe Lake, Burford Road, Lechlade, Gloucestershire, GL7 3QQ

**Date:** Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 – 1.30pm

---

## Agenda:

1. Welcome from the Chair
2. Review of the Past 12 Months
3. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM held on 16 February 2025
4. Adoption of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 May 2025
5. Approval for Annual Accounts to be prepared by an independent chartered accountant, at a maximum fee set by the Directors
6. Election of Directors and Officers (where applicable; see notes below)

### Closure of meeting

### Any Other Business

An informal Q&A session will follow the formal AGM, providing members with an opportunity to ask questions or raise discussion items.

---

## NOTES

- The Annual General Meeting will be conducted in accordance with the company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, available on the Society website or from the Head Office at Horseshoe Lake.
- A valid membership card is required for entry, and for submitting any proxy or voting forms.
- Questions relating to the accounts must be submitted in writing to the Company Secretary no later than 21 days prior to the AGM (Sunday, 25 January 2025).
- Director nominations (where vacancies exist) must also be submitted in writing in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles, no later than 21 days before the AGM date (see note below).

Director	Term Ending	Re-standing
ANDREW ELLIS	2026	Yes

Questions and nominations should be sent in writing to:

The Secretary, The Carp Society, Horseshoe Lake, Burford Road, Lechlade, Glas, GL7 3QQ  
or emailed to [sales@thecarpsociety.com](mailto:sales@thecarpsociety.com), quoting your current membership number.

### Current directors: 9

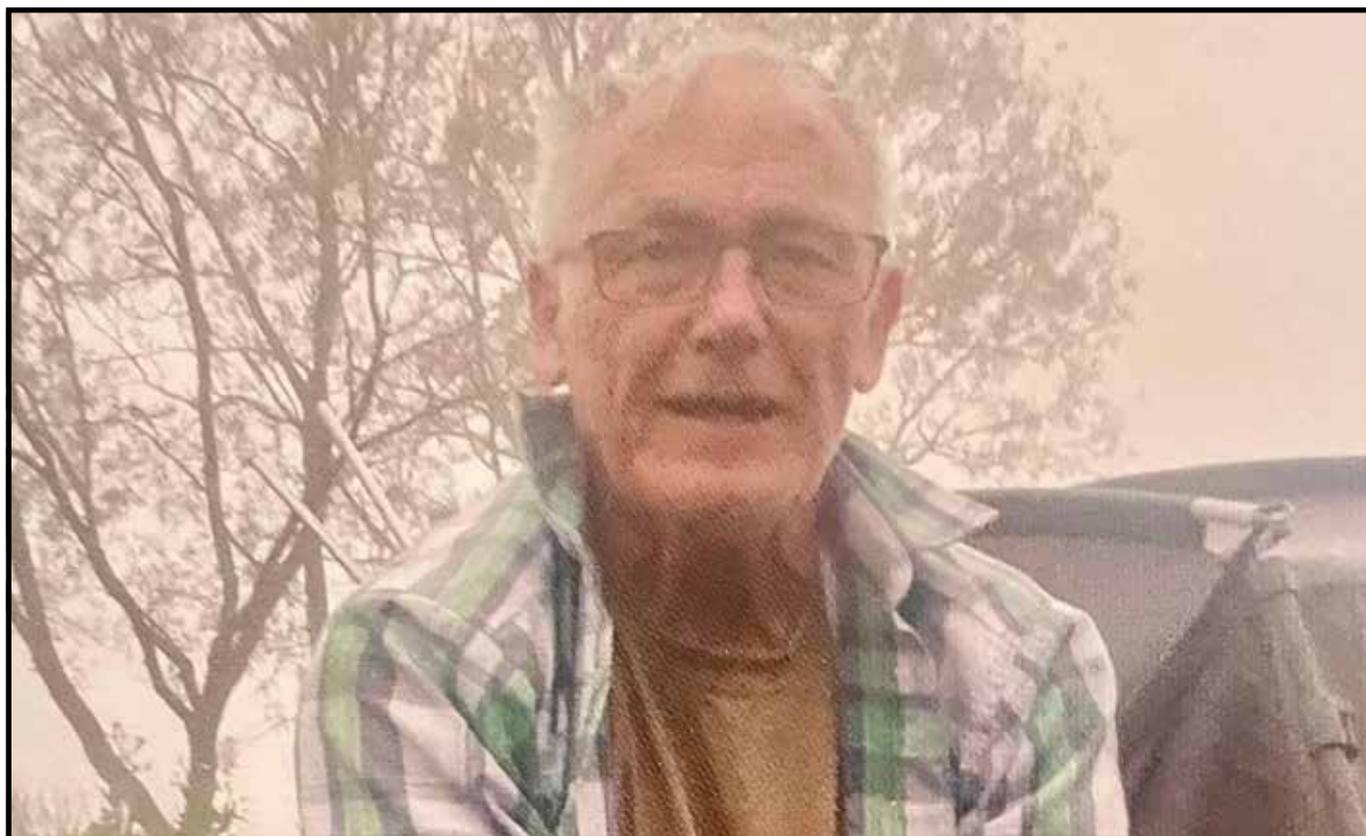
1 director's 5 year-term is due to expire this year; an election will take place by vote.

The director whose term up for renewal is Andrew Ellis

Where applicable, elections will be held at the AGM for any positions for which valid applications are received. Director nominations (in accordance with the Memorandum & Articles) must be submitted to the Society in writing no later than 21 days before the AGM date (Sunday, 25 January 2025).

After this time a full list of a full list of candidates and the voting/proxy forms will be made available 14 days prior to the meeting along with voting/proxy forms

# MIKE STARKEY RIP BY MARK WALSINGHAM



Very sad to hear of the death of Mike Starkey this morning. I knew Mike was a man of great integrity and principle and a fine angler...

I knew Mike through his membership of the Ashmead Syndicate but he will be very well known to many through his fishing on right..

# SHAUN McNUTT RIP



It is with profound sadness that we announce the sudden passing of our previous owner, Shaun McNutt.

Shaun was the second and longest owner of TopCats. He took over in May 2009 and in his 10 1/2 year's here, Shaun was instrumental in developing the resort into the world-renowned fishing destination it is has become today. For his vision and dedication, we are truly grateful.

His unexpected death occurred recently in Hua Hin, shortly after he spent a week doing what he loved most, fishing. Our thoughts and deepest condolences go out to Pim, Tadpole, and the rest of his family and friends during this extremely difficult time.

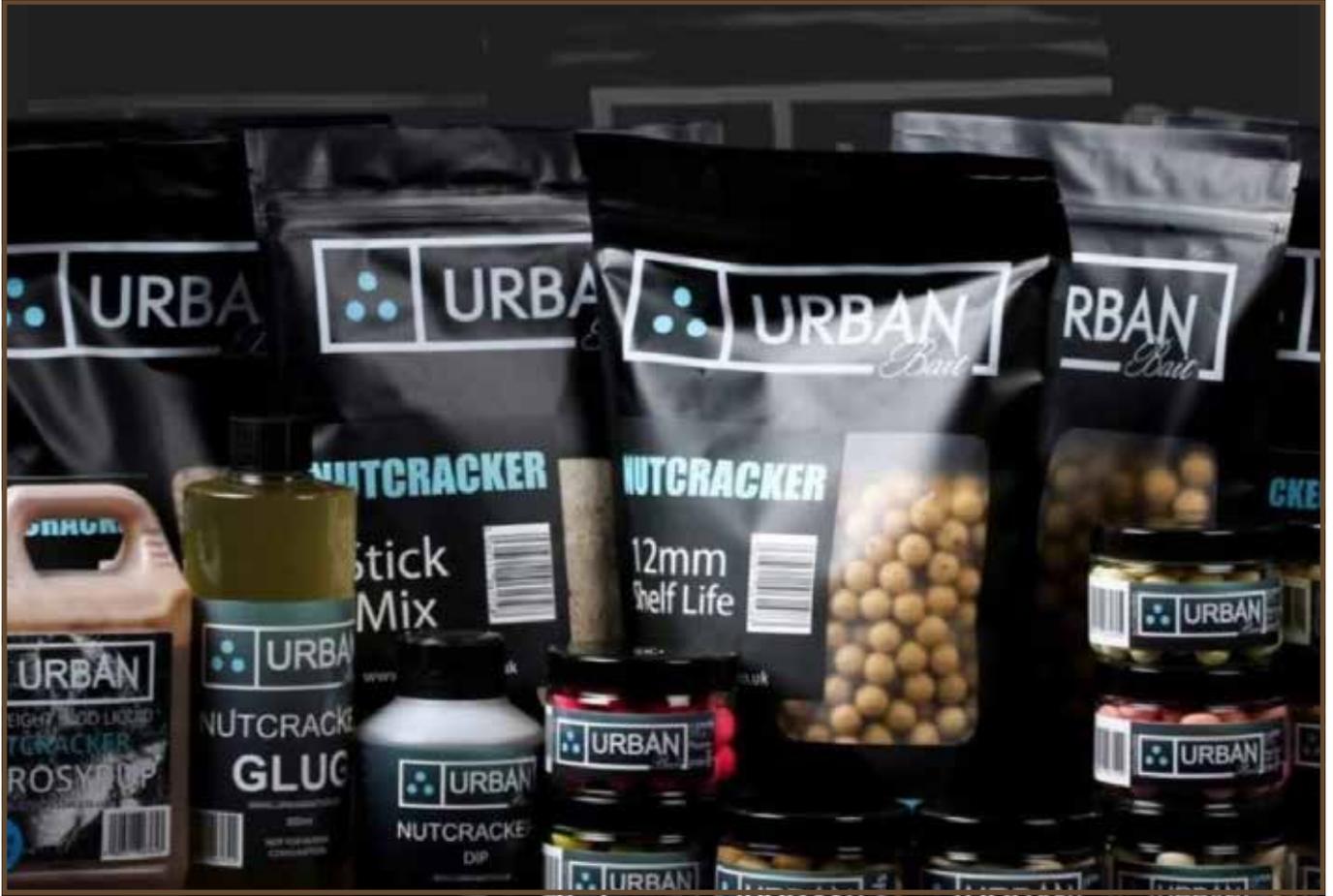
URBAN  
BAIT  
RANGE

# URBAN BAIT RANGE

**H**ere at Urban, our priority is to deliver bait of exceptional quality that really stands out in what has become a heavily saturated industry sector. We pride ourselves on producing premium products at a competitive price point without ever compromising on quality.

Every product we create is made using only the very best ingredients sourced from some of the finest producers across the globe. Backed with over 30 years of bait formation knowledge, nutritional understanding as well as a documented, comprehensive angling heritage, all of which is utilised to ensure you receive the very best possible results in your angling. After all, your success is our future.

[www.urbanbait.co.uk](http://www.urbanbait.co.uk)



# SHARP ULTRALOCK BACK RESTS



Sharp have come up with arguably the most secure backrest ever launched. There are 2 styles, the fixed version and the plus with tilts 180 degrees - ideal for fishing your rod tips high.

Using a very specific insert each rod rest is perfectly

tuned to your rod. They are interchangeable for different rod set-ups.

Made using the latest lazer printing process from almost indestructable nylon these back rests will provide rock solid rod security for years to come.

- [www.sharptackle.co.uk](http://www.sharptackle.co.uk)
- RRP from £15



EXCLUSIVE OFFERS

Come and meet top anglers alongside leading tackle brands from across the industry

Our First Ever Tackle Shop Open Day

# TACKLE SHOP OPEN DAY

Saturday 16th May 2026  
10am until 4pm

Bluelake Lakes Making History. Come Down To a FREE Event

Benson's Open All Day

Charity Fundraiser With Unmissable Prizes

DON'T MISS OUT

- ▶ Exclusive Offers
- ▶ Raffle Giveaways
- ▶ Chance To See The Products
- ▶ Meet Suppliers and Companies
- ▶ Rod & Bait Boat Demo's

Supported by:



# NITE WATCHES MX10 JUNGLE



**R**ob says, “Nite years. The MX 10 has always Watches have always been regarded as the original been popular with field watch, but I am guessing carp anglers and not many carp anglers know its Nite has been an integral part origins. I will let Nite explain.” of Big Carp Magazine for many “Originally commissioned



for military use, the MX10 earned its stripes with the UK Special Forces and secured NATO certification. Evolving from this lineage, our latest MX10 series is meticulously engineered to conquer the toughest environments. From treacherous waters to relentless winds and icy climates, it embodies unwavering confidence, ready to thrive in every challenge". Rob adds, "In January Nite very kindly offered Big Carp and Free Line readers a massive £85 discount, an offer

they have just extended to include February as it has been so successful. I could not resist and ordered one for myself immediately. The watch has not left my wrist since it arrived. It's superb and will accompany me on all my fishing adventures from this point on, both here and abroad. It really is the ultimate carp fishing watch. Especially with its Tritium illumination. Perfect for all my night time carp fishing."

- [www.nitewatches.com](http://www.nitewatches.com)
- RRP £330

# G - FORCE MULTI ADAPTER



**O**ur unique G-Force Multi Stove Adapter cleverly allows two stoves to be used at the same time! This high quality Multi Stove Adaptor is manufactured using CNC machining technology and duralumin material, making it durable and reliable. It has three 7/16" threaded valve outlets available, that can be used individually or in pairs. Available now from all good Gardner Tackle stockists!

- RRP £28.99
- [www.gardnertackle.co.uk](http://www.gardnertackle.co.uk)



**RAISING MONEY  
THROUGH  
ANGLING EVENTS  
SINCE 1996**

**MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**

# KING OF THE NORTH



I've been putting a lot of time and effort in on Cheshire sand pit, targeting a carp for a couple of years. This year, my dream finally came true and the fish I was after was finally sulking in my Springbow. A combination of work nights, weekends and a lot of bait produced the goods, landing 6 over 30lb and many others in a week and a half angling to 42lb 2oz - A fish known as 'The Half Lin', taken on my favoured Combi-Multi rigs, over big hits of particle and Cell boilie

**SEND YOUR CATCH  
REPORTS IN TO  
[bigcarpmagazine@hotmail.com](mailto:bigcarpmagazine@hotmail.com)**

# NOT SO GRUMPY

Ash Lorraine  
with the legendary  
Grumpy at 56lb



# MAGIC MAKER



How's that for a December bad boy. Weighing in at 44lb 2oz

**BAYESWATER  
RECORD  
BROKEN**

Congratulations to Chanelle Louise on banking a new Pb mirror and new lake record weighing 44lb



**STORMING  
RESULT**

Tony Kingdon with Dropscale at 50.08



# CAMBS HAUL



Cass Cole rounded off an unforgettable year in style with two December 40-pounders from his Cambridgeshire syndicate



## CATCH REPORTS

Lee Petty with a stunning common weighing 45lb10oz

# PETTY'S PRETY ONE



# NICE ONE

Mark Harris with a gorgeous mirror from a southern reserve weighing 42lb8oz





## ULTRALOCK

**The ultimate in rod security. The rod is securely held in place under lock and key. The side bar locks at the 9 o'clock position and is released when you press it down to the 6 o'clock position. Simple - easy - reliable. Individual inserts from 12mm - 25mm perfectly match your rod. There's no compromise here. A must for fishing locked up, snag fishing or when fishing your rods out in the lake. Your rod has never been this secure. Manufactured from almost indestructable nylon using the very latest lazer technology right here in the UK.**

[www.sharptackle.co.uk](http://www.sharptackle.co.uk)



50lb 12oz

**RODDERS  
50**



Rod Dale Cox landed his PB, weighing in at 50lb 12oz

**ROCKY  
54**

Joey Thomas with Wraysbury's north lakes "Rocky's Revenge" at 54lb 10ozs and a new Pb



# RACEY WINNER

Aaron Racey said "A new PB I've been chasing for a long time, Lucy 48.1lb



# BLOODY EL



Ellie Gilhooley with her very impressive new PB of 61lb

# REID'S RESULT



Callum Reid  
with more Winter  
Ticket Success  
here at Bluebell  
Lakes, 44.02

Ollie Willcocks  
with the incredible  
Mike's Pet on an  
OVERNIGHTER!  
at an all-time high of  
52lb 6oz

# ONE NIGHT STAND



# DAN'S DOUBLE

Dan Weaver  
with 39lb & 46lb  
mirror from a  
week away over  
Christmas



# ST JOHNS RECORD BROKEN



Danny Griffiths fishing St Johns has landed the lake record with the big ghosty at a massive 49lb 12oz!!

# the goodz carp baitz



## THE T.A.S.K.

A blend of tuna, krill and real food items with added spices and attractors complimented with GoodZ own amino booster that enhances the strong food signals emitted from this bait.



## THE F.A.M.M.

A blend of highly digestible milk proteins and real food items to achieve a highly digestible, high protein all season food source bait. The Fruit and Malted Milk blend is a carp classic



## THE N.M.E.

Introducing the N.M.E (Nut & Maple Extract) – The N.M.E is not just another bait—it's a revolution in carp nutrition and attraction. A true masterpiece of modern carp fishing science.

**matching liquid foods, drips, PVA bag mixes, wafers and pop ups to match your chosen bait**

Goodz, a company founded a decade ago, has built a stellar reputation as a premier supplier of high-quality fish bait. From its inception, Goodz has been committed to providing anglers with products that ensure success on the water, combining expert craftsmanship with a passion for fishing. Over the years, their dedication to excellence has earned them the trust of fishing enthusiasts and professionals alike. Whether it's their attention to sourcing premium ingredients or their innovative bait designs, Goodz continues to set the standard in the industry, making every fishing experience truly exceptional.

**[www.goodzcarpbaits.co.uk](http://www.goodzcarpbaits.co.uk)**

**info@goodzcarpbaits.co.UK / 07538 856851**



# YEAR ENDS IN STYLE FOR MILES



Miles Gibson said "Had a mega few days down at the lodge over New Years with the Mrs and catching up friends. Although the fishing was tough, with just one bite between us in 4 days. That one bite more than made the trip though, landing a mega old mirror known as 'Dent Head' at just over 45 pounds on New Year's Eve morning. Happy New Year indeed

# BRAVO JARVO



Mike Jarvis has been getting some great action just recently with this 45lb common

# NICK OF TIME



Nick Dodds with this 59.4lb mirror.

# LONG RANGER





Lee Clifton had an excellent session at the mighty Grenville for his Christmas session. Fishing at 35 wraps his choice of main line was easy..Crypton Elevate (Double Tapered Crypton) in 0.315 (14.55lb). Lee tells us he had absolutely no problem hitting the distance and the main line performed brilliantly.

He landed some incredible looking carp with the pick of the bunch being Grenvilles big common at 47.6lb

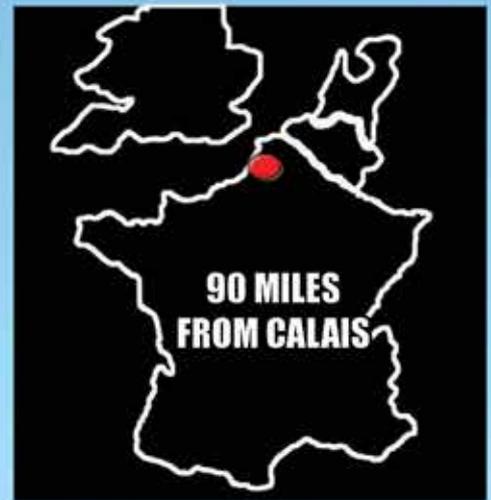
**SEND YOUR CATCH  
REPORTS IN TO  
[bigcarpmagazine@hotmail.com](mailto:bigcarpmagazine@hotmail.com)**

# PECK PICKS THE WINNER



Darrell Peck said "The biggest fish from our @bernershallfishery social in December, a lovely 44lb common"

# Experience the big carp venue in northern France



Only 1 hr 1/2  
from Calais !

## Val Dore Lakes

WEB : [WWW.VALDORE.COM](http://WWW.VALDORE.COM)  
email : [contact@valdore.com](mailto:contact@valdore.com)

ONLINE  
BOOKING  
AVAILABLE



**CARP AVERAGE  
WEIGHT : 30 lb  
CARPS up to 74 lb ...!**

- £255 / angl / week
- 6 lakes - 60 acres
- 24 tons of carp
- Restaurant / Bar
- Wifi - Elect on swim
- Carpark on all swims
- Log cabins
- Tackle shop



Cabins



Tackle shop



Restaurant

**FREE BROCHURE** 📄

Call evening  
**00 33 608 109 134**  
english spoken

or email us : [contact@valdore.com](mailto:contact@valdore.com)

## CATCH REPORTS

Mark Thompson on his new personal best, the festival big girl at a top weight of 52lb 4oz

# FESTIVAL WINNER



# ZIP UP



Dave Jones said "Safe to say my heads gone !!  
New Pb- 49-1 & in January too!

# SANDHURST STUNNERS



Sam Jacobs smashing it on a recent winter session.  
Cream of the crop the magnificent Armadillo at its top weight of 44.14. Backed up with rising star Petals at 42.12



# MEMORIAL MAGIC



Sean Youngman has had a couple of successful trips pre Christmas with a few mates. First starting with a trip to Yateley Pads lake resulted in the lakes biggest resident and his first fish out of 4 on the first night of the trip known as 'Lumpy.' Caught over a spread of Cell boilies soaked in Cell Smart Liquid. His second trip was a memorial trip for a friend of his called Martin Nichols who sadly passed away of cancer earlier this year. "We had this trip booked for him to try catch a Norfolk 40 but he passed before the trip" said Sean. "I came out last in the draw and decided to fish a swim next to my dad and baited a zone heavy with Cell boilies soaked in Cell Smart Liquid and Cell Stick Mix Liquid was worked great landing some stunners including a awesome 41lb 8oz mirror."

# CATCH REPORTS





**ADAM REED**

# A 'SOLID' CHOICE

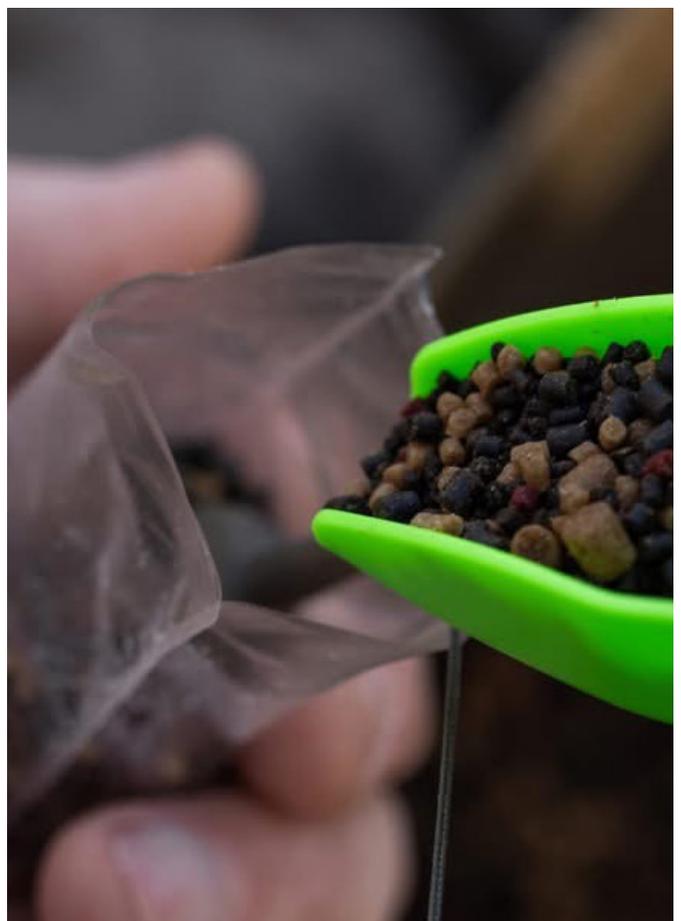
**W**hen the temps are at rock bottom and bites are hard earned, solid PVA bags can be the edge you need to catch a winter carp!

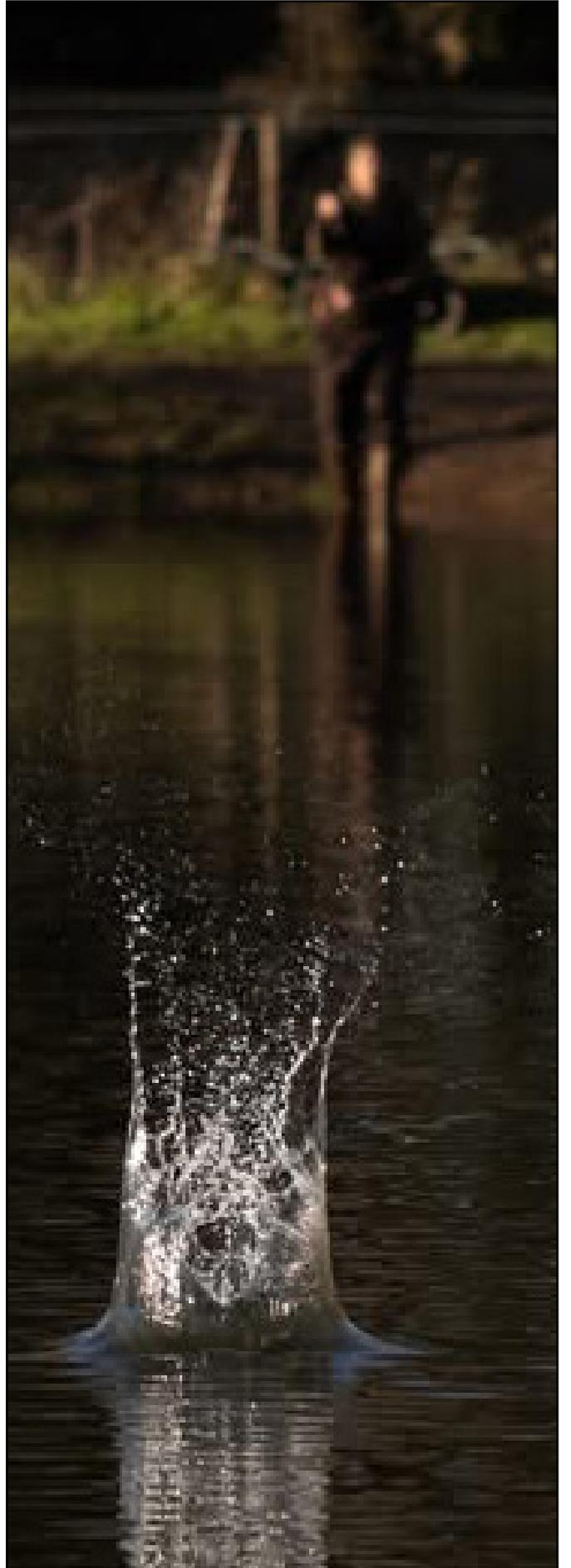
They offer a Small, High-Attraction Parcel – A compact mouthful of bait makes it easy for lethargic carp to feed. They're tangle-free, with perfect presentation as they land perfectly every time, with no tangles. You can get a concentrated cloud

of attraction as the PVA melts, releasing contents and attractants for a quick bite.

You can have a stealthy approach – No baiting needed, just a single, irresistible offering on the right spot. Use fine pellets - mainline Spod & PVA Mix and Boilie Crumb for a fast breakdown. Opt for a small wafter to create a natural presentation.

Solid bags are a deadly winter method for many. Have they worked for you?







**DAN BARBER**

# WINTER WHACKER

**S**ometimes, you just have to trust your instincts – and for Dan Barber, that belief led to a truly special capture!

Joining a new syndicate with one fish firmly in mind, Dan set his sights on the venue's standout common – a fish nearly 10lb bigger than anything else in the lake. With a high stock of smaller carp, getting through to her was never going to be easy,

so Dan spent spring and summer putting in the groundwork rather than chasing bites, listening carefully and building a plan for the colder months.

As late autumn and winter arrived, progress began to show. A couple of spots started producing consistently, and the last two trips delivered a better stamp of fish. Dan even mentioned to close angling friends that “she’s coming

from one of these spots” – that familiar feeling when a true big-fish area starts to mature.

A last-minute window between Christmas and New Year, following a freezing night, was too good to ignore. Arriving before first light to find other waters capped with ice, Dan trusted his gut once more – locating his chosen spot sitting perfectly in the lee of a northerly, flat calm and primed for a daytime bite.

Eight hours later, it all

unfolded. A savage take and a nerve-shredding battle followed, with the fish doing everything possible to reach a snag that would have meant disaster.

As the fish rolled into the net, Dan was greeted by the unmistakable sight of the lake’s giant common. Weighing 48lb 12oz, she fell just short of the magical fifty, but still represented a new UK PB and an incredible achievement, especially for the time of year.







**DARRELL PECK**

# THE CEMENT MIX

If you've watched heavy baiting tactics in this Darrell Pecks recent Combi Multi Rig Masterclass film, you would have again seen him put his Smart Liquid 'cement-mix' boilie tactics to good use. Darrell was using super-

scenario, and faced with a ridiculous stock of big carp, but this method and mix ratio is just as effective when scaled down to say a kilo of boilies and lower big fish stocks - and here's how it's done!

# DARRELL'S CEMENT MIX

- Pecky fills two buckets around 2/3 full with rain or lake water. He'll then squirt half a bottle of Smart Liquid in each of the two buckets. The liquids are then mixed together thoroughly.
- 5kg of boilies (10mm Cell) are added to one bucket. 5kg of boilies (15mm Cell) are crushed.
- You only want to crush the boilies, not turn them all to powder.
- Now add the remaining bucket of liquid to the crushed baits. Thoroughly mix together.
- Ideally leave the mix for 12-24hrs so the liquid fully soaks the baits.
- You're finished mix will look like this!







**ELLIE GILHOOLEY**

# JURASSICA IN DECEMBER

**I**f you're ever wondering whether December is a sensible time for your first ever carp fishing trip to France, let me help you out: absolutely not. But did that stop me? Of course not. Winter carp fishing is notoriously tricky cold water, cold nights, sluggish fish, and every single tactic has to be bang on. But I couldn't wait to be going out with the Carp Couture team for a social to

the most unbelievable venue with owners so lovely they almost made me forget I'd voluntarily chosen to freeze for a week.

Jurassica is a proper big fish water. The sort of place where every swim feels like it could produce something special. After a walk around the lake, the Island Swim kept pulling me back. It looked right. It felt right. It just screamed big carp. And let's be honest, it was an absolute picture too. It had features, depth changes and the channel running between the islands looked like a classic patrol route.

I got set up, spent time finding my spots, and got the rods out. Then the waiting started.

The first four days were painfully quiet. Not a bleep. Not a liner. Not even a rogue tufted duck to keep things interesting. I kept watching the water. No signs, I thought I was going mad. The cold

worked its way into everything, including my mindset.

I won't lie, my confidence dipped. Were my spots working? Was my rig right? You just start to question everything and it gets to you. I even had the chance to move to another lake with smaller more active fish, a proper runs water. But I hadn't come all the way to France for "easy." I wanted one of the big ones, I wanted something special.

So, I reeled in and switched it up. stripped everything back. Out went the spinner rigs with a pop up and I tied a simple hair rig with double maize on a size 6 chod hook subtle, balanced, and something i use alot in my fishing. The rods went back out, and I had my fingers crossed for another night.

At around 10pm, the silence was smashed apart.

my left rod suddenly screamed off like it had somewhere more important



to be. I just about found my legs...shaking, obviously after 4 days of waiting... and I lifted into what felt like a train with fins, the fish powered off heading straight for the channel between the islands.

I leaned into it and slowly started to gain some line back and i had that brief dangerous thought that the hard part might be over.

But no.. the clutch screamed again.

The fish changed direction and charged for the left-hand corner, straight towards the big willow tree. At that point, it wasn't just a fish on it was a fight between me, the carp, and the willow tree.

I could feel the line grating through the branches, every vibration coming straight through my little 9ft rod. I had one option. I had to follow it.

I pushed my way through reeds and branches in the dark, rod held as high as I could. Thank god at this point

I had 9ft rods. my heart was pounding and I was quietly praying the rig, the line and my knots were all better thought out than my route of choice. Then the line tightened again. It was on.

The battle was savage.

The fish stayed low, using every ounce of its weight. My arms were burning at this point and my legs were uncontrollably shaking, I think this is the part where I couldn't breathe. I'd waited for this moment.

When the fish finally rolled up to the surface, I had no idea how big it was I think my brain had clearly checked out mid-fight.

When I finally saw it, I knew. It was unlike anything I'd ever seen. Let's just say I freaked out a little, I was trying to keep my head together, i managed to guide the fish towards my partner with the net. And the moment it was in, I couldn't believe it.



A French carp fishing paradise only 2 hours drive from Calais, with 7 lakes from 2.5 to 40 acres set in over 80 acres of idyllic country side. Our stock includes both common and mirror carp up to 70lbs+.

(0033 672 247 889) (mobile/whatsapp) / 0033 681 497171 (mobile/whatsapp)  
sales@carp-fishing-holidays.co.uk



I'd dropped the net and taken a few steps back when it hit me, it almost didn't feel real. After four solid days of waiting... four days! Doubting everything... there was actually a fish in the net.

I got the fish out of the water and when I say I let's be honest, my partner pretty much took over at that point because my back nearly snapped in half. The fish was safely popped into the sling and returned to the water while I made the phone call. Jamie. The man who told me to call him at any hour and so I did. I knew he'd be just as buzzing as I was, and I wasn't wrong.

Jamie gathered the team and when they arrived, there I was, standing in my waders, ready... or so I thought. And that's when it really hit me. I got emotional. Properly emotional. To have everyone there, sharing that moment... it's hard to put into words. The

excitement isn't just yours it belongs to everyone around you. That feeling is surreal, and it's something you never forget.

Once everyone had seen what was sitting in the sling, their faces said it all. That reaction, that's what it's really about. At that point, there was only one thing left to do. Get it on the scales.

So we gathered round the willow tree where the chain hangs, clipped it on, and up it went. And honestly, my heart nearly jumped straight out of my mouth. There was no hanging about with those scales, straight past 60lb... and still climbing. I didn't really know what to say at that point. And that, right there, is what fishing is truly about. Moments like this. Sharing them. Celebrating them with your team, your family and loved ones.

Then it was time for photos. I got into the water and

everyone gathered round while Jamie and Kyle captured some incredible shots. I'd love to say it only took one lift and we nailed it first time, but I'd be lying. The fish was absolutely enormous, and I'm only 5ft 1, so let's be realistic here! A few attempts later, we got the shots and they were worth every aching muscle.

When that fish finally swam away, it honestly felt like a dream. One of those moments you half-expect to wake up from. Except the next day, and the day after, that dream reminded me it was very real, because I couldn't feel my arms. I even considered taking a week off work at that point.

And then... just to rub salt into my already broken body, I went on to catch a beautiful 45lb 15oz common, which I could barely lift. It somehow managed to make the 61 feel... almost easy.

Later, I was told that the 61 wasn't just my biggest

ever it was also the biggest mirror in the lake, known as the northerner. That just tops it off right there.

Fishing in December is hard. The conditions can be brutal, the cold cuts through you. That said, getting through those conditions isn't just about mindset, having the right clothing makes all the difference. I was so glad I had my Carp Couture Fortress coat, the Drift waterproof coat, and my bobble hat. When you're living in your waders, standing around for hours in the cold, staying warm and dry means you can actually focus on the fishing rather than counting down the minutes until your back in the warmth.

When it all comes together, when that one bite finally arrives, it makes every cold, blank day completely worth it.

Jurassica, you were very good to me...

And I'll see you soon







**OSCAR THORNTON**

# MY 'GO TO' RIG

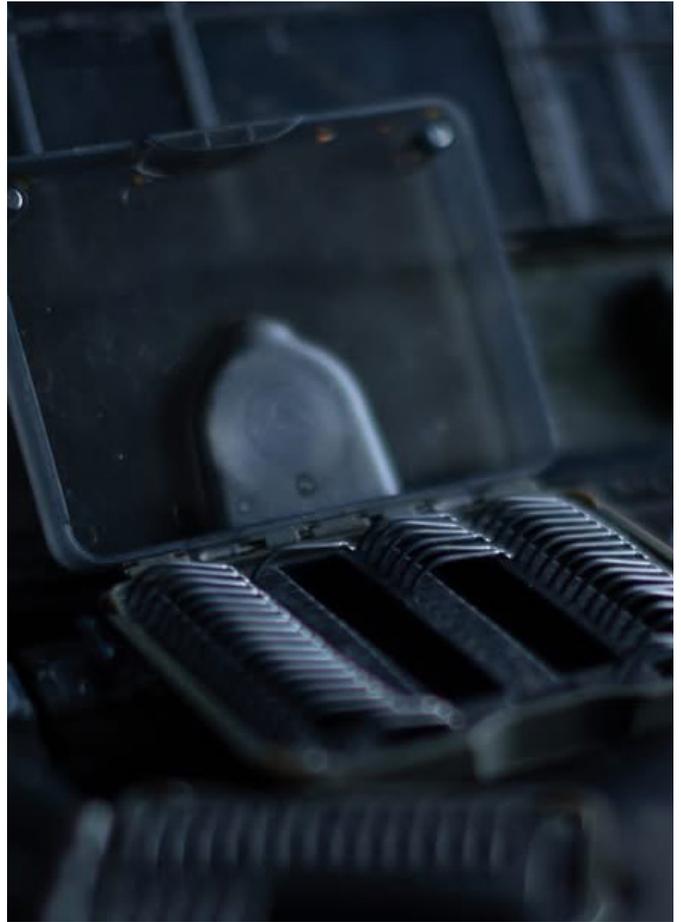
I always favour a longer rig, often fishing waters holding big carp, I want my rigs to offer plenty of movement. Fishing this rig, I can be super versatile with my hookbaits - I can fish big snowman baits, smaller baits or wafers, or even maggots. This means in pretty much all my fishing situations, my rig will stay the same. I use an overhand knot on the shank of the hook acting as the 'blow back section' and the reason I use a knot rather than the more commonly used swivel, is I

feel a knot just looks much neater, and is less bulky than having a swivel on the hook.

I always fish with Kamakura Wide Gape X's, I've used Wide Gapes for years and they never let me down. They are immensely sharp and the thicker gauge that the 'X' range offers, gives me peace of mind I'll land what I hook.

I use a short section of medium shrink tube, steamed in at a pretty tight angle to close the gape of the hook, with a small section of N Trap tripped back to create more movement, helping the hook catch. I use the Weed Green or Silt coloured N Trap, usually in 20lb, but will go heavier in weed or snaggy situations.

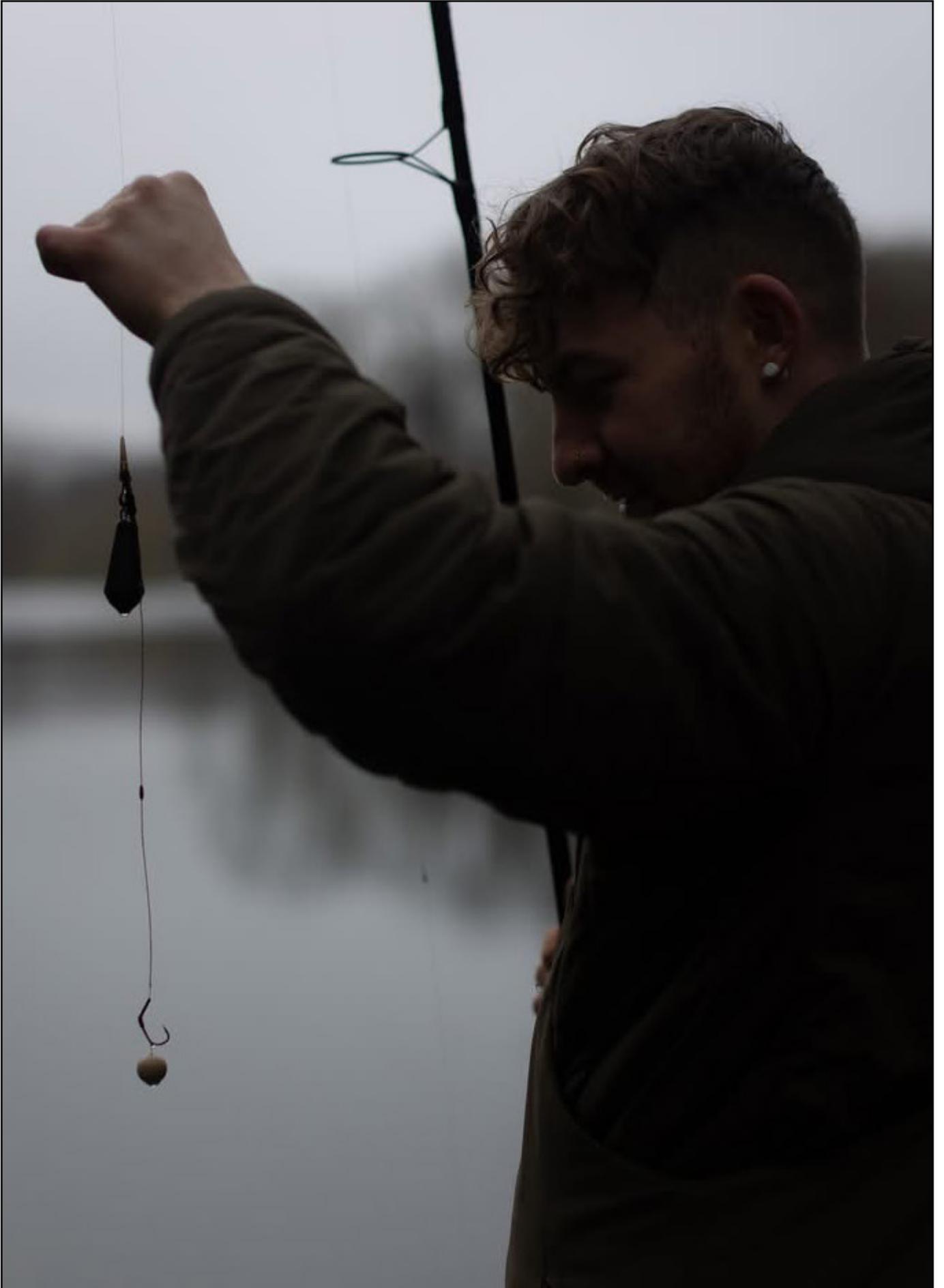
At the lead end, for me it's a Hybrid Lead Clip every time, I've so much confidence in them and never fish with Heli's. It's always worked for me so I'm not one to change for the sake of it. On this, I'll add the heaviest lead I can



get away with, when casting I favour a 4oz Distance Lead, which remains true in flight, stretching the line out lovely when it hits the clip and there's no denying a heavy lead is going to anchor that hook.

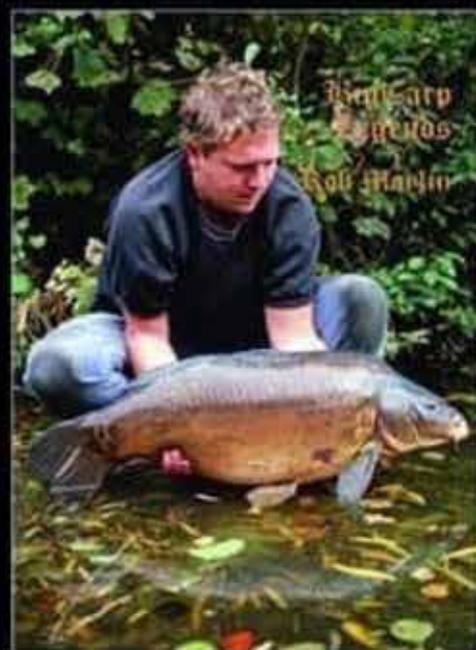
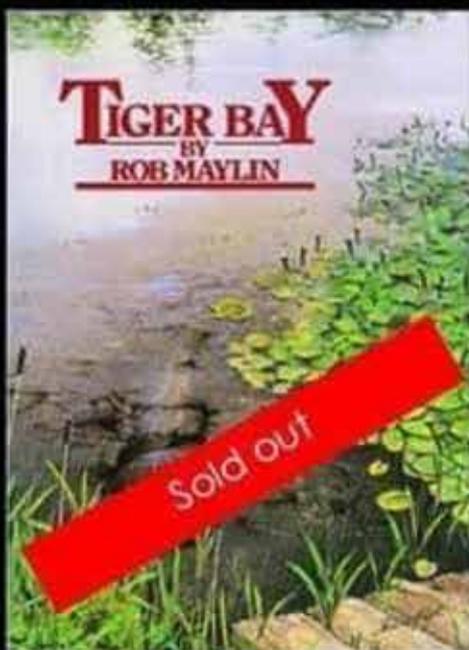
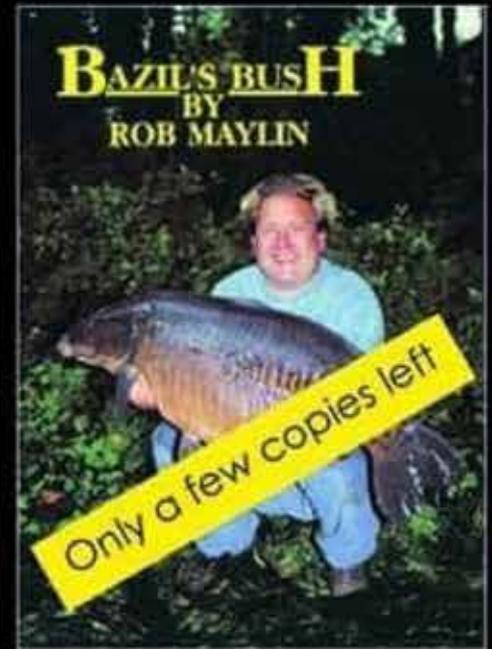
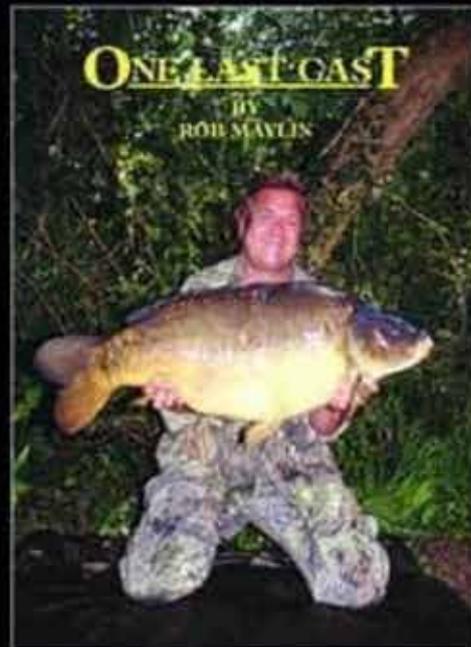
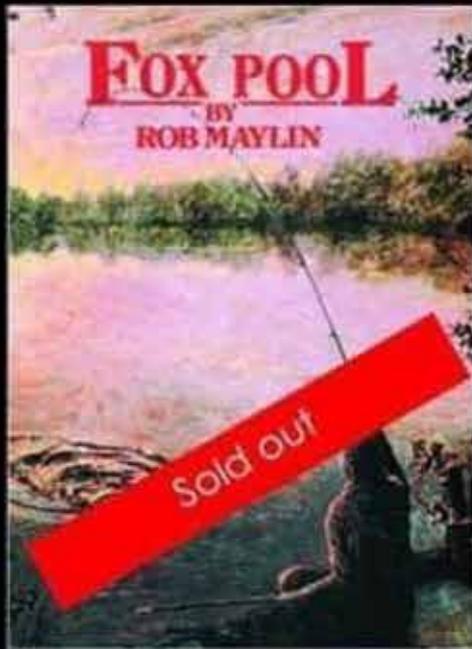
Then lastly, my mainline of choice is 15lb Kontour, which I'll fish straight through to my Lead Clip, fishing it super slack so it's pinned to the lakebed and out of sight.





# THE ROB MAYLIN SERIES

*50 years on the bank with Rob and Friends*



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



**RICH HOGG**

# CANAL SESSIONS

**F**or the past decade I have been targeting the elusive carp of the west midland canal system. Now for the first time my results, the highs, the lows and some incredible looking carp will be serialised monthly in Big Carp. My story begins here in

with my first diary entries on the 6th November 2015 (rod shot) and the 11th November 2015 early catches.....

“I’ve been having some good results on a stretch of canal that I became familiar with only in the last few months. Its home to some absolute mint commons and the biggest I’ve

managed from the stretch so far is this chunk just under 22lb from a couple of weeks ago. I've hit it a few times since and despite the warm weather, only bream and chub have decided to show. I'm sure there's more to come from this water in the future but for now it's time to move onto a new stretch of a different canal that I know nothing about. Who knows, could be something special in there!?

**26th November 2015**

Forget about black friday, its

all about golden thursday!!! haven't been on it as much the last few weeks but grabbed a quick few hours this morning on a quiet little stretch, well it was quiet until all hell broke loose on the right-hand rod at half 7!!! absolute stunner common bang on 15lb. 3 crumbed up big red boilies over a snowman hookbait doing it... I'm happy with anything this time of year but what a mint, well worth getting out of bed for!!!

**2nd December 2015**



Just about managed to sneak November's fish onto the bank, now I'm on the hunt for a December carp. 1st of only a handful of early morning sessions il get this month.

#### **4th December 2015**

Small but perfectly formed common from this morning! They dont always have to be big or a 'stunner' (though it does help), sometimes just the chaos of a 1 toner in the dead of night is perfect enough. coming in at just under 9lb.

Another quick 3-hour pre work session doing it! tight lines if you're out the weekend!!!

#### **19th December 2015**

Bit windy but they're out on a quick morning sesh. Came to 'eye up' a spot ready for next year but looked so good I had to drop on it today.

#### **December 22nd 2015**

With Christmas and new year coming up, i thought id take a moment to wish everybody a good one and a massive thanks for putting up with me ;- ) my

diary is less than 2 months old so there is still so much to share with you, not to mention all that's to come in 2016. I'm also delighted to say that I have joined the UkCarpBaits team! I've been using the bait for a while now and have to say, I'm very impressed with it. It's been quite a tough year on and off but since switching, I've managed a new staffs worcs pb of just under 22lb almost instantly on the 'big red' range. If you're

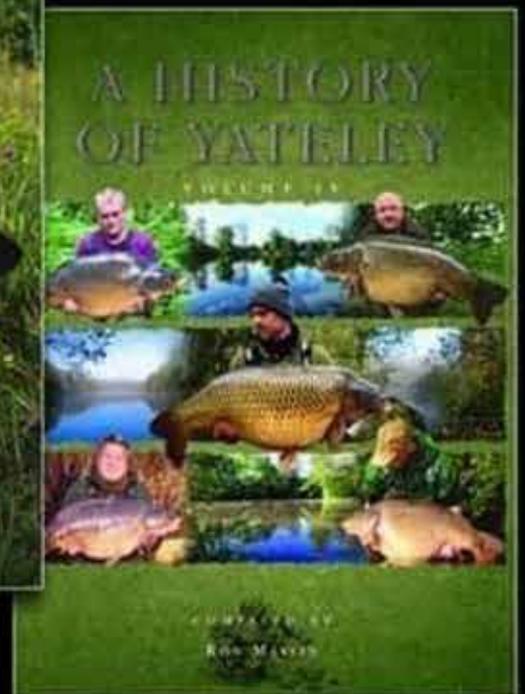
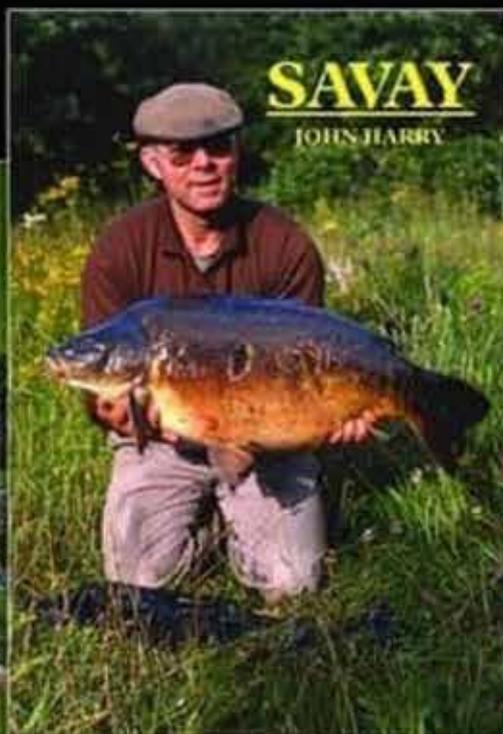
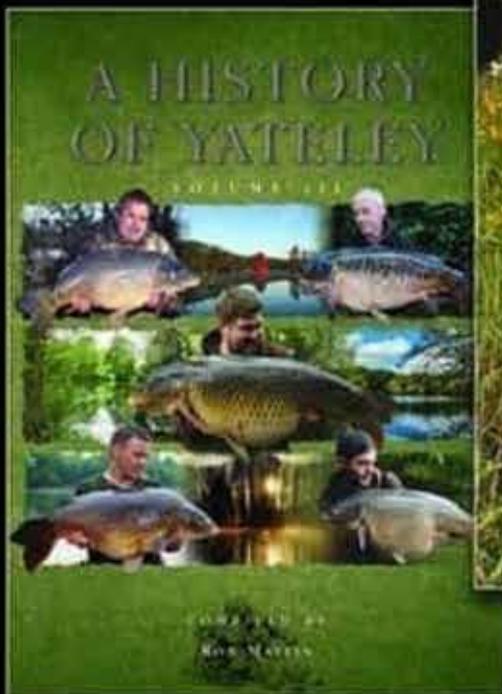
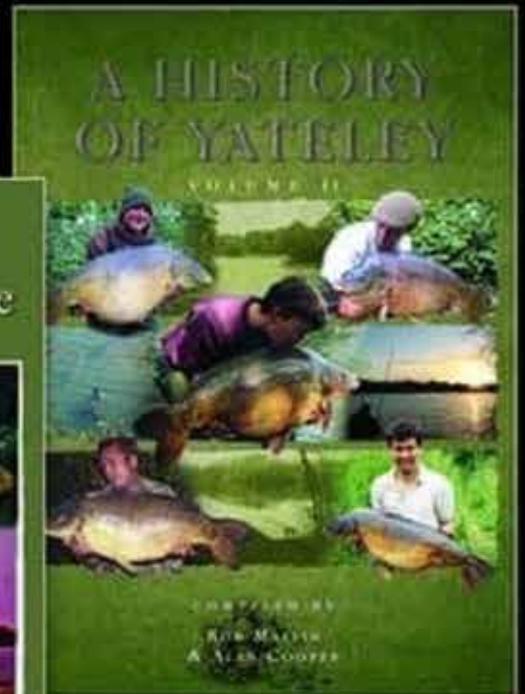
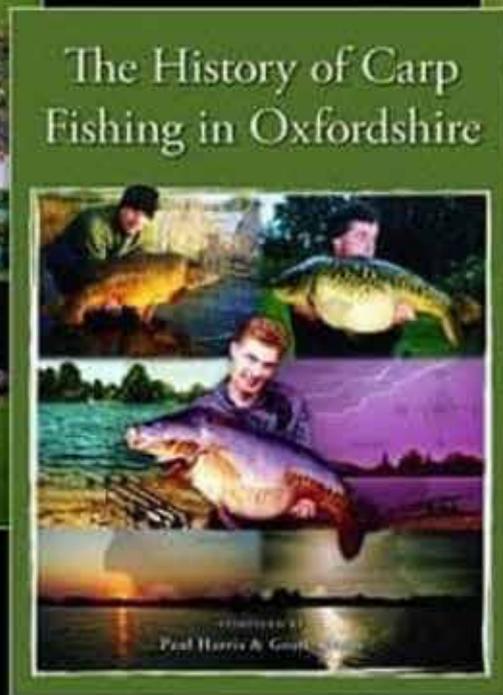
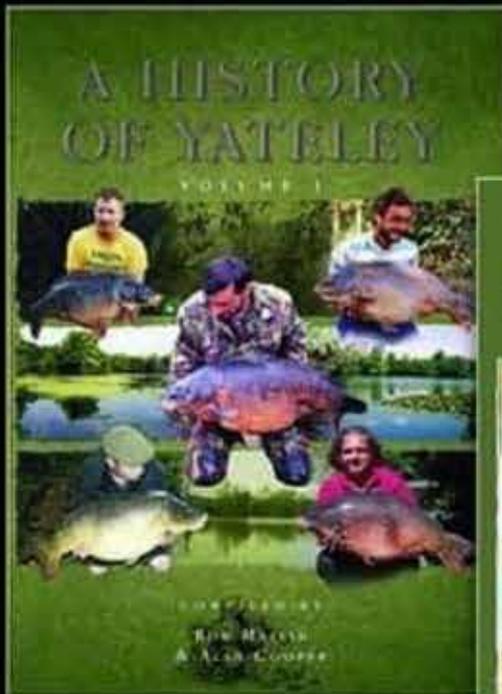
struggling when you think you should be getting results, it might be worth a change, the results speak for themselves! <https://www.facebook.com/UkCarpBaits/> once again a huuuuge merry Christmas and thanks, Rich!

### **29th December 2015**

A quick look back on the year of what's been a learning curve for me really, testing out new spots that I knew nothing about. Trial and error (and a lot of error) but that's



# THE HISTORY SERIES



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



the reality of the canals and finding things out for yourself. some stretches coming up with the goods and others not producing anything but all testing me. One new stretch in particular has been fairly rewarding in quantity rather than quality and I've found it difficult to step off it this year. I've had a good mix of mirrors, commons, ghosties and this, my favourite fish of 2015, a stunning little koi just under 10lb but proving size is

irrelevant! I'll definitely be back there next year for a sesh or 2 to see what other surprises are in the stretch along with some more learning on other new stretches!!!

### **3rd January 2016**

Off the mark! first sesh of the year and first fish of 2016 under my belt and also the 1st one on the new nutz range from #ukcarpbait. couple of single beeps was all she gave me, thought it was going to be a bream but turned out to

be a lovely common going 14 on the nose!!! only a couple of hours needed.

### **6th January 2016**

Sesh number 2 of the year and fish number 2 on the bank. I planned on returning to the same spot as the other morning where i managed the other common but with the road closed and all access cut off i had no choice but to go elsewhere. I ended up on

a stretch I've had my eye on but never fished before, knew nothing about it and for all i knew, may not have held a fish. Only there less than an hour before the left-hand rod let off a splutter and i was into a fish, just over 12 and half lb of pure gold from a quiet, seemingly untouched stretch of canal. no pre-baiting, just half a dozen pineapple & cream boilies over 2 likely looking





spots was enough to do the damage! instant results with #ukcarpbait

### **29th January 2016**

What a way to end January! A quick couple of hours this morning and within an hour of being set up, I go and get a double take. The second I slipped the net under the mirror, the other alarm sounded and I was into another! Coming from a stretch of canal well

out the way and untouched by carp anglers, wouldn't mind betting at least one of these little stunners has never seen a hook. Wind blowing straight into a bay with a couple of barges moored up, there was only one place they would have been! Let's just say I'm loving the pineapple nutz nearly as much as the fish are!!! tight lines for the weekend!

### **20th February 2016**



I must admit iv let the cold weather get the better of me lately. It's totally switched them off and i doubt the brief warm snap this weekend will be enough to put them on it with more cold weather forecast for next week. Running out of time for my February carp!!!

### **29th February 2016**

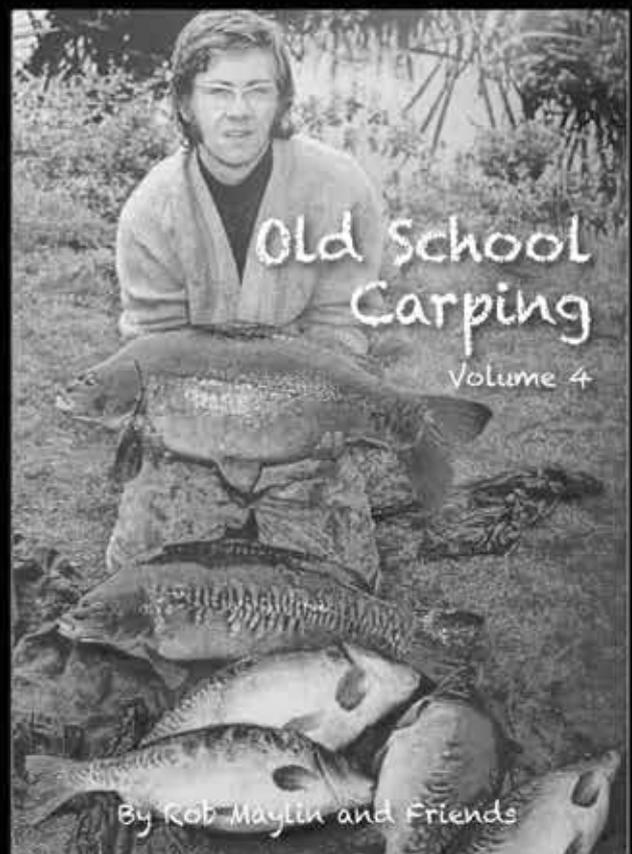
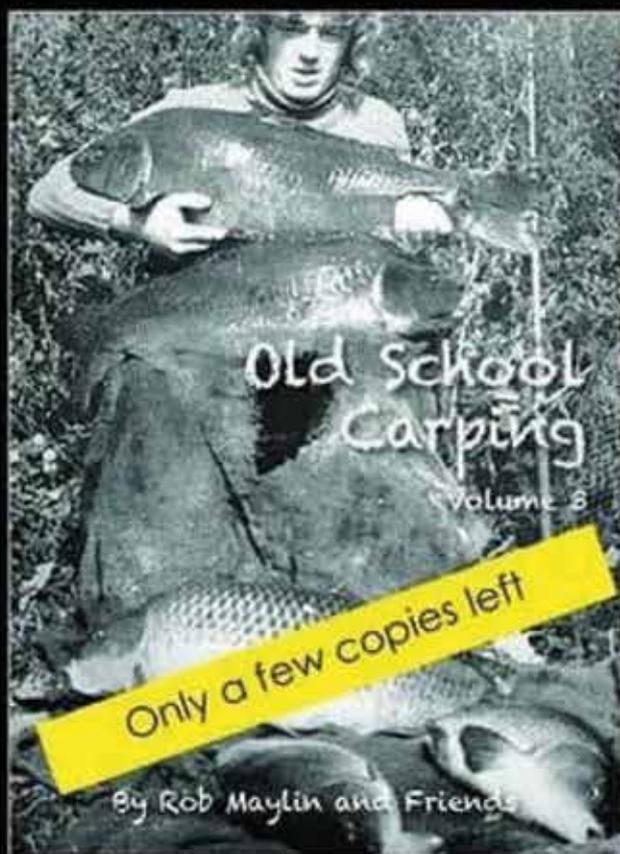
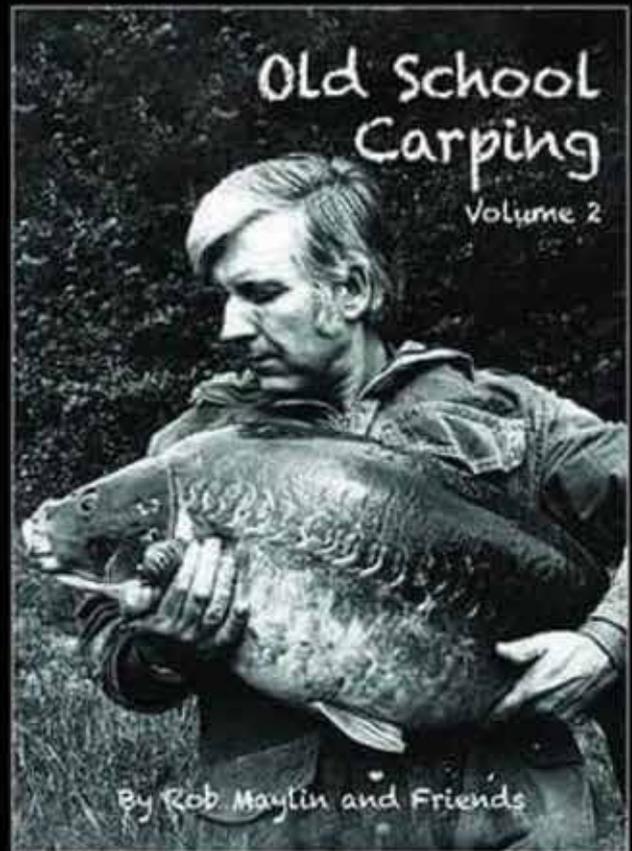
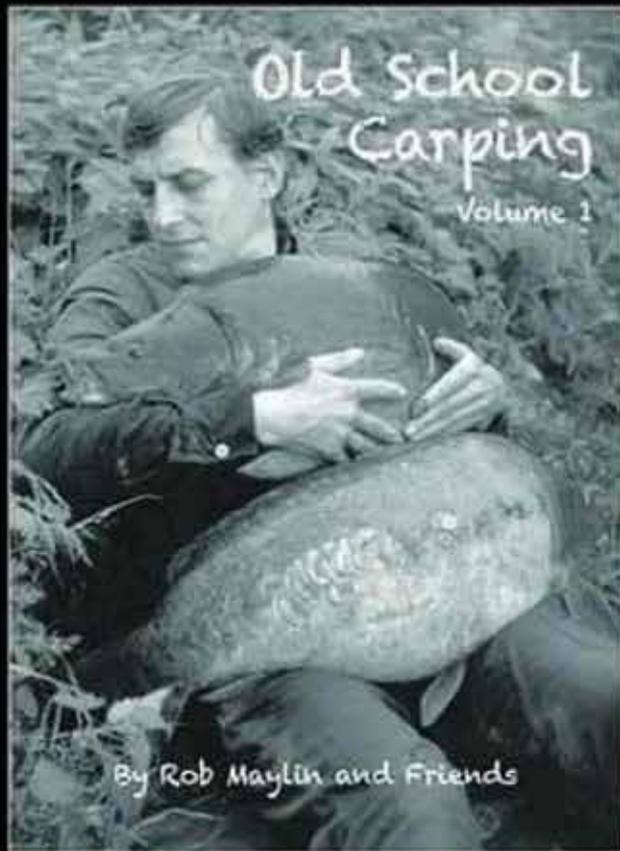
I had to pull something out the bag, the stretch I've been fishing throughout the month had not produced and with the cold weather the fish were obviously tucked well into the marina out the way, so as

a last resort I dropped onto a little featureless stretch with no boats or areas for the fish to hide away and resulted in this little chunk of bronze! not the biggest by far but with the temps at -2, I was over the moon to have a single beep less than 45 mins of being there, certainly the best single figure fish I've had, saving me from a February blank!!! :-)

once again the pineapple nutz from #ukcarpbait's doing the damage, couldn't resist the half a dozen crumbed up boilies around a snowman



# OLD SCHOOL CARPING SERIES



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



hookbait!

**6th March 2016**

This morning's sunrise over a frosty and rural staffs worcs...

**10th March 2016**

Couple of cold-water canal characters from this morning. Over the moon to bank these 2 (especially the fully) in a short morning session close to home. been baiting a spot now since the start of the month and it's paying off early. nice to grab a few shots in daylight

too. just a handful of the ever-faithful pineapple nutz around a snowman hookbait doing the trick once again! Chuffed!!!

**3rd April 2016**

Beautiful morning along the staffs worcs!!! Spring is finally here!

**3rd April 2016**

Little one at first light this morning going an oz under 11lb. Taken on uk carp baits 'big red' this time, with a couple of handfuls close by! Caught from a stretch



I've never fished before but it certainly will be back for the bigger residents that I'm sure are in there!

### **6th April 2016**

Little last minute blank saver this morning, definitely in the land of the small commons at the moment but you can't help what picks up your bait. It's great to see the future looking bright on the canals though! Once again taken on #ukcarpbait pineapple nutz fished tight to the boats on

the far bank with a handful of freebies over the top! Tight lines for the weekend!!!

### **12th April 2016**

Chuffed to land this one on a quick 'pre work' morning session earlier on today. Conditions were perfect for a run as this one proved. Only 40 minutes in and she'd sniffed out the 'big red' monster crab and black currant freebies... unfortunately for her she had one too many!!!

### **17th April 2016**



Freezing cold but beautiful start to the day... so worth it!

### **17th April 2016**

Over the moon to put my 1st 20 of the year on the bank, I started to think that the overnight frost had killed any chances but the water was still warm and just at 1st light the right hand rod came to life with a hard fighting common.

This is why I'm never far away from my rods, give them an inch and they'll take a yard!

Another falling victim to the pineapple nutz, a dozen or so scattered around a snowman hookbait gets em every time! Onwards and upwards!!!

Join me again next month, as I try to beat my canal PB at 30lb 5oz from September 2014





**SCOTT SWEETMAN**

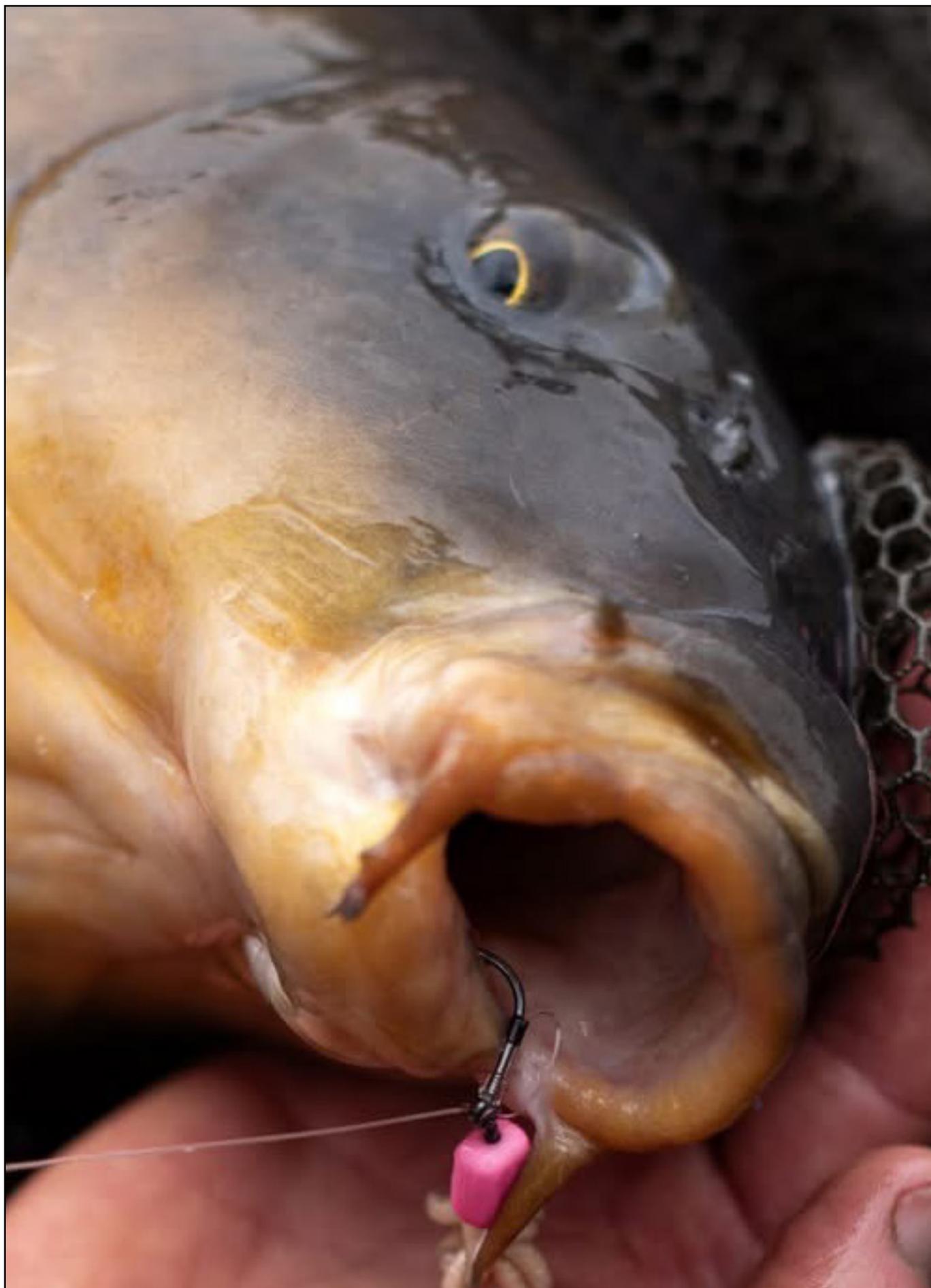
# IQ D-RIG

The IQ D Rig has stood the test of time, remaining a top choice for many anglers, including Scott. Its simple knotless knot design minimises tangles, while the freely sliding hookbait on the 'D' offers natural movement of even the smallest of hookbaits, which leads to great hookholds. Scott pairs it with a size 6 Kamakura Wide Gape X hook and a long length (10-inches) of IQ2 Fluorocarbon, which ensures effective presentation over a multitude of bottoms.

- Cut a length of 15lb IQ2, and attach a Kamakura Wide gape X with a knotless knot
- Thread a 5mm piece of silicone tubing onto the tag end. Carefully pass over the hook point and position opposite the barb of the hook
- Slide on a Micro Ring Swivel, and pass the tag end through the back of the eye. Blob with a lighter to secure the D in place
- Now slide an Anti-Tangle Sleeve on, and tie the rig to a Hybrid Lead Clip with the ring removed
- Pierce a piece of Slow Sinking Maize, and attach to the Micro Ring Swivel using Bait Floss
- Use a sewing needle to thread a bunch of maggots onto one of the tag ends of Bait Floss. Secure in place with a few overhand knots.







# SECRETS OF THE THAMES

Price  
£29.95

## Secrets of The Thames



*By Rob Maylin and friends*



The River Thames flows through southern England. It is the longest river entirely in England, with a total length of 215 miles (346km) and the second longest in the United Kingdom, after the River Severn. While it is best known for flowing through London, the river also flows alongside other towns and cities, including Oxford, Reading, Henley-on-Thames, and Windsor.

The river gives its name to three informal areas: the Thames Valley, a region of England around the river between Oxford and west London; the Thames Gateway; and the greatly overlapping Thames Estuary around the tidal Thames to the east of London and including the waterway itself. Thames Valley Police is a formal body that takes its name from the river, covering three counties.

In an alternative name, derived from its long tidal reach up to Teddington Lock in south west London, the lower reaches of the river are called the Tideway.

It rises at Thames Head in Gloucestershire, and flows into the North Sea

via the Thames Estuary. On its way, it passes through London, the country's capital, where the river is deep and navigable to ships; the Thames drains the whole of Greater London. Its tidal section, reaching up to Teddington Lock, includes most of its London stretch and has a rise and fall of 7 metres (23ft).

Along its course are 45 navigation locks with accompanying weirs. Its catchment area covers a large part of South Eastern and a small part of Western England and the river is fed by 38 named tributaries. The river contains over 80 islands. With its waters varying from freshwater to almost seawater, the Thames supports a variety of wildlife and has a number of adjoining Sites of Special Scientific Interest, with the largest being in the remaining parts of the North Kent Marshes and covering 5,449 hectares (13,460 acres).

By far and away the largest carp water in UK. Now sit back and enjoy just a few of its many secrets.

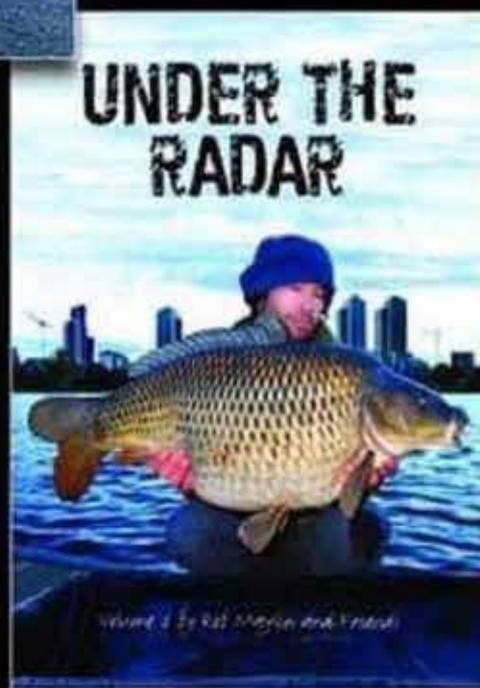
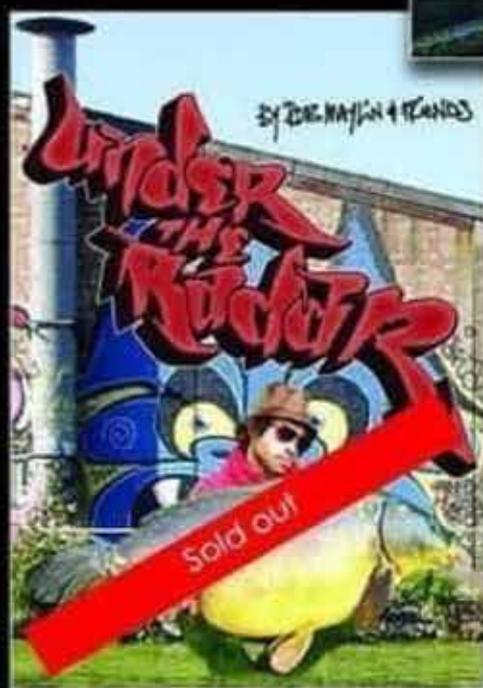
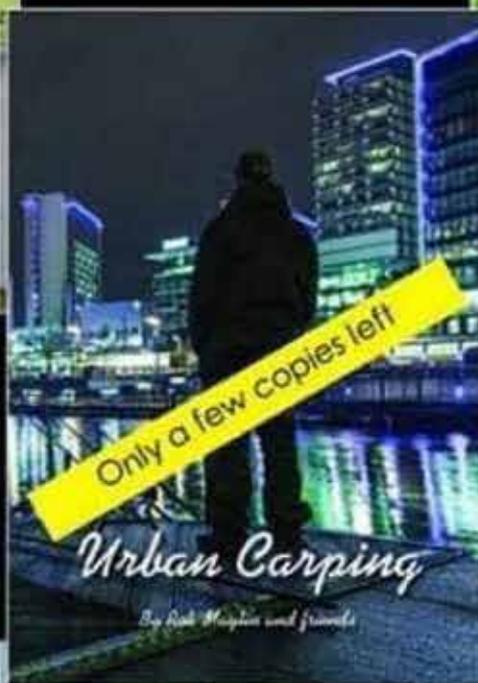
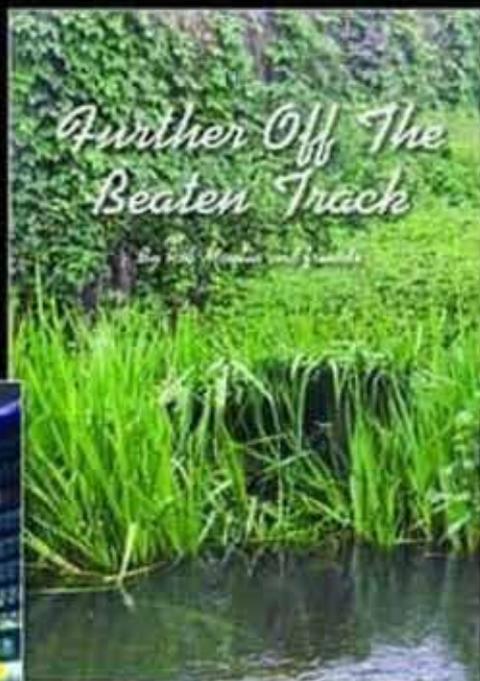
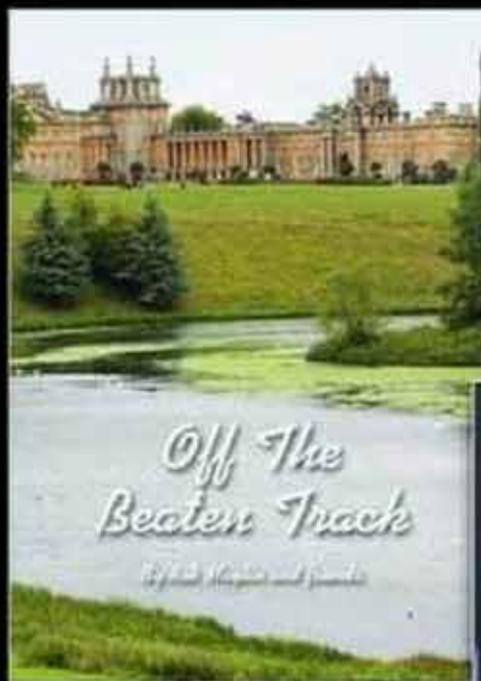
Order your copy now, only 500 copies produced, so be quick!

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



# OFF THE BEATEN TRACK SERIES

For lovers of the unknown, unnamed and uncaught



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



**TOM MAKER**

# TOM'S NATURALS MIX

**M** U L C H E D of lighter items. Not only does  
BOILIES: This the mulch pack attraction, it  
form the base of also absorbs all liquid from the  
Tom's Natural other elements below.  
Mix and many others for it's WORM: A worms natural  
ability to add weight to a mix amino profile is the best

natural feed stimulant out there! By chopping your worms fresh, you pack your mix with a literally irresistible element.

**HEMP:** A first choice for any mix according to tom. Not only is it moreish and oily, it's size makes it perfect to keep the carp grazing for longer.

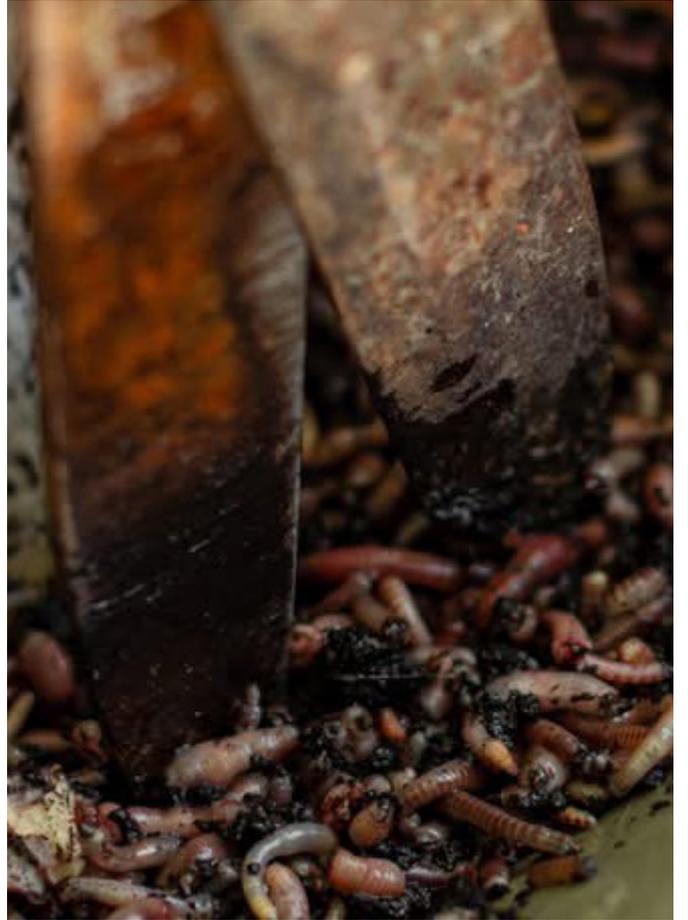
**SWEETCORN:** This sweet grain is included for the the visual element more than anything... Passing fish can easily clock flecks of yellow, and home into the bait on your chosen spot.

**CASTERS:** As soon as the carp get the taste of caster, and start crunching it's game over!

**MAGGOTS:** Carp just LOVE maggots! Not only do they mimic Bloodworm as best as possible, they also pack more of those all important amino's! Making it the ideal addition to your mix and as a hookbait option.

Mix it together and you've got yourself one seriously mix in your bucket







**TOM STOKES**

# GET THE BEST FROM YOUR CASTERS

The autumn and mild weather that can often be encountered in early winter is a great time to be using natural baits, and one of my favourites at this time of year is casters.

The only problem with casters, especially during

early autumn, is keeping them fresh while on the bank - Exposure to sunlight and oxygen will make them turn quickly, and when they turn, they float, rendering them useless.

In order to keep my casters



as fresh as possible, for as long as possible, I like to keep mine inside a medium Compact Cool Bag. A couple of ice packs will help to keep them cool, and by keeping the lid shut and storing them at the back of the bivy will protect them from sunlight. I wrap the ice packs in an old t shirt, towel or reel pouch, just to save the casters from directly touching the ice packs themselves, as this can also damage the casters giving them frost bite.

I buy the casters in sealed, individual pint bags, rather than buying them in bulk bags. Once opened, the casters are instantly exposed to oxygen and will turn much quicker. Using them a bag at a time definitely helps with longevity through the session.

By looking after your casters in this way you can keep them in perfect condition for days on end, which is handy if you're planning a longer trip this winter.



# ANGLERS: STAY SAFE FROM CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING



Carbon monoxide (CO) is a silent killer - It's invisible, odourless, and deadly.

## COMMON SOURCES AT THE BANK:

- Portable gas heaters
- BBQs and camping stoves
- Petrol generators
- Gas lanterns used inside bivvies or tents



## NEVER DO THIS:

- ✗ Use fuel-burning equipment inside your bivvy
- ✗ Sleep with a BBQ or heater still warm inside your shelter
- ✗ Block air vents or close yourself in tight spaces

## ALWAYS DO THIS:

- ✓ Use heaters and stoves outside, in open air
- ✓ Ensure your bivvy is well-ventilated
- ✓ Carry a portable CO alarm
- ✓ Learn the signs of CO poisoning

## KNOW THE SYMPTOMS:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Confusion
- Collapse or loss of consciousness

If you feel unwell, get into fresh air immediately and call 999.

*"It won't happen to me..."* Too many anglers last thought.

## SUPPORTED BY:



LIMITED EDITION • SIGNED AND NUMBERED

# Legendary Carp Paintings



- Bazil
- Heather
- The Black Mirror
- The Royal Forty
- The Bishop
- The Burghfield Common
- Jumbo
- Two Tone
- Mary and Mary's Mate



<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>

# Big Carp Magazine!

*a history of excellence*



## AVAILABLE AS A DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

Yes, you can purchase Big Carp magazine as an App downloadable to your iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch, PC and Mac and read the only carp magazine worth reading anywhere you go...



Available on the  
App Store



Available on  
Android

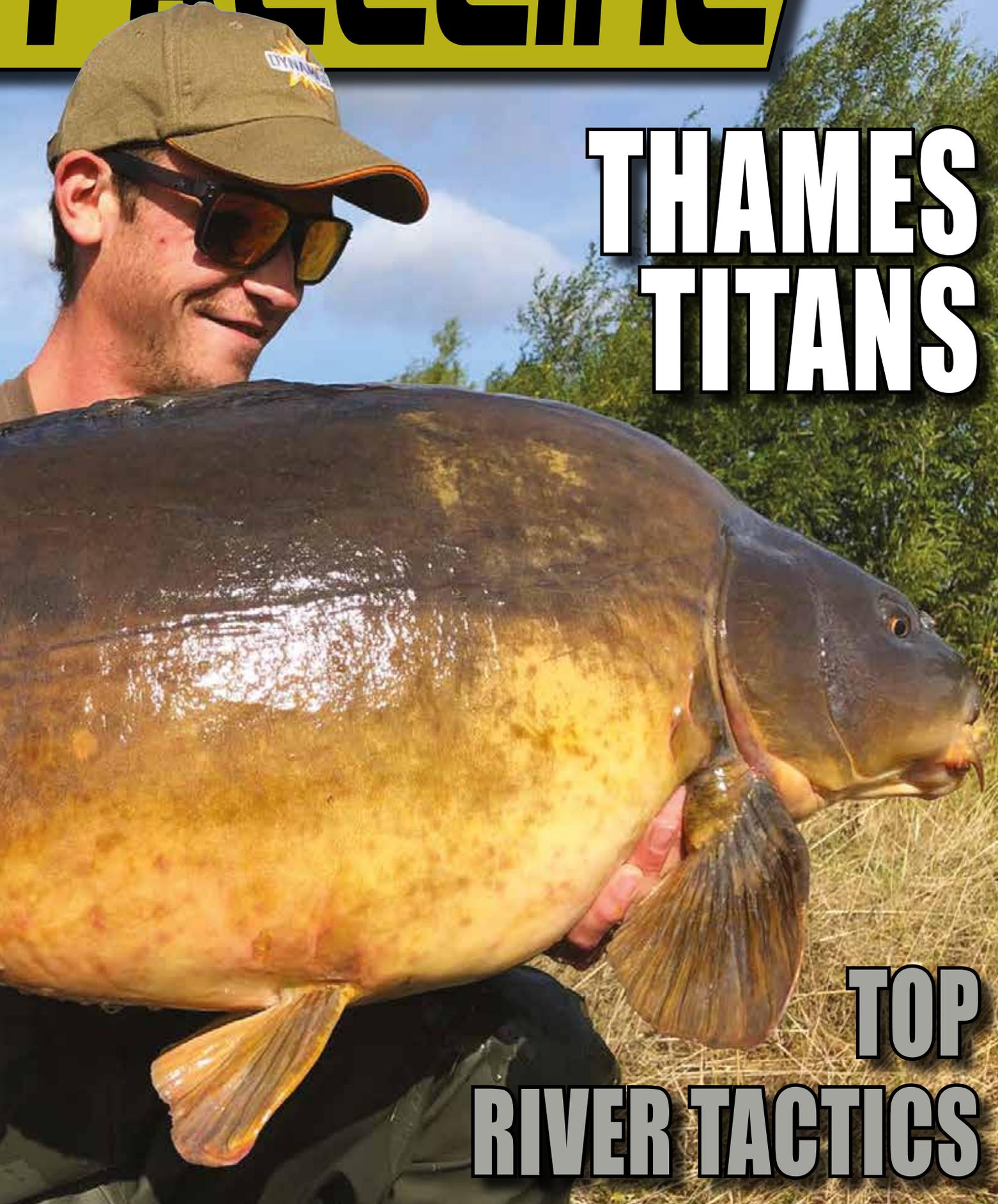
 [pocketmags.com](http://pocketmags.com)



FEB 2026

# FREELINE

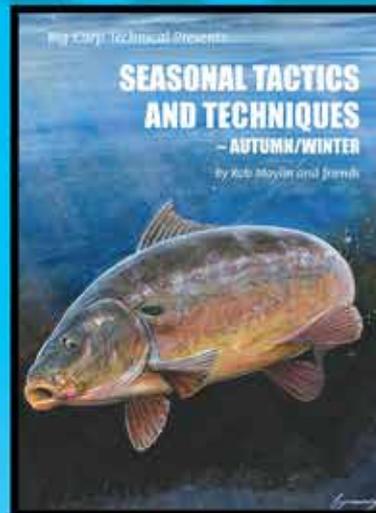
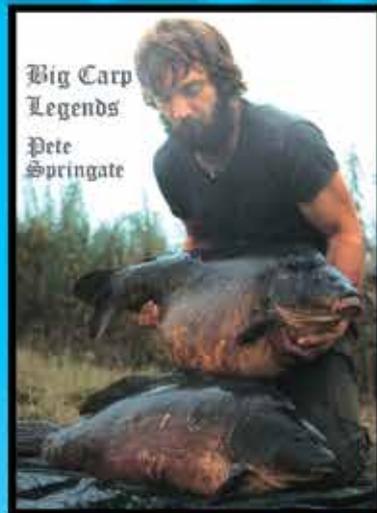
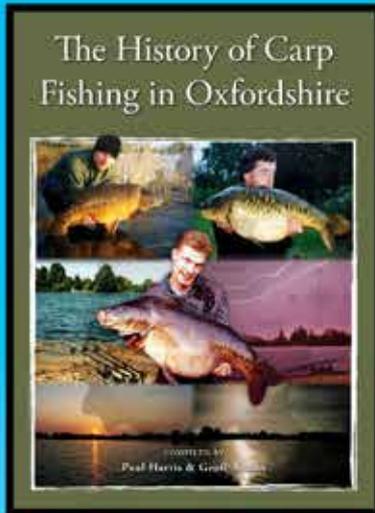
## THAMES TITANS



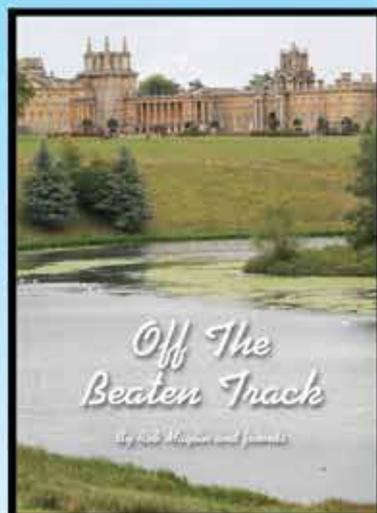
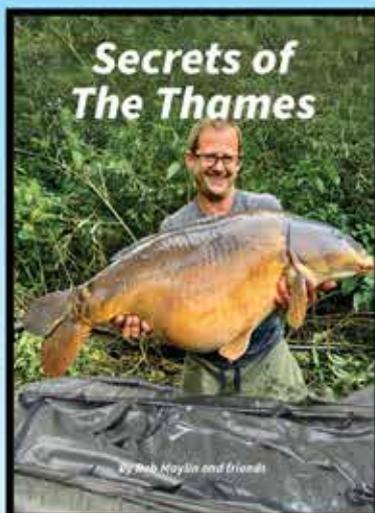
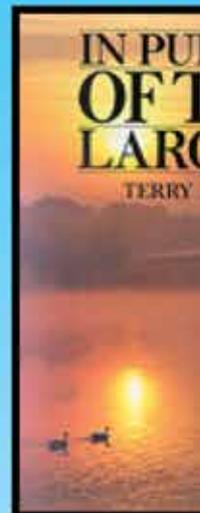
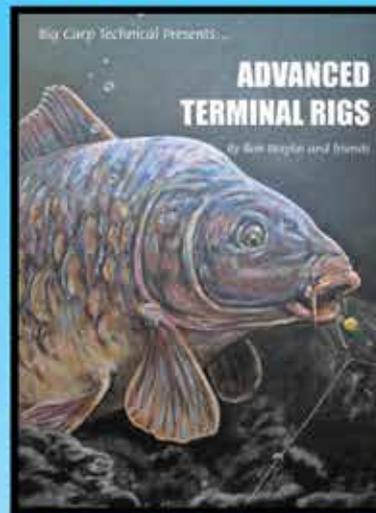
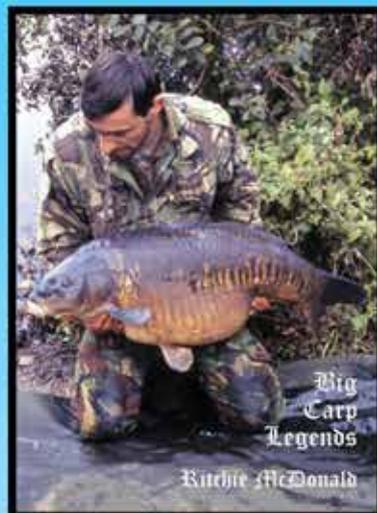
TOP  
RIVER TACTICS

SAVAN - GEDEN - FROST

# WINTER

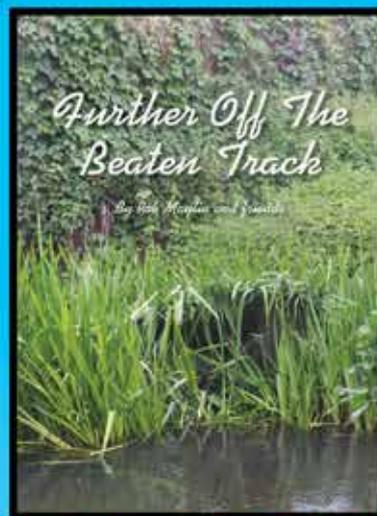
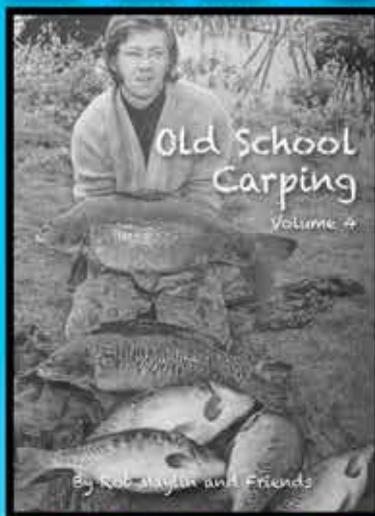
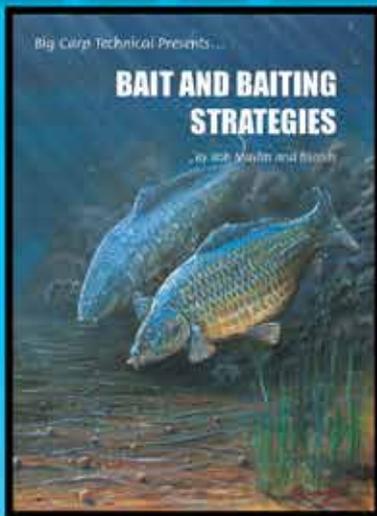


ORDER ONE OF OUR BEST SELLERS A

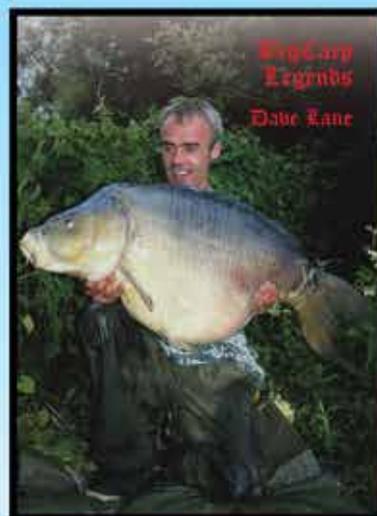
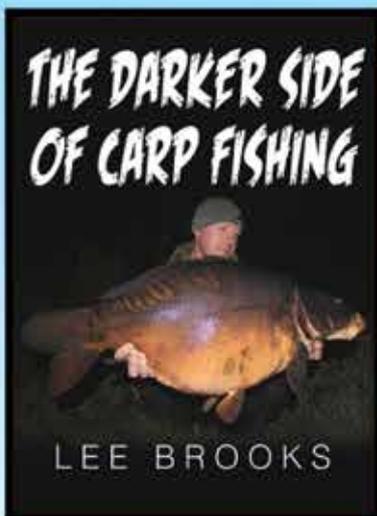
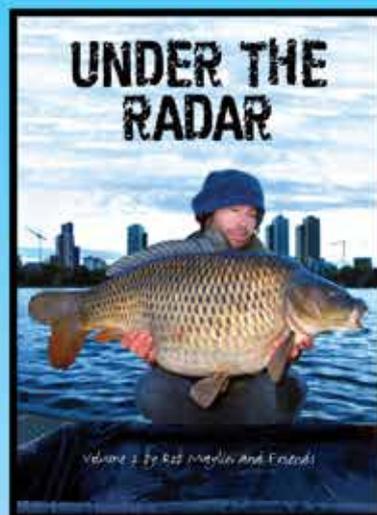
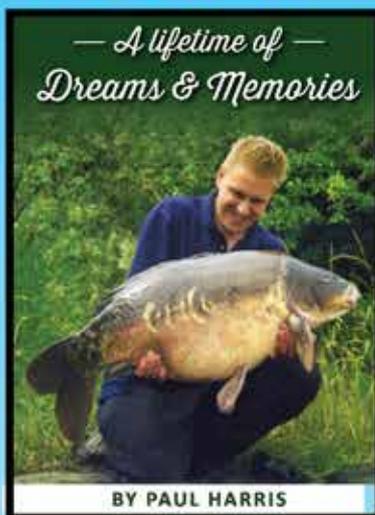
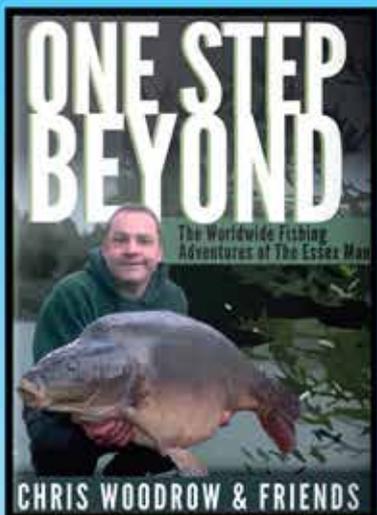


NEW BOOKS: [WWW.C](http://WWW.C)  
NEW AND OLD BOOKS: [WWW.EBAY.C](http://WWW.EBAY.C)

# READING



AND BE PREPARED FOR NEXT SEASON



[CARPBOOKSONLINE.COM](http://CARPBOOKSONLINE.COM)

[CO.UK/USR/RARECARPBOOKSUNLIMITED](http://CO.UK/USR/RARECARPBOOKSUNLIMITED)

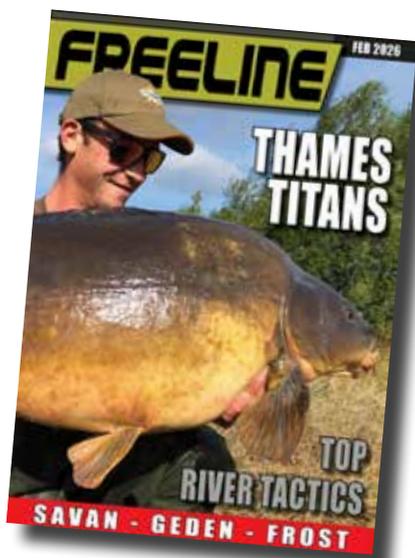
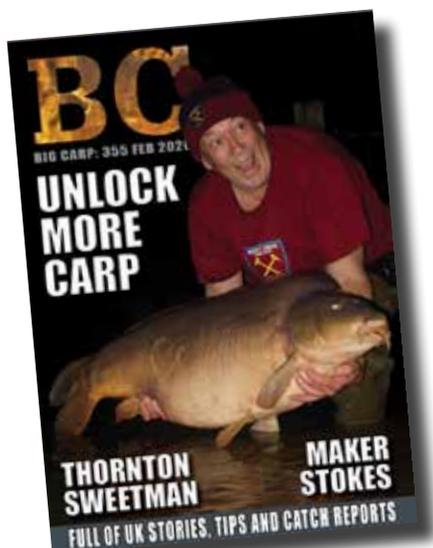
# Rob's Ramblings

Editor/Publisher  
Rob Maylin  
Bountyhunter  
Publications  
44 Herbs End  
Cove, Hampshire  
GU14 9YD

07768 731425  
bigcarpstudio@hotmail.  
co.uk

Design & Production  
James Harrison

Also available this  
month Big Carp issue  
355.



Front Cover:  
Ash Geden with the  
Thames' 'Cheese'.



## PETERBOROUGH AND DISTRICT ANGLING ASSOCIATION

It's a real honour to be the current Angling Times club of the year. We're firm believers that there are no solutions that aren't national solutions and no growth that isn't national growth.

For that reason, we're searching for the next generation of fishery managers and volunteers to help us build the future

Whether you want to coach kids, patrol the bank, manage the club or learn about fishery management we've got an opportunity for you.

If you are interested, please email [support@fishinginpeterborough.co.uk](mailto:support@fishinginpeterborough.co.uk)

**6. CARP CHAT**

**26. CARP SCENE**

**36. AIDEN SAVAN**

**64. ASH GEDEN**

**80. DAVID WALLEN**

**102. MIKEY FROST**



# TACKLE SHOP OPEN DAY

Saturday 16th May 2026

10am until 4pm

EXCLUSIVE  
OFFERS

Come and  
meet top anglers  
alongside leading  
tackle brands  
from across the  
industry



Don't forget to send us your pictures and join us in celebrating your wins. Our Bluebell community is one of a kind - the support, team work and camaraderie for one another is one we are proud of. We'll share here on our page for over 30,000 of our followers to cheer you on and see what's really happening at Bluebell.

Don't forget to send us your pictures and join us in celebrating your wins. Our Bluebell community is one of a kind - the support, team work and camaraderie for one another is one we are proud of. We'll share here on our page for over 30,000 of our followers to cheer you on and see what's really happening at Bluebell

# APPLICATIONS OPEN

SPARSHOLT  
CAMPUS

# RIP MITCH SMITH

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of our dad/Mitch.

His funeral service will be held at Southend Crematorium on 7th January 2026 at 11am. We will be holding a wake after at Ocean Beach.

We welcome family and friends to come together to remember his life. We thank you for all of your support, love and kind messages at this difficult time.



# WE ARE HIRING!

## Full -Time Sales & Order Administrator

Solar Tackle is a fast-growing, dynamic business at the heart of the carp fishing industry. We're looking for a reliable and motivated Sales & Order Administrator to join our on-site team in Dartford.

This is a key position within our operations, ideal for someone who thrives on being organised, takes real ownership of their role, and enjoys being part of a close-knit, fast-paced environment. You'll play a vital role in processing customer orders, supporting the sales team, and helping ensure that the day-to-day flow of operations runs smoothly.

This is not a "tick-the-box" admin role, we're looking for someone who is proactive, dependable, and proud of their work. In addition to core duties, you'll also handle various ad-hoc administrative tasks across the business, occasionally assisting with finance or other departments as needed.



To apply please send  
a cover letter & CV to:  
[jobs@solartackle.co.uk](mailto:jobs@solartackle.co.uk)



### Key responsibilities:

- Experience in sales administration or order processing.
- Strong communication skills, both by phone and email.
- Excellent attention to detail and accuracy.
- Ability to manage multiple tasks and work well under pressure.
- Experience with ERP systems (e.g., NetSuite or SAP) is an advantage.
- Confident using Microsoft Office, especially Excel and Outlook.
- Comfortable working on-site in Dartford and being hands-on in a busy environment.

### Benefits:

- Stable, predictable working hours.
- Opportunity to gain hands-on experience with ERP systems and various aspects of sales operations.
- Supportive work environment with scope for learning and development.

# TAYLOR'S LEAD LOUNGE CLOSING



After much reflection, we've made the difficult decision to move on to new horizons. We're incredibly grateful for your support over the years - it's meant the world to our family. As a heartfelt thank-you, we're offering a 25% sitewide discount [www.taylorleadlounge.co.uk](http://www.taylorleadlounge.co.uk)



## THE #1 FRENCH CARP FISHING VENUE

2 VENUES · 6 LAKES

OVER 4,000 CARPS

Average weight 35–42 lbs

Carp record 80 lbs+

Grass carp up to 80 lbs+

Koi carp up to 46 lbs+

Catfish up to 260 lbs+

Sturgeon up to 250 lbs+

ONLY 43 SWIMS

Across 6 lakes

240 acres of exclusive carp fishing

Huts · Safari tents · VIP swims

Carp fishing shop · Bar & restaurant

Tackle rental · Bungalows

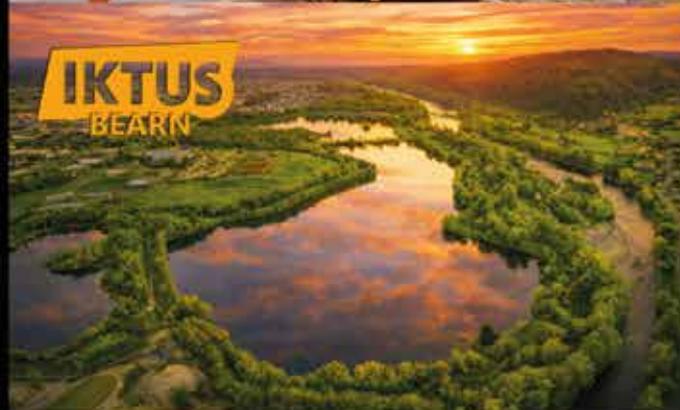
Professional bailiff team - 7 days a week

+33 6 44 35 96 35

Iktus Béarn  
Iktus Corrèze

@iktusbearn

[www.iktus.fr](http://www.iktus.fr)



# **ROBERTSON'S TACKLE CLOSING DOWN**



## **ROBERTSONS fishing tackle**

Robertsons fishing tackle closes it's doors. We've come to the end of the line! It is with great sadness that i will be closing robertsons fishing tackle on december 6th. Please accept my apologies for the sudden closure, this is due to increasing pressures on the business and sudden family bereavement. We love you all, team robbos!

We've come to the end of the line! It is with great sadness that i will be closing robertsons fishing tackle on december 6th. Please accept my apologies for the sudden closure, this is due to increasing pressures on the business and sudden family bereavement.

# WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR FISHERY?



Want to improve your fishery? You could create better habitats, enhance facilities for anglers or protect your stocks from the impacts of prolonged dry weather. Backed by fishing licence income, the Fisheries Improvement Programme (FIP) opens on Monday 1st December. Angling clubs and fisheries are encouraged to submit projects proposals which the EA may be able to provide some funding support.

Find out more: <https://anglingtrust.net>

# PHYLIS TUCKWELL HOSPICE NEWS



Fantastic amount raised again this year at Frimley charity event in aid of Phylis Tuckwell hospice. From Mark and Lorraine Fisher and all the team, we thank each and every one of you that helped to make this possible.

**This is our 10th year of supporting the Hospice. In that time we have raised a massive £363,085!!!**



**Fine quality fishing tackle  
since 1857**

[www.reubenheaton.com](http://www.reubenheaton.com)

For more on Reuben Heaton, Sportscale & RH brands  
call 01455 293000 or email [info@reubenheaton.com](mailto:info@reubenheaton.com)

Join Reuben Heaton on Facebook for all our latest news

**REUBENHEATON**



**EAGLE  
CLAW**

**EAGLE CLAW  
TROKAR**



**Exclusive distributors for eagle claw**

# **REVOLUTIONISING CARP BAITZ THE GOODZ WAY**



At Goodz Carpbait, we haven't just made another bait... we've completely redesigned how bait should be made. Unlike traditional bait companies that are forced to design their base mixes to suit high-speed factory machines, we flipped the process on its head. We built bespoke machines that form bait specifically around what carp need, not what machines demand.

- Full HNV food-source baits
- Little to no binding products
- Rolled on specially designed slow-forming machines
- Built to lock in ingredients for longer during formation



This means our baits are designed for the digestive system of carp first – not to survive mass production lines. We've also developed a unique cooking process that lightly binds the natural food fibres, keeping structure to a minimum while retaining valuable soluble attractors and nutrients. This helps carp digest our bait easier while still boosting leakage and attraction in the water. While other companies are still designing baits to suit their machines.

We design machines to suit our bait!! This isn't evolution. This is revolution.

# PHIL BRAUN JOINS THE ESP TEAM



We are very delighted to announce that Phil Braun has joined the ESP team. Phil is well known in the big fish scene and has a very unique profile: As a traveling angler based out of Germany, he fishes some of the UK's most demanding circuit waters – and has been for the past 20 years. Places like Conningbrook, Nunnery Lakes, Burghfield and more recently the Linch Hill Complex in Oxfordshire, are where Phil has fished his UK campaigns and caught some stunning carp over the years. As a specimen hunter Phil likes to fish other countries and for other species as well – although



carp is his first and main love, especially old English ones. Phil is a psychologist by trade and works as a university lecturer and leadership coach on topics around mental health and personal development. He



has a philosophical outlook on current trends in society and a deep knowledge of our angling world which is brilliantly expressed through his writing. Check out Phil's article in the new @subsurface\_journal Submag 4. We look forward to partnering with Phil and can't wait to start some exciting media projects together: especially a film to cover his angling story.

Here's what Phil had to say: "I'm honoured to join ESP, our ethos has always been very close as ESP encapsulates the big carp spirit, a proper old school brand with a modern twist, it feels so good for me to join a team of anglers that I admire and here's to the future!"

# WINGERWORTH LIDO FISHING BAN OVERTURNED



After months of backlash and pressure, the Derbyshire Council has admitted an oversight on the ban they implemented on the Wingerworth Lido.

Fishing will now resume on an interim basis, which has been hailed as a success story, while providing a strong statement to any other councils looking to ban angling that it will not be taken lightly.

As well as those involved from the Countryside Alliance, Big Duffs Fishing and the Angling Trust we want to thank each and every angler who shared our posts, signed the original petition and completed questionnaires, as without the support, who knows what outcome may have been reached.

It just shows that despite the negativity we see in angling towards one another at times if we all stick together as we should, just want can be achieved!



EXCLUSIVE OFFERS

Come and meet top anglers alongside leading tackle brands from across the industry

Our First Ever Tackle Shop Open Day

# TACKLE SHOP OPEN DAY

Saturday 16th May 2026  
10am until 4pm

Bluelake Lakes Making History. Come Down To a FREE Event

Benson's Open All Day

Charity Fundraiser With Unmissable Prizes

DON'T MISS OUT

- ▶ Exclusive Offers
- ▶ Raffle Giveaways
- ▶ Chance To See The Products
- ▶ Meet Suppliers and Companies
- ▶ Rod & Bait Boat Demo's

Supported by:



# WELCOME TO PARKFIELD, EDDY STOCKER



Parkfield would like welcome big fish angler Eddy Stocker to the team! For years and years Eddy has been one of Wirrals main BIG carp anglers, with success all over the country fishing carp matches and chasing some of the nicest fish this country has to offer! Loaded with advice and expert knowledge, Eddy has now joined the team here at Parkfield. We welcome anyone to pop down for a chat, whether its rigs, tactics, bait or just general knowledge Eddy is more than happy to help all! You will find Eddy behind the counter for now every Sunday We look forward to what the future holds so this a massive welcome from everyone at Parkfield!

# NITE WATCH COMP WINNER

Nite watch comp winner Wayne Griffiths from Northampton was blown away when this fantastic watch was delivered in time for Christmas. He said “ the watch is superb, thank you so much”.

If you entered the competition and were not so lucky as Wayne but are still interested in getting a watch for yourself, check out the special readers offer in this issue of Big Carp where Nite offers Big Carp readers a special low price!!!



LOVE'S



*Carp Fishing*

**Looking to *book?***

**Get in touch with us about  
our lake availability below:**

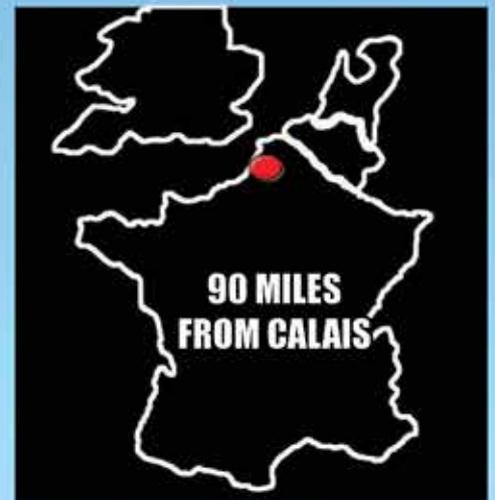
**Graviers Dijon:**  
[info@thegraviersdijon.com](mailto:info@thegraviersdijon.com)

**Napoleon Lakes:**  
[info@napoleonlakes.co.uk](mailto:info@napoleonlakes.co.uk)

**Lac de Premiere:**  
[info@lacdeprem.com](mailto:info@lacdeprem.com)

# Experience the big carp venue in northern France

Only 1 hr <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>  
from Calais !



## Val Dore Lakes

WEB : [WWW.VALDORE.COM](http://WWW.VALDORE.COM)  
email : [contact@valdore.com](mailto:contact@valdore.com)

ONLINE  
BOOKING  
AVAILABLE



**CARP AVERAGE  
WEIGHT : 30 lb  
CARPS up to 74 lb ...!**

- £255 / angl / week
- 6 lakes - 60 acres
- 24 tons of carp
- Restaurant / Bar
- Wifi - Elect on swim
- Carpark on all swims
- Log cabins
- Tackle shop



Cabins



Tackle shop



Restaurant

**FREE BROCHURE** 📄

Call evening

**00 33 608 109 134**

**english spoken**

or email us : [contact@valdore.com](mailto:contact@valdore.com)

# AVID SCREEN HOUSE XT COMPACT

Ideal for anglers wanting a larger 1-person bivvy with increased space and headroom. Can also be used as a 2-person bivvy quick-up fast-erect frame poles to reduce set-up time. Improved zip-off tunnel porch giving you full coverage from the elements. Ideal to be used as a large 2-person shelter. Perfect as a social hub during your session. 10,000mm hydrostatic head Khaki fabric. Roof has blackout fabric reducing light penetration. Keeps you cooler during hot weather. Full-size mosquito mesh panels for improved airflow. Finished in our distortion camo pattern. 3-way rear window featuring solid infill, PVC and mosquito mesh. 4 heavy-duty corner blocks with guy rope carabiner attachments.



2-way heavy-duty guy ropes for increased strength during testing conditions. Side door configuration allows bivvies to be positioned on the shelter. Supplied with a groundsheet, heavy-duty carry bag, guy ropes and pegs

- RRP: £399.99
- [www.avidcarp.com](http://www.avidcarp.com)

# WYCHWOOD EVA LUGGAGE RANGE



Looks like the wet weather is here to stay. Fed up of all your gear getting wet through and capped in mud? Why not look at the EVA range of bags, fully waterproof and wipe clean. You can literally dip them in the margin and wipe them off before you throw the back on the barrow.

- from £10 to £50
- [www.wychwoodcarp.co.uk](http://www.wychwoodcarp.co.uk)

# ESP QUICKDRAW BROLLY



ESP QuickDraw Brolly's will be back in stock early January! Available in 52" & 58", supplied with the unique design Mozy Drape, 4 storm poles, mini detachable groundsheet, 8 pegs and outer bag.

We keep getting asked when they will be back in stock as quite a few people missed out on the initial launch. Not long to wait now!

- [www.esp-carpgear.com](http://www.esp-carpgear.com)
- £189.99 and £199.99

# GEOFF ANDERSON WS BASIS JACKET



Our WS Basis jacket is the latest in a line of wading jackets developed specifically for coastal fishing. The WS Basis is born with the same robustness as our luxury models. It carries the well-known DNA of the WS jackets: durability, waterproofness and reliability – as known from the first WS jacket produced back in 1998.

The WS Basis does not compromise on quality. But we have opted out of a number of details, so you can now get a rock-solid fishing partner at an affordable price.

- [www.geoffanderson.com](http://www.geoffanderson.com)
- €299.99

# the goodz carp baitz



## THE T.A.S.K.

A blend of tuna, krill and real food items with added spices and attractors complimented with GoodZ own amino booster that enhances the strong food signals emitted from this bait.



## THE F.A.M.M.

A blend of highly digestible milk proteins and real food items to achieve a highly digestible, high protein all season food source bait. The Fruit and Malted Milk blend is a carp classic



## THE N.M.E.

Introducing the N.M.E (Nut & Maple Extract) – The N.M.E is not just another bait—it's a revolution in carp nutrition and attraction. A true masterpiece of modern carp fishing science.

**matching liquid foods, drips, PVA bag mixes, wafers and pop ups to match your chosen bait**

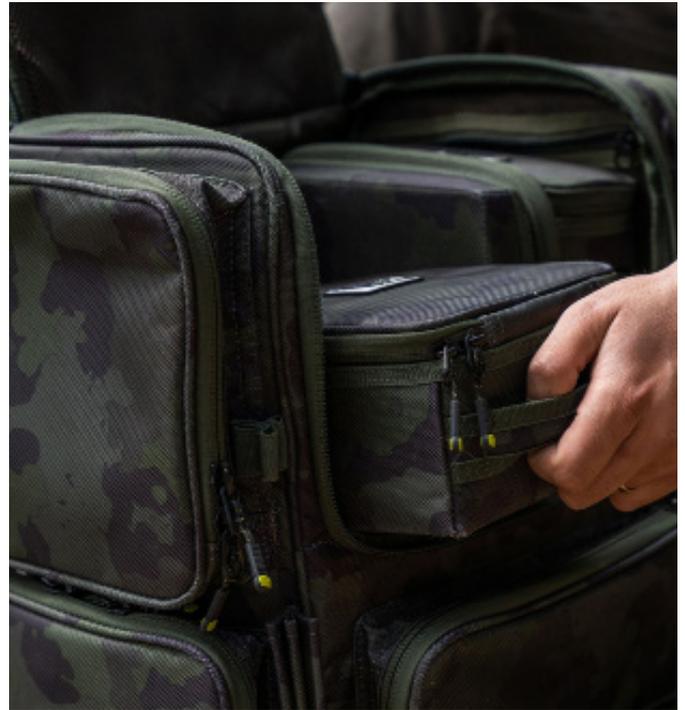
Goodz, a company founded a decade ago, has built a stellar reputation as a premier supplier of high-quality fish bait. From its inception, Goodz has been committed to providing anglers with products that ensure success on the water, combining expert craftsmanship with a passion for fishing. Over the years, their dedication to excellence has earned them the trust of fishing enthusiasts and professionals alike. Whether it's their attention to sourcing premium ingredients or their innovative bait designs, Goodz continues to set the standard in the industry, making every fishing experience truly exceptional.

**[www.goodzcarpbaits.co.uk](http://www.goodzcarpbaits.co.uk)**

**info@goodzcarpbaits.co.uk / 07538 856851**



# RIDGEMONKEY RUGGAGE 40L BUNDLE



Upgrade your bankside organisation with the Ruggage 40 Litre Rucksack & Accessory Case Bundle. The Ruggage 40L Rucksack includes four accessory cases, all fitting neatly inside for a clean, grab-and-go setup. With lumbar support, padded adjustable straps, and five double-zipped external pockets, it's ideal when barrowing isn't an option. Featuring a magnetic EVA moulded utility tray for tying rigs, internal mesh pockets, tough Hydropel 1680D water-resistant fabric, and a wipe-clean PVC base - this rucksack is built for serious anglers.

- [www.ridgemonkey.co.uk](http://www.ridgemonkey.co.uk)
- £129.99



**RAISING MONEY  
THROUGH  
ANGLING EVENTS  
SINCE 1996**

**MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**

# A.T. BAITBOAT LIFTER

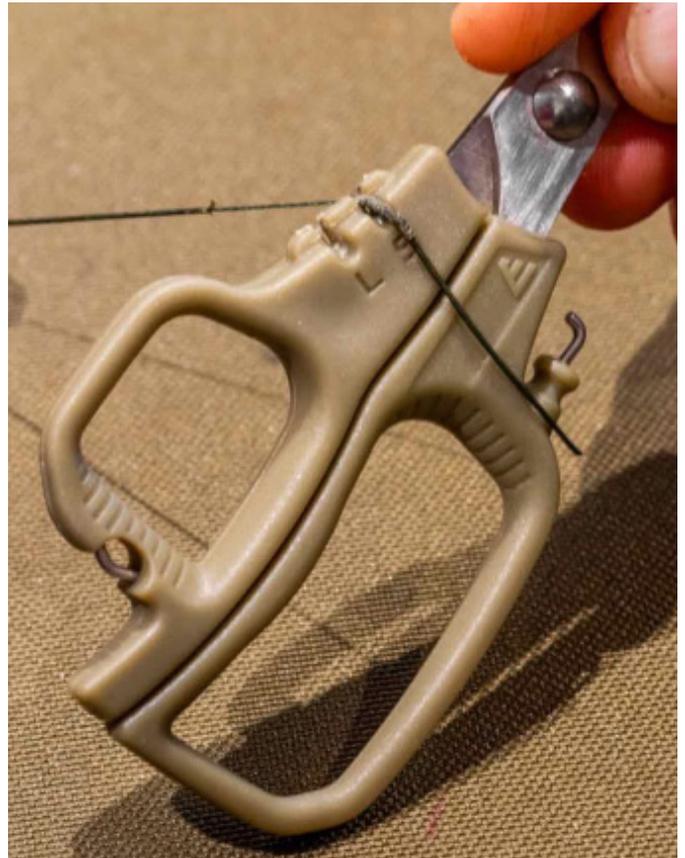


Built for reliability, compatibility, and style — the Stabilize Boat Lifting Hook from Angling Technics is a premium accessory designed to make boat handling effortless.

Precision-engineered from high-grade aluminium. Hard black anodised finish for maximum durability and corrosion resistance. Custom coloured sight caps and screw for a sleek, modern look.

- [www.anglingtechnics.myshopify.com](http://www.anglingtechnics.myshopify.com)
- £19.99

# EVOLVE ANGLING RIG SCISSORS



Not Just a Pair of Scissors. Our all-in-one scissors pack a serious punch. Featuring a small & large coating stripper, two loop pullers, a hook puller, and even a magnet in the handle to help you grab hooks or swivels from tight spots in your tackle box. And of course... our double-serrated steel blades slice through the toughest materials with ease. Why carry a load of separate tools when you can have them all built into one?

Less clutter. Smarter product.

▪ [www.evolve tackle.com](http://www.evolve tackle.com)



# FISHING IS SUCH A PASSION

Fishing is such a passion that when you don't get the chance to go, it can hurt. Those in between years when it was a struggle to find the time were soon to be laid to rest. A lifestyle change had given me the opportunity to fulfil a dream, the chance to live afloat on the mighty River Thames.

The location of the new home is surrounded by a multitude of fish holding areas. The boat is moored between two islands

no more than 50 yards apart. The left hand side of the mooring looks decent enough for a fish or two, but the right hand side blows it away. The right hand side consists of a series of pilings including a few overhanging bushes and even more permanent moorings.

Having moved on in February, the 16<sup>th</sup> couldn't come quickly enough. However with the dawn of the new season almost upon us, the huge amount of unseasonal rain had taken its toll on the river. The water levels and speed it was flowing at made it virtually impossible to present a bait in a given position for any amount time.

Whilst the upper river remained out of sorts, the main focus was concentrated on the channel that connected the two weirs that encompassed our island. It soon became apparent that a lot of carp had pushed up hard into this piece of water. The most logical approach was to bait the chocolate coloured water on the near side margin close to any features. After a few days' steady baiting, the first opportunity arrived. A short underarm flick positioned the bag exactly where it needed to be. Before the bobbin could even be attached to the line, the rod was ripped from my grasp. The fight that ensued was dramatic to say the least, as the fish tore into the main flow, and I felt as though I was just hanging on, nothing more. Steady pressure eventually got the fish to turn, and its bulk could be felt side-on in the flow. More steady pressure, and the gap between the fish and me had been narrowed to a mere 50ft, so I felt as the odds were slightly in my favour to land the unseen fish. Then the hook pulled. You know that sinking feeling.

After a short sulk, new rig was tied, bag on and back in position. It didn't take long, perhaps ten minutes, and I

connected again to a river fish that was pulling hard. I did manage to get this one into the net, and although she was undoubtedly a lesser relation of the beast hooked earlier, she still spun the needle round to 23lb 5oz. I felt so satisfied to have put the net under my first river carp in a decade.

The next month saw a routine evolve – basically bait the marginal areas as frequently as possible using a light scattering of bait. It soon became obvious that these spots would produce fish, but only if they were rotated. In the end, I probably had around ten different areas primed. This didn't mean hoofing tonnes of bait in; it was more a case of a handful of tigers a handful of boilies and a few chops at very regular intervals. By keeping the bait regularly going in, it was still possible to nick a fish every few days. It would almost be a guarantee that if you fished a spot that had produced the previous day,



the end result would be a blank. After a bountiful start to the season, the channel was starting to slow down both in terms of the river's flow and the results I was getting. I had a notion that one or two fish may be visiting the main weirpool.

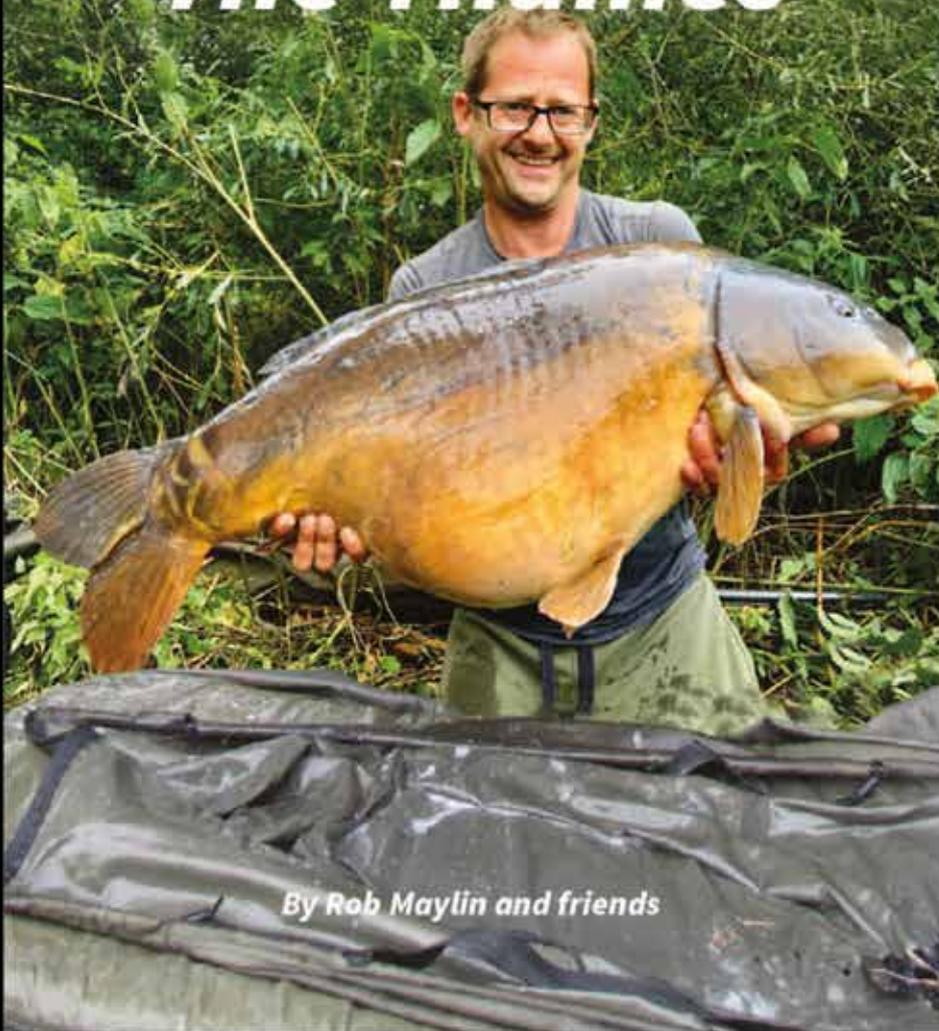
I clearly remember a July morning when I had tried at least three of the primed spots in the channel but to no avail. At this stage, the weirpool had been baited only two or three times whereas I wanted in my mind to continue baiting the weir for at least another few days. However that morning the main weir was in all its early season glory with the angle of the already rising but warm sun hitting the baited area. I couldn't resist a go. A simple underarm flick with the centrepin deposited the bag up against the structure. It was such a beautiful morning that I sat looking out into the steaming river totally entranced by the view. I guess the relentless boiling baits, baiting, tying rigs and endless early mornings were catching up, as I started to nod off, only to be woken by the screaming pin. The rig had been set up to dump the heavy lead on the take, and from the first moment to the last, the fish fought unbelievably hard, but fortunately most of the fight was high in the water, which was a godsend with the amount of boulders that adorn the weirpool. The fight was spectacular at times, and from my vantage point, a lot of the battle could be witnessed at first hand as the fish twisted and turned in the clear water in its bid for freedom. The carp gods were smiling on me that particular day, as she was safely netted and returned to

That stunning almost leather carp was the last fish I caught from the lower river. As the flow receded, the fish decided to move on to a new postcode. I kept an eye on the channel for the rest of the season, but it was to produce no more fish. The

# SECRETS OF THE THAMES

Price  
£29.95

## Secrets of The Thames



*By Rob Maylin and friends*



The River Thames flows through southern England. It is the longest river entirely in England, with a total length of 215 miles (346km) and the second longest in the United Kingdom, after the River Severn. While it is best known for flowing through London, the river also flows alongside other towns and cities, including Oxford, Reading, Henley-on-Thames, and Windsor.

The river gives its name to three informal areas: the Thames Valley, a region of England around the river between Oxford and west London; the Thames Gateway; and the greatly overlapping Thames Estuary around the tidal Thames to the east of London and including the waterway itself. Thames Valley Police is a formal body that takes its name from the river, covering three counties.

In an alternative name, derived from its long tidal reach up to Teddington Lock in south west London, the lower reaches of the river are called the Tideway.

It rises at Thames Head in Gloucestershire, and flows into the North Sea

via the Thames Estuary. On its way, it passes through London, the country's capital, where the river is deep and navigable to ships; the Thames drains the whole of Greater London. Its tidal section, reaching up to Teddington Lock, includes most of its London stretch and has a rise and fall of 7 metres (23ft).

Along its course are 45 navigation locks with accompanying weirs. Its catchment area covers a large part of South Eastern and a small part of Western England and the river is fed by 38 named tributaries. The river contains over 80 islands. With its waters varying from freshwater to almost seawater, the Thames supports a variety of wildlife and has a number of adjoining Sites of Special Scientific Interest, with the largest being in the remaining parts of the North Kent Marshes and covering 5,449 hectares (13,460 acres).

By far and away the largest carp water in UK. Now sit back and enjoy just a few of its many secrets.

Order your copy now, only 500 copies produced, so be quick!

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



upper river now looked prime, and I had been baiting several areas to see whether the carp could be drawn in. The first fish came totally out of the blue. The rod had been positioned almost underneath our boat, and it was a bit of a surprise, as no fish had been seen whatsoever. It's at these times that you realise you have to keep baiting... keep baiting... keep baiting... The fish was a stunning, nicely plated mid-20 mirror that fought in true Thames style. This fish was followed by a number of others over the next three months. It would seem as though small patterns would emerge, i.e., two fish on two consecutive nights at approximately the same time, then nothing for a number of nights, and then another feeding spell. One of these feeding spells was most interesting, as for five nights

running, one fish was caught from the same area between 9pm and 10pm. What was surprising was that the first three fish almost looked like Leneys - you can judge for yourself from the pictures below. The other two fish were both close to the 30lbs barrier.

The river shut up shop for me in the third week of October. I fished through to the end of January before I gave up, but somehow the same stretch of water seemed devoid of life. Time to plan for the new season. the same time of day on three consecutive days As spring led into summer, it was quite obvious that the channel wasn't going to benefit from the same influx of water it had received the previous year. However plenty of



# AIDEN SAVAN





carp were spotted up to the beginning of the season, and one large, and I mean large, plated mirror was seen several times. In addition to these sightings, the upper river looked really good for a bite, as the few fish had been seen feeding on the spots

At this stage at least ten different swims were getting a regular helping of bait, which mainly consisted of hemp, red maize, tigers and fishmeal barrels. How I envied those fortunate sponsored anglers, as my bank balance was taking a real dent in order to feed the fish. Opening night went to plan with a 22lb 5oz mirror that fought hard but didn't cause too many concerns.

The early mornings were spent observing the baited spots in the channel. Just when you think you are beginning to get in tune with the river, you quickly learn that it is far more

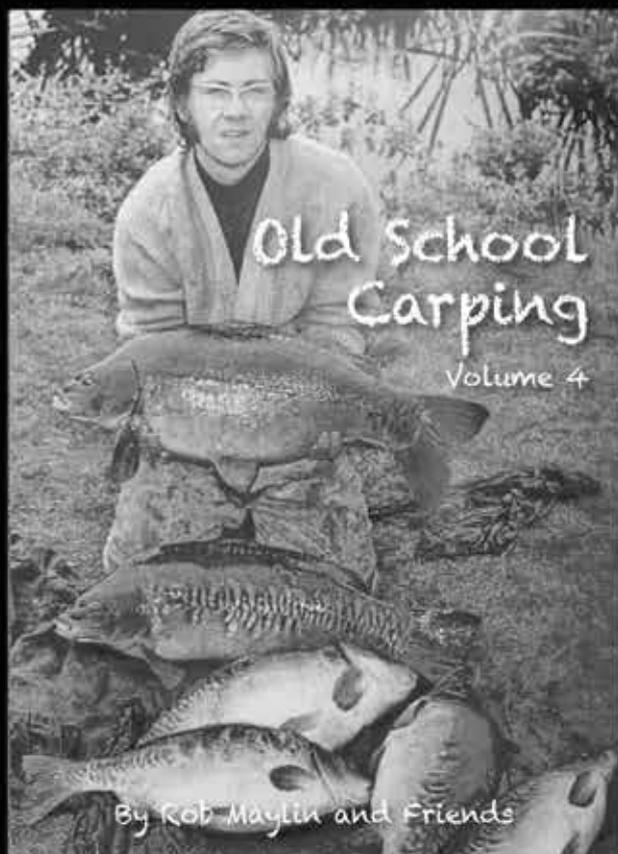
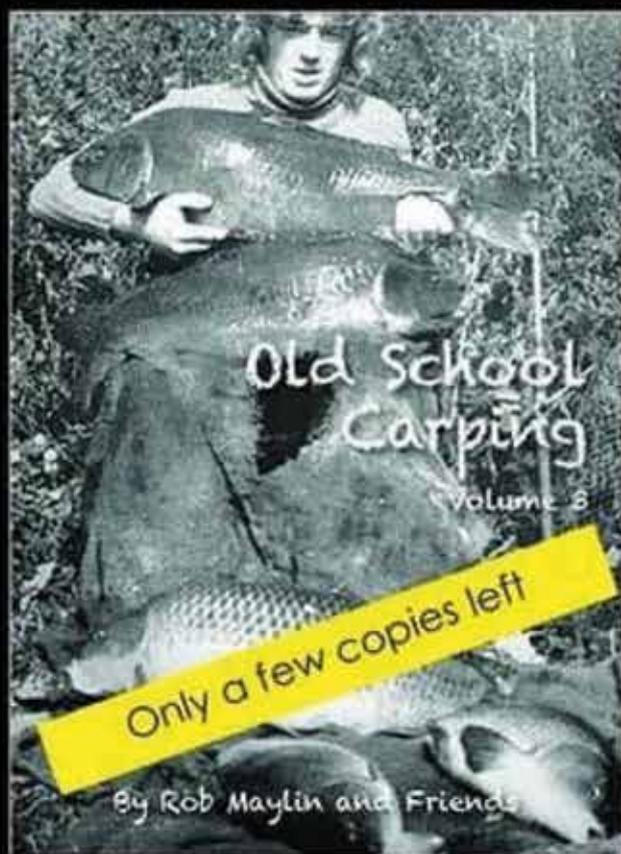
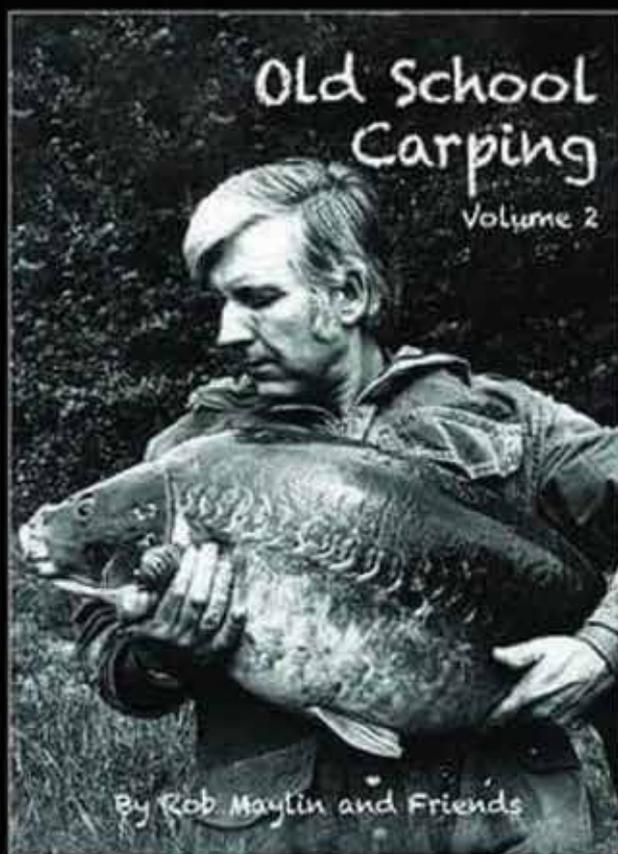
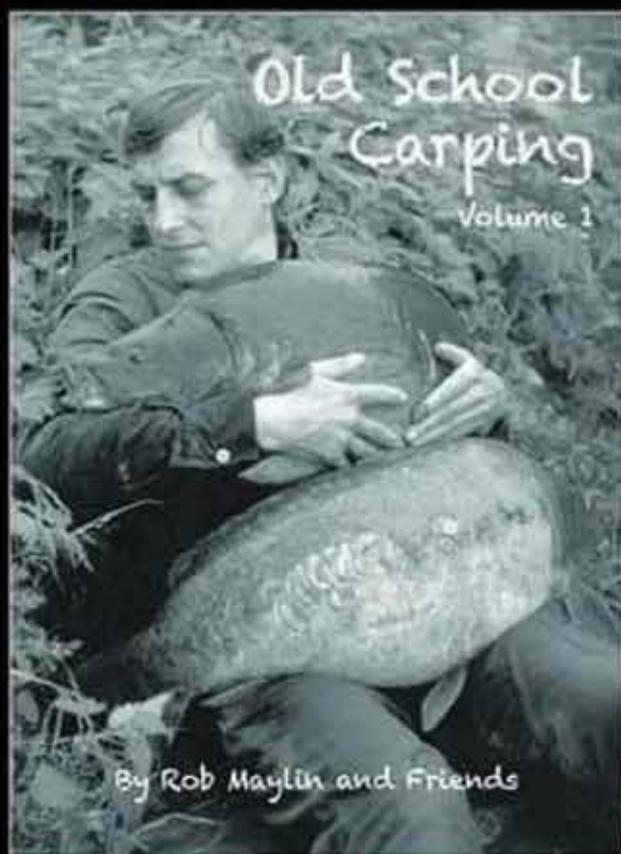


complex than you could ever imagine. Over the next three months, only one fish came out of the channel, a stunning 28lb linear caught by a local lad named Sam. Sam moved into a spot that I had vacated half an hour previously and winkled it out in no time. Good angling, mate.

Due to the lack of sightings in the channel, I decided to cut down on the number of baited spots but at the same time promised myself that I would still keep a watchful eye on what was going on. It was hard to imagine that with the amount of fish that were present the previous year, that there could be such a low level of activity 12 months on.

The main focus now was the upper river. I decided to experiment by pouring large buckets of prepared particles into

# OLD SCHOOL CARPING SERIES



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



a clear marginal spot that I could constantly monitor. Let's get the bream active and see if the carp really do follow. For days, the bream ripped the area to shreds. Why bream are described as a fish that grazes is beyond me; the reality is that a shoal that is upwards of 20 fish will feed with such aggression that they are doing anything but grazing. Sure enough the carp followed, and one particular day a good friend of mine on the island and I lay stomach down, with our heads inched over a parapet watching a group of fish feed in extremely shallow water. By this time plenty more tigers were being used to deter the bream. The group of fish consisted of one double,

four really good 20s and a beast of a common. The common looked really hungry and was almost using his nose to push any stones out of the way to get at the tigers. After watching these fish for an age, it became apparent that every 20 minutes or so they would vacate the area and go on a short circuit.

The plan was laid: a rig consisting of 25lbs Sensor attached to a chain link lead core on an inline led and a neat little combi rig presenting two balanced tigers was gently lowered 5ft from the bank into 3ft of water. The fish returned and immediately started to act more cautiously in the proximity of the rig. They would move to one side and within minutes would start picking up mouthfuls of bait quite confidently. At times the big common picked up mouthfuls of bait within inches of the hookbait. She would back off over the hookbait and just stare at it whilst gently finning, then with a delicate flick of the tail, she would start feeding far more aggressively a mere foot away from the bait. I decided that the next time the fish vacated that the rig needed to be repositioned. Some changes were needed in the presentation, so the two tiger nuts were substituted for a cut-down tiger tipped of with a piece of real corn. The hook size was changed down to a size 10 heavy duty wide gape, and I then proceeded to disguise the rig by laying a number of pebbles and other bits that were scraped off the river bed. The net result left purely the subtle hookbait on show and very little else. I wish I could tell you a tale of success, but for approximately three hours those fish had fed on that spot, and I didn't get close. In a way just to have witnessed wild river fish behaving for the most part totally naturally was an absolute privilege that will never be forgotten.

Its funny how things change... The channel was devoid of fish and the ones on the upper river seemed pretty tricky to catch. In my mind, I had decided to change a few things (as it turned out what a mistake) the plan was to up the bait levels, let them know the bait is here and there is plenty of it. Unfortunately I only succeeded in attracting every tufty on the middle Thames into my area, and how they decimated the bait. I had changed the rigs to smaller hookbaits mounted on size 6 Ronnies. The thinking behind this was all centred on those wily fish that had laughed in my face previously. The result was hooked fish after hooked fish, but the dozens of bream that I caught just proved that I was no closer to getting things right.

The fishing was slow, and I wondered if the onslaught and success of the previous season's campaign had taken its toll. Was the river starting to behave more like a lake - after all there was no flow to speak of and any increased fish activity seemed to be a reflection of more favourable weather. By watching the weather patterns it became more obvious where and when to feed them. Most fish that were caught that stale summer were caught in good winds or after really heavy rain, and unfortunately we didn't get enough of either. After all is said and done, a few nice fish were landed here and there.

There was one particular morning in the middle of some warm settled weather that will stay with me forever. I was on my way to work, really pissed off at the prospect of leaving the island when I spied some movement out of the corner of my eye whilst walking down the main pathway. I hadn't seen fish in this spot previously. I had two options - walk to the station, head up to Waterloo and try to sell my carpets to some miserable customers or to turn around and get on with

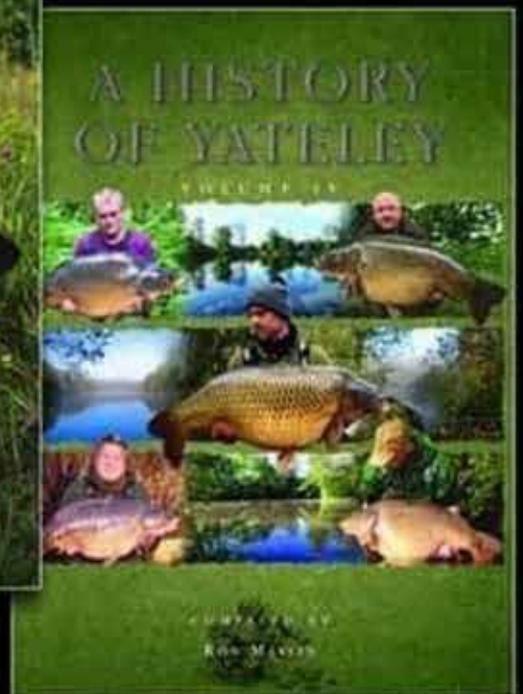
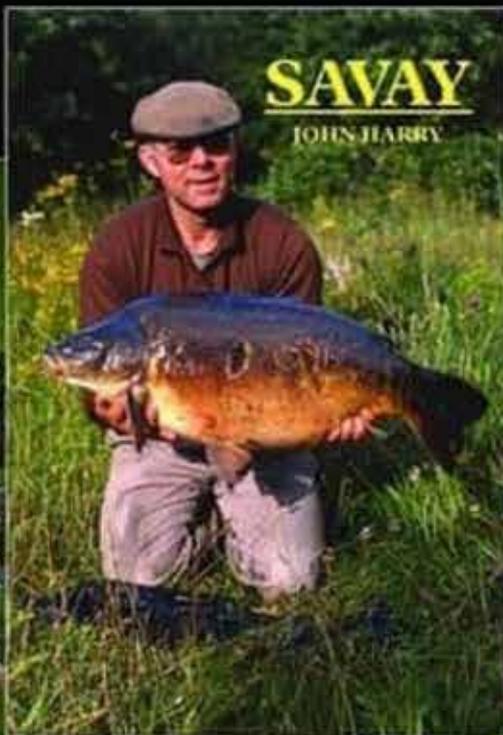
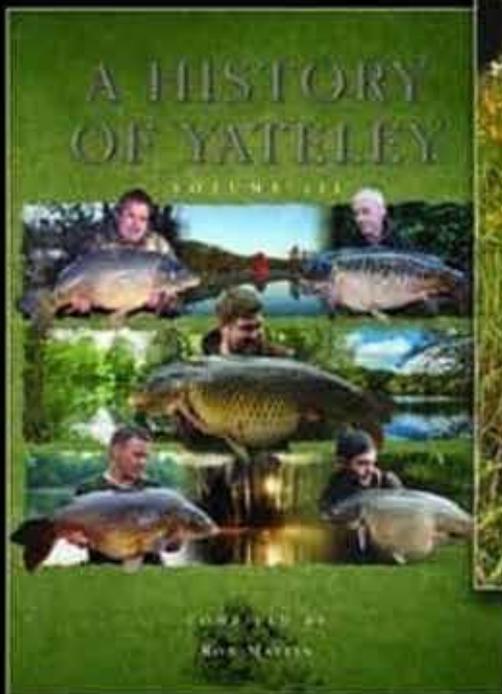
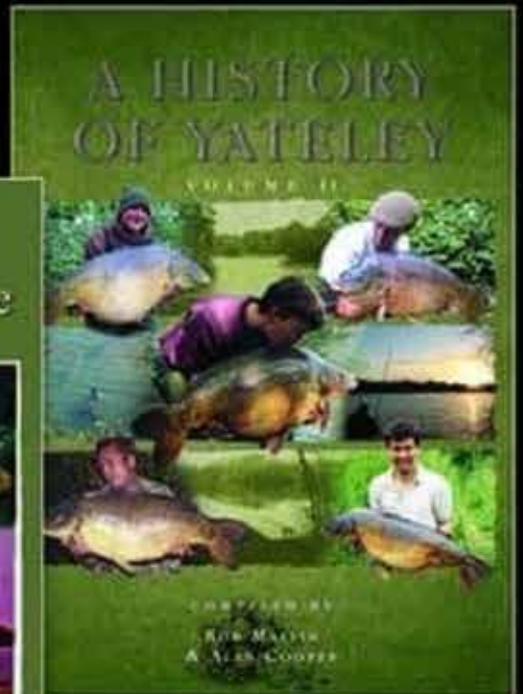
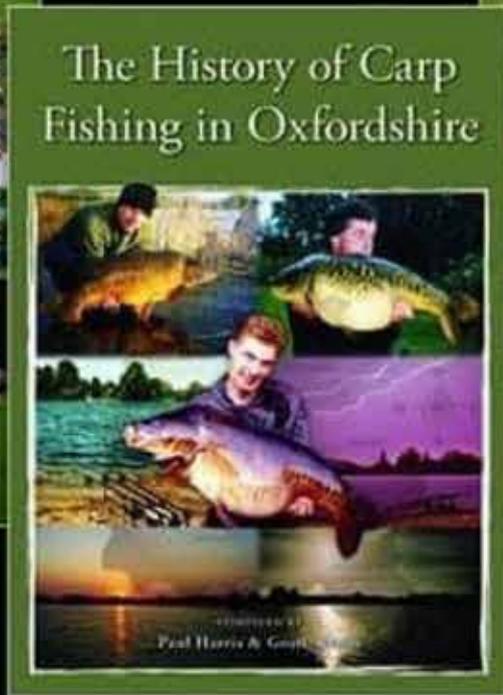
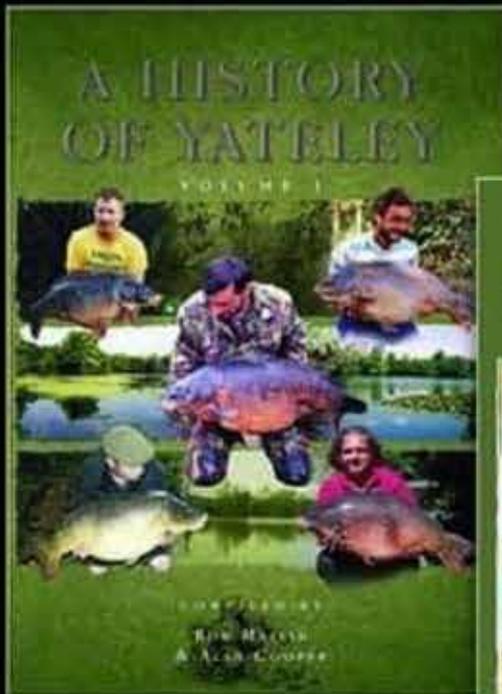




the real job.

The group of fish consisted of two small commons, a nice mid-20 mirror, a much larger common and a gigantic orange and white koi carp. The fish were going about their business basking in the upper layers, sometimes nosing the bits of flotsam sitting on the surface. I had heard of a few fish being caught on the surface, but the opportunities were very infrequent. I managed to get into a position without disturbing the fish. From the moment the crust was gently lowered into the water, the koi looked very keen indeed. It was as though she had decided that her name was on that piece of crust. She approach the bait in a positive manner, tipped up to suck it down and missed by a good 3ins. Then she tried again and missed, and again and missed by an even greater margin. At

# THE HISTORY SERIES



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)

one point I was convinced that she must have turned up after happy hour had finished. As you've guessed, it didn't take long for one of the smaller commons to engulf the bait. I suppose in hindsight I could have played the game a little more cleverly and tried to be more selective, but on the river these windows aren't open for long and any Thames carp of the surface is something special.

Only a day later, a visit to the real world had made me anxious to get back and get the rods out. It was a weird feeling that was telling me to get back to the island, especially as it was 4pm, and the best time for a take was 4am. Within half an hour I was getting a few knocks that looked very breamy. As the knocks persisted, I wound down and struck to feel solid resistance on the line. The fish kited left and locked up into something solid. The snag was possibly part tree, as a few fish had previously found its sanctuary. The only way to deal with the obstacle was to jump into the Bic boat and get upstream to continue the fight. The plan worked, but being single-handed in the dinghy is a completely heart-stopping experience. The unseen fish dragged me everywhere in a game of cat and mouse. I came close to netting her on a couple of occasions, but her lunges totally evaded the landing net. I managed to coax her back nearer to my boat and to tie up against it. The fish, now under the rod tip, stayed deep and took ages to get up to the surface. Even then she was an animal to get into the net, but that's where she eventually ended up after an amazing fight. She went 29lbs 14oz on the scales - what a stunning fish. On one of my visits to the channel to check on the remaining areas that I had continued to bait, I had made myself comfortable in, shall we say, an out of bounds area and had decided to settle

down to watch the water for half an hour. I felt as though I knew every little stone on the riverbed here, so I was really surprised when I noticed that the two double paving slabs that had been chucked into the water had moved. On closer inspection, the paving slabs had morphed into the largest carp I had seen swimming in the River Thames. The fish was grey coloured, thickset and really long. She was doing tiny little laps of the area and dipping down every time to feed without a care in the world. I was a nervous wreck putting the tackle together. The solid bag of crumb, chops and a 14mm barrel waffer were flicked into position, and the trap was set.

On her next visit to the baited area, she dipped down, and within seconds she was nailed. The slack line was taken up till she steadily pulled the tip around. I kept steady pressure on her, but all the time the distance between the two of us was getting larger. The more I leaned into her, the more determined



she seemed to become get to the other bank. At one stage, having hooked her from virtually under the rod tip, she was now 80 meters away at which point she boiled on the surface. I really wish I hadn't seen the fish I was attached to, as my nerves weren't helping the fight. She kited right on a long line and then came towards me, which put me in the box seat. The fight under the rod tip was epic, and it felt as though she was tiring. Just as I thought I was getting the upper hand, she made one last deep dive to the left, and it seemed as though things had gone solid. As I increased the pressure and lifted her up through the depths, she brought up an old tethered rusting boat chain with her, and as I reached for the net, the final surge of the fish with the chain's angle pulling across the line caused the hook to pull free. We all suffer loses in our angling, but somehow I knew there was no way to ever get over this one.

When I first arrived on the island, I had the dilemma of what to do with the 28 carp that I had in my pond where I previously lived. I didn't have much confidence in the new homeowner and was sure that he was going to neglect these beautiful creatures. They had been taken out of a lake in Kent as nothing more than large fingerlings. Even in their infancy some stunning scale patterns could be seen. The last fish of the season was to be one of the above pond fish. Pictures paint a thousand words, so they say and that's exactly what this photo does. For the record, the largest fish stocked approximately 18 months ago was a stunning 14lb fully scaled, and when this fish reaches her potential, you will be looking at something very special.

The second season's carp fishing had drawn to a close, and I



had already decided in my mind that the new season was going to get all that I could throw at it. The plan was to scrutinise every element of my angling and to improve. I started with the bait – the particles were all flavoured during the appropriate stages of preparation. The combinations were as follows: hemp/chilli, tigers/talin, red maize/sweet cream. The smaller particles were drenched in condensed milk and the boilies were supplied by Bob Newman at the Carp Company. Not too many clues here, but try their Tuna and Garlic with the Icelandic Red – I'm sure you won't be disappointed with the combination.

The rigs consisted of lead free hooklinks and razor sharp Fang hooks coupled with a lead arrangement that suited the ground it was fished over. The rigs were the brainchild of Jo

at CMC, and what that guy doesn't know about end tackle is not worth knowing. The close season was also spent bending my old mate Phil Roots' ears on all things carpy.

The season started well with a striking linear on opening day followed by a steady stream of fish, a real mixed bag of commons, mirrors, small and large. With the amazingly hot summer, the carp were really happy coming into the margins and feeding for decent periods of time. So much time was spent observing these carp at close quarters that it became part of the daily routine. I will treasure that time and the lessons I learned forever. The behavioural patterns were fascinating, how different fish reacted to bait, how some fish were so much more cautious than others, how they reacted to an area with and without a rig in situ, how some rigs worked and how some didn't, how much indication you don't get when a fish picks up and ejects a bait and how quickly a bait can be ejected. You were often left scratching your head as to how we ever hook one of these creatures, and at times you just had to laugh at how smart they were. However, with fine-tuning and a bit of luck, they were catchable at times.

I had dispensed with the matching rods and buzzers approach, and was just easing into position with my old fibreglass Hardy No.2 carp rod and a centrepin, but that's where the nostalgia ended, as the end tackle was as efficient as I could offer – no room for a freelined par boiled potato here. The buzz of now and again bending into a carp on that gear was a special experience, but as ever, a few captures had made the fish more cautious.

As the margins slowed, the focus switched to the main baited area on the upper river, which, due to the snags that



## ULTRALOCK

**The ultimate in rod security. The rod is securely held in place under lock and key. The side bar locks at the 9 o'clock position and is released when you press it down to the 6 o'clock position. Simple - easy - reliable. Individual inserts from 12mm - 25mm perfectly match your rod. There's no compromise here. A must for fishing locked up, snag fishing or when fishing your rods out in the lake. Your rod has never been this secure. Manufactured from almost indestructable nylon using the very latest lazer technology right here in the UK.**

**[www.sharptackle.co.uk](http://www.sharptackle.co.uk)**



had been washed downstream had now necessitated the use of a dinghy to safely land any hooked fish. I was fortunate that my girlfriend, Kami, was as intoxicated with carp fishing as me, and on plenty of occasions we could be found mid-river at 3am playing a fish from the dinghy. Her help certainly helped to put a few more fish on the bank.

The buildup of tufties around the baited area was becoming a real pain. Every few days more and more of these feathered vermin were playing havoc with any attempt to fish. We all know there are certain tricks to slow them down, but even trying to get them to a level where we could fish was becoming impossible.

Kami had mentioned about visiting her parents for a week in late September. To begin with, I wasn't that receptive to leaving the fishing, but with the onslaught from the tufties, it would probably do the area some good to totally leave it alone. It was with absolute joy that we returned a week later to witness a tufty-free zone. In all reality, the window to winkle out a last ditch carp or two was quite slim.

On the first night back, a one-toner let us know in no uncertain terms that an angry carp was attached to the line. As we took to the dinghy, the carp felt special - a real solid battle curve. In our absence we had had a fair bit of rain, and the extra flow was now working in the carp's favour. At times she could be seen twisting and turning in the torchlight, only then to power out into the main flow, and this scenario was repeated time and time again. It must have taken a hard 20-minute fight to get her close to netting, and in she went. She was a classic Thames warrior that didn't quite pull the needle round to 35lbs. To catch my Thames 30 was a dream

and a total privilege.

The river produced a few more fish over the next two weeks, and unfortunately a pattern was seeming to emerge with a lot of repeat captures. The final fish caught that season was becoming a close friend, as this was the fifth time I had caught him in three seasons, so perhaps now is the time to move further afield.

The mighty Thames is a special river indeed. I have fished for carp as far down as Kew Bridge, and wouldn't it be great to see a massive uncaught chunk come out of the big tidal? Who knows what lurks in its depths.



# AIDEN SAVAN







# CHASING THAMES DREAMS

With the brolly system trying its best to take off at around 7:30am on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July whilst I held on for dear life, tangled up in the spokes inside, soaked through to the bones from the driving rain and a little sleep deprived, it really had been a savage night out here on the river, and I thought to myself, surely it can't be much longer now, or am I just mad for being here?

I had started my Thames campaign a little late this year in all

honesty, preferring to be out there, proactive and on it, learning, baiting, prepping tucked away swims and learning a little more from as early as the middle of March sometimes, but having been really focused on my syndicate water during the previous couple of months, I just hadn't done half as much homework as I normally would like to do during the close season, so I felt a little bit behind, and doubts were starting to creep in to my head, such as had I prepped my chosen area enough, and more importantly, am I in the right place now? It was now just before 8am, I was still hanging onto my house whilst pondering life, and out of nowhere the middle rod went from nothing to all, just like that. Stuff the broolly! I was on it in a heartbeat. I was a little shocked as to how the whole situation had turned just like that. I was into my first Thames carp of the season – always a heart pounding moment! After a long run on the initial take and a spirited battle as I lead it back towards me from the distance it had gained, I could see it was a lovely scaly one, so it was a huge relief to get it in the net. It was just under 20lb, and that will do nicely for a first session result, I said. From that moment, I knew that it was game on – location was right and the bait was working and this was the place to be to catch a dream. I just needed to condition the spot and believe.

I was due to work away from Monday onwards, and having just had one from the area, I wanted to apply a bit more bait, knowing it would be at least seven days until I was able to get down to get some more in on the spot. So with the gear on the barrow and the rods strapped on, I deposited the remaining bait I had on me from the session, which was around 3kg, a mixture of Complex-T boilie, pellets and particles. That was another 3kg in weight off the barrow now – every little helps – anything to lighten the load

for that absolute mission of a mission back to the motor. The gear was twice the weight, soaked through, but did I care? I was nowhere near happy with the amount of bait out there though, but it was all I had on me, so the first priority for when I got home was to grab more bait and get straight back down there, so off I shot with another 7kg, which would then bring the hit up to 10kg, again a mixture of boilies, pellets, tigers, particles and liquids. I had been putting in around 5kg every three days for about three weeks so far, so I was happy with the ratio I had deposited for the week.

It was nine days later that I was back down and in the area, so there wasn't one moment that went past during the week whilst working where I didn't think about the spot and what might be visiting it. I certainly knew what potential there was and what the river has to offer with years' worth of knowledge, experience and sightings firmly embedded in my mind. I was woken by a seriously fast take on a tightened up clutch on my left hand rod just before 7:30am on 7<sup>th</sup> August. Having been wrecked from a busy week, I needed a couple more hours' sleep in me rather than waking up at first light to watch the water, which I just really didn't have it in me to do that morning and had fallen back to sleep. I proceeded to try and control a very angry Thames carp that chugged around in front of me for a couple of minutes whilst I rubbed my eyes in an attempt to wake up. All was under control though, and number two of the season was mine, a lovely dark 20lb mirror, even though it was a recapture of one I'd had off the surface last year a few miles upstream. With that, out went another 5kg of bait, and I headed off home.

I was back down three days later and feeling very confident. I arrived just as the light was fading on Friday evening and

instantly got to work getting the rods out on the spot, which was a small raised area out in the middle of the river, on and around which three rigs were accurately positioned with a top-up of bait, around 30 spods. That sounds like a lot of bait for an overnighter, but trust me; you get cleared out in no time, depending on stock levels and species etc. The spot felt very clean to me when the lead touched down on the right hand rod, and I thought, that will be away come morning.

Sure enough, 8am came round, and again I was disturbed from such a lovely sleep (I needed it!) by the sound of an alarm, but this was different – just a few bleeps, as a stuttering take suddenly kicked me fully into life after picking up the rod and tightening up to something kiting upstream at speed and now stripping line from a tight clutch. I couldn't disengage the back-wind quickly enough – I hate playing fish on the clutch! After what felt like a lifetime, the pace started to slow, and a few big head shakes and thumps later, I managed to turn it. It then proceeded to make a beeline straight back towards me at speed with me cranking down hard on the reel for a good eight seconds in an attempt to catch up with this unseen torpedo heading straight for me.

The sun was beaming down, and from 20-odd yards out I could see this long, lean, silver figure twisting and turning as I led it up to the surface with my little fluoro pop-up just visible in the corner of its mouth. I knew exactly what I had hooked; I had seen it a hell of a lot in the area before committing to the baiting campaign, and it was about to breach, so at any attempt at netting it, I was going to take. I grabbed the net, threw it into the water between the other two rods, jumped in with chest waders on and hovered on the edge of the marginal shelf. (I've got into the habit of getting my waders on within seconds upon waking up to a



A French carp fishing paradise only 2 hours drive from Calais, with 7 lakes from 2.5 to 40 acres set in over 80 acres of idyllic country side. Our stock includes both common and mirror carp up to 70lbs+.

(0033 672 247 889) (mobile/whatsapp) / 0033 681 497171 (mobile/whatsapp)  
sales@carp-fishing-holidays.co.uk





take for this type of fishing, and apart from that I will live in the things – it's too fast paced to lapse in concentration for even a second!)

By now I was well aware of what calibre of carp I had on the end, which I had no control over. It was going absolutely ballistic in an attempt to wipe my other two rods out and get free. To my right was the thickest raft of weed that had built up in the margins, and this is where it headed next... and I followed – bad move! The water even deeper there, and with me now being well out of my depth, sliding down the slippery, silty shelf, the net was my only support as I rammed it into the thick weed raft as a counter balance so I could ground my feet. This I quickly managed to do, but with the fish now thrashing water in front of me and the raft of weed, I was in a very bad position and now not

thinking straight at all. The fish boiled at the front of the weed, leaving a hollow, so seeing the chance, I got the net in there and heaved the 3ft long common over the net cord until it was kissing the spreader block. There was still half a foot of wrist and tail hanging out over the net cord! With all my might, whilst water streamed over the top of my waders, I tried all I could to shuffle the half a foot extra of silver 30lb-plus Thames common into that net, but the weed had closed back in on both the arms of my landing net, and I just could not lift it. The arms were locked solid in the weed and were now snapping due to the weight of the weed as I struggled. In the blink of an eye, before I could react to the situation I had got myself into, the great common thrashed,



turned and swam straight back out and into the depths of the Old Father, leaving my little fluoro pop-up on my rig, hooked up to the mesh at the bottom of my broken, empty net.

After throwing the gear around the swim for a bit, lots of swearing and some chain smoking, I repositioned all three rods with a light top-up of bait over the area. With such a good stamp of carp possibly still being in the area, there was no way I was leaving, so I forced myself to stay on for one more night in the hope that they were still about, I felt like a broken man. The night was quiet, and I woke feeling even worse than I did, but still, out went 5kg of bait, and I decided to give it a week's rest, repeating the baiting process three days later during that period of my absence.

My next actual fishing session back was much later than planned, but I had come back refreshed after a couple of nights' break spent at my syndicate water with success, in between a busy week of work and a lot of hours spent tracking down these nomadic Thames carp in other areas of this big river of dreams, all the time keeping up with the bait application ratio – the more priming the better! I fished two blank nights in a row. What was going on? I thought... where were they? I wasn't too put off by the quiet spell though, as the area was feeling polished, especially where the middle rod was positioned, right in the center of the baited spot.

A full moon was coming up on the 26<sup>th</sup> August, and I was feeling something was going to kick off, as it had been strangely quiet recently. It was 3am on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August, and I found myself starting to come to my senses in the glare of the bright moon that I had been watching grow by the day, stood in the margins of the river with the rod starting to double over with a heavy and strong but steady moving weight on the end. This felt serious! I

carefully attempted to make a turn of the handle in order to apply a little more pressure, and with that, everything fell slack as it literally just fell off. How do you just fall off? With my jaw now somewhere down by my arse, I skipped the rig back in to inspect my perfectly fine rig with a turned-over hook point. Two losses in a row – so cruel!

8am came round, and with no more action, I topped up the area and went off hunting, with the plan of not fishing that night. The original plan was to be there next just before the date of the full moon, having been pushing myself to the limits with the lack of sleeping and eating that was replaced by plotting and planning in the determination to keep my dreams a possibility... I was completely burnt out.

A fish loss always seems worse sitting at home; it really grinds away at you! Feeling sorry for myself and licking my wounds whilst trying my best to zone out staring at a TV that I wanted to throw out the window (there were adverts on at the time!), I still couldn't stop looking at those bloody weather apps. It was bob-on conditions – moon, pressure, the lot! I glanced at the clock. It was 10pm, and the motor was half loaded... “Sod this,” I said. “I'm off!”

The rest, as they say, is history...

Nah... I'm joking!

Never has there been more of an anxious drive in my life. It was one of those rare vibes you get when you're connected that deeply to what you have focused everything you have been working so hard for on. Something made me do what I did that night, and I wasn't going to question it! It was now around 11:30pm by the time I was settled in, and with my senses running at their peak on the bright, moonlit night, one-by-one, with 100% accuracy,

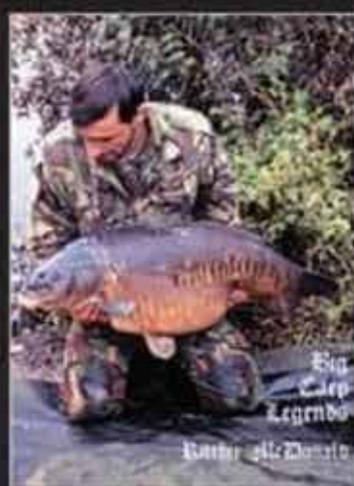
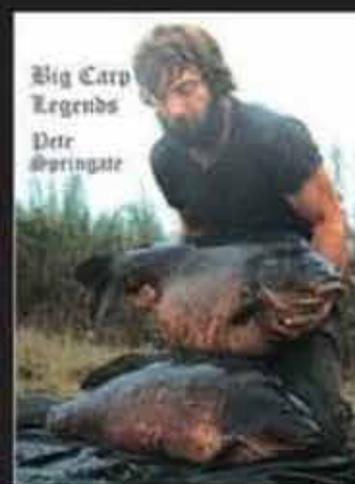
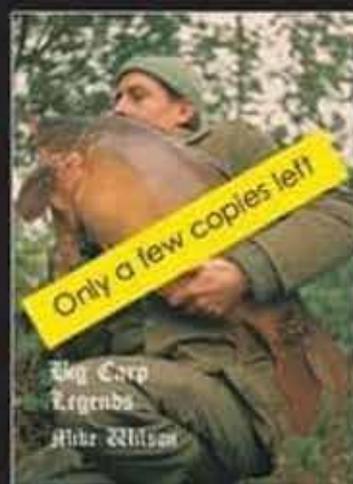
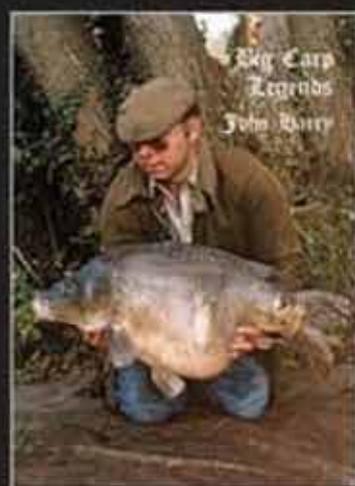
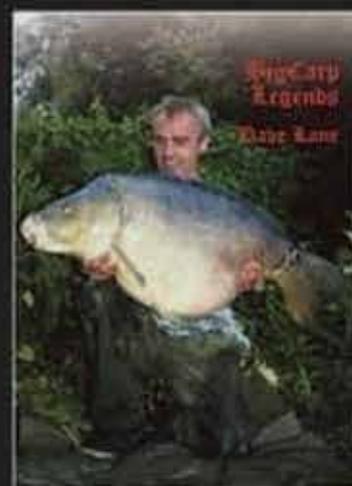
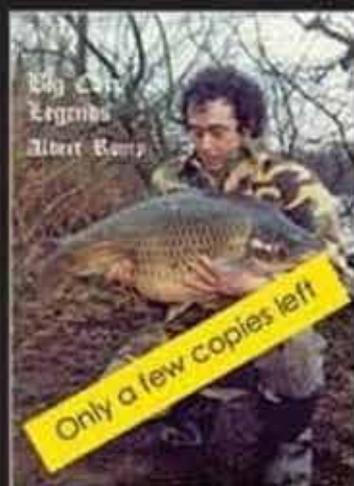


each of the three rods were positioned on their respected spots. I didn't even have to feather the leads in flight – everything was second nature. I hit the clips sweet, and with that, another 30 spods were put out, focused mainly over the middle rod. I had done all I could, and it was time to try and get some sleep.

The night had been quiet, which was half expected. I felt I was there for a morning bite... well, I was before the session anyway. It was just after 7am, and I was still feeling very anxious after quite a sound sleep. Conditions were due to change later that day, but as I sat there quietly staring at the middle rod, it was just after 8am that all that buildup, all that anxiety and overpowering feelings of something brewing, suddenly became apparent. The

# BIG CARP LEGENDS SERIES

The anglers that shaped today's carp scene



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>

[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



tip on the middle rod just slowly arched over, and the alarm let out a few bleeps as line ticked off the tight clutch on the solid setup.

Upon taking a breath, I picked up the rod, and the surface just erupted! The rest really does feel a bit of a blur. Everything felt like it was going one hundred miles per hour! I was well aware I had hooked something very, very special before even picking up the rod. You know what I mean; we have all had that feeling at some point. It was going mental, and there was such power from this beast that I could do absolutely nothing with it. If it wanted to go, all I could do was backwind, backwind and backwind, keeping those knuckles away from the reel face as much as possible, as this felt wild and unpredictable.

After what felt like a lifetime, I slowly gained control as we fought each other from out in the middle of the river all the way back towards me, now absorbing the powerful lunges with more control as it charged off up and down the margin in front of me in between the other lines. Having already got in the water after edging my way forward with the net in position during several stages of the fight, I had learnt from the loss of that 3ft common to stay where I was for netting, despite wanting to keep the fish away from the other lines as much as possible. I got ready. I can still see it now, just this massive orangey/yellow glow coming from a stupidly sized block of cheese of a carp, just wallowing around beaten below the tip and ready for netting. I recognised the fish straight away; it had been over five years since my last sighting of it! I will never forget it. As if in slow motion, I ever so gently fully sunk the net around the beaten beast and scooped! Instantly I felt sick, standing there in utter disbelief, having just had the adrenaline rush of my life, I actually had to sit down. Within a couple of minutes, my head stopped spinning. I got in the water, carefully unhooked the fish and safely secured it in the retainer whilst I called a friend who had been on standby. "I've got the Cheese!" I said.

My dream went 42lb 10oz.

I fished a couple more sessions on the spot over the next couple of weeks, keeping to the same baiting pattern. I went on to take another two carp from the spot, another recapture from back in 2013, which was a mirror going 27lb 2oz on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September and a common of 17lbs on the 6<sup>th</sup> September, both early morning bites again, before calling it an end to the campaign. Seven bites from the spot resulting in five carp landed including my first 40lb-plus Thames carp in a season – that surely couldn't be topped,

right? Incredibly amazing and epic times – what a rush – but the season was still young.

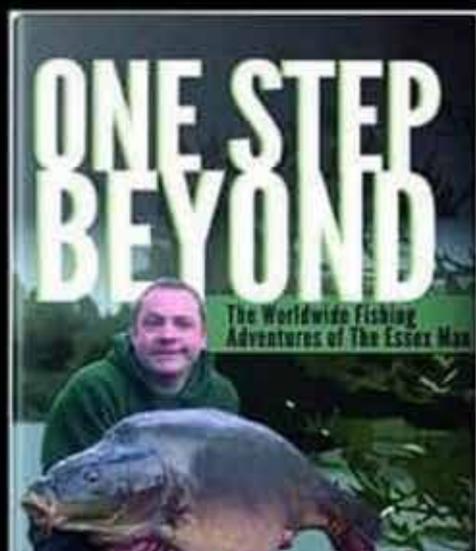
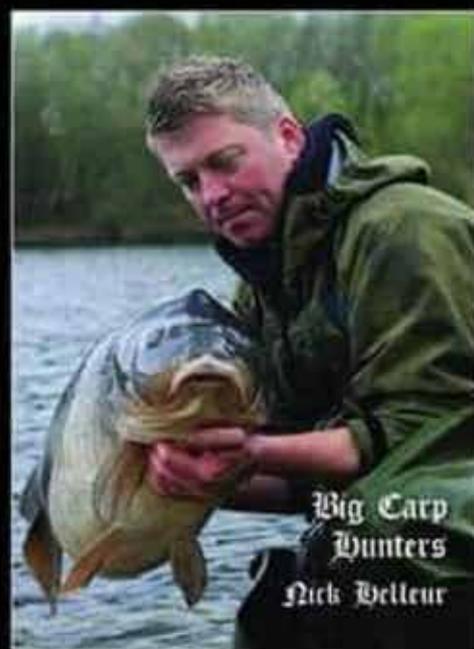
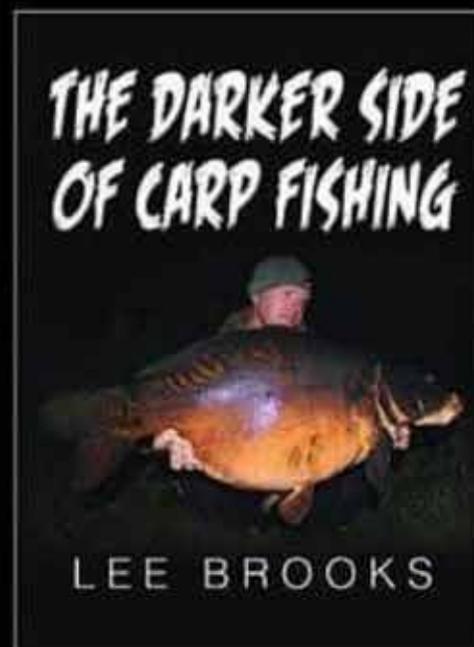
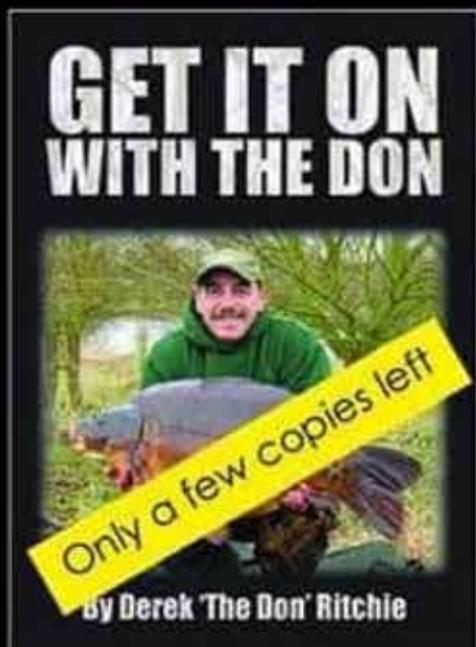
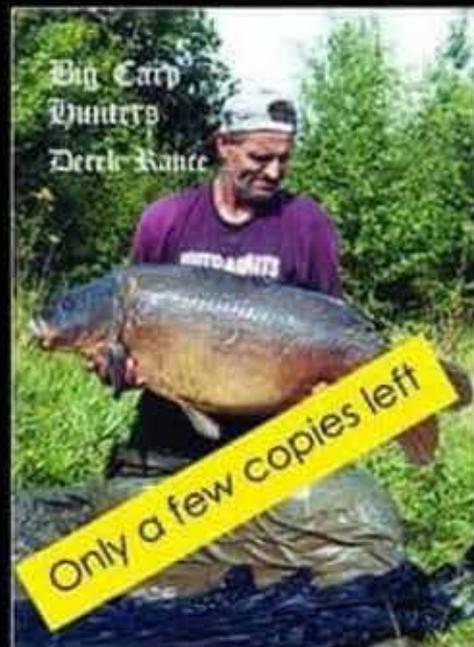
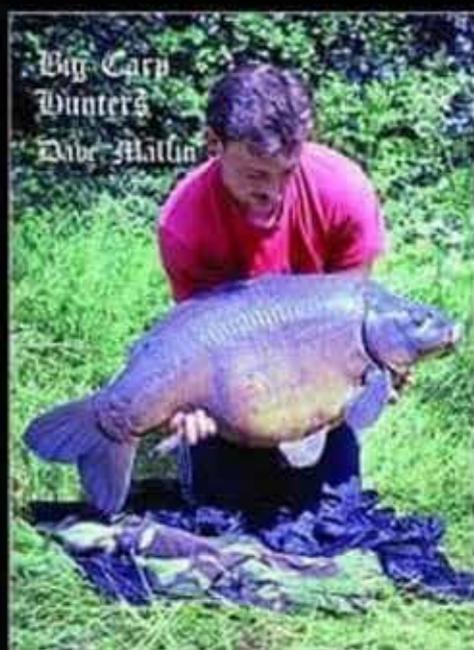
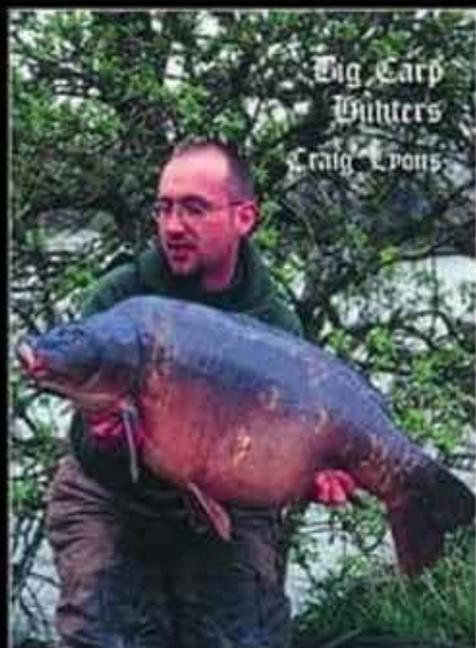
I had been working hard on plan B for a couple of weeks by now, after visually locating carp on occasions during my spare time after work and when I wasn't fishing. The new spot was located in a completely different area of the river, and I had a feeling there were quite a few carp held up there than I was actually physically seeing. I planned to hit it two more times heavily with bait and then drop in for my first session. It was 19 days later that I was on my way, ready to hit the location where they were giving themselves away.

To be continued...



# THE BIG CARP HUNTER SERIES

*The Unsung hero's prolific catches with a unique tale to tell*



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



# LIFE ON THE THAMES

Never did I think that something my dad got me into as a child would become such a big part of my life. From a young boy up to the age of 10-11, I spent my free days and weekends, like most, out with my friends or fishing with the old man. Although the Thames was less than 5-10 miles from where we lived, we never ventured out to fish the big river. I don't think it really mattered where we fished, whether it was the local

pond, stream or dyke – we always found something to go at, and catch or not, it was always a nice time. I miss those early days.

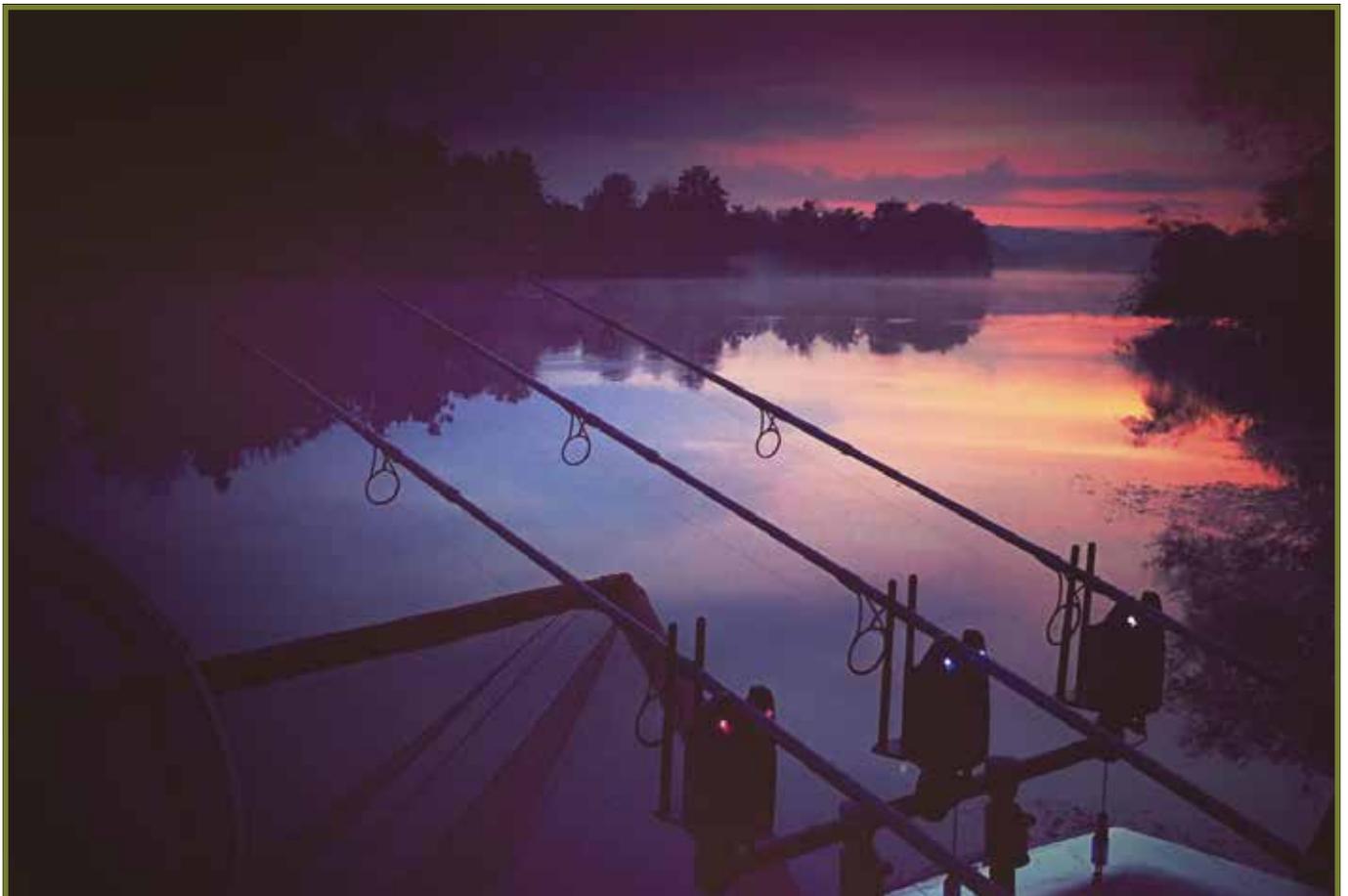
The night before it was a buzz getting everything ready, and we were up early making flasks of coffee and a pack lunches for the day ahead. Then it was off to the tackle shop as it opened, stocking up on the essentials and listening to the old heads chatting away before the anticipation of what the day might bring as we drove to our chosen venue. They are truly great and very fond memories, just catching whatever came our way, hoping that maybe one day we might catch one of the bigger ones that we had seen lurking in the depths. This was definitely where my passion for fishing began, but my fishing has certainly changed since then though...

At the age of 12, I moved house, and the River Thames was now on my doorstep, so it was only natural that I would be fishing it. I still remember seeing the river for the first time and being overwhelmed by the sheer size – wide, long and deep – a world away from the 4ft gin clear dyke I was used to. I didn't have a clue where to start, but I was excited to get stuck in – the mystery of what it held in its depths had me from the very beginning! I started slowly, targeting the local tributaries and backwaters, as they seemed more intimate and a little less intimidating than the main flow, fishing the only way I knew how, on the float, catching nothing more than small fish for the first year or so and losing the odd better fish to hook pulls and weak tackle, but as always, hopeful that one day I'd catch something special.

I was down one day after school, and I saw a guy fishing under an overhanging tree in one of the backwaters. As I approached

and asked if he had caught anything, his rod tip pulled round and he was in. After a short battle, a stunning 3-4lb chub was in the bottom of his landing net... I was blown away by the size of it, considering I hadn't had much over a pound since fishing there. I noticed he was using a quiver tip rod, big reels, thicker line and weighting his bait on the bottom using luncheon meat as bait. After picking his brain for a while and gaining some valuable knowledge, I was overwhelmed by how much I didn't know. I figured I'd take his guidance onboard and try this approach on my next trip down!

After school the next day, I went straight down to the tackle shop. I brought some big size 8 hooks and some luncheon meat, buzzing with excitement as I headed back down to the backwater, optimistic and a little overconfident that I was going to easily catch one of these giants, but not realising



it wasn't as easy as I first thought it would be. The next few sessions I spent blanking and being frustrated, worrying that what I was doing wasn't working and it wasn't going to work for me... Had the bigger fish moved on?

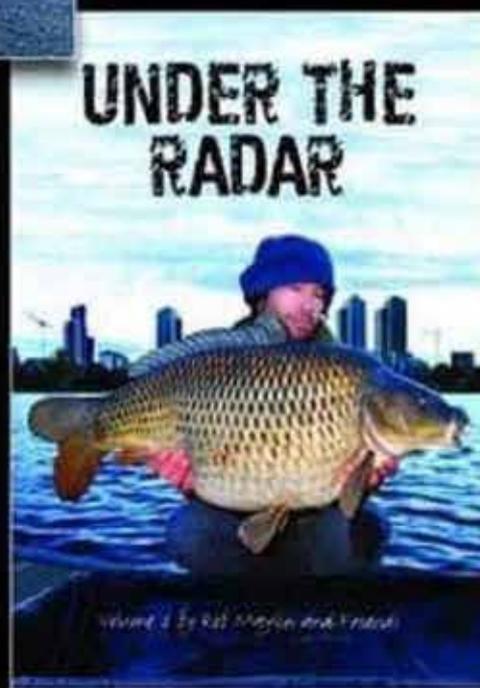
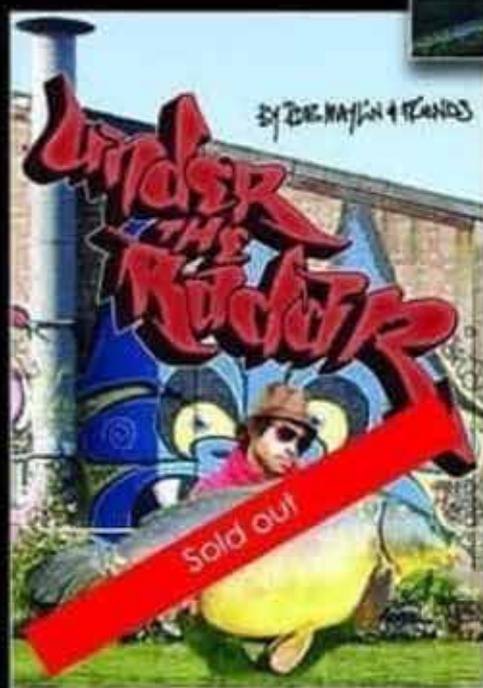
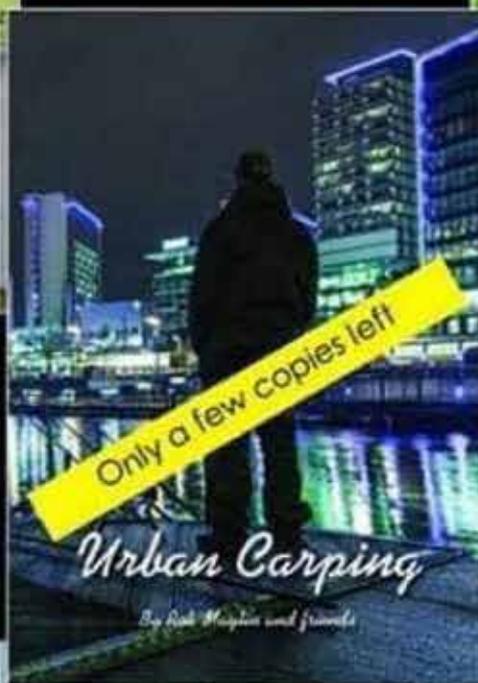
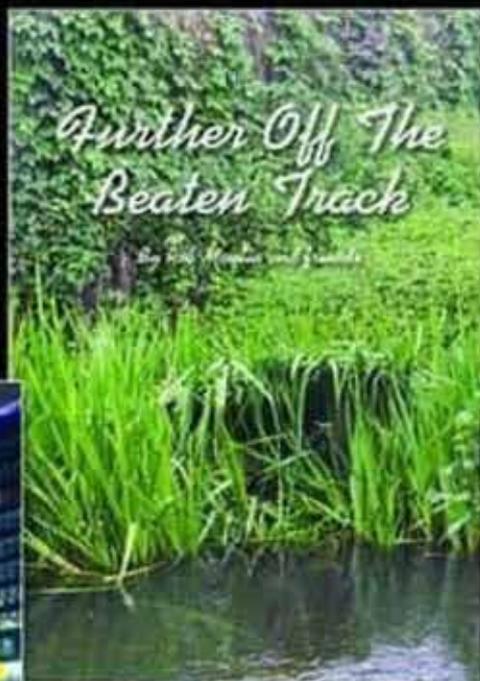
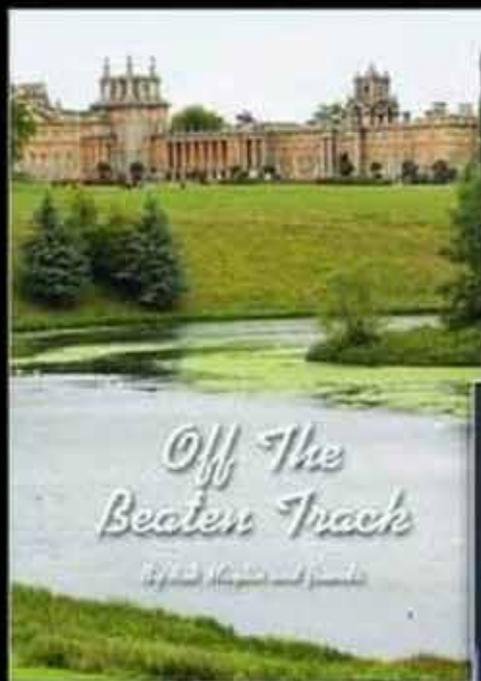
Then after a few tweaks to my rig and a couple more sessions, it finally happened... I got down to the river an hour before sunset, planning to stay into dark. After lowering my cube of luncheon meat and barbed sized 8 hook into a likely hole underneath an overhanging bush on the far bank, I sat back and waited in silence. After an hour or so, it happened! Bang! The rod hooped over, and I was in! What's happening? It went like something I'd never experienced before - pure power and energy surging down the rod. It was such good fun in a small overgrown blackwater. I had the clutch set pretty tight so it couldn't get any line on me, and after a few savage lunges for the snags trying to get free, I swung the net under it. As I stood there in the dark on my own looking into the net at this huge, oversized chub, my obsession and passion for fishing started picking up pace. The buzz of setting a target, a little prep work and understanding, laying my traps and achieving my goal was and still is an awesome feeling! Mugging off some wily old character in the process - that's what it's about!

Catching my first big chub of 4-5lbs was enough to keep me interested over the next few years! This I guess was the first turning point in my fishing. I decided to stop fishing with small hooks and maggots and start targeting the bigger fish only. I knew I might catch less, but the excitement and challenge of catching the bigger fish was what I was chasing for sure.

The next couple of years I spent learning more about the river on a whole, with lots of researching, YouTube, books, DVDs and

# OFF THE BEATEN TRACK SERIES

For lovers of the unknown, unnamed and uncaught



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>  
[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)



magazines, different species of fish, different styles of fishing, rigs, tackle, where to find fish and different ways on how to target them. I was building my watercraft and enthusiasm as I went and catching numerous good fish along the way: chub, perch, pike and bream aplenty! I can remember holding bream up for photos and thinking I was the man. Haha! I no longer like bream.

After lots of sessions, lots of blanks plenty of learning, one night whilst fishing a new stretch, I got lucky and had my first ever Thames barbel of 11lb 6oz! Now that was an experience - by far one of the strongest fish I had ever battled with and pound for pound one of the hardest fighting fish in the UK river systems. This sparked my barbel phase. No longer did the chub matter; I had a new challenge - the mighty barbus barbus. By

this time I was driving, and a fresh faced 17-year-old me had become obsessed with barbel, not only from the Thames but from all rivers up and down the country: the Hampshire Avon, the Kennet, the Stour, Warks Avon, the Loddon... along with many others. I covered many miles chasing specimen chub and barbel, never catching barbel to more than 12lb 5oz and chub to 5lb-plus, but I learnt a hell of a lot along the the way! I spent from the age of 17 to 21 targeting barbel! The fight they gave and the sheer power and aggression was what I was after! It's awesome sport on the right gear – true warrior fish!

The road I'm on now all started the day I saw a group of 5-10 carp in one of the shallow tributaries I always fished in my



# DAVID WALLEN



early teens. I had seen the odd carp but always thought it was impossible to catch them. These fish looked a different level to the chub and barbel that I was used to catching – long dark and thick, 20-30lb-plus fish right before my eyes – I just had to try and catch one.

I had already fished the Thames for ten years and had never caught nor even seen more than one or two, but I thought that this was clearly a good time to have a go. Being an angler who loves a challenge, I set myself to task of catching one, I grabbed the gear out the motor and got to it. In short, I didn't manage one the first few times down, as they can be very tricky in shallow, clear water. The mystery of what they actually look like or how much they weighed was on my mind big time. I just knew that I had to catch one of these river carp to see what they are all about!

After targeting the carp for a few months and not catching them and the weather getting colder, the fish slowly moved out back into the main river, so I decided I'd leave it until the next year before I had another go and focus on some predator fishing through the colder months!! After another cold winter and long close season, I expected the carp might show up on the spawning grounds and decided I would put some bait in if they did. Sure enough, a week later they showed up, and with the opening day looming, I started baiting up in an effort to hold the fish there.

On opening day, the bank was absolutely packed when I came down to fish! Obviously everyone had the same idea. A few days passed and the pressure got too much, so the fish moved out, as did all of the other anglers. Luckily it's local to me and



knowing the fish hadn't spawned, I kept an eye on the area, and sure enough with a bit more bait and a little savvy, I got them back in and feeding away from the other anglers.

It must have been early July, and I headed back down to the river. After keeping the bait going in through the previous week, I fished two rods with a small scattering of bait – Richworth Tutti Frutti was the bait I was using at the time. I managed to lose the first carp I hooked, a small common of about 10lb, after a short, sharp run. It battled hard through the weed and did me at the net! Feeling defeated, I flicked my rod back out not expecting anything to happen!

After an hour, I had a take on my right hand rod, and after an epic ten-minute battle, I had my first ever Thames carp in my net, and I was happy to know they go as good as the barbel! It was a 12lbs 12oz mirror carp with a slightly ghost carp look

LIMITED EDITION • SIGNED AND NUMBERED

# Legendary Carp Paintings



- Bazil
- Heather
- The Black Mirror
- The Royal Forty
- The Bishop
- The Burghfield Common
- Jumbo
- Two Tone
- Mary and Mary's Mate



<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>



to it. I went home that night, chuffed at having achieved my goal! I couldn't wait to get back down the next day and have another go, but little did I know that the very next session would see me catch a beautiful old 26lb mirror, my second ever 20lb-plus fish and a new personal best! Now that was the last turning point in my angling. That fish is the fish that has had me obsessed by the carp that swim in the mighty River Thames for the last decade!

I went from a dedicated barbel angler to a sell-out carp fishermen overnight! Gone are the 1.75lb tc rods and the Shimano baitrunners, hello 3.25 tc 12ft carp rods, the big pit

reels, fishing alarms and learning how to tie carp rigs. It was a massive learning curve, but I have to say, I embraced it. I love the fact that there is so much more to carp fishing than I first thought. There is so much that you have to get right in order to catch, from finding spots to leading them out, feature finding, baiting up, and then there's your bait choice, rig choice and weather factors! Whether you're fishing lakes, pits, reservoirs, canals or rivers, it's endless!

Over the last 10-11 years, I spent The first 5-6 seasons bank fishing all over the place including getting to grips with the main flow of the river and understanding the seasons and flows, unfortunately for very little reward. I tried to understand what the fish were doing but struggled a lot of the time. I think I completely blanked for a couple of seasons and only had two or three fish per season the other years, but to be fair, I didn't put in anywhere near as much effort as I do nowadays, nor did I know what I know now.

After spending many years struggling, I finally started making some progress, learning as I went and picking up knowledge from people who were willing to share. I realised that moving around so much like I would if I were chub or barbel fishing wouldn't always help me on the stretch I was fishing. With that in mind, I started baiting an area heavier than usual. It was an area that I really liked the look of, away from the masses, a really quiet stretch, and after a few sessions, I finally started catching – a great personal moment in my angling! It all started to come together and make sense that little bit more, and doing the best part of it by myself felt great too.

After my first proper run of fish and a new personal best two-tone mirror of 29lb 12oz at the time, my passion and drive

to get out on the river and catch more carp was stronger than ever! As time went on, I decided the bank was too busy and crowded for me, and I needed a change, so I bought a boat and slowly became even more obsessed with the river and the carp – hunting them in the close season when the waters are clear, bedding down in the colder months when the water's murky, prepping areas, baiting spots and watching them feed! Three nights a week is just normal now... well, it has been for the last 4-5 years. June til December is generally my season, and honestly, I've never dedicated myself to a passion like I have done to my river carp fishing! Carp fishing over the last five years has become a massive part of who I am as a person! The unknown and unexplored depths of the mighty River Thames and the potential and mystery of what is still swimming around uncaught down there is what drives me to do it. I have caught some really stunning fish over the years. Where they started life, who knows? Did they grow from spawn in the Thames? Did they, like most, enter in the floods? Either way, I just can't get enough of the awesome characters the river holds.

Over the last few seasons, all of my hard work, drive and determination to keep on going through all the blanks and all the drama and stress that comes with carp fishing has served me well. I've managed to catch many different characters from the river: long ones, stumpy ones, fat ones, scaly ones, chilled ones, angry ones and I've had nine different 30lb-plus carp to over 37lbs with a back-up of gnarly, dark colourful warriors! I've had barbel to over 18lbs, chub to 7lb-plus, perch to over 3lbs, pike to double figures, bream to 10lb-plus and grass carp to mid 20s! It's been an epic journey so far, and I can't wait to see what the future has in store! I'm fully hooked on old





Father T!

Goals over the next few years...

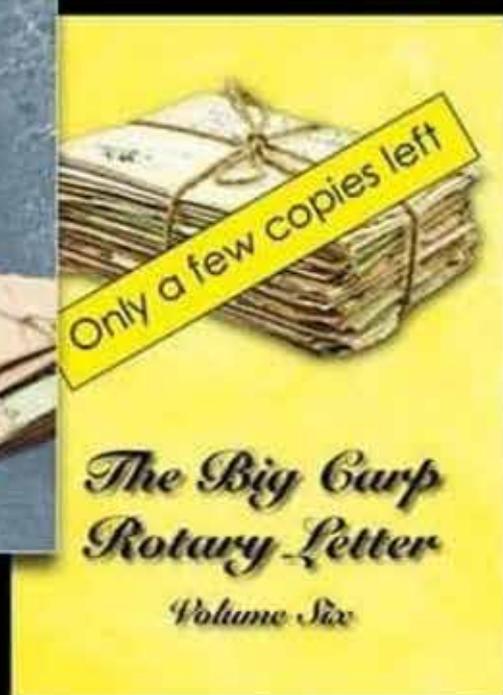
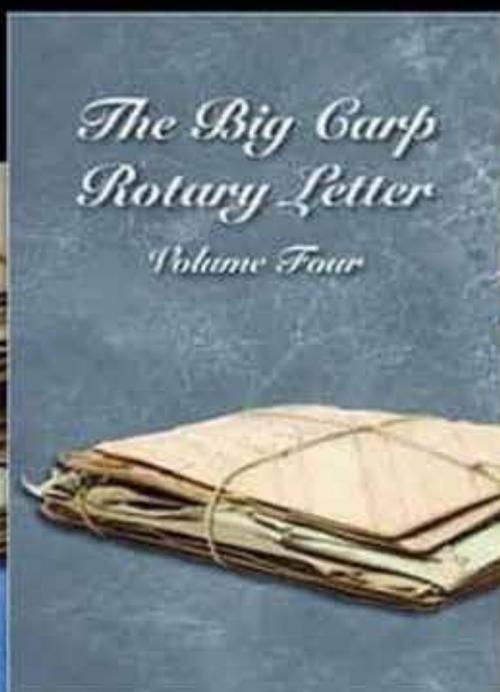
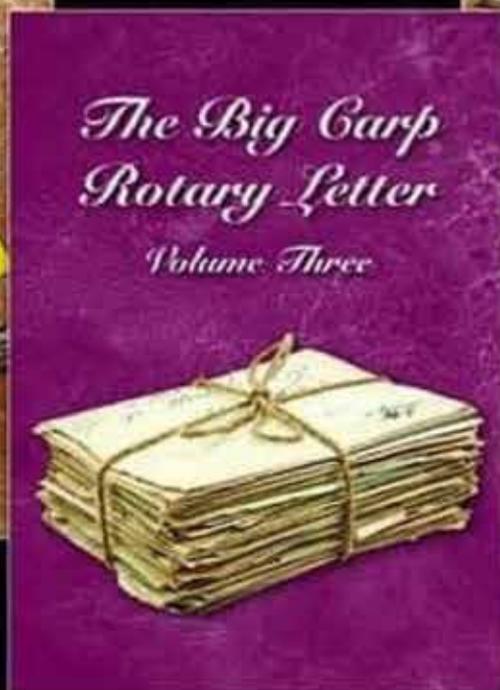
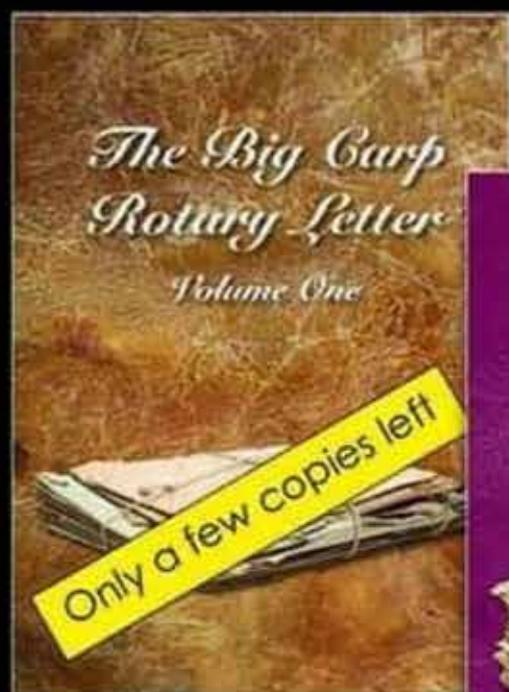
I'm still chasing a 30lb common, which is a dream of mine. I've had so many high 20 commons, it's mad, just never a 30. Obviously the 40lb barrier will be an amazing moment too! In general though, I'm just going back to enjoying my fishing. I've allowed it to take over in some respects, and it's all been a bit too serious the last few years, so the boat's gone and I'm back to the bank and enjoying fishing some new areas with some old faces - back to the old school! But yeah, that's where my fishing is up to. I'm looking forward to having a few more before the end of the season if I can manage it.

Highlights from the last couple seasons...

I've managed more fish these past few seasons than any

# THE BIG CARP ROTARY LETTER SERIES

The greatest collection of thinking anglers ever amassed



07768 731425

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/rarecarpbooksunlimited>

[www.carpbooksonline.com](http://www.carpbooksonline.com)

others. It shows that a lot of hard work and effort whilst learning and taking it in will slowly start to seal you more fish. The more you do something, the better you understand it and the more you will get out of it in the long run! The effort's really been paying off! I have caught five 30s just this season alone, having only had four over the last ten years... I managed to catch a fish this year that a month beforehand I had photographed spawning in the shallows. In a river as vast as the Thames, that really was an epic moment! I also managed to recapture my first ever 20lb-plus fish that funnily enough I first caught in a lake about 8-10 years ago and which had been set free in one of the recent floods, miles from where we first met – a beautifully scaled linear. Absolutely nuts!

Last year in August, I joined Nash Tackle as a bait tester, which has been great, and so far, it's worked out well for me. They are a really good bunch of guys and it's great tackle and a modern brand – honestly good stuff all round! I've been doing well using 15mm Pink Citruz pop-ups and size 4 Chod Twisters Pin Point hooks over big beds of heavily glugged 20mm Scopex Squid. Other than that and all the usual highs and lows I experience whilst out there doing it, there was one really standout moment this year, 2018. I managed to have my first brace of 30lb Thames carp and what an awesome morning's fishing it was with 67lb 2oz of old scaly Thames mirror in the bag within an hour.

I had been struggling the previous few sessions and went to sleep thinking it wasn't going to happen. The next morning I woke up to my left rod peeling off and jumped up out of bed buzzing to finally be into something! After a couple of short runs and a fair scrap, I had the first fish in the net – a long,

heavily scaled mirror of 30lb 4oz. I decided to retain the fish, as I usually do when I catch, to allow the fish to recover and to give the spot chance to rest after the commotion, hopefully allowing the other fish to move back in and continue feeding. With the fish secure, I recast the ever-faithful 15mm washed-out Pink Citruz pop-up presented on a multi-rig back to the spot. After half an hour to 45 minutes, it was away again, but this fish was a whole different beast, giving a good 10-15 minutes of powerful runs and holding her own – a really mean battle! But after a proper going over, finally the battle was won, and staring into my net, I couldn't quite believe it. I expected to see a long, powerful mid 20 common, but no – it was another big mirror, but different in appearance to the last. It was a big, dark wide-bodied fish with big, sloping head and droopy stomach and a few scales on either side – an utter dinosaur of a fish! It wasn't quite a new personal best, but



## DAVID WALLEN

another amazing river specimen of 36lb 14oz.

You can imagine the moment – sat alone and floating on the river with 67lb 2oz of river carp sat off the back of the boat – that’s what it’s all about!! It’s a memory I’m sure I will never forget. You just can’t beat the feeling of catching these epic river characters! They come in all shapes and sizes, every one with its own story and bit of history, and there’s always the chance of catching something you never expect! This is the reason I’ll be Thames carping for many more years to come. Roll on 2019 and getting stuck into some new ground!

Follow me on Instagram @rivercarplife for regular updates and content.

If you are out today, be lucky, and if you’re not, take it easy whatever you’re doing!







# **THE NEVER ENDING CAMPAIGN**

Thames carping is a campaign that seems to never end, and it goes from one extreme to another. The constant movement of fish up and down the river means that you have to make sure everything is perfect in your behalf, and even then you might not see a fish for weeks on end. It feels like a never ending rat race sometimes, but if you keep your head on the fish and go in search, watching different parts of the water and seeing where they are and when they seem to feed, you can start to get the most out of your fishing. I fish relatively short sessions but will find myself on the bank at least four to six times a week at the right times. I believe the key to success on the Thames is simply being on the fish if you can find them, then you have a chance in having them.

# MIKEY FROST



# ANGLERS: STAY SAFE FROM CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING



Carbon monoxide (CO) is a silent killer - It's invisible, odourless, and deadly.

## COMMON SOURCES AT THE BANK:

- Portable gas heaters
- BBQs and camping stoves
- Petrol generators
- Gas lanterns used inside bivvies or tents



## NEVER DO THIS:

- ✗ Use fuel-burning equipment inside your bivvy
- ✗ Sleep with a BBQ or heater still warm inside your shelter
- ✗ Block air vents or close yourself in tight spaces

## ALWAYS DO THIS:

- ✓ Use heaters and stoves outside, in open air
- ✓ Ensure your bivvy is well-ventilated
- ✓ Carry a portable CO alarm
- ✓ Learn the signs of CO poisoning

## KNOW THE SYMPTOMS:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Confusion
- Collapse or loss of consciousness

If you feel unwell, get into fresh air immediately and call 999.

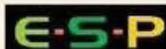
*"It won't happen to me..."* Too many anglers last thought.

## SUPPORTED BY:

AnglingTimes.co.uk



Parker Baits



# Big Carp Magazine!

*a history of excellence*



## AVAILABLE AS A DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

Yes, you can purchase Big Carp magazine as an App downloadable to your iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch, PC and Mac and read the only carp magazine worth reading anywhere you go...



Available on the  
App Store



Available on  
Android

 [pocketmags.com](http://pocketmags.com)

