

# MARCH ISSUES OF **BIG CARP** AND **FREE LINE** MAGAZINES FREE HERE

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**Back On The Roundabout At The Park Part 2**

**by Nathan 'Snowy' Sharp**

**The Maze Part 1 by Mark and Emma Rose**

**Colebrook Fishery Session Part 1 by Tristan Cooper**

**Chasing Willows Lumps by Adrian Palmer**

**On Aldenham Country Park by Lee Nobbs**

**Monks Pit Peach by Robert Crowson**



**The Incarcerated Carper by Marc Lyons**

**Unexpected Brace by Andy Loble**

**Chronicle Le Queroy**

**A Carper's Path... Returning to Source by Dave Little**

**Upper River Yare Carping by Dave Peacock**

**Chronicle Fishing Fryerning**

**River Waveney by David Lockwood**

**A Season on The Thames by Graham Stevens**

**The Great Ouse: Still Addicted by Joe Gacon**

**The Mighty Trent by Lee Brooks**

**River Carp Fishing on the Somerset Levels by Joseph Baldwin**

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# BIG CARP

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3	SOLAR
4	RIDGEMONKEY
5	FOX
6	KORDA
7	GEMINI
8	NGT
9	TERMINAL TACKLE UK
10	CARP ONLINE

### Top 10 Day Ticket Carp Fisheries

1	COTTINGTON
2	LINEAR
3	CHRISTCHUCH
4	OAK LAKES FISHERY
5	BLUEBELL LAKES
6	CATCH 22
7	SANDHURST
8	ANGLERS PARADISE
9	ELPHICKS
10	BURY HILL

### Top 10 Carp Tackle Companies

1	ROD HUTCHINSON
2	DIAWA
3	REUBEN HEATON
4	SHIMANO
5	FREE SPIRIT
6	NORMARK
7	FOX
8	TRAKKER
9	CARP SPIRIT
10	OKUMA

### Top 10 French Holiday Destinations

1	IKTUS
2	CRETE LAKES
3	VAUMIGNY
4	MAUREPAIRE
5	LAKE HERITAGE
6	ABBAY
7	BILLS LAKE
8	DREAM LAKES
9	LAKE BOSSARD
10	JONCHERY

### Top 10 Carp Shops

1	POINDESTRES
2	JOHNSON ROSS
3	YATELEY ANGLING CENTRE
4	THE TACKLE BOX
5	ANGLING DIRECT NORWICH
6	ANGLING DIRECT SIMPSONS
7	TACKLE UP
8	ANGLING DIRECT CHELMSFORD
9	FISHING REPUBLIC
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1	DYNAMITE
2	STICKY
3	MAINLINE
4	TARGET
6	NUTRABAITS
5	CC MOORE
7	NASH
8	BAIT TECH
9	URBAN
10	DAVE MALLIN

### Top 10 Iconic Carp Waters

1	REDMIRE
2	SAVAY
3	YATELEY
4	WRAYSBURY
5	FOX POOL
6	HORSESHOE
7	CASSIEN
8	LINCH HILL
9	ROACH PIT
10	JOHNSONS RAILWAY



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**BC**  
ISSUE 308

**SPRING  
EQUINOX  
ISSUE**

**Robert Crowson  
– Monks Pit Peach**

**Nathan 'Snowy'  
Sharp – More  
Park Life**



**Mark and Emma Rose – The Maze  
Adrian Palmer – Chasing Willows' Lumps  
Tristan Cooper – Colebrook Fishery Session  
Lee Nobbs – Aldenham Country Park Reservoir**

*Competitions*



**Still the proper carp angler's favourite read**

# PREPARE TO BE SURPRISED



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## Spring Equinox Issue

My my, doesn't time fly? It only seems like yesterday that I was putting together last year's Spring Equinox Issue. I remember thinking to myself how pleased I was that spring was coming, the clocks were going forward and those warm spring days were only just around the corner.

I'm not a winter person since I have gotten older. Season Adjustment Disorder, or SAD I think they call it. Give me the spring anytime, it's my favourite season. A season of 'hope' for the coming year.

Not that we can complain about February, what a month! Both weather and captures wise. I saw a comment on Facebook that made me smile – 'February the new May'. Not far from the truth.

The captures have been off the scales. Multiple captures, and not just one or two, loads! I saw someone at Bluebell with a 42 fish haul and several similar catches from Linear. Never in all my days have I seen February captures like these? Even the two big storms towards the end of the month did not stop them.

So, what have we got to entertain you this month? Well the cover story is from Robert Crowson with the colossal Monks Pit Peach. Christ, these fish are getting big and what a cracker!

Next up, Nathan 'Snowy' Sharp is back with More Park Life – part 2 of his very successful campaign – Back on the Roundabout at the Park. Some great carp and a sprinkling of humour thrown in for good measure. I love it!

A couple of part ones too this month. Mark and Emma Rose begin their tales of The Maze and likewise, Tristan Cooper fishes his first Colebrook Fishery Session.

Park two of these two articles will be in two issues time as next month we have an Old School Special! Not to be missed I assure you as I have some FANTASTIC, all original pieces from Keith Jenkins, Milkey and many more.

Lee Nobbs's 20-page Aldenham Country Park Reservoir article finishes this month's issue off in style, some very nice carp indeed.

Add to these loads of carpy humour, all the latest tackle reviews and carpy news and competitions.

I hope you have been enjoying our two free monthly carp magazines, Big Carp and Free Line, see them both here - [www.freelinemagazine.com](http://www.freelinemagazine.com).

Now I need your help. – Filling two magazines each month means I need twice as many articles, some people say they want to write, but never do. If you have had a successful start back after lockdown, we would love to hear your tale. There are no picture or word limits. Simply Email your article to [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk).

If you would like to join our FREE subscription list to be sent the mags as soon as they come out – email 'FREE SUBBY' to [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk).

WITHOUT YOUR INPUT THERE WILL BE NO MAGS!

Have a great spring friends, catch a monster and send us the story. Be part of the UK's fantastic carp angling history!

*Rob Maylin*

PS We are doing some great ADVERTISING deals to help everyone through the pandemic, drop me a line at [info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk](mailto:info@bigcarpmagazine.co.uk) if you would like to see the deals and our media information pack.

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**Front Cover**  
Robert Crowson.



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# ESSEX CARP SHOW

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# ShockLeader

What's happening, where and when in the carp scene

## Angling Trust's volunteer bailiffs raise £1,081 for Get Hooked On Fishing

The Angling Trust's Voluntary Bailiff Service has raised over £1,000 for Get Hooked On Fishing, an angling charity which supports young people to improve their lives and wellbeing by introducing them to fishing.

A cheque for £1,081 was presented to the charity's CEO Sarah Collins and trustee Keith Arthur at GHOF's headquarters in Northolt, West London, by Nino Brancato, the Trust's Fisheries Enforcement Support Service Manager, and Dave Wilkins, Regional Enforcement Support Manager for the South East region.

The money was raised from the sale of VBS pin badges. The VBS is part of the Fisheries Enforcement Support Service and is funded by the Environment Agency through the National Angling Strategic Services contract.

Dave Wilkins said: "The VBS does a great service to angling enforcement working in partnership with the Environment Agency and Police, so it is fantastic that we can help to put something back into the sport by rais-



ing money for Get Hooked On Fishing. The GHOF team do a brilliant job to get people of all ages and backgrounds started in fishing." Nino Brancato said: "I was very proud to present the funds raised by the VBS to Sarah Collins, the CEO of GHOF." Sarah Collins said: "We are delighted by this very kind and generous donation raised by those associated with the Angling Trust's FESS and VBS. This will help us to support even more

people across the country to access the benefits of going fishing and being in 'blue-green' environments. Thank you."

Notes: You need a valid Environment Agency Fishing Licence if you are aged 13 or over and fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England (except the River Tweed), Wales, and the Border Esk and its tributaries in Scotland. Licences cost £30 for up to two rods to fish for coarse & trout, £82 for salmon & sea trout.

Licences for 13 to 16 year olds are free but you still need to get a junior licence. Concessions, short term and three rod coarse licences are also available. Anyone witnessing an illegal fishing incident in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. The Fisheries Enforcement Support Service is funded by income from fishing licence sales as part of the Angling Trust's National Angling Strategic Services contract with the Environment Agency.

More information about the Fisheries Enforcement Support Service Get Hooked On Fishing are an angling charity which helps provide positive opportunities for young people and communities through fun and interactive training around the sport of angling. Their work is designed with the help of young people to give the participants more confidence and to demonstrate that there are alternative pathways and better opportunities available to them. Find out more: Nino Brancato, Angling Trust Regional Enforcement Support Manager

Tel: 07971 677638 Email: Inino.brancato@anglingtrust.net Image: Nino Brancato presents the cheque for £1,081 to Sarah Collins watched by Keith Arthur (left) and Dave Wilkins. ■



## Government Water Statement must overhaul 'creaking and leaking' sewage infrastructure

The Government's Strategic Policy Statement (SPS) for water, laid before Parliament today (February 2nd), urges water companies to do more to protect the environment.

But the Angling Trust has expressed concern that the guidance given to the water regulator OFWAT could fall well short of what will be needed to end the scandal of untreated sewage polluting the nation's rivers. The SPS claims to want to see "protecting the environment" placed at the heart of OFWAT's strategic priorities and "urges" water companies "to do more."

"However, it fails to signal the need for the step change required in investment in outdated waste water infrastructure which has resulted in record levels of discharges in untreated sewage from facilities that can no longer meet demand. (400,000 times in 2020 - up from 293,000 in 2019). Simply urging water companies to tackle pollution isn't enough and leaves them far too much room for manoeuvre.

The Angling Trust believes the Government should be demanding that water companies do more to protect the environment and this should become the number one priority for OFWAT over the next five years.

These were the conclusion of the Angling Trust, who along with Salmon & Trout Conservation, set out what was needed in a major report, Time to Fix the Broken Water Sector.

Martin Salter, Head of Policy at the Angling Trust, said: "We were hoping for more than warm words in this water policy statement and a bit of restating the pollution monitoring provisions that are already in the Environment Act.

This is the Government's opportunity not just to will the end of pollution but to actually deliver the means by getting OFWAT to allow much needed investment to flow into England's creaking and leaking waste water infrastructure.

"As our studies have shown, the absurdly low replacement rate of sewerage pipelines is resulting in more discharge of untreated sewage into rivers and coastal areas.

Hardly surprising when pipes, designed for 50 to 100 years of service, are expected to last for 2,000 years.



"He added: "Defra have themselves admitted that water industry investment has not kept pace with the increase in demand and the impacts of climate change.

They said last January that 'climate change has led to increased rainfall and water infrastructure has not kept pace with development growth over decades'. This SPS is a once in a five year opportunity to instruct the industry to put that right.

"Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust, said: "If, as Minister Pow has stated, 'water quality is an absolute priority' then we're going to need radical and rapid change in the management and governance of our water sector.

The Government are, at last, beginning to see the connections between sewage pollution, the alarming consequences of agriculture pollution and run-off, the need for sustainable water abstraction, and the need to protect precious and unique habitats, like our chalk streams. This SPS is a chance to drive all these issues forward. It remains to be seen if it is strong enough to do so.

Notes:Key Points from Time to Fix the Broken Water Sector:Failure of OFWAT to take environmental issues seriously in the past. A £10 billion investment funding gap over the last 10 years. The declining condition of rivers and streams due to 400,000 extra sewage spills last year.

England has only one site on a river seeking to achieve 'bathing water status' compared to 32 in Germany,

76 in Poland and 420 in France.

The absurd expectation of a 2,000-year lifetime for sewage pipes and other infrastructure.

Failure to build any new reservoirs in the southeast despite a 3 million population increase and huge projected growth in house building.

That lack of investment in water supply has seen excessive groundwater abstraction drying up some chalk streams altogether and damaging many other rivers. The impossibility of delivering commitments in the Government's own 25 Year Environment Plan and our legal obligation under the Water Framework Directive.

Failure of both the Government and OFWAT to pay any heed to the promises in the 2011 water white paper or indeed the warnings from the National Infrastructure Commission and the National Audit Office about the pressing need for investment in water and sewerage systems to address the challenges of climate change and population growth.

The prospect of severe drought events causing parts of southern England to run out of water within 20 years. That the consequences of failing to invest in water infrastructure will cost more in the long term – £40 billion versus £21 billion and thousands of jobs.

Time to Fix the Broken Water Sector report Defra blog highlighting infrastructure problems More information: Martin Salter, Angling Trust Head of Policy Tel: 07976 946033. Stuart Singleton-White, Angling Trust Head of Campaigns Tel: 07487 526913. ■

## Anglers 'heartbroken' as stretch of River Tone stripped of trees



© Provided by The Guardian Photograph: Dominic Garnett/PA



© Provided by The Guardian River Tone before removal of trees. Photograph: Dominic Garnett/PA

Anglers are “heartbroken” after a 250-metre stretch of the River Tone in Somerset was stripped of trees by the Environment Agency as part of flood management measures.

The semi-wild section of river running through Taunton was a popular spot for anglers and wildlife-lovers, where kingfishers were often spotted. However, the majority of trees were felled last week, leaving the banks of the river as bare earth.

Dominic Garnett, 42, an angling guide and coach, has fished the stretch of the river for the past 20 years and has been visiting it since childhood. “It was a semi-wild stretch of river and they have channelised it,” he told PA. “It is absolutely heart breaking to see the destruction of the places you love – you go there to be with nature and to get away and it’s all just been ripped away.”

The length of the river ran through marshland until the 1990s, when the surrounding land was tarmacked to

make way for housing and a leisure and shopping complex.

Garnett said the area is now prone to flooding. While woodland planting is often used as a flood mitigation strategy, Garnett said representatives of the Environment Agency had told him the trees were felled “because they make the water back up”. “It is like they have taken an old hippie and given him a buzz cut – it is scorched earth tactics.” He pointed out that huge swathes of trees had been cleared only weeks away from nesting season, with river plants dredged out when some species of fish are starting to spawn. “It makes them vulnerable to predators – fish need places to hide,” he said.

Mark Barrow, a film-maker who has specialised in productions about freshwater species in the UK’s rivers and lakes for the past 20 years, tweeted that he was “shocked” to discover the scene on the River Tone. “Complete devastation, courtesy of

the Environment Agency. Scorched earth work the Russian army would be proud of! Those stumps were decades old trees where I used to watch the local kingfisher. Everything is now disappearing.”

A spokeswoman for the Environment Agency said: “Essential work to manage flood risk and protect properties in Bathpool and the upstream town of Taunton is ongoing.

“We always work to minimise any impact to the environment when carrying out work and have measures in place to compensate, such as new tree planting. Flooding and coastal erosion can have terrible consequences for people, businesses and the environment.

It is understood the trees at water level were deemed to be creating a flood risk by catching debris and restricting the flow of water. The area is due to be sown with a wild flower seed mix and replanted with native trees. ■



Gallery: Otherworldly photos of the deep sea (Espresso)



© Provided by The Guardian Dominic Garnett says the trees were cleared weeks before the nesting season. Photograph: Dominic Garnett/PA

## The Carp Society is proud to announce the purchase of Ashmead Fishery on the Somerset Levels!



In the five years since our difficult legal battle we have issued a number of important statements. The most significant probably the announcement that we had regained control of the Carp Society. The most difficult, that we had failed in our bid to purchase and maintain control of Langholme Lake in Lincolnshire.

Today, the Carp Society can proudly announce the purchase of the renowned Ashmead Fishery on the Somerset Levels from Mark and Shona Walsingham.

Negotiations have gone on for a while now, with both parties keen to maintain a dignified silence until the deal was completed, which we have successfully achieved. Our dealings with Mark, and his agents at Fenn Wright have been both fair and open, and we are delighted they are now concluded to everyone's satisfaction. The Carp Society can confirm that we will honour the existing bookings made for 2022, (subject to Carp Society membership, to confirm the booking).

We wish to take time to review how we manage the lake in the future, but those who love and regularly fish the lake should not fear that it will change dramatically in character under our management.

We would ask that members accept this statement in the manner that it is offered and wait for further announcements about the future, without contacting our office for information, which will not be forthcoming until we have finalised any arrangements we wish to make. We will contact those with existing bookings for 2022 in due course.

Mark has agreed to write about Ashmead in future editions of our Carp Fisher magazine, which will help



our members get to know the background to this historic fishery, and he will also be interviewed by Miles for Carp Radio in the near future.

The Carp Society, Horseshoe Lake (thank you Mike Kavanagh), Farriers, Little Farriers (Brian Sefton) and now

Ashmead, sounds like good news for our members!

Derek Stritton on behalf of the Society Directors.

Enquiries please contact us 01367 253959 or email [sales@thecarpsociety.com](mailto:sales@thecarpsociety.com). ■

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# NEWS

## 'Trial run' dates following Aire & Calder barge suspension



Following the Canal & River Trust's decision on January 18th to order the suspension of the commercial barge responsible for significant fish deaths on the Aire & Calder Navigation at Knottingley, the Angling Trust has been notified of the dates of a series of trial runs being organised as part of further investigations.

During the trial runs, the barge will operate at progressively lighter loadings so that the Canal & River Trust fisheries officers and colleagues can assess the situation.

These will take place as follows:

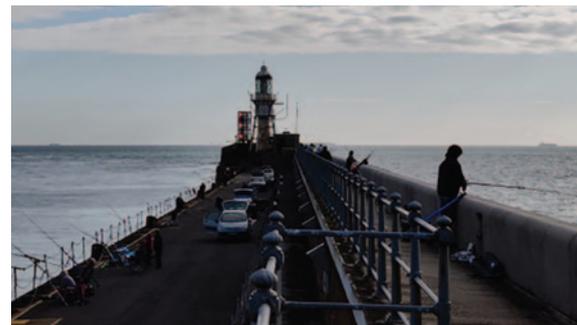
Feb 3: 6ft 7in (1.98m) – loaded (return following day unobserved)

Feb 10: 6ft 2in (1.88m) – loaded

Feb 11: 5ft 6in (1.68m) – this return trip to be observed

Feb 17: 5ft 11in (1.8m) – loaded (return following day unobserved)

## Campaign success as fishing returns to Admiralty Pier



The Angling Trust and Dover Sea Angling Association have secured the reopening of the Admiralty Pier for fishing, which had been closed because of Covid restrictions and then security concerns. The Association and the Trust are working closely with the Dover Harbour Board to see its return in early 2022.

## Get Fishing Fund now open for applications



Building on the successful launch of the Get Fishing Fund in December 2020, the Environment Agency and the Angling Trust have announced an additional £100,000 investment to encourage more people to give fishing a go for the first time in 2022.

Funded from fishing licence sales, grants of up to £2,500 are available to benefit angling-based projects. The funding can be used to help purchase equipment, fishing tackle and resources to run fishing events and activities to give people the opportunity to get into fishing. The deadline for applications is Friday, 18th March.



## Angling Trust and Fish Legal NEWS

### Tribute to angling coach Pat Byrne



The Angling Trust was saddened to hear the news that angling coach Pat Byrne had passed away. Through his Wellingborough & District Nene Angling Club, Pat introduced hundreds of youngsters to fishing and was instrumental in growing the club's junior membership. He will be sadly missed by many.

### Not a Fish Legal member? Find out more...

If your club is not a member of Fish Legal and would like more information on how Fish Legal can benefit your club, contact Nick Simmonds, Membership Manager on:

01568 620447

or [nick.simmonds@anglingtrust.net](mailto:nick.simmonds@anglingtrust.net)

### FISH LEGAL UPDATE: Maidstone Draft Local Plan



Fish Legal has objected to the Maidstone Draft Local Plan on behalf of member clubs and fisheries because of the inappropriate earmarking of rural land next to the ancient village of Lenham in Kent for 5,000 new homes as part of the Heathlands Garden Settlement. Fish Legal says that the Plan does not properly consider the environmental impact, especially on fish and protected species, and habitats in the River Stour downstream of the site.

Fish Legal has written to Maidstone Borough Council expressing the concerns of its members - Ford Mill Fishery, Upper Stour Syndicate, Stour Fishery Association, Tonford Fishing Club and Canterbury and District Angling Association.

### HERE TO HELP: Building Bridges Project team

The Building Bridges Project has been running for 10 years and has made huge progress towards the successful integration of migrant angling communities in England – providing positive education and advice to help anglers understand our angling laws and customs.

At 'grass roots' level, the Building Bridges team assist and support angling clubs and fisheries by translating their rules into different languages and offering free multi-lingual signage and leaflets. The team also work with clubs and fisheries to host angling events that bring together anglers from different countries and cultures, in addition to organising school visits and coaching days – giving many youngsters from diverse backgrounds an introduction to fishing in the UK.

If your club, fishery or angling organisation requires support from the Building Bridges team, please contact Project Manager Janusz Kansik on 07495 433615 or email [janusz.kansik@anglingtrust.net](mailto:janusz.kansik@anglingtrust.net)



# Angling Trust and Fish Legal NEWS

## How we can help with predation issues

Otter fences are one of the most costly projects a club could undertake, making it vital they function as intended. Even with regular maintenance, damage and weak points can often be overlooked, resulting in the potential for otters to enter a fenced fishery and threaten valuable stock. In this video, Richard Bamforth, one of two Fisheries Management Advisors at the Angling Trust, explains how we can help clubs and fisheries with predation issues and features the project undertaken by Leeds & District Amalgamated Society of Anglers at its Kippax Park Fishery. They received support from the Angling Improvement Fund which uses Environment Agency fishing licence money to benefit freshwater angling in England.

## Members discounts: Get 10% off CC Moore baits!



CC Moore are one of the biggest names in bait. With decades of experience, the brand has become synonymous with quality with established products such as Live System, Odyssey XXX and Northern Specials catching huge number of carp time and time again. Angling Trust members can claim discounts on a range of tackle, bait and other products - including 10% off all CC Moore baits!

## Leigh Leavesley: Catch Report Yateley Pads Lake



First ever trip to yateley pads lake this week resulted in a 42lbs 4oz mirror 34lbs 3oz mirror 32lbs mirror and 17lbs 8oz mirror link to my YouTube video of the session below and some pictures. Thanks Leigh

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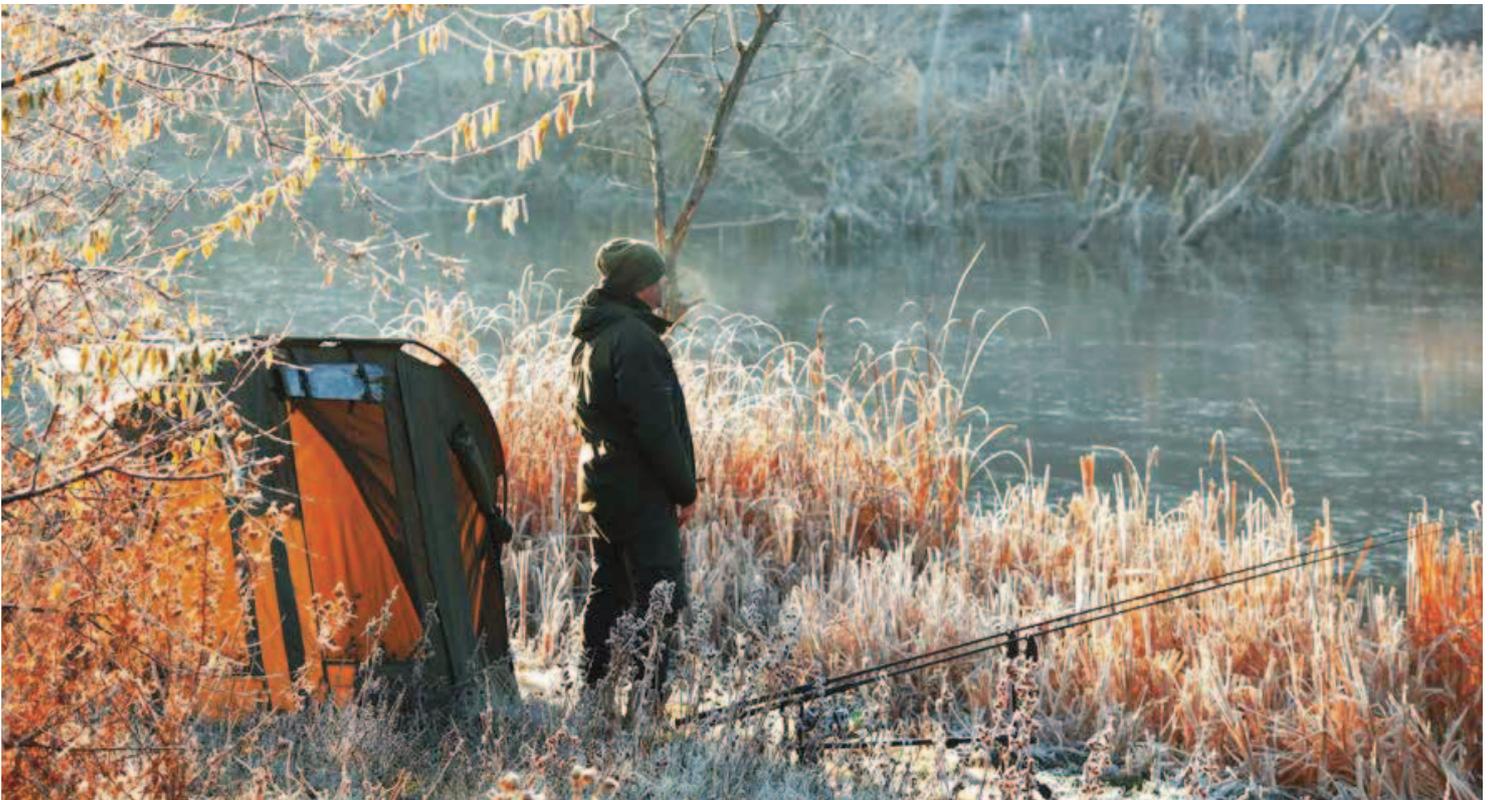
**starmertd.com**





# ANLRS NEWSLETTER

FEB 2022



## HAPPY NEW YEAR

### HERE'S TO 2022

Well it's the start of a new year and all of us at the ANLRS hope you all had a great Christmas and 2022 has started well. The year that we have just waved goodbye to, proved to be a great one for the ANLRS with over 11 million meters of line and around 12000 empty spools returned for recycling, the launch of the Recover, Research, Reduce and Recycle project along with the continued sign up of shops and fisheries to expand the availability of line recycling bins around the UK to over 600.



## COMPLETING THE CIRCLE

During the early stages of the scheme seeing an angling related end product made from the line, redundant spools and, more recently, the commercial net debris collected from the coastal bins was a real target. Very quickly Steve Carrie at ReFactory (formerly Reworked) produced the rod stands and racks for us but the desire for something pretty much ever angler can use long term was the goal.

Many of you may not be aware but Steve also owns DNA Baits, who are one of the country's leading boilie manufacturers alongside ReFactory. Due to his amazing drive to make things happen this has now become a reality and the first polarised fishing glasses made from fishing line and commercial nets in the UK will be available in the coming weeks.

Steve teamed up with Waterhaul, a west country-based business, which have a proven record in producing great products from commercial fishing nets to produce these that will be available via the DNA website. Incorporating quality polarised lenses these will be a great addition to any anglers armoury and the team here at the ANLRS will be getting a couple of pairs for sure! They even have "supporting the ANLRS" embossed on the inside arms of the frames.

For every pair sold, DNA will be making a contribution to the ANLRS funding pot.

## Carpy Humour



## Carpy Humour



## POLYPIPE PITCHES IN THEIR SUPPORT

Back in the Autumn of last year a keen angler Adrian Bristow, who happens to be Technical Director of Polypipe Building Products, got in contact to offer the companies support to the scheme. As one of the largest plastic piping solutions manufacturers in the UK they felt that they could offer some practical support to the scheme and help keep the nations waterways and coastlines free from lost or discarded fishing lines. In a fantastic gesture a team of volunteers from the staff there gave up a weekend to create more than 100 plastic pipe bins from Polypipe stock and donated these to the scheme. Not only did they construct the pipe bins they also painstakingly applied the multiple stickers to the bins, so they are ready to be sent out to fisheries and coastal locations.

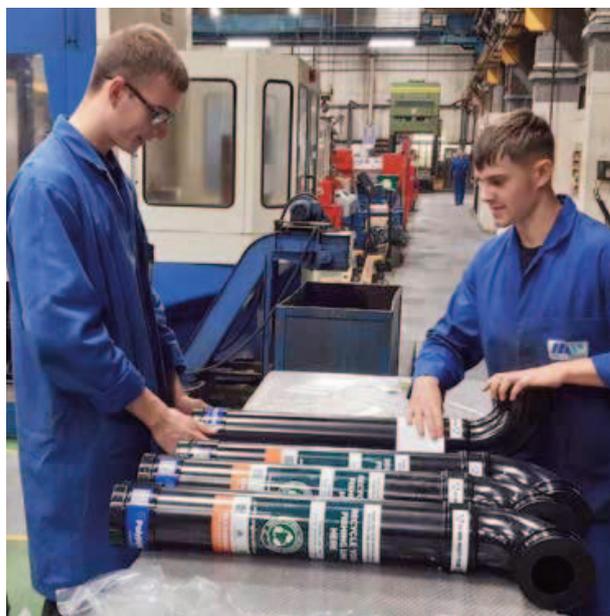
Adrian said “We were very happy to be able to offer some practical help for this worthy cause. At Polypipe we are committed to attaining the very highest standards of sustainability and environmental protection and this donation is a small part of our efforts in the coming year.”

These 110mm diameter bins are now available, at an amazing price cheaper than the parts can be purchased for, via the ANLRS online shop and every single penny from their sale will create funds to allow us to spread the word further, expand projects and assist in developing products from the recycled plastics we collect.

The bins are being offered at the following amazing prices, excluding P&P, and we are offering deals on bundles that would suit fisheries that want to spread them around the site or have multiple car parking areas. Each bin comes supplied with installation instructions and two pipe clip mounts to they can be fixed to wooden posts, fences or brick walls.

1 Bin £25,00  
2 Bins £45.00  
4 Bins £80.00

A massive thanks to Polypipe for their support and amazing donation. Lets hope that these fly out the door over the coming months, fill with line quickly and that we can see it all being recycled into something useful.





Adam Satchell with a nice fish from Sandhurst called The Armadillo.



Great result, got my winter ticket for Coking Farm, been fishing Oak Lake and caught my PB on the 3rd of January at 42lb 6oz called 'BIGGIE' and then caught him again 27th January. #CCMOORE #KORDAGOOSHERBERT. I Only did a 24 hour it's a very busy day ticket water, I used IQ rig (homemade) and yellow NS1 wafers soaked in Sherbert Goo. Only there for few hours had a double take but lost the first before catching my 42. Also caught a nice fish from Sandhurst called 'The Armadillo' recently.

Adam Satchell.



Getting to my local water just before light and setting up in the deeper area of the lake. A few hours passed without a bite. So, I couldn't sit behind still rods. After getting everything on the barrow I had a wander around the lake. I opted for a shallower and snaggy area. I put in a couple of handfuls of triple M mix from CarpParticlesUK and A small PVA mesh ball of pellets. A Crushed Nutz and Wicked White boilie with a pear drops pop up on a Ronnie Rig managed to trip up this beautiful 20lb 4oz common. Which is also my 1st ever winter 20.

Peter Conn.



After a few weeks off from fishing, I decided it was time to get back down to my syndicate lake. After spending two days in one swim not seeing any carp, I was thinking luck was not on my side this trip so I lapped the lake trying to find some fish. After finding some fish I got all set up and the following day this absolute beauty of a mirror carp graced my net. 35lb 2oz – caught over a bed of C4 boilies, with a Ronnie Rig and Milk One pop-up over the top.

Steve Parker



**Winter Common for Timothy Thornton**  
First session out in 2022. Fishing to a spot I had a few fish off in Autumn using a DNA baits 18mm Bug corker wafter over a bed of 18mm Bug shelf life. 29lb 12oz common in all its winter colours. Taken from a Devon reservoir in Feb.

## Peter Conn – Calm before the storm



A good couple of days. Glugged RNT and wicked whites and Nutz from Mad baits. With some boosted pellets from carp particles UK. Pear drops pop up on a Ronnie rig. Fishing in the shallower area of the lake tight to some snags. Managed to trip a few of the local residents up. Biggest going 20lb 2oz.  
Peter Conn @Carper\_and\_son

## Dynamite Baits – Tony Kingdon and Alfie Nicholls



Tony Kingdon's first trip of 2022 was a 48 hour session on St Johns where he managed six fish from 21lb to 29lb. All fish falling to a mix of whole and chopped monster tigernut boilies, hemp, corn with a good helping of CSL and baileys lol opti-mex fluoro combi rigs with size 4 razor point wide gape hooks accounting for all the fish with custom pink hook baits. These two are 26 and 29



21-23lb.



30lb 10oz for Alfie Nicholls caught on a zig with a size 10 razor point chod hook and 12lb zig master hook link from St Johns.

# Oak Lakes Fisheries

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



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



Danny Lloyd.

Alun Roberts.

Jonathon Cooper.



Joe Cowell.

Curt Adams.

Rikki White.



Rikki White.

Robert Dorward.

Vince Scardarella.



## Lake Prices

**Day ticket lake - Oak Lake** - £10 a day and £20 for 24 hours.  
**Predator Lake** - Prices are the same as the day ticket lake for pike during the winter - £20 a day and £30 for 24 hours for catfish in the summer.  
**Match Lake** - £6 for one rod and £10 for two rods.

Our monthly reviews on products currently on the market

**In this issue:**

- Nite Watches
- Geoff Anderson
- Geoff Anderson
- Snugpac
- Geoff Anderson
- Geoff Anderson

## JUST ADDED

White Dial Alpha Models



### OUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC DIVE WATCH

**T100 TRITIUM ILLUMINATION:** Tell the time, all the time.

**300M WATER RESISTANT:** Discover the darkest depths.

**10-YEAR BATTERY LIFE:** A decade of adventure.

**CERAMIC BEZEL INSERT:** The very best available.

**SAPPHIRE CRYSTAL FACE:** Ultra-scratch resistant.

**SWISS-MADE MOVEMENT:** Accuracy and reliability, always.

## Barbarus Asimi Jacket Asimi – then it's over freezing

Asimi is warm, versatile, waterproof and breathable with an exquisite soft insulation that provides you with great heat preservation. Barbarus can be considered a worthy member of our family consisting of premium waterproof and breathable garments.

Generous length and insulation give maximum weather protection. Insulated, waterproof with a design fine-tuned for the cold and wet landscape. Warm, versatile, waterproof and breathable with an exquisite soft insulation that provides you with great heat preservation.

After 5 years on the market, we can truly say that Barbarus has grown up to become a versatile, waterproof and breathable garment.

Status after 5 years: Barbarus passed the test with a complaint rate of less than 0.5 %. Regardless of the water column pressure, the choice of



materials and construction has proven that nothing works better in real life than Barbarus. Our aimed goal with Barbarus 2 is to combine the "stone-safe" waterproof and breathable construction with a more contemporary and functional design. Thus, Barbarus can be considered a worthy member of our family consisting of premium waterproof and breathable garments.

Generous length and insulation give maximum weather protection.

### Insulation:

Man-made 100% polyester insulation. Nicknamed imitation silk cotton. A thicker continuous filament that is lofty, strong and durable.

Warms and stretches, and combined with the shell and lining, supplies outstanding unprecedented air permeability, allowing excess heat to move away from the body.

The filling stay in place so you do not get cold spots.

Our synthetic fill is quick-drying and insulates even if wet (something down struggles to do)

Filling details:

Body - 100gm

Sleeve: 80gm

### Pockets:

Two hidden vertical front pockets placed at chest height.

Carefully tuned depth and seam taped for water protection.

The pocket design protect the fish from free-lipped zippers when the fish is held against the jacket during e.g photographing.

Two hidden incline pockets with zippers. Seam taped for water protection.

Zipped Inner pocket

All smart, secure and easy accessible.

### Zippers:

YKK® Aluminum alloy zipper takes

advantage of the "lightweight" of aluminum, but they are susceptible to moisture, temperature, humidity, friction, acid, alkaline, etc. Fabrics:

Shell: Barbarus is made from an innovative material providing excellent protection from the elements. A durable and tough polyamid face fabric with superior waterproofing, breathability and heat reflective capabilities.

The fabric allows excess heat and moisture to evaporate without compromising waterproofing, leaving you dry and comfortable throughout the day.

Water column : 10.000 mm. (iso0811) – or as we promise:

Guaranteed waterproof

Lining: Soft micro fleece.

### Functionalities:

- 100% wind and waterproof
- Breathable
- Hidden Zips
- Insulated





- YKK® alloy zippers
- Durable
- Taped seams
- Waist adjustment
- Strong pocket lining
- Watertight pocket design
- Zipped inner pocket
- Spacious vertical chest pockets
- Zipped incline pockets
- Hypalon cuff straps with Velcro®
- Hypalon patch for attaching accessories
- Generous length - extra weather protection.
- Øko-tex certified fittings
- Designed in Denmark

**Featuring:**

Hood with one hand adjustable drawcords. The elasticated adjust system allows you to personalize the fit to exactly your head even if you wear your favorite cap.

The insulated hood extends warmth and protection.

The new wrist/cuff closure includes our latest Hypalon closure with molded and patented Velcro®

The fit has been adjusted to give you an even better experience when using it actively.

**Colors and sizes:**

Grey.  
Small to XXXL -as well as a "JX" which is around 4 sizes above XXXL

**Environment:**

Barbarus is known for its strong and long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive most other pants. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limiting the climate impact.

Individual parts are eco-tex certified.

**Who is Geoff Anderson?**

Geoff Anderson is a small danish company that exclusively designs and produces clothing for anglers - especially for the harsh weather in northern Europe.

In the production, special consideration to the environment is taken and all products are certainly free of toxins. Durability and water proofness has always been keywords in the production. Today, the clothing are only produced under its own name, but for many years Geoff Anderson has produced clothes for a number of other brands: Vision, Rapala, G. Loomis, Shimano, Zpey, Sierra, Hardy and Greys – the last two in more than ten years.

Geoff Anderson are also in the process of establishing itself in a number of other countries. If you would like to learn more about Geoff Anderson or countries in which we are looking for new dealers, you're of course welcome to contact us. More information [Malthe Ryge Petersenmrp@geoffanderson.dk](mailto:Malthe.Ryge.Petersenmrp@geoffanderson.dk)+45 71 991 859. ■

## Zesto - then it's over freezing

Zesto is specifically designed for demanding outdoor activities in changeable weather. Also ideal as a low friction insulating layer under your fishing jacket.

There is an exceptionally nice comfort even when the jacket gets wet as it does not lose its insulating ability. The jacket is designed to effectively balance heat-versus-weight. Zesto will provide you with great heat preservation.

Who is Geoff Anderson? Geoff Anderson is a small danish company that exclusively designs and produces clothing for anglers – especially for the harsh weather in northern Europe. In the production, special consideration to the environment is taken and all products are certainly

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## Sleeping Essentials from Snugpak



Apart from a warm comfortable Snugpak sleeping bag, you'll perhaps need one or more of these useful sleep essential accessories to compliment your camping kit. Snugpak has a great range of Bivvi bags, sleep mats, liners and pillows to enhance your camping experience in the Great Outdoors!

### Bivvi Bags

When planning a lightweight trip in the wilderness without the bulk of carrying a tent, a Bivvi Bag is an alternative which can supply adequate protection from the elements. Snugpak's range includes a range of lightweight Bivvi Bags which can be used for wild camping in the summer or used in conjunction with a sleeping system and air mat for venturing out all year round.

**The Snugpak Stratosphere** (SRP £178) is an easily pitched, classic bivvi shelter with a self-supporting canopy, which allows increased breathability and movement while giving protection from the elements. It features a No-See-Um Mesh Mosquito Net, which can be rolled away when not in use, and a 3/4 length side zip for easy access. There is also a mesh covered vent behind the head area for improved air circulation.

Its lightweight, single skin design is waterproof, breathable and made from a PU coated flysheet with 5000mm hydrostatic head, taped



seams, aluminium poles and an 8000mm waterproof PU coated bathtub style groundsheet. When packed into its compression sack it weighs only 1.1kg/2.2lbs (including tent stakes) and is ideal to use when both weight and pack size are essential.

**Snugpak's Bivvi Bag** (SRP £76 - £80) is both waterproof and windproof and the Paratex Dry technical fabric allows trapped moisture to escape from the microclimate, keeping you warm, dry and comfortable. Easily packed away, it can form an essential part of your outdoor kit, with or without a sleeping bag, and is ideal

for minimalist camping, bushcraft and emergency survival.

**Special Forces Bivvi Bag** (£86 - £90) is the ideal choice for adventure racers, bushcraft and emergency survival. The non-locking 1/2 length front zip allows a quick exit when you have to move fast and when every second counts. With a small volume and exceptional lightweight properties, it can easily be packed away into a race pack.

Used as the bare minimum for lightweight summer races, or used in conjunction with an Adventure Race Sleeping System for harbour areas and longer excursions, all year round, the SF Bivvi Bag can also provide extra protection from the elements in an emergency situation.

**Snugpak Bivvi Bags** are available in Standard and Extra Large Sizes, which can be used with 4 Season or Expedition (Polar) based sleeping bags as well as the Snugpak AR Sleeping System.

### Sleeping Bag Liners

As seasons change you'll need extra warmth from your sleeping bag on overnight camping trips. Snugpak's insulating sleeping bag liner with full length zip can instantly add over a season to your sleeping bag and the lush fleece will create luxurious comfort and warmth for occasional colder nights without the need to invest in a new bag.

The breathable and moisture wicking **Fleece Liner** (SRP £38) is supplied with its own compression sack when not in use, it weighs only 1000g is available in Olive green and packs down to a handy space saving 25cm x



Snugpak's Bivvi Bag.



Special Forces Bivvi Bag.



**Thermalon Insulating Liner**

18cm pack size.

Adding the body-hugging **Thermalon Insulating Liner** (SRP £27) inside your sleeping bag will significantly improve its thermal qualities. It has an incredibly soft, wool-like finish for a little extra luxury and the clever construction of the fabric ensures that any moisture will be moved away from the body for a comfortable night's sleep. The Thermalon Liner is 165cm long but can be stretched to 210cm in length.

**Silk Mix Liner** (SRP £51) - Silk is a type of fabric that is naturally associated with luxury but not usually

warmth. In fact, silk is a very poor conductor of heat, and consequently will trap warmth within the sleeping bag, making it a very warm option with a touch of luxury. Silk also has another surprising quality that makes this liner a must when you're travelling in hotter climates. Its natural heat-managing characteristics keep the body at a comfortable temperature in both extremes of hot and cold.

For those who love the feel of poly cotton against the skin, the **Poly Cotton Liner** (SRP £18) is a camping favourite. The mummy shape fits inside any sleeping bag and it comes with its own stuff sack for simple and easy storage.

When you need a little extra warmth at night, you can add the **TS1 Insulating Liner** (SRP £42 - £53). The Thermal Suede is instantly warm to the touch and provides a noticeable thermal improvement to the sleeping bag. It also has an incredibly soft finish for a little extra luxury.

The clever construction of the fabric ensures that any moisture will be moved away from the body into the wicking core of the knitted fabric.

#### **Sleeping Mats**

To keep your tent protected from the ground and add another layer of insulation and support, a sleeping mat will make all the difference to your comfort at night. Snuggpak's Self-Inflating **Maxi Mat** (SRP £63) is a full length self-inflating mat with a valve system



**Maxi Mat.**



**Travelite Midi.**



**The Snuggly Headrest**

that allows you to adjust your desired fill and a handy stuff sack allows you to pack it down small when travelling.

For the seasoned camper or backpacker, the Travelite Full (SRP £85) is designed to provide extra comfort whilst minimising weight. The non-slip base ensures stability and to save space, when the sleeping mat is not in use it can be easily deflated and stored. Light, comfortable and compact, this mat is a convenient way to get a good night's sleep when travelling.

**Travelite Midi** (SRP £70) is a sleeping mat that is designed to provide extra comfort, so you wake up to feel well-rested and refreshed. This self-inflating, non-slip sleeping mat is designed to do just that, while keeping the weight of your kit down to a manageable level and to save space, when the sleeping mat is not in use it can be easily deflated and stored.

**The Snuggly Headrest** (SRP £8.00) is an extremely lightweight and compact pillow that stuffs into itself for simple storage yet provides excellent support for the head and neck. The pillow is made out of the same materials used to make the Softie sleeping bag range making this little pillow big on comfort and warmth!

**The Butterfly Neck Pillow** (SRP £24) is self-inflating and specially designed to make sure you have a comfortable night's sleep, equally supporting both sides of the head due to the 'butterfly' shape.

Simply remove the pillow from its stuff sack and it will inflate to a standard size. Air can then be added or removed through the blow-and-lock valve system to reach your preferred inflation and the soft touch 70D material adds a luxury feel to the pillow.

The full range of Snuggpak Sleeping Essentials can be found on the website at [www.snuggpak.com](http://www.snuggpak.com). ■



**The Butterfly Neck Pillow**

## Geoff Anderson Raptor6

After 20 years on the market and more than 35.000 Raptor-jackets sold we can promise you something unique. Historically, we have had a complaint rate of less than 0.5%. Regardless of the water column pressure, the choice of materials and construction has proven that nothing works better in real life than the way we have designed Raptor.

Raptor is known for its strong and long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive most other jackets. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limiting the climate impact.

Individual parts are eco-tex certified. With over 35.000 jackets sold we can promise you something very special!

After 20 years on the market and more than 35.000 jackets sold, we can promise you something unique. Historically, we have had a complaint rate of less than 0.5%. Regardless of the water column pressure, the choice of materials and construction has proven that nothing works better in real life than the way we have designed Raptor. It is not without reason that Raptor is named after a predatory dinosaur. A species that developed and perfected its skills, and ended at the top of the food chain as the ultimate hunter.

Similarly, the Raptor jacket's evolution has resulted in a perfection of its features. A jacket design where waterproofness, strength, and mobility are united in a crispness of simplicity. For this reason, the style has always attracted beginners as well as pro guides. In addition to you, we have more than 38,000 other anglers around Europe using the jacket. Ever since we introduced Raptor, we have had no reason to change the basic design. Over the years, all we have been doing is refining.

Since the first edition, we have achieved:

- Lower weight
- New functions



- Increased breathability
- Thinner membrane
- Improved tape technology

### Fabric:

100% water, windproof and breathable. A fusion material. The fabric is applied a substance (membrane) which works its way into and becomes an integral part of the material. This technique is by far the most durable for angling in fresh and salt-water.

To protect the membrane, the jacket has a mesh lining, which at the same time improves the micro climate.

### Featuring:

Hood with one hand adjustable drawcords. The elasticated adjust system allows you to personalize the fit to exactly your head even if you wear your favourite cap.

The new wrist/cuff closure includes our latest closure with "shark-skin" neoprene lining and moulded Velcro.

Pockets and zippers

Spacious box chest pockets that close tightly and keep rain and splashes out.

Large back pocket. Napoleon pocket (inner pocket) that can be operated without opening the jacket.

On the front there is a small attachment loop that can be used for eg.our WizTools.

The Heavy centre front zipper is protected by a double overfold with velcro and stainless buttons.

### Functionalities:

- 100% guaranteed waterproof- Breathable
- More than 35.000 jackets sold
- Less than 0,5% returns
- YKK® zippers
- Durable saltwater design
- Taped seams
- Elasticated waist. Adjustable
- Strong pocket lining
- Watertight pocket design

- Zipped napoleon inner pocket
  - Spacious back pocket
  - New cuff straps design with Velcro®
  - Webbing loop for attaching accessories
  - Øko-tex certified fittings
  - Designed in Denmark
- Changes from previous model:**
- Improved Water repellency
  - Improved wrist design
  - Accessory loop added left and right chest
  - Extended lifespan Color and sizes:
  - Green
  - Small to XXXL - as well as a "JX" which is around 4 sizes above XXXL

### Environment:

Raptor is known for its strong and long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive most other jackets. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limiting the climate impact. Individual parts are eco-tex certified. ■



**TOP 10**  
2022-23



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## WizWool - then it's over freezing

Long lasting, stretchy and soft technical Merino blend. The best of both natural and synthetic yarn. Hard wearing, no nonsense to wear for any kind of cold weather.

Keep you warm. WizWool Roar, Ulf and Njal includes a strong and thereby a long lasting design characteristic and the choice of material will make sure it will outlive similar "merino only" styles. Durability is the most sensible when it comes to limit-



ing the climate impact.

### Who is Geoff Anderson?

Geoff Anderson is a small danish company that exclusively designs and produces clothing for anglers - especially for the harsh weather in northern Europe.

In the production, special consideration to the environment is taken and all products are certainly free of toxins. Durability and water proofness has always been keywords in the production.

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Geoff Anderson are also in the process of establishing itself in a number of other countries.

If you would like to learn more about Geoff Anderson or countries in which we are looking for new dealers, you're of course welcome to contact us.

More information Malthe Ryge Petersen [mrp@geoffanderson.dk](mailto:mrp@geoffanderson.dk), +45 71 991 859. ■

# Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack Competition

**A massive thumbs up to our great friend Terry Dempsey for providing an awesome NEW monthly competition**

And it could not be easier to win this fantastic **Urban Baits Nutcracker Session Pack** which contains **5kg of 18mm Nutcracker Boillies** (RRP £37.50) and a tub of **Nutcracker Pop-ups** (RRP £6.49), perfect for an early season session.

To win simply go to the Urban Baits Facebook page and 'LIKE' it. THAT'S IT! - Terry himself will pick a winner at random.

Closing date is 1st June, 2022

**- SO GET LIKING!**



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### LINEAR MIRROR

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**Exclusive**

# Back On The Roundabout At The Park

Part 2 by Nathan 'Snowy' Sharp

Just another standard Northey sunset. Magic!

**W**ith my successful return to the park, having caught the 'Two Tone' 'The Friendly mirror' and big bad 'Scar' I was brimming with confidence and I knew my game plan was worth continuing with. I was buzzing like an Anne Summers toy and gagging to get back but it was a couple of weeks before I could.

Time wasn't wasted though, as new line was loaded and another batch of hooks were sharpened. It's essential to check and change your line when fishing weedy snaggy waters like Northey. The next time I arrived I decided to have the Friday off work so I was able to beat the weekend rush by arriving on the Thursday evening.

On my arrival there was only one other person on the lake and luckily they were in a area I didn't really

**(Top) Northey is home to a variety of wildlife including several resident professional anglers.**

**(Below) The first bite produced this lovely high double scaly.**



fancy, especially as I'd made the decision to stick to known swims for the fish I was targeting. Gratefully he wasn't in any of them, so after a mooch around I soon had my bucket dropped in a swim called 'Elliotts' there was a few fish tucked up in the weed and it had a decent track record for my main target fish 'The Crater'.

The other great thing was as I

started setting up the other angler on the lake packed up leaving me with a free lake, this meant I could have a mooch around in the boat which is a rarity on there in the Summer due to there always being someone else on. I had also taken a rake and a bucket of bait so I could bait up my spots whilst on the water. I don't normally like doing this but due to this swim being





in the centre of the lake I knew fish would still pass through despite my disturbance, I also knew there was a lot of spots in this swim so it would be nice to see which looked the best to present a rig on. This swim held a decent depth of water aswell with a few spots being around 5ft (deep for Northey) and out of Swan reach. I had decided on two spots in the main swim and a single rod behind the main swim in a small corner of the lake. Both the spots in the main swim were given a kilo of Trent Baits - 16mm freshwater shrimp boilies

soaked in a blend of Amino 30, some salt and a handful of crushed tiger nuts.

I knew my best chance of a bite was from the single rod spot which was dropped close in behind a set of lilies using the bait spoon, this was baited with the same mix of bait but only a couple of handfuls worth. I knew this was the best chance of a bite but I felt it was a area that mainly produced stockies.

Here's the boring part .... The rigs! All three rods were rigged up with my favourite setup of 18 inches of Korda

**(Above) The other side of the future of Northey, Elliott Symak (owner) really does know how to pick them! (Bottom) Elliotts – a swim with some form for producing a few lumps, and it looked prime with its abundance of weed and lillies.**

Darkmatter tubing to a Korda hybrid leadclips, and 7inch coated braid tied multi rig style to a mega strong size 4 Korda Krank X that I had hand sharp-end. With a Trent Baits freshwater shrimp natural wafter attached, the faith I have in this rig and bait combination is unreal and when your fishing a lake that is full of weed or snags, and holds some special fish like Northey, you need to know that the gear will stand up to the job.

And touch wood (we'll that's what I say to the misses!) this setup doesn't let me down.

The rigs were placed on the spots perfectly, all cracking down on hard spots amongst thick weed. I knew the best chance of a bite wouldn't be until first light so I settled down with a bbq and the sight of Northey in all her splendour. This lake really does look amazing especially when the weeds are thick, the pads are in flower and there's big black backs poking out the flat calm surface.

As I awoke it was 4am and the sun was now rising and beaming down



# CARPING RE-CUT

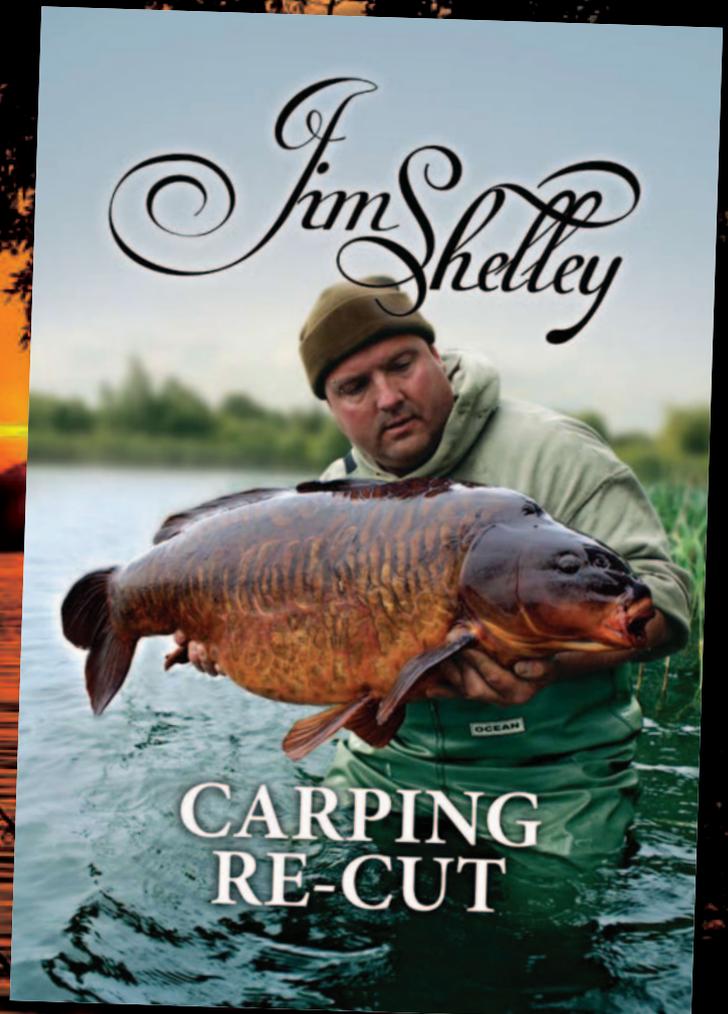
## *Jim Shelley*

Jim Shelley is the UK's most prolific hunter of big carp. He is a carp fishing force of nature and no carp can withstand his pursuit for long. He has carved out a career in carp fishing with an iron will and perspiration, and this book is the physical embodiment of that drive. Every single word is testament to the fact that Jim won't ever give up. He taught himself to write so that he could genuinely say that he'd written this huge book unaided. That is just what he has done too.

Inside you'll find the truth... the whole truth. Nothing has been airbrushed and at times Carping Re-Cut can make for uncomfortable reading. It's gritty, it deals with difficult situations that Jim found himself on and off the bank. Let's not forget, throughout a portion of this book, Jim's wife Jane battled with cancer and if the strain took its toll, then Jim has written about the consequences, and left nothing out! Carping Re-Cut tells the story of a man driven to catch the biggest and best carp out there. There are colourful and touching moments along the way and of course, there are the fish! This book holds beautiful images of many of the fish that captured the hearts of carp men throughout the last decade or so. Eventually, Jim worked out how to catch them all, and the way that he did it is laid bare here for you to read.

So, join Jim on a journey that starts in 'bandit country' near Heathrow, passes east through Cambridgeshire and Norfolk before swinging back via Royal Berkshire, and plunging deep into the jungle that is the mysterious Colnemere, as Jim searches for the ultimate prize, the Black Mirror. One thing's for sure, it won't be dull!

At last the long awaited second book from carp fishing's No.1 angler is available direct from Bountyhunter Publications. Carping Re-Cut is the follow up to Jim's highly successful first book Carping Un Cut and is a mammoth size publication containing over 400 beautiful colour plates, exclusive stories and an incredible amount of huge carp from waters far and wide. Jim always was a great carp angler but over the past few seasons he has evolved



into the ultimate catching machine. Water after water, target after target and record after record have fallen to this sometimes controversial angler, nevertheless no one can deny his ability and no carp is uncatchable once Jim sets his mind to it. Jim's first book was a great read and it's sometimes hard for an author to match the quality of his first book, however this is not the case with Carping Re-Cut. This book is a revelation and no carp angler of any ability, age or status should miss out on what is definitely the book of the decade from the world's greatest carp angler.

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on the far side of the lake, the resident kingfisher had just polished off his breakfast on my rods and I just knew there was a chance of the single rod behind me ripping off.

I just had to take a look to see if there was any signs of life in the area. As I took my first step from under the broolly the rod was away with a savage one toner that sounded in desperate need of Snowy's attention.

On picking up the rod the fish had gained a few yards of line off the tight clutch and had reached the outskirts of the bed of lilies. Luckily this was not a problem as the heavy gear I use on the park just ripped through the them!

The fight was incredibly quick and simple and soon I had a lovely scaly stocky in the folds of the net. Due to the fight being so quick I was prepared for the inevitable and it went barmy on the bank, tail slapping me every chance it got. A few quick self takes were done and she was slipped back.

Even though I didn't think another bite was possible on that rod I decided to replace the rod, as I knew that if anyone walked around and saw that rod out the water they would suss there were fish in that area. Atleast if it was in and motionless they might not consider the area.

It might sound crafty but you have to put odds in your favour.

Throughout the morning I was witness to some incredible fish activity with a absolute unit visiting one of my open water spots, it would visit the spot for twenty seconds or so then rise to the surface before letting massive plumes of bubbles out. It would then move off, do a figure of eight of two other weed beds before returning to the spot for another quick munch. It did this five or six times and I was sure that it would slip up at some point.

I was hovering over the rod watching the fish motoring back for another feed, the fish got within twelve feet of



the spot and I could hear water moving, I looked down my right margin and my heart sank. To my disbelief someone was coming towards me in a boat and heading directly toward the spot. I waved my arms trying not to make too much commotion but it was to late and the fish had clocked the boat and powered up the lake as far away from the boat and my rig as it could get. I knew my chance had gone and the rest of the morning was quiet. By midday I decided to nip to the butchers and grab some banging fat boy beef burgers for a bbq later.

With the rods all out on there spots and baited with another dose of freshwater shrimp, I sat back enjoying a mega sunset before the mozzi got to much.



**(Top) The vampires of Northey.. They're big, bad and a damn nuisance.**

**(Centre) The killer combo, freshwater shrimp and my multi-rig arrangement, hasn't changed for years.**

**(Bottom) Remember kids, when it's hot keep yourself hydrated with plenty of suitable fluids.**



Canon! The lake's big girl looking awesome after spawning.



Catching Cannon again cemented my faith in my game plan.



**(Left) You must have trust in your gear.**

**(Right) Returning the Queen of the lake.**



I jumped in the sack zipped the mozzi mesh down and fell asleep confident of another chance at first light.

First light came and with me having a terrible nights sleep I felt very groggy so whacked the kettle on for a much needed cappuccino and cinnamon bun or two. I had just taken my first sips when the single rod behind me steamed off again, this time the fish had kited on the tight clutch towards some branches up the margin. I was on it quick but still had to put all of my twenty two stone mass into holding it back from gaining any more ground. Luckily the gear held and I soon had her in front of me gulping for air and ready for the net. Again it was a fairly scaly stocky but this time a bit bigger at 25lb+ - again with self takes done I redid the rod incase any eyes came looking.

I sat back down content with how things were going but just couldn't stop thinking that my best chance of a unit was from one of the open water spots, and after seeing a unit feeding

on one of them rods the day previous I was willing one of them to rattle off before I had to leave.

The sun was now beaming down and the temperature was rising, with bite Time being up to 11am I knew time was running out, but miraculously at 10am I noticed a lump of weed push out the water to the right of one of my open water spots. The same spot as the day before then plumes of fizz and bubbles erupted the surface of the spot before an absolute unit wallowed out and proceeded to take the same figure of eight route as the day before, to me 25yds away I was convinced it was the same fish.

The main question being which fish was it?

On the third time of visiting the spot it went wild, ripping up the bottom and obviously scoffing as much freshwater shrimp baits as it could, the spot was a cauldron of bubbles weed and silt. I knew this was my best chance of a bite as she was so obviously in - fat boy at an all you can eat buffet mode!

Just then my phone rang and I had only spoke to the misses for a matter of seconds when the spot erupted

and the rod smacked round, the bite from hell!

This fish was seriously angry and pushed through a couple of beds of weed before I could waddle to the rod. On picking it up my line was already round the back of another weed bed.

With my line now entering towards the spot but the fish had kited a further rod length to the left and was now thrashing on the surface, I could see this was a decent fish and all I could do was have faith in my tackle and the hook hold. Walking backwards I hoped the slow intense pressure would either move the fish or the weed bed and after a few minutes I seemed to be making ground with both fish and weed moving towards me. I thought I had the upper hand but as I've learnt before these Wiley old carp are abit smarter than me and this time was no exception!

With the fish thrashing on the surface she darted towards me so quick I could not keep up, I just couldn't stop her from making it into yet another clump of weed. By this stage I already had a clump of weed the size of a bed chair wrapped about five yard in front of the fish and now it was embedded

# The History of Carp Fishing in Oxfordshire

Paul Harris and Geoff Adams

Carp fishing has a very rich history. In the early days of it becoming popular, Kent and the Colne Valley were the hot beds of our fledgling pastime and of course there was the legendary Redmire Pool.

Into the new Millennium and one area above all others exploded onto the scene, this was of course Oxfordshire. The quality of the stock of carp in this county was incredible but where did these beautiful scaly beasts come from? When did the Leney's get stocked? What were the origins of the famous Linch Hill fish and what of the history of the now infamous Linear Fisheries? Over the course of the pages of this book all will be revealed as Paul and Geoff have put together the facts of how these lakes were stocked and also banded together many successful local anglers, some of which have never published any of their catches, who tell their fishing tales on these stunning lakes.

With more than 300 pictures of some of this country's finest ever carp and several full page maps, this huge volume tells the story of Oxfordshire's carp fishing history whilst still leaving a little bit of mystery for your imagination!

Included within the pages of this book is the foreword written by local legendary angler and former tackle dealer Joe Taylor. We have chapters from Paul Kitchin on the legendary Vauxhall Lake. David Brian Williams tells us the story of the lakes in the City of Oxford itself! Chris Robinson has written an incredible chapter on two of Dorchester's lakes. Orchid and The Lagoon. The history told in Chris' chapter on these lakes is just incredible and wait until you see the pictures!

Next door to The Lagoon is Dorchester's Alliance Club Lake and Joe Forrester tells his story of the incredible scaly carp that inhabited this lake and how he outwitted them.

We have a real coup in the fact that brilliant all-round Oxford angler John Everard agreed to be interviewed and he has an incredible amount of historical information to share, as has Gerald Stratford who is also included in this informative chapter.

No book about Oxfordshire's carp fishing history would be complete without the story of Oxford's first forty and what a story it is. Richard 'Paddy' Paradine has never written or published any of his catches before and we have his interview here for you of his historic catch which was kept under the radar for so long.

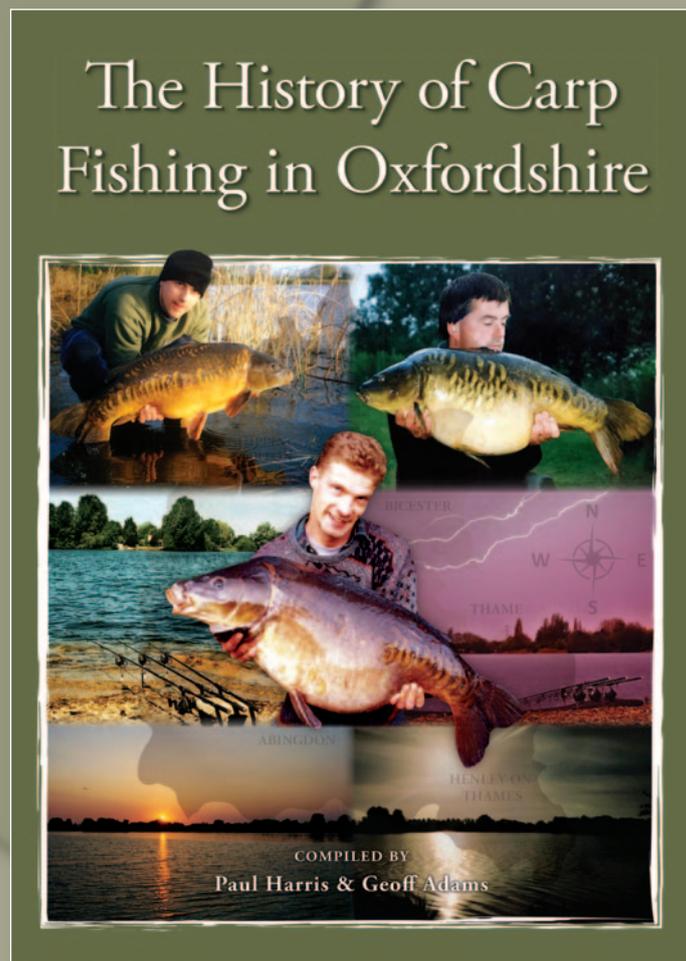
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing on The Leisure Park was back in the day when the Leney's were still about and culminates with his capture of The Big Leney at its biggest ever weight, the iconic 'Paddy's Fish'.

We have brilliant chapters on Newlands from Ginger Robinson and Milton Pools from Stuart Rothwell. Danny Aplin has written about his time on Linch Hill which will just blow you away! His pictures alone are worth purchasing this book.

Nick Franklin has written a lovely chapter on one of Oxfordshire's little known lakes and his account really hits home that carp fishing isn't always about the numbers game. Sometimes it's just you fishing for the unknown! There are superb chapters on Manor Farm from Paul Hathaway and St Johns from Stewart Roper.

If that wasn't enough Paul and Geoff have wrote chapters themselves which cover the stocking history of lakes, how the gravel company ARC played such a big part in the early stockings of Oxford's lakes, the early days of Linch Hill and Linear Fisheries and facts and stories regarding Oxford's other lakes, some very off the radar!

If you like your history, you like carp fishing and love stories of beautiful scaly carp, there is only one book to purchase this year. Here it is...



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**A V A I L A B L E N O W**

**Exclusive** Back On The Roundabout At The Park



Second fish of the session was this chunky character, again one that seems to be doing well.



The second fish was swiftly returned and the rod replaced straight away.

in another even bigger clump. I thought I had no choice but to jump in a boat but to my amazement the whole lot started to shift and with several smooth and steady walks up the bank, I soon had all the weed clumped into one and the top of my tubing now poking out the top.

This gave me an idea that if the fish was still attached it was only a matter of placing my net deep and dragging everything around the tubing into the net, easy in theory.....

I sunk the net, grabbed my main-line and gently shuffled the lot into the net. All seemed to have worked until I went to lift the net, there was so much weed now in and around the net it was almost impossible to lift or move it.

I started ripping away at the weed begging that there would be a fish in amongst it. Weed was going everywhere but suddenly there was a old withered tail appear with a thick tail wrist attached, I now had a clue what fish it was so I ripped more balls of weed away and there lay the lakes

big girl the 'Canon'

Well known for her fierce takes and ability to beast you during the fight. I rang my mate who was on the now busy lake and he came straight round and helped with the weighing and photos.

A mega old fish that looked in great condition considering she had obviously recently spawned, on the scales she went to 43lb 4oz, a truly brilliant post spawn weight. After a few water shots and a change of underwear I decided it was time to get the gear packed up.

Before leaving I popped the remainder of my bait onto the spots, just hoping that whilst I was away the elusive 'Crater' fish would get a taste for the shrimp.

Confidence was high and I knew that despite not having loads of time to angle, if I could stick to my plan of attack my main target was possible. Being consistent would hopefully keep the bites coming.

Until the next time keep them alarms singing, Snowy.. ■



With a Cannon in the sling and a pistol in my hand, you could say Snowy was enjoying himself.

## WIN A HOLIDAY FOR TWO

Our good friends Steve and Sandy Bond have put up a fantastic competition prize in Big Carp to celebrate Big Carp's 250th issue. Here's your chance to win a Holiday for two including food at Lake Bossard.

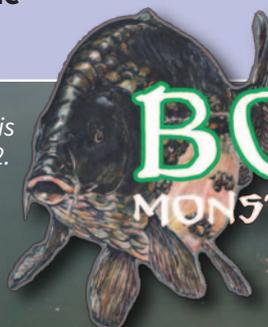
And it could not be simpler to enter... All, you have to do is go to the BOSSARD Facebook page...

- 1 You must like the Bossard page.
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Closing date is  
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Good luck!



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# The Maze

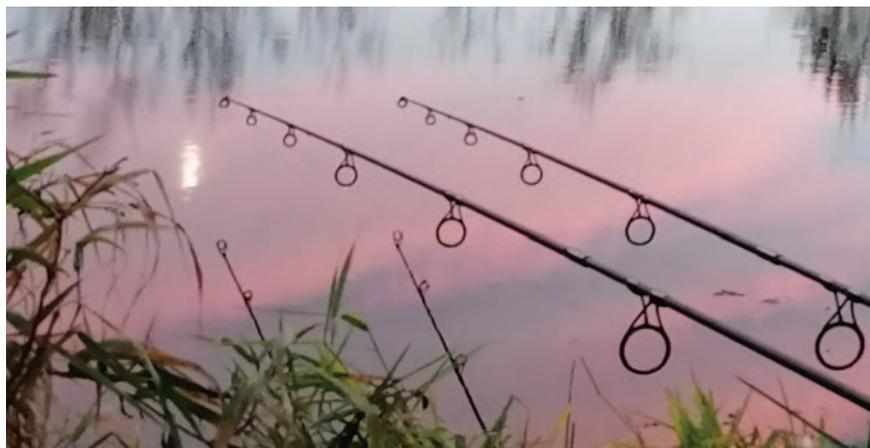
Part 1 by Mark and Emma Rose

**I**t's strange how we all have specific Lakes, Rivers, Canals, etc on a 'Must Fish!' list, but never seem to get round to fishing them. This was certainly the case for me with regards to a venue named 'Digger Lakes', until November 2019 when myself and Emma finally managed to book a few nights on this exciting Devonshire venue.

For those that have never heard of 'Digger Lakes'. It's a two Lake venue set in the Culm Valley in Devon and run and owned by the man himself, Ben Gratwicke. Out of the two, we decided to fish the larger, but original 5 acre 'Snails Lake', as opposed to the smaller, newly excavated Perceys Pool', of what can only be described as a 'Maze' of channels, islands and bays.

When redeveloping the venue, on Ben's takeover in 2011, they were both purposely designed/adapted to make the fishing 'tricky', boasting a host of features including Bars, Silt runs, Gravel, Pads as well as Overhangs, and not forgetting a good dose of the 'Green Stuff' thrown in for good measure. After a good walk around, I decided to settle in a swim known as 'Brick Point', with Emma taking a fancy to 'Diesels'.

With the light levels rapidly fading, with the clocks having gone back, it was a little bit of a race against time to find a couple of suitable spots, but after a quick lead around I was happy with what I had found. I decided to



fish only the two rods due to the limited amount of water in front of me, as I genuinely believe sometimes fishing three in tighter swims can sometimes do more harm than good.

Due to having never fished 'Snails Lake' before, we decided to use a mix of DNA Baits S7 and Switch, both of which we have the utmost confidence in. With the rods finally on the spots and a cold beer in hand, we sat back to watch the water, as the final evening light quickly faded sending us into darkness.

After a very quiet first night and with the dawn of a new day, brought a complete change in the weather with a very bitter easterly wind and torrential downpours, the conditions were certainly far from favourable.

The day passed by without a single indication or sighting for either of us and with a quick freshen up of the baits and a pouch full of freebies over

each, we were soon plunged into complete darkness once again and back listening out for the slightest of signs of Carp.

The following morning and still not a single indication between us, a decision was made to bring the rods in and take a walk around the lake, to see if we could see any signs of movement. After an hour or so of wandering aimlessly around the complex and nothing really seen we decided to stay put and see out the final two nights in our chosen swims, unless something told us otherwise.

With the rods back out and dinner on the go, we could only hope and pray for the Carp gods to be kind to us, but with the temperature already dropping and a thin layer of the white stuff already forming on top of the bivvies it wasn't exactly looking prime for a bite.

Morning came again and with no





action, let alone any indication, as per the previous two nights, it was safe to say, our optimism was rapidly fading with less than 24 hours to go. By mid day the temperature was on the rise and our thoughts turned to putting a couple of zigs on, as I personally believe the Carp spend more time off the bottom at this time of year than they do on it.

But as luck would have it, I decided to make a coffee first and whilst beginning to walk to Emma, armed with two steaming hot cups, I heard that familiar, long awaited for beep of a bite alarm, suddenly scream into full meltdown. My thoughts at first was that it was Emma's, but I quickly

realised the sound was coming from the receiver that was in my pocket.

I almost threw the mugs in Emma's direction and with a quick sprint (that even Usain Bolt) would of been proud of, I was soon stood with Rod in hand, attached to what was obviously a very feisty Carp. After a very hairy and hectic battle, to which the Carp, took me, on more than one occasion, through a number of Weed Beds and Lily Pads, I must admit I thought it was going to end in tears, but finally gaining the upper hand and with the fish sliding over the net cord, the relief was immense.

With the adrenaline still pumping through my body and the obvious

relief of a fish in the net, size definitely didn't matter. After all it was my first 'Digger Lakes' Carp, something I always cherish on any Lake I fish and after the struggles of the last few days, it definitely made it all worth it.

With the weed pulled to one side, what was looking back at me was a stunning Mirror Carp, that would eventually settle the needle on the scales at 19lb 12oz. The remainder of the trip remained uneventful, much to Emma's disappointment, and with the car loaded, our thoughts had already turned to planning a return trip, sooner rather than later.

Until next time Mark and Emma Rose



# Colebrook Fishery Session

Part 1 by Tristan Cooper

**M**y names Tristan Cooper I'm a sponsored mainline Baits angler I'm 18 years old and I'm from Devon. I'm a video maker who has filmed videos with angling times writers, rod reviews for Free Spirit fishing and a lot of mainline Baits product testing and personal vlogs.

The story I'm going to write is about 2 fish I caught while out filming 2 very iconic fish to Devon one being called chunks and one being called smudge which were within half an hour of each other which resulted in a near 56lb brace of Devon commons.

## The story:

I ventured up to a venue I've been wanting to put a lot of time into called Colebrook fishery. We booked the lake out for a lake exclusive booking just myself, my dad, his mate and his mates' son. It wasn't anything competitive or serious, but it was just a plan to have a nice weekend all together.

I've previously fished here for 15 nights this year since August without a fish I lost 2 back in August typically from the exact same spot this story is about. I wouldn't say 15 nights is a long long time without a fish but I didn't know what I was doing wrong, so after I lost those 2 fish I changed all my rigs over, hook pattern and everything. I ended up swapping from a multi rig style set up to a Ronnie rig with a size 4 Krank hook. Tied with 35lb boom and just everything even stronger than what I would usually be using. I done this so if I do get stuck in a snag, I will be able to keep that pressure without any fear of a snag snapping my rig while I'm applying more and more pressure.

Flash back to prior this session I've been speaking to all the locals that fish the lake and the owner especially



Matt Gunn who's been very helpful and just taking certain information on and then noticing connections between everyone's tactics so first thing I noticed was yellow and then someone else said pop up fake sweetcorn. And to me that links nicely as fake sweetcorn is usually yellow. Following on from that I then spoke to more and more people, and I heard

pink works well which is the colour I lost my fish on. Of course, being sponsored by Mainline Baits I've got a deal to use their Baits, so I decided to use Pink Fluro Cell pop ups in 14mm. Speeding ahead I picked up some fake sweetcorn from West Bay Angling Centre which I currently work at and headed over for my weekends session. I didn't get to the



lake till 10ish and didn't start fishing till 12ish I baited up all the areas with a lovely 15mm cell and 5mm cell response pellet with the cell stick and bag mix which is a dust form of cell that created a more attractive mix as the dust broke off as it fell through the water columns the dust was stuck on as I coated the boile on the cell stick mix liquid which is absolutely perfect for the job. I got all the rigs in place later in the day by casting into a narrow gap in the trees and with the other one just casting it to the far bank and then attaching my rig and baiting spooning it under a tree everything was perfect.

Through the first evening nothing shown at all no signs of anything yet alone carp. Until at 3:30 I got woken up by these huge carp jumping and making disturbance of course I couldn't see them in the dark but I knew where they were and as the light came nearer the fish were slowly moving around to my hook baits and

at that moment I knew I was going to catch, and at 6:15 my left hand rod which is the one I baiting spooned under the tree just went into complete meltdown mode and I was in to a fish. The carp came really easily away from the snags, and it didn't feel like a big fish at all until it got in close and then decided to bully me for a further 10 minutes wiping out my other rod but thankfully never moved the actual lead of my right-hand rod.

The carp finally gave up and I had my first ever Colebrook carp in the net and looking at it I just remember thinking wow that's a big fish and one I recognise in which it was a fish called Chunks which funny enough is one of the ones I wanted which made that moment even more special. I got that fish in the sling and transported it safely to the Carp Cradle.

I weighed it at 25lb 12oz! unfortunately it was spawned out but what a fish starts a session. We did the photos and videos for the latest video I

was out filming and released Chunks back safely. As soon as I got everything set again, I didn't even have time to get that rod back out and the other rod slowly pulled up tight and then peeled out line incredibly slowly and as soon as I picked the rod up, I could feel a snag but this heavy weight pulling back. The fish was in this snag for 5 minutes in which I got my dad to row out in the boat to go and free this fish for 2 reasons give me more of a chance to land it but more importantly to prevent that fish from being tethered to that snag in case something in my terminal tackle gave way.

But typically, as soon as my dad got halfway out the carp decided to swim our anyways which my dad wasn't too impressed with how I just rushed him to get the boat out. Again, the fish came in nicely after the snag until it saw the net and it just decided that it didn't really like that and just wouldn't stop going the other direc-



Chunks at 25lb 12oz

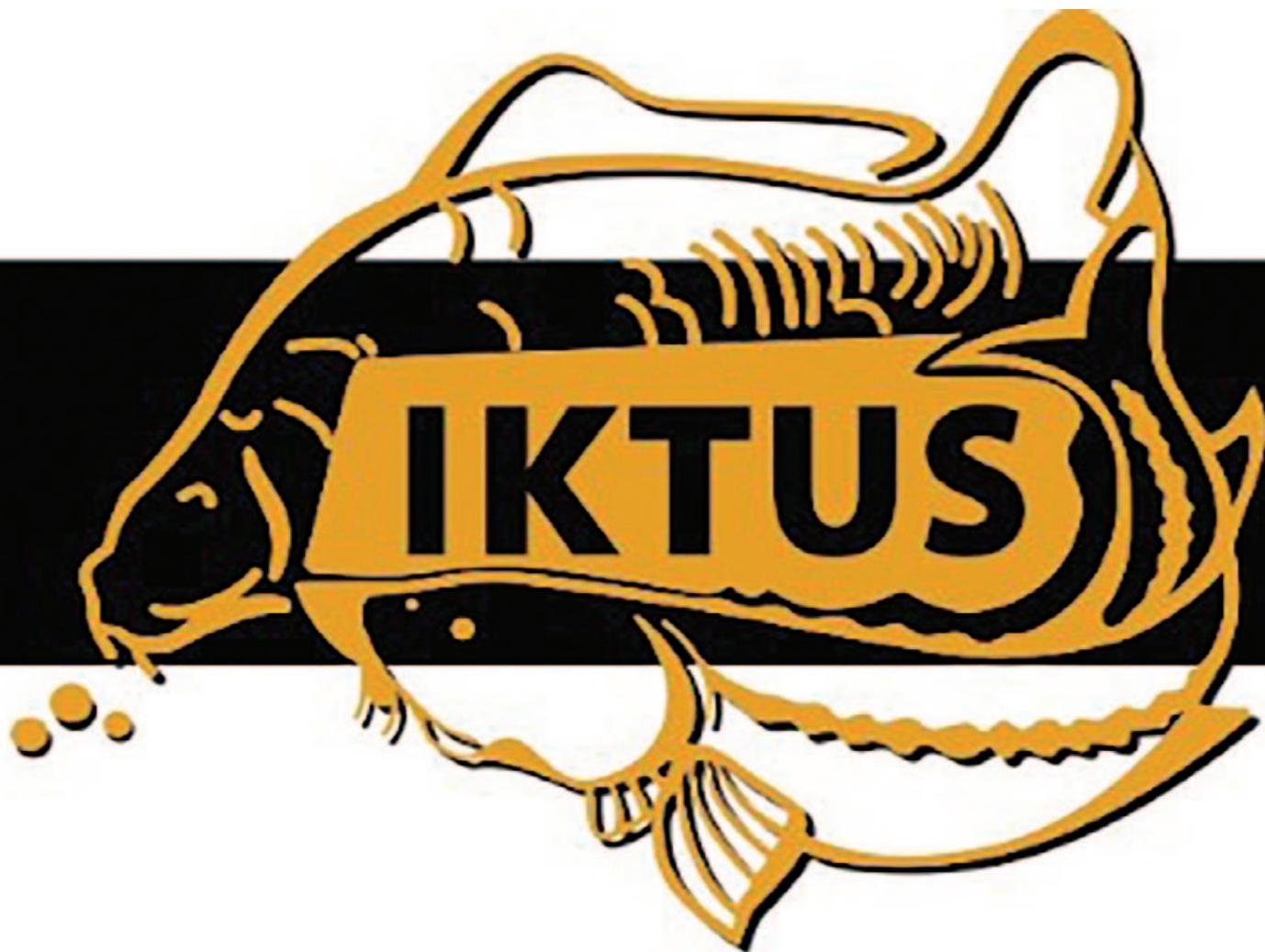


tion! I managed to turn the fish before it got near another snag and after 15-minute battle of this carp running left right left right my dad finally got it in the net and that's when I knew wow this is a very rare fish to catch.

Your all probably what fish this was... this was a carp known as Smudge which is a very rare carp to be caught as you could guess I was over the moon as I've come from catching no fish on this lake to 2 fish in the space of 20-30 minutes of each other.

We weighed Smudge at 29lb 12oz and being a PB common for me which made it even better for me! This meant I just caught a near 56lb brace of commons from Devon and that's just unheard of.

The rest of the session passed quietly and in no time, I was off home after having a fantastic session and one to remember. All while filming too which was incredible to capture all of it on camera. If you would be interested in watching the video the title is A Session to remember and the channel name is Tristan Cooper Fishing it's definitely worth a watch for all you carpers out there! ■



# FISHING RESORT



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# Chasing Willows Lumps

By Adrian Palmer

**E**ric's Willows is a lake I have been fishing for about nine years. I joined to catch my first 30lb carp which I did on my first season, catching carp to 38lb 10oz.

So, my next target was a 40! Little

did I know it was going to take eight years to catch one. Which leads me on to my recent session. Me and my fishing buddy Nick, booked a 48 hour session. Arriving at the lake, the weed was really bad this year, so it was going to make things tricky!

After a good walk round the lake

we settled on pegs 14/15. I had a good idea where to fish, as out in front there was a deeper channel down to 8ft. After a quick check with a bare lead it seemed presentable, so I tied up a German rig with Korda Ntrap soft 12 inches long with a spotted fin pink pepper squid waffer hookbait. I put





the rig in position with 5kg of particle around the area.

With all the rods sorted, we sat down to a well-earned brew. About 10 minutes later, the rod in the gully was away. I picked it up and started to bring the fish through all the weed that was in front of me. About 40 yards from the bank, all went solid! I kept steady pressure on but nothing was moving. So on with the life jacket and into the boat.

After getting above the fish, steady pressure saw the fish emerge from the depths. I got my first glimpse of my prize. It was a possible 40 and a new PB. But the fish had other ideas, diving back into the weed. But steady pressure brought the fish back to the surface, but this time with a ball of weed around its head. Into the net she went. Getting back to the bank, I got everything ready for weighing. Would she be a forty, I was thinking. The scales settled at 48lb on the nose and a new PB. The quest for a forty had finally ended. Now for a fifty! ■



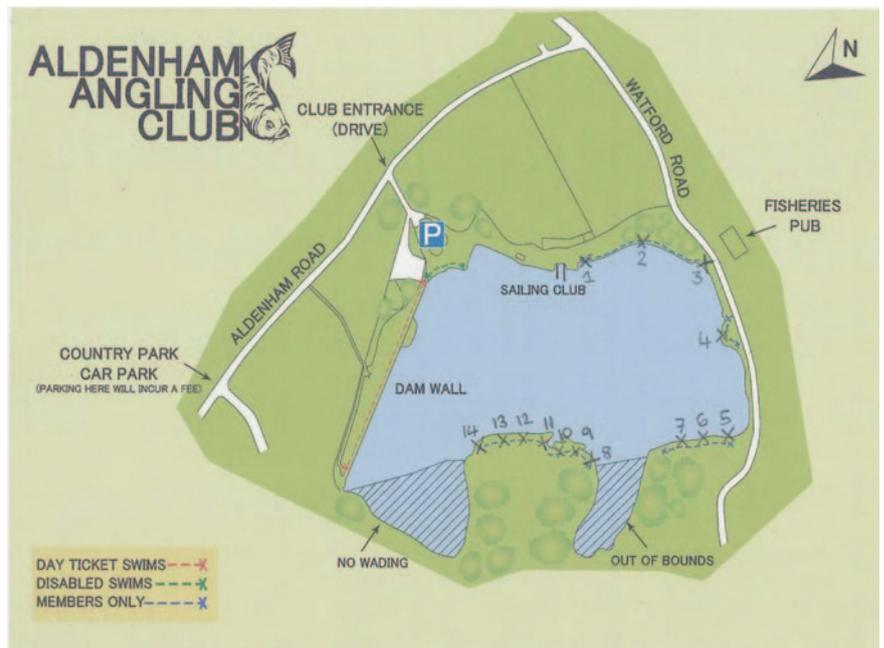
# Aldenham Country Park Reservoir

By Lee Nobbs

**A**fter spending the winter and spring on the sailing lake on St Ives with no joy and not really feeling I was on fish, I felt I needed a new challenge, if nothing else just to freshen up my fishing. A good friend of mine Steve, mentioned a water he'd just joined in Hertfordshire which as he described as a box of chocolates because you don't really know what is in there.

I got sent a few pictures of known fish that have been caught over the last six years and I thought I'd have a bit of that. £160 later, my ticket was secured for twelve months.

Aldenham Country Park is as the name suggests, a country park with public access around the reservoir, which can be a pain during the warmer months with kids and people





wandering around and the odd kid thinking it's acceptable to throw stones at your rods out in the water!

The reservoir itself is around fifty acres, depending on the water level. It's one and a half miles to walk right around it, but access is pretty decent.

The water also has the added pain of Turkish crayfish which probably explains why some of the fish are decent weights.

There is an angler's car park, but to cut some of the walk off, you can park in the country park car park and just pay £4.50 when you leave.

The fish stocks are not 100 per cent known, some say 40-70 fish, others say more. It has some lovely linears over 30lb and a few koi which have made their way into the water over the years.

I've seen drone footage of a couple of big commons which look to be over forty pounds, which was the main reason I had joined.

After I got my ticket, I popped in on my way home from St Ives. After a

walk round, I pin pointed an area that I fancied, the following week. Typically, it was the furthest point from the car park!

So Sunday arrived, van loaded and off I headed to Hertfordshire for my first session. Steve was to join me later in the week for a couple of nights.

I decided to go in with chods the first night with meshed up baits. It was soon clear that the crayfish had quite enjoyed this, so plastic baits became the way forward.

The first morning I saw several fish show down the middle but the other side of the south bay from where I was plotted up. I fished two rods out at range and one close-in over the marginal weed.

It was this rod on the third morning that bent round, waders on and by then it fell slack and a mirror poked its head out and did the off.

So, my first session was bitter sweet but armed with what I'd seen and learnt my next session couldn't

come soon enough.

Sunday soon came around and I was heading back to the res, this time I headed to the other side of the south bay, where I'd seen fish the previous week. Steve again was due down for a couple of nights and plotted up the next swim up for a social.

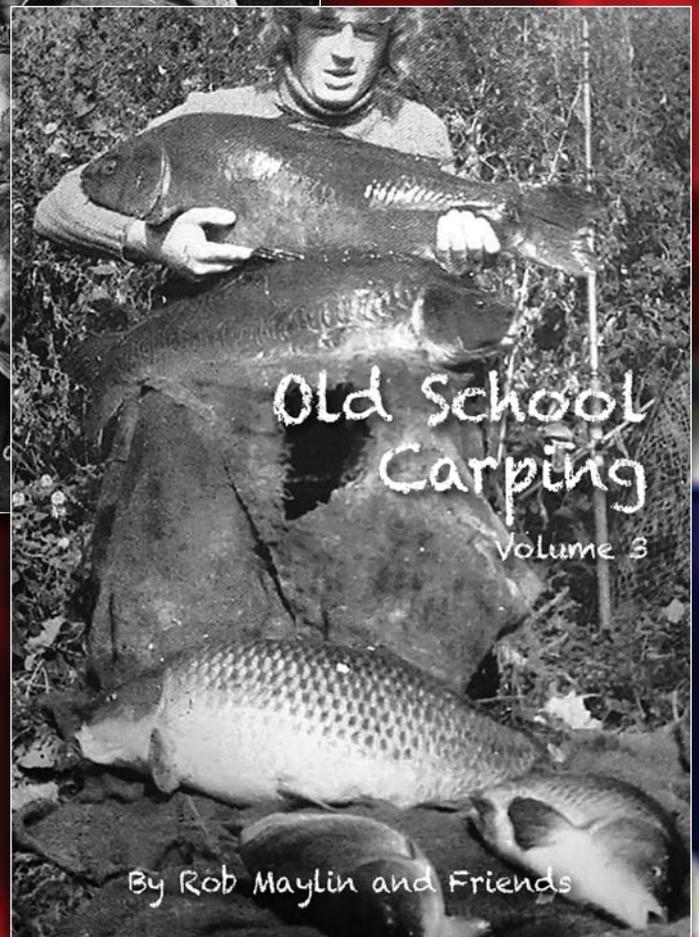
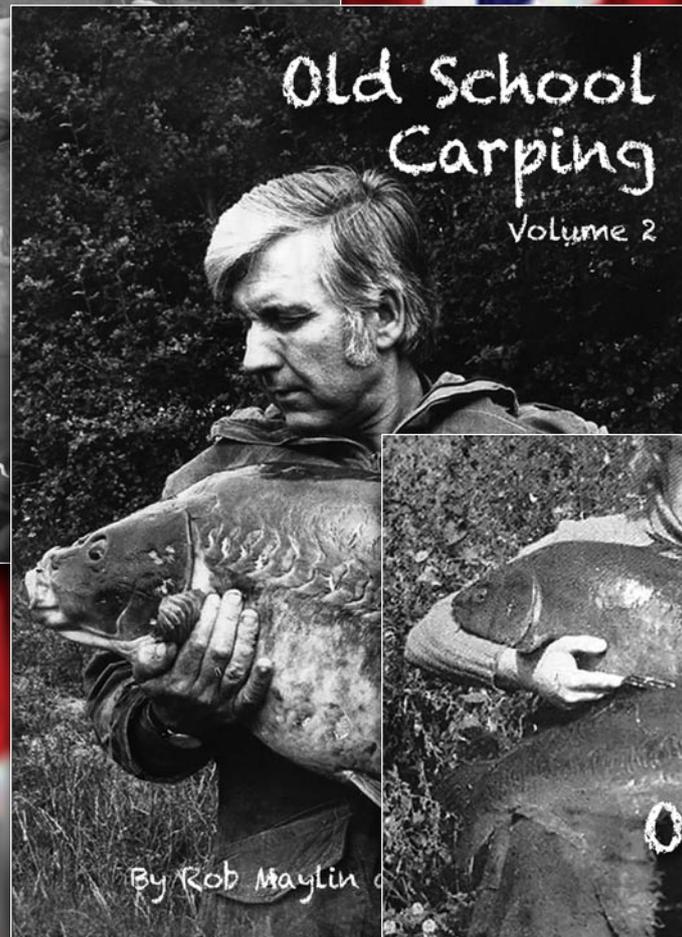
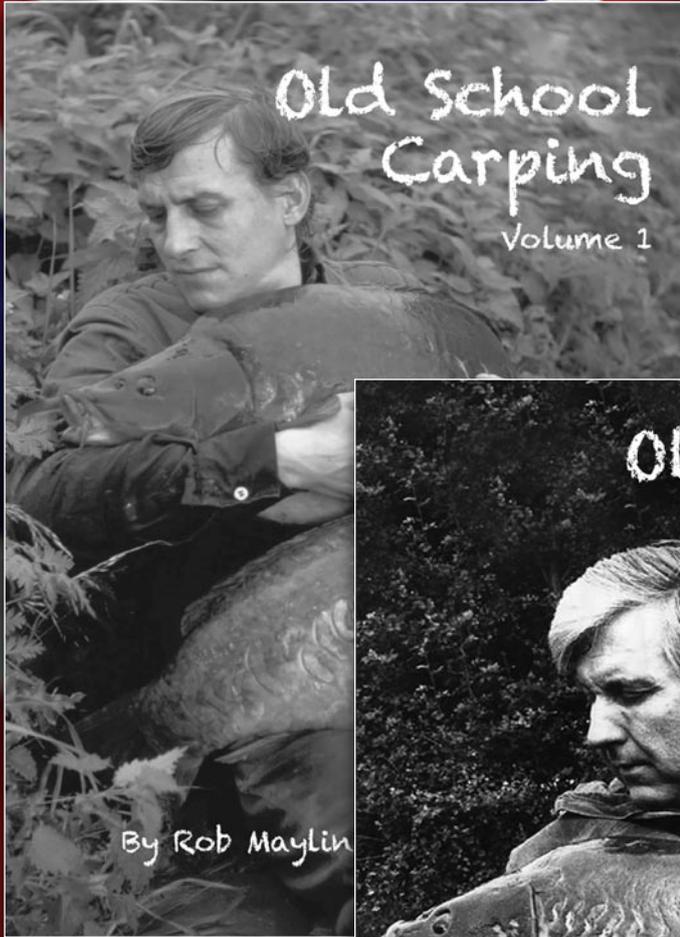
I'd decided to go heavy on the particles from Carbon Baits, topped up with 5kg of mainlines 18mm essential cell. The first night for me was quiet carp wise, I did have several bream, all were doubles, probably up to 15lb-plus, I continued to top the spot up with bait, fishing through the bream.

Just after midnight, Steve woke me up to do some pics of a 30lb 4oz common that he'd banked, so this got us underway on a new water.

The next morning was quiet, apart from the bream. I kept the bait going in though, hoping it wouldn't be long before the carp moved over me. Early evening and the bite came that I'd been waiting for – a lovely mirror at 23lb 8oz. I believe the first ones are



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always the hardest from a new water.

I forgot to mention that I changed tactics too, from chods to ronnies on a running lead system with balanced baits. This meant I could fish my braided mainline bow string tight to keep it off the deck and away from the crayfish down to the lead, but still meaning my boom section was laid out on the bottom.

My plan was now in place to continue, if possible, to keep fishing this area at 21 wraps every week, hoping the fish would keep visiting and in turn picking up my hook baits. The Reservoir doesn't really have any features so in my mind I'd make one out of bait.

The following week I got back down and straight away spombed out 5kg of particles and boilies. I was thinking now even if the bream turn up, I know the spot is starting to become a feature for feeding fish.

On the first night of the session, I had a bite just after midnight which

was a 21lb common, which sadly was the only bite of the week. Again, I was pleased that my plan was working.

Prep work sorted for the following week, with plenty of Mainline liquids ordered and more particles from Carbon Baits stocked. I also switched my leads from Bartons Leads to 4oz in a silt texture to completely blend in with what I was fishing over.

My next bite was a proper cricket bat common, completely different to others I'd seen. Only 16lb, but on a tricky low stocked water every bite is welcome.

With a full moon cycle approaching and a northerly wind, it was perfect conditions for the area I'd been fishing. I was pleased to see the swim was free when I arrived at the lake, so straight away I spombed out particle and boilies. Three rods on the spot it was just a case of fingers crossed that they turned up. Within two hours I was in, my first middle of the day bite, one of the ghost commons at 23lb 6oz

– a great start to the week.

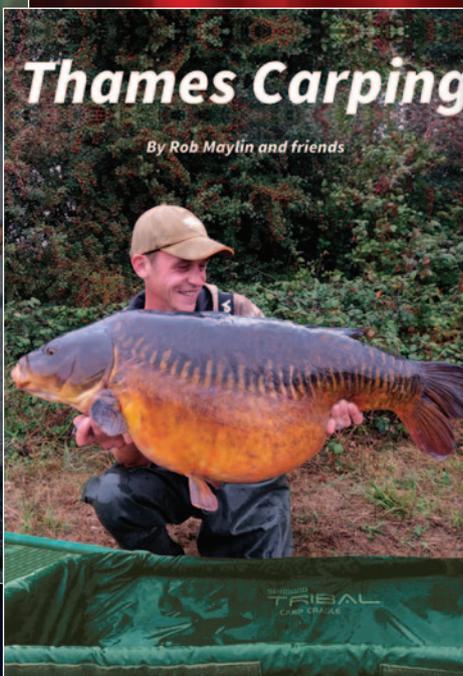
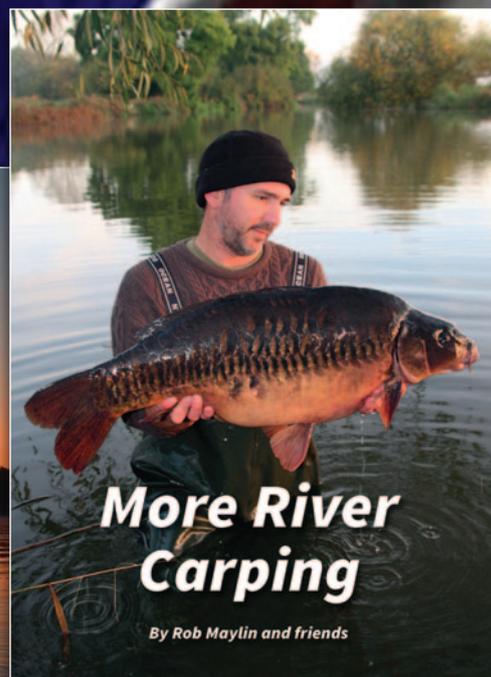
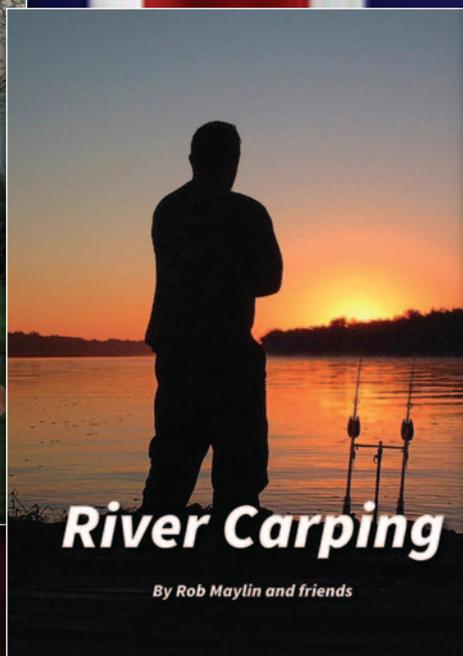
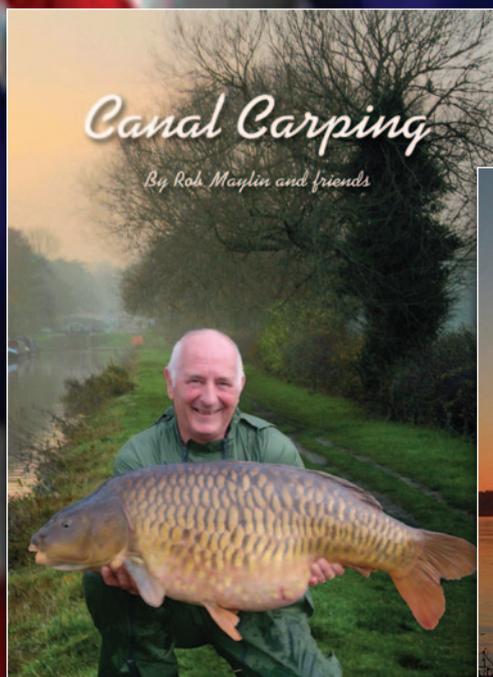
I kept the bait going in knowing the conditions where bang on, this time last year I had the round brown from St Ives, so I was hoping this lake reacted the same. The week ended with five fish, a couple of high double commons and two that I really wanted when I joined. The box mirror at 34lb 8oz and the friendly mirror at 28lb 6oz, both lovely fish and the friendly that normally does over 30lb.

The next two weeks were very quiet, nothing than a couple of bream and a couple of cormorants! But I kept plenty of bait going in, hoping the area hadn't blown with several of the lakes' stock coming out of this area.

I headed back down thinking that I might fish another area up towards the north bay, due to others fishing the area I'd been catching from. This ended up being the case, for the first night I fished the same distance, same amount of bait but other than a cou-

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ple of bleeps, nothing happened. The swim I'd been fishing was now available, so I had to move, which did pay off. The wind switch to a North easterly which was perfect.

Once the rods were out, I again committed plenty of bait. Just after 10pm, one of my rods dropped back slightly and then pulled up. Thinking it was a break, because it came in

easily, I was surprised to see a carp hit the top on the edge of the weed. A lovely 25lb 12oz mirror was secured in the net.

I decided to top up with five spombs once I'd returned the fish, which when the first one hit the water my left-hand rod bleeped. To me it seemed as if I may have spooked one off the spot. Nothing

else happened until the morning when the heavens typically opened. A low double common was unhooked in the net and returned. The rain eased mid-afternoon so more bait was dispatched.

I had a couple of bleeps around midnight, which got me in to my waders, then the middle rod ripped off. Weirdly they don't seem to fight



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much in here and once in the net I had a feeling it was one I'd already had. Not being 100 per cent sure, I did a quick snap and let her go. It was the box mirror again at exactly the same weight at 34lb 8oz.

While I was putting my net back together, I thought I'm not putting any bait out in case they are out there.

It's only 5ft deep so a spomb over them isn't ideal. I just turned and staked my net back out and the left-hand rod pulled up tight, slightly shocked to get a take again so quickly, I picked the rod up and thought bream. Wrong again, as it turned out to what I believe is the double sided linear at 32lb 8oz.

Another one of the A-team and again slightly down in weight after spawning. A cracking fish and to brace it with the box, was a proper result.

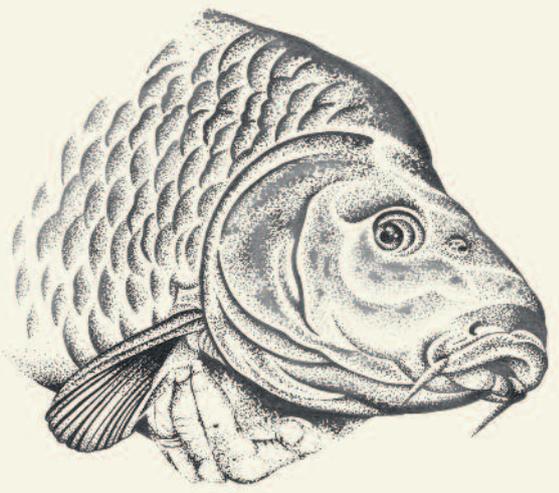
The following week was completely different conditions to the week before. The wind had switched to a south westerly pushing up the dam wall end. I did the first two



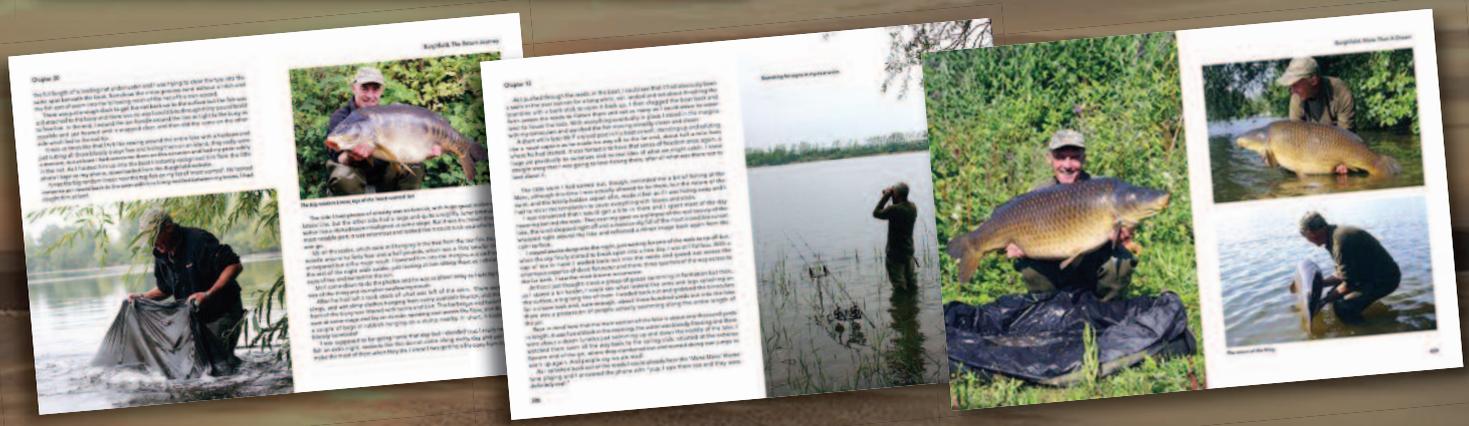
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# Fine Lines

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Now available direct from Bountyhunter Publications is a signed copy of Dave Lane's fourth book, Fine Lines. Whether you are an avid fan and following on from Dave's first books or delving into his world for the first time, you are bound to be entertained, amazed and left wanting yet more of his adventures. Together with his faithful hound, Padwar, he has travelled the land in search of monster carp and catalogued his experiences in his own inimitable style, which is peppered with humour, disasters, bizarre occurrences, and, ultimately, success.



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nights for just a bream around 14lb. My mate Steve had managed to get a couple of nights in too, with a full moon due, we were hoping one of the big commons would slip up. Four nights in, nothing happened for us

and Steve made the effort by moving, hoping to get a bite.

The next week would take me in to the last week of September. Not wanting to make the same mistake again, I decided to fish further along

towards the North Bay, the way the wind was pushing. The pressure was due to drop dramatically and we were due quite a bit of rain. I decided to fish exactly the same distance 21 wraps. Again, I baited heavy with





Mainlines essential cell and Carbon Baits nutty maple and crushed tigers, all smothered in fruit smart liquid. Just after 10.30pm my left-hand rod rattled off and a linear called 'Red Cheeks' slipped into the net at 23lb 8oz. Rod put back out on the spot but nothing else happened that night.

The next morning, I decided to spomb out another couple of kilos of bait, all prepared the night before so all the liquids could soak into the particles and boilies. Just before dark, I topped up with another 20 spombs, just in case the crayfish had a munch. Around 3am I was woken up by a RX+ singing out and this time a 20lb 7oz common slipped into the net. Again, it was the only bite of the night.

I repeated the process of baiting morning and evening, keeping the area topped up. I knew we were due some heavy rain and one thing I've learnt is, they definitely like to feed when the weather's bad. The rain moved in after dark and boy did it rain. I was sitting there thinking I

wouldn't want a bite in that, and you've guessed it, I got a bite.

The fish didn't really fight much so I secured it in the net to wait for the rain to ease but recast the rod. Two hours later it was still raining, then I received another bite, this was going to be tricky with one already in the net. This one felt bigger, a slow dogged fight.

Eventually I got it in my net and could see it was another common, I thought it looked around the thirty pound mark. I managed to get one in to a sack secured in deeper water ready for pics and weighing. At this point I reeled the other two rods in and went back to my van for some dry clothes. When I got back the rain had stopped, I weighed the first common at 20lb 12oz and the second one at 29lb, both crackers and this took my tally up to 19 fish from the reservoir for the year so far.

Now just into October, I was hoping my luck would still produce me bites. With the weather still blowing

from a northerly direction the north end of the reservoir would be my choice on my next session. As usual I decided to fish at 21 wraps and with the water being up considerably from my last visit, I could actually bivvy up in the woods – although my rods would still be out in the water.

After my power pack failing, I decided two nights this week as I don't like to be uncontactable from home. The first night looked really good for a bite but nothing happened. I repeated the process with baiting after what I'd consider bite time and just before dark add another 15 spombs in case the crayfish had been on me.

The weather turned very wet and windy during the night and with the weed now becoming an issue floating about wiping me out I didn't think much was going to happen, then around 6.30am my middle rod went, waders on and after a short battle a repeat capture of a cricket bat type common rolled into the net, up over a

pound in weight from my last capture at 17lb 06oz.

Soon after that I packed up and went home to source another power supply for my next session.

The following week I decided that I would get down on a Friday which is something I rarely do nowadays, I prefer to fish week days. To my surprise the lake was empty so I decide to head up the north end of the lake as the wind would be pushing that way. If I'm honest the conditions didn't really materialise and after three nights of not even a bleep I decided to head over to St Ives for a couple of nights.

Heading into mid-October now and with a fresh delivery of bait, I headed back down the lake knowing the conditions this week were spot on for the southern end of the lake. All three rods were positioned at 21 wraps and just as I contemplated putting some bait out one walloped out just right of my right-hand rod.

I held back on the bait for an hour just in case I'd dropped on a couple of fish. I baited up with around fifteen spombs and sat back hoping they were still in the area. A couple of hours passed when my right-hand

rod absolutely ripped off. They seem to do this on here then come in like a dog on a lead, not really putting up much of a fight. As soon as it rolled in the net I recognised the black eye one side, it was the friendly mirror again at 29lb 2oz, up a pound from around a month ago when I last had it, this fish is probably 30-40 years old and always comes out really well on the self takes.

The rod was repositioned back on the area, I didn't expect much else to happen for a bit so I laid back and watched the football. Just after dark again the right-hand rod was away, again the fish didn't do much and was soon in the net.

Frustratingly, it was again another repeat capture, a lovely double sided Linear. This time it was 33lb 2oz and it had put on around a pound since I last had it. Fish slipped back, rod back out and I decided to have an early night.

The rest of the night was oddly quiet although the wind did drop off and it definitely fishes better with a night wind. The morning went by and with a slight switch the weed became a problem, whipping me out twice. My mate Steve popped over to see me

and we fashioned a weed barrier with a bit of floating timber and some storm poles. I introduced a few more spombs of bait before dark and one of the other syndicate members Jack went to my left for the night, both of us hoping that they would turn up on us.

I had a bream around 3.00am, probably 13lb-plus, so I quickly wrapped the rod back up and cast it back on the area. Within 10 minutes amazingly it was away again. This time I was attached to a carp. It turned out to be a plump 24lb 8oz common, one I'd not had, so another one of the reservoirs' stock off the list.

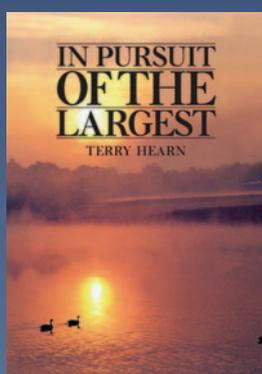
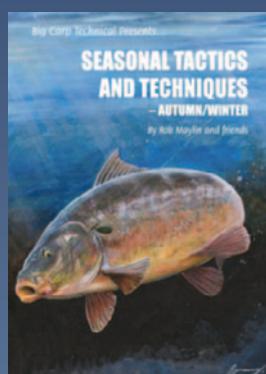
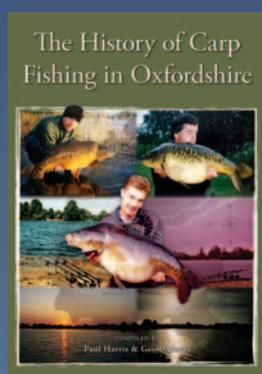
This turned out to be my last session on the reservoir. I did intend to do the whole winter on there. I might still do the odd session but now that I've started to get a few repeat captures, I've decided to concentrate on St Ives for the next few months.

Aldenham Country Park is a lovely place to fish, some proper old English fish, with a few surprises to be had from what I've seen over the few months I've been on there. Everyone on the syndicate is friendly and a great bunch of lads – I wish them all well for the future. ■



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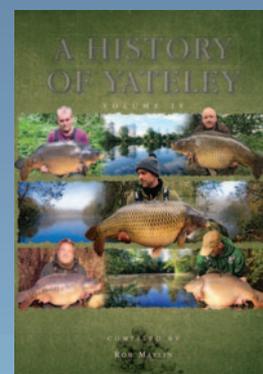
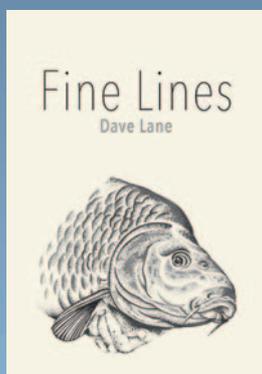
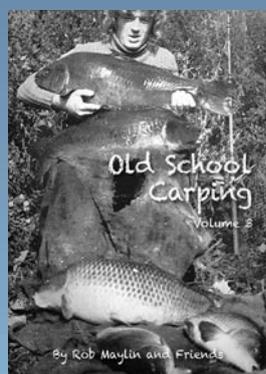


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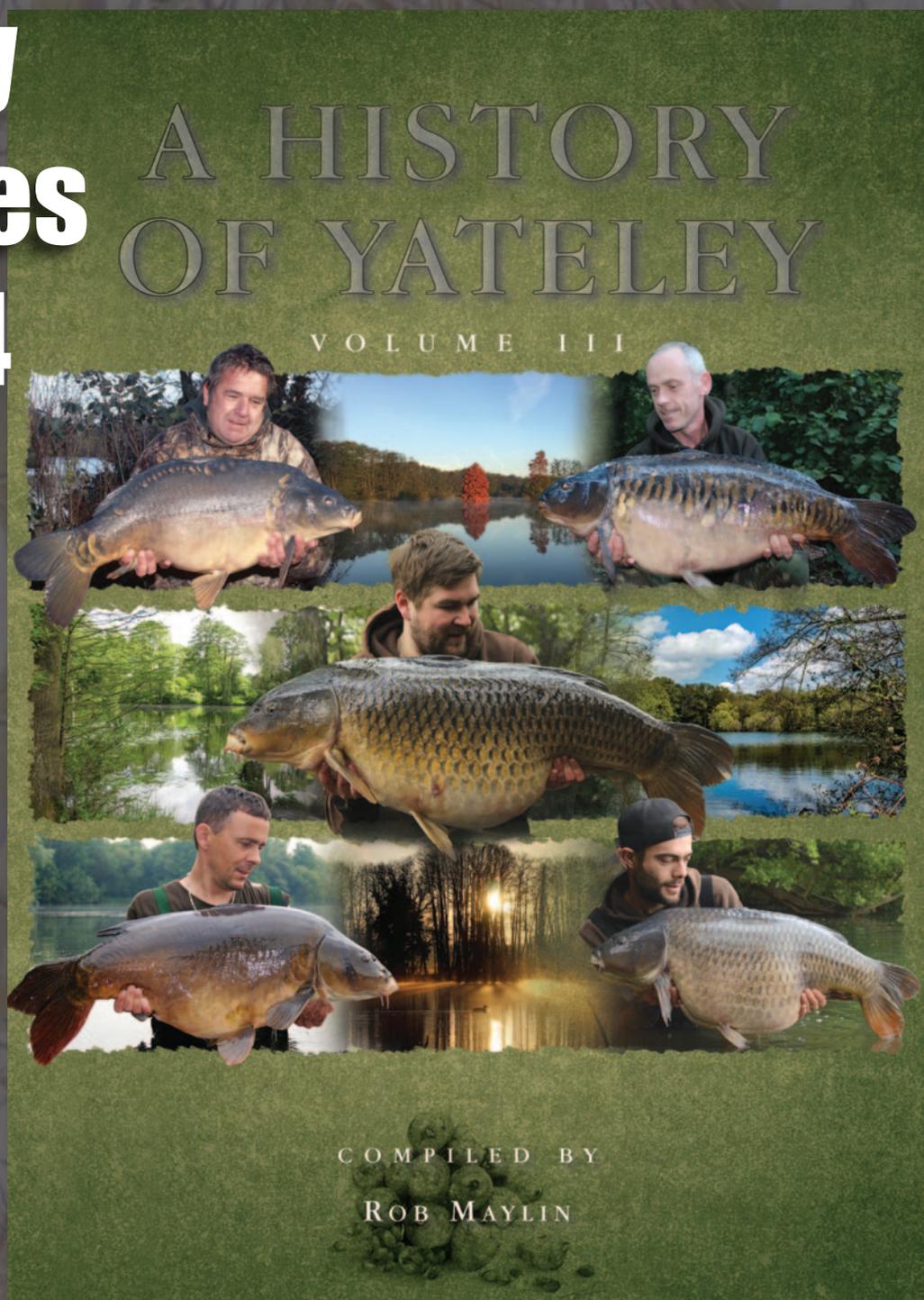
# Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

In the time since the Cemex sell-off, Yateley has had a new lease of life. Although those legendary carp like Basil, Heather and their buddies are now long gone, the new stock has grown and returned Yateley to its former glory. Likewise, its banks may not now be trodden by the likes of Terry Hearn and me, but the anglers that fish Yateley now are just as passionate about the Yateley carp as we were 20 years ago.

Every lake has come on leaps and bounds in this time: The North boasts commons up to 54lb with a handful approaching 50. The Car Park too has numerous good forties. The Split Lake is a real eye-opener with a good head of big fish up to 47lb! You would never have dreamed it. The Pad Lake, South Lake and even the diddy little Horseshoe and Pump House all contain big fish. The Pad has numerous forty-plus.

Over the other side of the road there is a similar story: multiple forties in the Match, some beasts now in the Copse and The Nursery holding fish to 47lb and maybe bigger, as its anglers keep very secret squirrel about what goes on over there. The Nursery is certainly Yateley's secret jewel in the crown.

Hence the reason for this book... It's been six



years since the first two volumes, and the changes are phenomenal, the fish huge, and only living five minutes from the complex, I felt duty bound to record the history further on these lakes, the UK's true heritage waters. The format remains much the same: the page numbers continue through the volumes. Maybe in another ten years, there will be more history to record, even perhaps a Yateley British record... who knows? Now wouldn't that be something?

I have also decided to include the Yateley lakes on the edge of the old Cemex complex, these being Little Moulsham, Mill Lane, Swan Valley and Sandhurst. Each contain their own

treasures including a couple of fifties!

Because of the sheer size of this project and to do justice to all the lakes there will once again be two volumes.

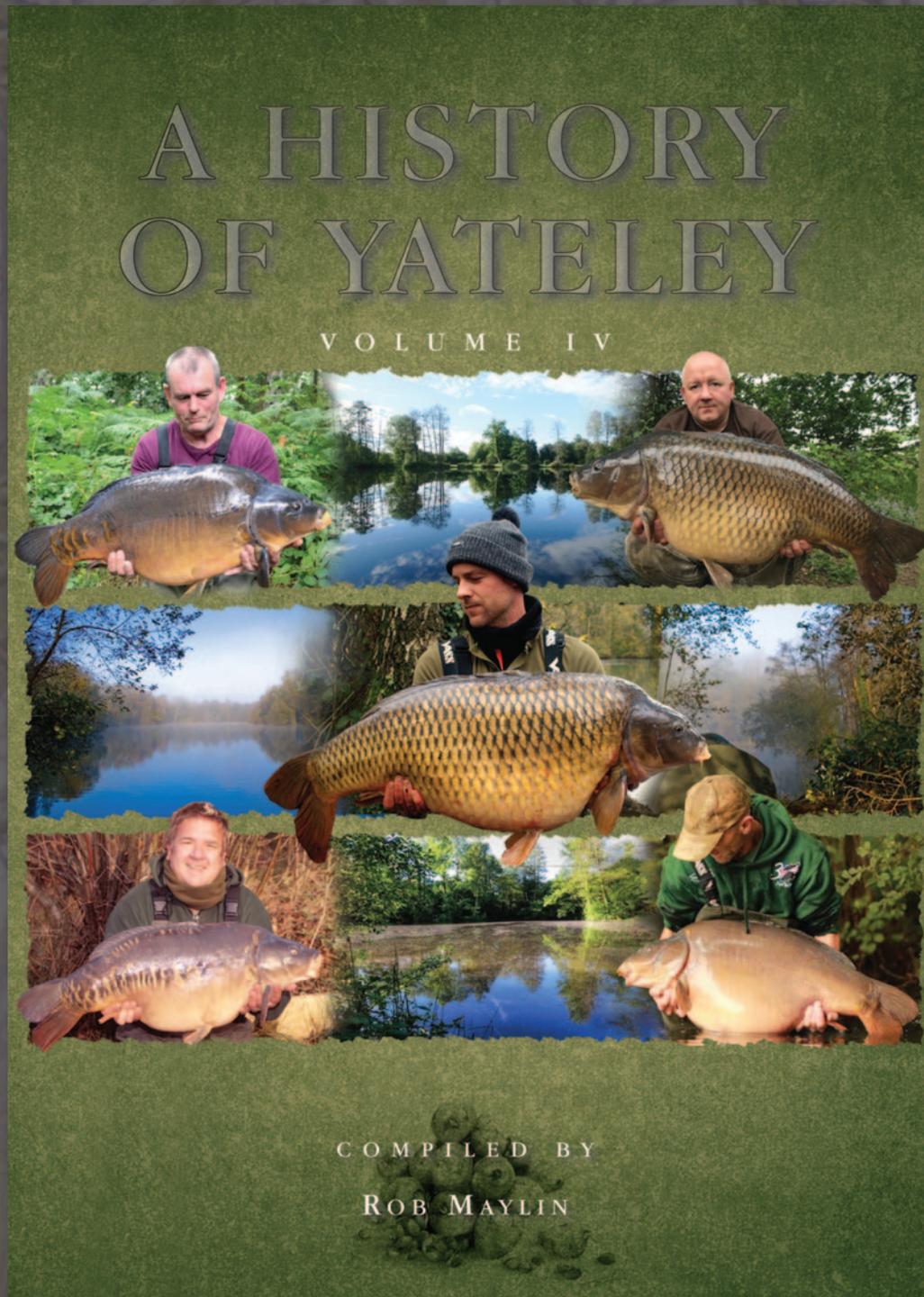
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumhouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

Volume 4 contains the chapters on The South Lake, Match Lake, Copse Lake, Nursery Lake, Sandhurst and Swan Valley.

There are some great introductory pieces from Martin Gardener, owner of Yateley West Fisheries and Ian Gray, Honorary Secretary of Farnham Angling Society, the owners of Yateley East, plus a chapter featuring the famous

Stoney and Friends MacMillan bashes each year. There are stock lists with photos of as many of the new residents as it was possible to get and chapters from the guys who fish there at present – ordinary guys with some great tales to tell of their captures on each of the lakes.

All this is combined with fantastic colour photography throughout, some amazing paintings of each lake and a host of special drawings commissioned for these volumes. These volumes are as much if not more of a work of art as the predecessors. The first two volumes were amazing and received worldwide praise... but dare I say, in my opinion, these two volumes could be even better? A massive thanks to all concerned, and long may Yateley continue! Long live the king of English carp fishing history!



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# Monks Pit Peach

By Robert Crowson

**W**ith work being slack and the full moon due on the Monday night I decided to head down to my syndicate lake Monks pit in Cambridgeshire for a three-night session.

On arriving at the lake early on the Friday morning I was surprised to see no other cars in the car park, happy days I thought to myself, so with plenty of options on offer I spent the next couple of hours walking around the lake scanning the water for signs of fish. Unfortunately, nothing was to be seen which wasn't surprising to be honest considering it was minus two and absolutely freezing!

So, with not much to go on I decided to head down the deep end of the lake and set up in a swim called the swamp, this swim commands a lot of water and has good winter form.

With the air pressure sky high, nudging nearly 1040 zigs seemed to be the obvious plan of attack, so three zigs were cast to areas that I know from previous experience the carp hold up in the winter.

Just after dark three carp rolled in roughly the areas, I was fishing so I hit the sack that night confident I was in the right area and expectant of some action.

Disappointingly though the first night passed by uneventful so with twenty-four hours of the session gone with no joy a different plan of action was needed. With this in mind the zigs were swapped over to my favourite winter tactic, solid bags filled with boilie crumb, maggots and micro pellets. These were all cast to hard clay areas that had served me well on previous sessions.

Just before midnight a screaming take on the left hand rod had me scrambling out of the sleeping bag,

after a short spirited scrap a nice nineteen pound scaley mirror lay in the bottom of the net. A new bag was tied up and cast back to the same spot. At first light the next morning the same rod was away again, just a little ten-pound stockie this time, not really what I was after but Hey Ho a carp is a carp this time of year as they say.

Again, another twenty-four hours passed by with no action and I awoke on the last morning to another heavy frost, the rods completely white and cat ice forming in the margins, not ideal you might say but Monks doesn't always play by the rule book, and you can often still be in with a chance even in the most challenging of conditions.

With the time approaching ten o'clock I thought my chance of any more action had gone and contemplated a slow pack down. Out of the blue and to my surprise I received a





slow twitchy take on my right-hand rod, this proved to be another one of the lakes smaller residents a common of around seventeen pounds.

As soon as I'd dealt with the little common, I had a drop back on the left-hand rod. By the time I'd picked the rod up the fish must have run at least forty yards towards me before I made contact with a solid heavy resistance, it then turned and slowly started heading out towards the middle of the lake taking line from a tight clutch.

This was obviously a completely different animal to anything else I'd hooked that session. However, after

around five minutes or so I'd managed to get it fairly close in. The fish put up quite a battle under the rod tip repeatedly boring down in the deep margin. I still hadn't seen it, but I knew it was big by the sheer amount of water it was moving with huge boils and tail patterns hitting the surface.

Eventually though the pressure told, and a big mirror rolled on the surface, and I managed to glide it into the waiting net first time. I peered into the net to inspect my prize and to be honest I was blown away at what I was looking at it was bloody massive! I gently rolled the fish over to get a

better look, I recognised the scale pattern on its flank and was by now pretty sure which one it was.

With the big mirror safely secured in the net I went and fetched my mate Dan who was fishing a couple of swims down the bank to come and take a look and he confirmed my suspicions it was indeed a fish called the Peach. A big brute of a male and a rare visitor to the bank, not out for over eighteen months and one that had never done a winter capture in the six years or so I'd been a member.

As we laid the fish on the mat, we were both in awe at the size of it and he looked stunning in his winter's colours.

Up on the scales the needle pulled round to an incredible 56lb 8oz! A new pb for me and a new lake record for the mighty Monks pit!

Dan done a grand job with the photos and after we'd returned the fish, I just sat there on the bed chair in a bit of a daze blown away by what had just happened.

My attention then turned to the radio that was still playing in the background and I listened to the DJ explaining that this was Monday January the 17th supposedly blue Monday the most depressing day of the year. I thought not in my world matey I'm absolutely BUZZING! ■



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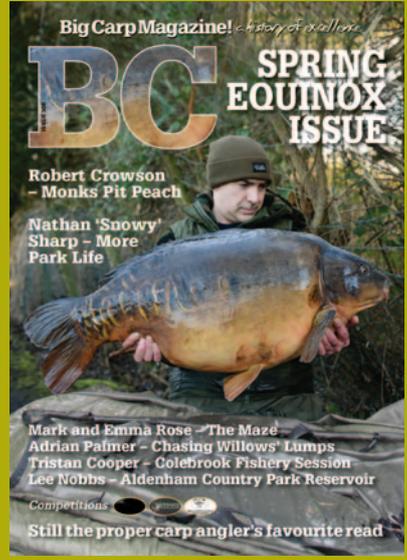
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## Brett White

"It's with the great sadness that I write this to let you know that my great friend Brett White has tragically passed away after a brave fight with cancer.

I speak for the countless people lucky enough to have known Brett, in saying that he was one of the nicest people that you could wish to meet. He was one of the few people who could light up a room when he walked in with his cry of "ALRIGHT". Full of energy and enthusiasm for fishing, Brett was one of the early pioneers, organizing foreign flyaway trips that became known as Whitey Tours, and more recently his Spanish adventures on the River Ebro, a place that he loved so much that he bought a house on its banks. Brett would help anyone out to do anything for a mate, the sort of friend we all need in our lives.. At times like this, life gets put into perspective, a time for reflection .. Bretts passing has left a huge void in my life and those that were lucky enough to know him.. I can't believe that I am saying this , but our thoughts go out to your family at this terrible time... RIP MY FRIEND from all who knew you Martin Locke

Sad news for sure this week as we lost one hell of a character as Brett White passed away.

There have been so many remarkable words shared about Brett. He was a fighter for sure and was always one for messing around. Always positive and smiling. I feel privileged to have met him and been in his company. If you have a spare moment and have not seen Brett on the Korda Podcast, link below, then take a look. This will give you an insight of what he was like. Such a loss to many a heart he dearly touched. So, rest easy Mesun! No more pain and suffering Duke. Until we meet again.





# IN THE MIX

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FREE LINE  
MAGAZINE

# CARP CHAT

Carpy News

## Angling Trust welcomes hard hitting Commons pollution report

The increasing threat of pollution of rivers in England is once again in the spotlight with the publication today of a hard hitting report on water quality by MPs on the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee (EAC). Their report concludes that poor water quality in our rivers is a result of chronic under-investment and multiple failures in monitoring, governance and enforcement - all areas highlighted by the Angling Trust and partners who have been pressing for urgent action to halt the decline.

The EAC report states: "Only 14% of English rivers meet good ecological status, with pollution from agriculture, sewage, roads and single-use plastics contributing to a dangerous 'chemical cocktail' coursing through our waterways. Not a single river in England has received a clean bill of health for chemical contamination."

They point to a lack of commitment by successive governments in tackling pollution saying: "There has been a lack of political will to improve water quality, with successive governments, water companies and regulators seemingly turning a blind eye to antiquated practices of dumping sewage and other pollutants in

rivers."

It concludes that the country's sewerage infrastructure is not fit for purpose and recommends a 'step change' in approach from both Ofwat, the water regulator, and the Environment Agency and an end to paying bonuses to executives of the worst polluting water companies.

They say: "The Committee calls for a step change in regulatory action, water company investment, and cross-catchment collaboration to restore rivers to good ecological health, protect biodiversity and adapt to a changing climate. MPs are demanding far more assertive regulation and enforcement from Ofwat and the Environment Agency. The report recommends that Ofwat examine the powers it may have to limit the payment of bonuses to water company executives until widespread permit breaches cease."

Environmental Audit Committee Chairman, Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP, said: "Rivers are the arteries of nature and must be protected. Our inquiry has uncovered multiple failures in the monitoring, governance and enforcement of water quality. For too long, the Government, regulators and the water industry have allowed a Victo-

rian sewerage system to buckle under increasing pressure."

Responding to the report, Martin Salter, Head of Policy at the Angling Trust said: "Phillip Dunne and his colleagues have pulled no punches in their condemnation of the state of England's once beautiful rivers. The lethal cocktail of sewage and agricultural pollution is slowly choking the life out of these natural assets and successive governments have been reluctant to release the investment needed to properly and safely treat increasing volumes of sewage from a growing population. They have also failed to take action against those farmers, and others, who wilfully use our rivers as open drains."

Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust added: "This report from MPs exposes the systemic failure in how we manage our water in England. Nothing short of a revolution is needed. The government, regulators, water companies, and the way we manage our land, are all at fault. All need to be part of the solution. With freshwater ecosystems and species among the fastest declining environments on the planet, those solutions need to come quickly, the time for waiting and more discussion is over."

The Committee wrote to the DEFRA Secretary of State in October submitting views on the upcoming Strategic Policy Statement Guidance for water regulator Ofwat.

The Committee called for increased emphasis on wastewater treatment in capital spending plans for water companies, including nature-based solutions. They referenced the call for increased investment in the Time to Fix our Broken Water Sector report produced by the Angling Trust and Salmon and Trout Conservation last September. ■



# Polypipe gets in line to help environmental charity

Plastic piping solutions manufacturer Polypipe Building Products is pitching in to help keep the nation's waterways free of leftover fishing lines – in order to protect wildlife and the environment.

A team of volunteers from the staff at Polypipe toolmakers Mason Pinder, in Doncaster, worked over a weekend to create more than 100 plastic bins from Polypipe stock which will be used to collect unwanted fishing line across the UK.

The bins have been donated to the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme (ANLRS) which distributes them across the country. Discarded lines can pose a serious threat to wildlife around our rivers and lakes or on the coast, and the only previous alternative for disposal was landfill or incineration.

ANLRS ensures that all donated line is safely recycled.

It was Polypipe Building Products' Technical Director and keen angler Adrian Bristow who came up with the idea that the Doncaster-based company could offer to help the ANLRS.

He said: "We were very happy to be able to offer some practical help for this worthy cause.

"At Polypipe we are committed to attaining the very highest standards of sustainability and environmental protection and this donation is a small part of our efforts in 2021.

"I would like to thank the volunteers who gave up their time to help make this possible in what was a real team effort."

Viv Shears, co-founder of ANLRS which is funded entirely by donations and run by volunteers, said: "A massive thank you to Adrian and the band



Adrian Bristow – Technical Director – on the left and Derek Howe – Development Technologist on the right.

of Polypipe volunteers!

"The incredible donation from Polypipe has allowed us to make more pipe bins available and the funds raised from their sale will all be put back into the scheme allowing us to expand even further.

"The support of companies like Polypipe allows us – and our volunteers collecting discarded line – to make a significant impact into the damage that line can cause to wildlife."

For Polypipe news see <https://www.polypipe.com/news> – to

find out more about the ANLRS email [Anglersnlrs@gmail.com](mailto:Anglersnlrs@gmail.com) or visit [www.anglers-nlrs.co.uk](http://www.anglers-nlrs.co.uk)

**About Polypipe:**

Polypipe designs, develops and manufactures the most comprehensive range of plastic piping products in the UK, with more than 20,000 products available.

The primary focus of Polypipe is on developing and supporting pragmatic product systems through specific knowledge and understanding of the residential, commercial, civils and infrastructure market sectors.

Customers can trust Polypipe's significant sales and technical expertise to provide value engineered, fit for purpose piping solutions for the growing diversity and complexity of construction and building technology challenges they face.

For more information, please visit [www.polypipe.com](http://www.polypipe.com). ■



Polypipe volunteers working on the bins.



## Natural England back down over Hoveton fish barrier removals should harm occur to bream spawning areas

After determined action by solicitors at Fish Legal, on behalf of the Angling Trust and the Broads Angling Services Group (BASG), Natural England have accepted a previously disputed permit condition. This will now require the controversial fish barriers that they are installing at the entrance to Norfolk's Hoveton Great Broad to be removed should harm to fish stocks be detected at this important spawning site for bream and other coarse fish.

This is the second successful challenge by Fish Legal to the decision by the Environment Agency in East Anglia to grant Natural England a permit to block off the major spawning site for fish at Hoveton Great Broad in the northern Norfolk Broads in order to combat turbidity and promote better weed growth. The permit was granted despite formal objections from the Environment Agency's own fisheries staff backed up by seven years' worth of fish surveys, studies and tagging costing more than £250,000 of rod licence and taxpayers' money.

In November 2020, anglers won the first round in their battle to save this important spawning site when the Environment Agency announced that it was conceding the first of four grounds in a judicial review lodged by Fish Legal. This included "unfair and unlawful public consultation as evidenced by the failure to place rele-

vant information, including the objections from Environment Agency fishery staff, in the public domain."

The previously 'hidden' Environment Agency Fisheries Team advice stated:

"It follows that the proposed bio-manipulation methodology, involving the installation of fish proof barriers to prevent fish accessing the habitats currently found within HGB [Hoveton Great Broad] carries a high risk of detrimental impacts to the fish populations of both HGB and the Northern Broads system."

Following a second consultation the Environment Agency eventually bowed to pressure from Natural England and granted permission for controversial fish barriers to be installed with a tough condition that Natural England tried to claim was unenforceable. They have now conceded to the condition and compliance will be closely monitored by local angling interests and Environment Agency fisheries staff.

In a letter to both Natural England and the Environment Agency, Fish Legal solicitor Justin Neal clarified the legal position of Condition 9 as follows:

"Natural England had said in their application documents that the condition requiring that the barriers be removed if they cause environmental damage was unenforceable. That was extremely concerning as it would

mean the barriers would not be removed even if bream numbers crashed because they had been expelled from their spawning grounds. However, they now say the condition is enforceable

He concluded:

"Therefore, we now hold Natural England and the Environment Agency to this interpretation. If, once the project is undertaken, the Environment Agency determines that significant environmental harm is occurring to fish populations in the River Bure system as a result of the exclusion of fish from Hoveton Great Broad and/or Hudson's Bay, Natural England will be required to open the gates in the three barriers to allow fish into Hoveton Great Broad and/or Hudson's Bay."

The news was welcomed by Kelvin Allen, Chair of the Broads Angling Services Group who said:

"This places the Broads Fishery on a sustainable footing moving forwards and through these legal challenges we have made some significant progress, but much more is needed in the coming months working in partnership."

Martin Salter, Head of Policy at the Angling Trust added:

"Faced with the prospect of further action, Natural England have now conceded that the permit conditions are enforceable and that action can be taken to save fish stocks that are threatened by their hare brained scheme. The Environment Agency, whose fisheries experts opposed these plans from the start, now have to do their job in assessing the project for environmental harm. We will be watching the situation intensely and the moment any problems are identified, the barriers must be opened up to allow fish to enter and complete their spawning cycles.

"I have reminded the Environment Agency that they have a statutory duty to improve and protect fisheries and we will hold them to this. It is good news that Natural England are now severely constrained by these permit conditions and we will ensure that they comply. With BASG a key part of the monitoring process both the Angling Trust and Fish Legal will remain on standby to support them and to intervene again if required." ■



# PREPARE TO BE SURPRISED



**INC** 6000 & 8000

With ultra-durability and exceptional reliability and performance, the Inception is a carp reel that will exceed your expectations. Available as 6000 and 8000, 'The INC' really is a reel you can use rigorously for the years ahead.

That's because at Okuma we not only understand the importance of having the right tackle for the job but also tackle that you can 100% rely on.

| Compact body | Long Stroke spool 30mm | Corrosion-resistant graphite body | 3 ball bearing +1 roller bearing | Quick Set infinite anti-reverse system  
| Machine cut aluminium spool | 2 round metal line clips | Rigid metal handle with wooden knob | Worm shaft oscillation system | Machined cut brass pinion gear  
| Heavy duty, solid aluminium bail wire | RESII: Computer-balanced rotor system | Even Flow line roller | Rotor brake system | Fast progressive drag

**okuma**  
INSPIRED FISHING

## GO Outdoors and Fishing Republic give Angling Trust their backing



The Angling Trust is delighted to announce that leisure and tackle retailers GO Outdoors and Fishing Republic have become our latest Retail Associate members.

The partnership will see GO Outdoors and Fishing Republic support the Trust's work, especially our campaigns to protect rivers and coastal waters from pollution and initiatives to get more people into fishing.

Marie Stewart, Partnership Accounts Manager at JD Outdoor, said:

"We are delighted to be partnered with the Angling Trust. We aim to support the Trust in any way we can so that they continue to carry out the invaluable work they do for the angling industry and anglers across the country. We are particularly keen to back both their Anglers Against Pollution campaign and their work to introduce more people to fishing, especially at a time when protection of the environment is more important than ever."

Fishing Republic have 21 outlets inside GO Outdoors stores across the country, with plans to install a further 30 outlets next year. They also have three standalone stores in Birmingham, Barnsley and Crewe.

With a purpose "to inspire and

equip everyone for life outdoors", GO Outdoors stock a huge range of great value items for walkers, campers and anglers in its stores and online.

As part of the agreement, GO Outdoors and Fishing Republic are offering Angling Trust members a 10% discount on items in store and online. Members can find more details, including discount code, when they login to the Angling Trust website.

John Cheyne, Angling Trust's Head of Marketing, Communications & Membership, said:

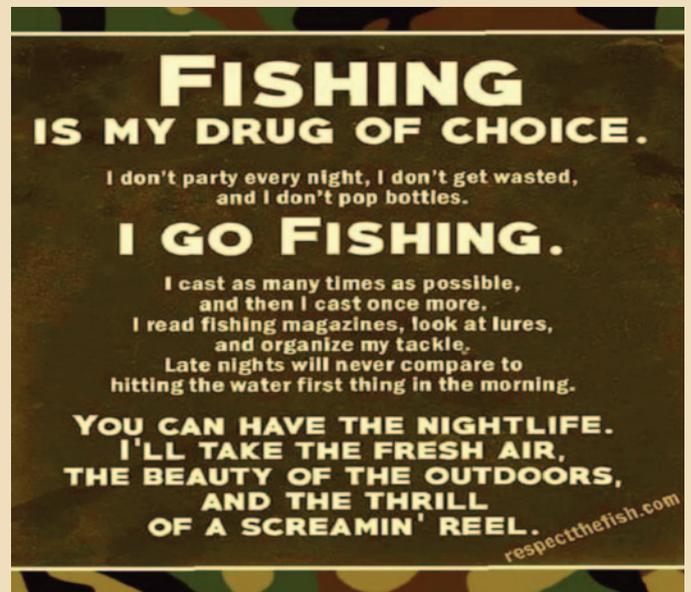
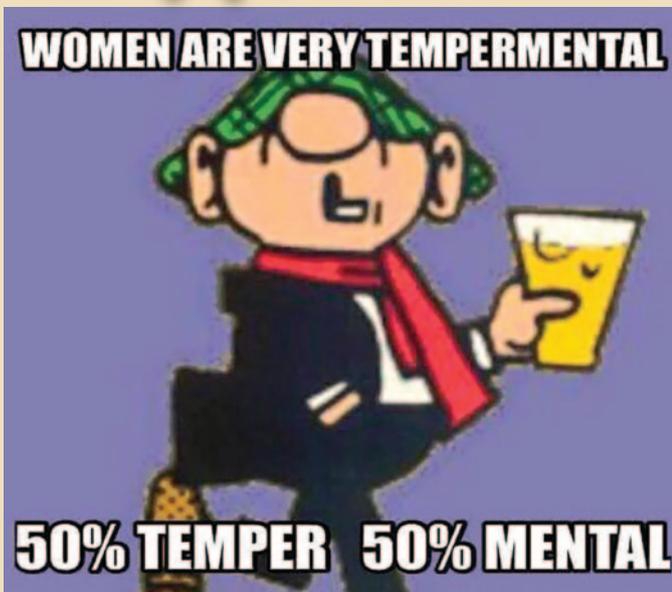
"GO Outdoors stores are a 'destina-

tion' shopping experience that almost every family in the country will visit at one time or another. The fact that they are expanding their angling offering is brilliant news for our sport and is another example of how fishing is growing in popularity and is reaching a new audience who are keen to experience and engage with our natural environment.

We are delighted to welcome GO Outdoors and Fishing Republic on board as Angling Trust members and look forward to working with them in the future." ■



## Carp Humour



## After a successful launch in 2019, the Angling Trust in partnership with the Environment Agency, is pleased to announce a new Get Fishing Fund for 2022

An additional £100,000 of fishing licence income has been made available as part of a new Get Fishing Fund which opens for applications on Monday 17th January.

Angling clubs, fisheries and other organisations can apply for up to £2,500. Funding is for fishing tackle, equipment or other items to help run events and activities that create more opportunities for people to get into fishing. The type of items that can and cannot be funded are listed on the Get Fishing Fund page at [www.anglingtrust.net/funding/get-fishing-fund](http://www.anglingtrust.net/funding/get-fishing-fund).

Applications are judged on a weekly basis, therefore funds may be allocated before the deadline of Friday 17th March. Last year, the Get Fishing Fund was incredibly popular. Do not delay in applying! The Get Fishing Fund has already supported 140 projects all over the



Shakespeare is the Exclusive Fishing Tackle Partner of the Angling Trust's 'Get Fishing' campaign to get more people fishing, more often. There's no fish like your first fish. And nobody knows that better than Shakespeare. As more and more newcomers discover the joy of fishing, Shakespeare will be there, providing the gear and inspiration to make sure that the next bite will never be the last.

### Funded by rod fishing licences



Going fishing is about much more than catching fish. It's a low-cost, fun and healthy way for families and friends to spend time together outside in nature.



Angling Direct is the Exclusive Retail Partner of the Angling Trust's 'Get Fishing' campaign to get more people fishing, more often. This partnership encourages more people to take up angling for the first time, to get back into the sport and brings the health and wellbeing benefits of fishing to a wider audience, across all age groups.



The Environment Agency funds the Angling Trust to provide more opportunities for people to go fishing and encourage sales of fishing rod licences. Money from fishing licence sales is spent on improving fisheries habitat and angling infrastructure through projects like the Angling Improvement Fund.

### Get Fishing

Get Fishing is the Angling Trust's campaign to get more people fishing more often. It's funded by the Environment Agency from fishing licence income and Sport England to encourage regular participation and diversity in sport.

**The Get Fishing Fund is only available for clubs, fisheries and organisations in England.**

The Angling Trust is a representative body for all anglers in England and Wales. Our members support the campaigns we carry out to protect fish and fishing and our programmes to increase participation. We are recognised by Sport England as the national governing body in England and promote active lifestyles and maintaining a regular angling habit. We are united in a collaborative relationship with Fish Legal, a separate membership association that uses the law to protect fish stocks and the rights of its members throughout the UK. Joint membership packages with Fish Legal are available for individuals, clubs, fisheries and other categories. ■

**NEW**



**‘Nut just any hookbait...’**



- Stand-out, specially boosted hookbaits in a handy 500ml jar
- Cooked in thick, Tiger Nut or sweet & salty syrup
- Natural colours, Preservative Free



**NEW**



**Shrimp up  
your bait...**



- For glugging PVA, hookbaits & spod mixes
- Contains fermented Shrimp
- Proven flavour
- PVA friendly, water soluble
- Classic proven attractor

**1litre**

## Environment Agency delivers major fisheries improvements funded by rod licence income

Today (12 January), the Environment Agency has published its Annual Fisheries Report revealing that over 1 million licence sales in 2020/21 funded improvements to the environment and fish habitats.

Over 1 million (1,090,068) fishing licences were sold to anglers between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, generating £24,583,342 in income which has been reinvested into incident response, enforcement action and habitat improvements to support fisheries.

This income was further boosted by government funding and partner contributions, allowing the EA to deliver a major investment of £33 million through the Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) to enhance the environment which fish stocks rely on to survive.

The report outlines how licence income supported fish restocking across the country which helps fish populations to recover following environmental incidents. Almost 500,000 coarse fish were stocked into rivers and still waters around the country, including over 130,000 barbel and almost 82,000 roach.

Licence sales also helped to fund 45 fish pass projects, opening up rivers to encourage the free movement of fish. Installing structures to bypass obstacles, such as weirs, allows fish to access new feeding areas and breeding ground to spawn successfully.

As inclusivity is a key pillar of the EA's National Angling Strategy, the additional income from increased licence sales has been used to benefit the growing angling community and make the sport accessible for all. This includes the construction of facilities for less able anglers such as accessible toilets, safer platforms for wheelchair users and improved access to fisheries sites.

The EA worked in collaboration with partners, such as the Angling Trust, the Angling Trades Association and the Canal and Rivers Trust, to encourage more people to give angling a go. The relaunch of the Take a Friend Fishing initiative (TAFF) encouraged over 3,000 licence holders to take a friend fishing. Licence income was also used to support the training of new coaches and facilitate 495 participation events which saw around 5,000 people try fishing for the



first time Kevin Austin, Deputy Director for Fisheries at the Environment Agency, said: "It's fantastic to see that over a million people went fishing last year and are recognising the benefits of this sport. The Environment Agency uses licence income to maintain, improve and develop fisheries across the country.

"Whether it's preventing illegal fishing and poaching, responding to incidents or safeguarding habitats – all licence income is invested directly back into our fisheries and angling services.

"When you buy a licence you help us continue this vital work and create new opportunities for anglers."

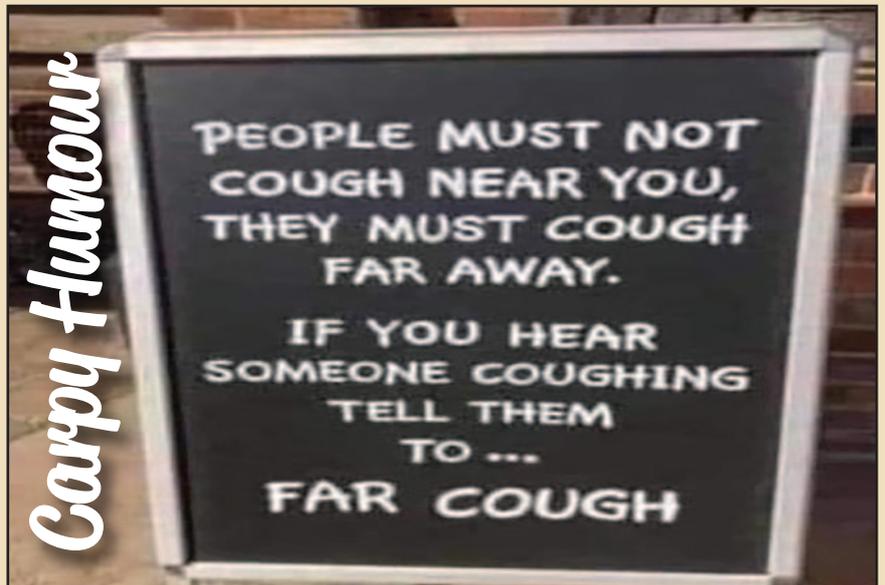
### During 2020/21, fisheries licence income funded:

- 119 fish stock surveys
- 17,106 fishing licence checks carried out by Environment Agency enforcement teams with the support of the Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS). 867 offence reports were issued, and 340 anglers were prosecuted for fishing without a licence EA response to 391 incidents involving dead or dying fish, including reports of pollution and fish disease Improvements to fish habitats on 575km of rivers in England
- Supply and stocking of almost 500,000 coarse fish including barbel, roach, bream, tench and

grayling

- Initiatives to provides facilities to anglers, encourage more people into the sport and make fishing more accessible for all
- Work with over 1,200 project partners to improve fisheries and angling facilities
- The Angling Improvement Fund (AIF) managed by the Angling Trust to protect fisheries from predators, such as cormorants and otters
- Improvements to over 153 hectares of still water fisheries
- Monitoring, research, and development work to deliver sustainable fisheries management
- Vital work at the National fisheries laboratory at Brampton, to check the health of fish stocks and minimise the risk of spreading fish diseases
- The EA has created a digital fishing licence, which allows anglers to purchase and display licences on their smartphones. This not only simplifies the process for anglers but has reduced spend on producing licences, allowing even more income to be spent on improving angling services.

You must purchase a fishing licence to fish in England and Wales. All income from fishing licence sales is reinvested to support the vital work of the Environment Agency to improve and develop fisheries across the country. Annual licences start from £30 and can be purchased online or by phone, more information can be found here. ■



*Carpny Humour*



## More Pipe Bins

### Berwickshire Marine Reserve, Scotland

Lauren and the team at the marine reserve up on the southeast coast of Scotland heard about the pipe bin project and wanted to get involved. They purchased 4 bins via the ANLRS shop, and these have now been installed at 4 coastal locations throughout the length of the reserve.

The 4 bin locations are:

**Eyemouth Harbour** - TD14 5SD (bin is positioned on the red bridge)

**St Abbs Harbour** - TD1 4 5PW (bin is located in the car park opposite Ebb Carrs Cafe)

**Coldingham Beach** - TD14 5PA (beside the public toilets)

**Weasel Loch Coastal Path outside of Eyemouth** - TD14 5BE (at the top of the steps down to Weasel Loch)





## Other News

### Gardner Tackle sponsor Portishead Marina bins

Hannah, from Gardner Tackle, has always been a great supporter of the scheme and approached her local Portishead Marina over in Somerset to see if they would like to put a couple of bins in the area around the marina and where anglers fish from the adjoining rocks.

They were very receptive and we are delighted to say there are two bins in place and these were bought by the Gardner Tackle team. Massive thanks to Hannah and we wlook forward to seeing how much the bins collect over the coming months. As per normal all the materials will be taken back to Gardner HQ and collected by the scheme when driving past their Guildford unit.



## New Returns Address

In the last newsletter we announced the new address for all returns and correspondence. In a oversight by ourselves the PO Box address wasn't much use for Parcel Force or other couriers so please use the following addresses depending on how you are returning line to us

### Parcel Force & Couriers

ANLRS, 12 Rosedene Close, Brighton BN2 6LE

### Envelopes and Royal Mail

ANLRS, PO Box 96, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 8BU



# ESSEX CARP SHOW

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**trakker**  
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## New Supporters

**A big ANLRS welcome** to the following shops, clubs, fisheries and other businesses that have signed up since our last newsletter and now have bins in place for customers to recycle their old line, braid and spools via the scheme. Since the easing of lockdown the response from both fisheries and tackle shops has been brilliant as you can see below:

### Fisheries & Angling Clubs:

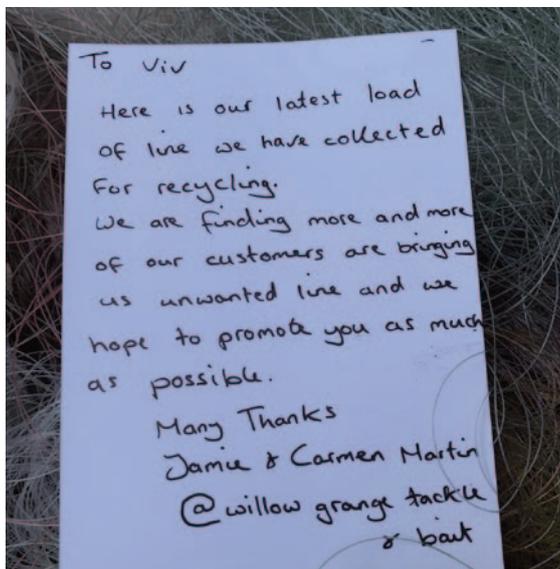
Press Manor Fishing Lakes  
Manor Farm Lakes  
Brasside Pond  
Jubilee Lakes & Anglers Lodge  
Thornwood Trout Fishery  
Dever Springs Trout Fishery  
Pochard Lake Fishery  
Tyram Fisheries  
Bells Mill Fishery  
Ledyatt Trout Fishery  
Seven Lakes Fishery  
Docking AC  
Combwich Ponds  
Stanley & District AC  
Barton Fish Pond  
Port Sunlight AC  
Leckford Estate Fishery  
Keighley Angling Club  
Winsford & District AA  
Willow Lakes Fishery  
Burton Farm Fishery

### Other non angling business sign ups:

The Environment Centre  
Zero Waste on Wheels  
The Wee Shop

### Tackle Shops:

Tackle Dynamic  
Outlaw Pro  
Jakeman Sports  
Baits & Weights Rhyl  
Fleetwood Fishing Supplies  
Valley Baits Ltd  
CW Fishing Supplies Ltd  
Fishing Tackle Direct UK  
Dial a Bait  
The Lure Lodge  
John Norris of Penrith  
The Keen Angler  
Simply Pets & Angling Supplies  
Nonstop Angling  
Churchgate Tackle & Lakes  
Quay Sports Fishing Tackle Store  
Metcalfe's Fishing Tackle  
Reefers Fishing tackle  
Matts Bait & Tackle Ltd  
Tyneside Angling Ltd  
Westbury Tackle  
Tees Sea Weights





<p>SAVE £3.65</p> <p>ANLRS Monomaster Bundle</p> <p>£20.00</p>	<p>ANLRS Monomaster</p> <p>£17.95</p>	<p>Pin badge</p> <p>£3.00</p>	<p>NEW</p> <p>ANLRS Olive T Shirt</p> <p>£11.50</p>
<p>Spread the word</p> <p>ANLRS A5 leaflets FREE</p> <p>£1.00 £0.00</p>	<p>Large ANLRS seat box sticker</p> <p>£3.25</p>	<p>ANLRS Pipe Bin</p> <p>£62.00</p>	<p>Carp Spirit D-Spool Line Stripper</p> <p>£8.00</p>

## Online shop & new items

In the last few months, we have added a couple of fantastic items in the form of the new ANLRS pin badge and a branded monomaster waste line gadget.

The **pin badge** is a classy addition to any outfit and certainly one way to show your support for the scheme along with promoting it to others.

The **ANLRS monomaster** is a great addition to any tackle bag whether boat fishing, chasing trout with flies or coarse fishing and can be clipped to any tackle bag with a split ring or carabina. It is a small spinning tube that you can wind all those redundant hooklinks, tags ends and old leaders onto safely storing them until you return home. Once full its simply a case of popping the top off, removing the brush and snipping along its length to remove the line ready for the next visit to your nearest recycling bin.

We are doing a **bundle offer for £20** at present for a Monomaster, Pin Badge, Car Sticker and Tackle box sticker that saves you £3.65. Have a look at all we offer [via the shop](#).

Sales have been good in the last few months with the line strippers being most popular and please remember **every penny of profit goes back into the scheme and helps us continue our work.**

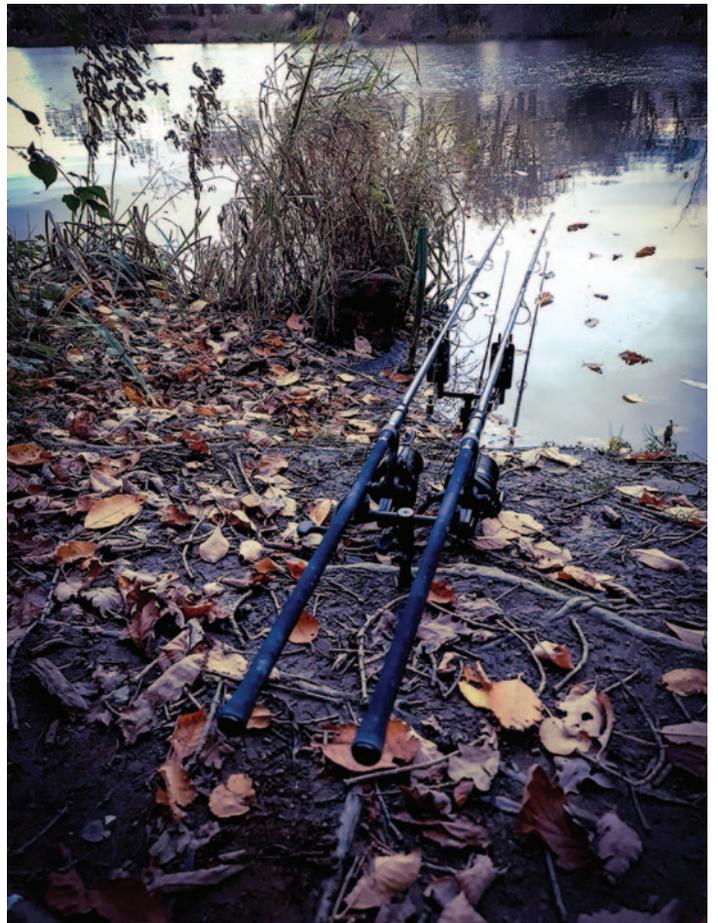


The open box still 150 and we incl that con



## Mighty Mirror

After taking advantage of the unusual warm spell on a recent Sunday in Sheffield, I decided to try luck on my local syndicate. With nothing showing whilst having a walk round, I opted for a peg we call The Fridge, as the cold air always blows through it. Fishing at short range with a Madbait pear drops pop-up over RNT and Wicked Whites, my right-hand rod melted off, resulting in a lovely looking mirror weighing in at 18lb 4oz  
Peter Conn @Carper\_and\_son



What about this mega 54lb Wraysbury 1 North Lake mirror banked by Ian Russell Carp Angler! It's the largest fish in the lake and proved to be the jewel of the session that also included three other cracking carp - all taken on our soon-to-be-released 12mm Monster Tiger Nut pop-ups fished over a load of Frenzier Hemp and sweetcorn. These new 12mm MTN baits have now helped him bank the largest common AND mirror from the North Lake... GET IN CHEMO!



## WIN A HOLIDAY FOR TWO

Our good friends Steve and Sandy Bond have put up a fantastic competition prize in Big Carp to celebrate Big Carp's 250th issue. Here's your chance to win a Holiday for two including food at Lake Bossard.

And it could not be simpler to enter... All, you have to do is go to the BOSSARD Facebook page...

- 1 You must like the Bossard page.
- 2 You must like and share this competition.
- 3 And just write "Done" in the comments.



Closing date is  
1st June 2022.

Good luck!



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MONSTERFRENCHCARP.COM



# U F B

**Starmer Baits**  
giving you the edge!  
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**starmertd.com**

# UFB

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# The History of Carp Fishing in Oxfordshire

Paul Harris and Geoff Adams

Carp fishing has a very rich history. In the early days of it becoming popular, Kent and the Colne Valley were the hot beds of our fledgling pastime and of course there was the legendary Redmire Pool.

Into the new Millennium and one area above all others exploded onto the scene, this was of course Oxfordshire. The quality of the stock of carp in this county was incredible but where did these beautiful scaly beasts come from? When did the Leney's get stocked? What were the origins of the famous Linch Hill fish and what of the history of the now infamous Linear Fisheries? Over the course of the pages of this book all will be revealed as Paul and Geoff have put together the facts of how these lakes were stocked and also banded together many successful local anglers, some of which have never published any of their catches, who tell their fishing tales on these stunning lakes.

With more than 300 pictures of some of this country's finest ever carp and several full page maps, this huge volume tells the story of Oxfordshire's carp fishing history whilst still leaving a little bit of mystery for your imagination!

Included within the pages of this book is the foreword written by local legendary angler and former tackle dealer Joe Taylor. We have chapters from Paul Kitchin on the legendary Vauxhall Lake. David Brian Williams tells us the story of the lakes in the City of Oxford itself! Chris Robinson has written an incredible chapter on two of Dorchester's lakes. Orchid and The Lagoon. The history told in Chris' chapter on these lakes is just incredible and wait until you see the pictures!

Next door to The Lagoon is Dorchester's Alliance Club Lake and Joe Forrester tells his story of the incredible scaly carp that inhabited this lake and how he outwitted them.

We have a real coup in the fact that brilliant all-round Oxford angler John Everard agreed to be interviewed and he has an incredible amount of historical information to share, as has Gerald Stratford who is also included in this informative chapter.

No book about Oxfordshire's carp fishing history would be complete without the story of Oxford's first forty and what a story it is. Richard 'Paddy' Paradine has never written or published any of his catches before and we have his interview here for you of his historic catch which was kept under the radar for so long.

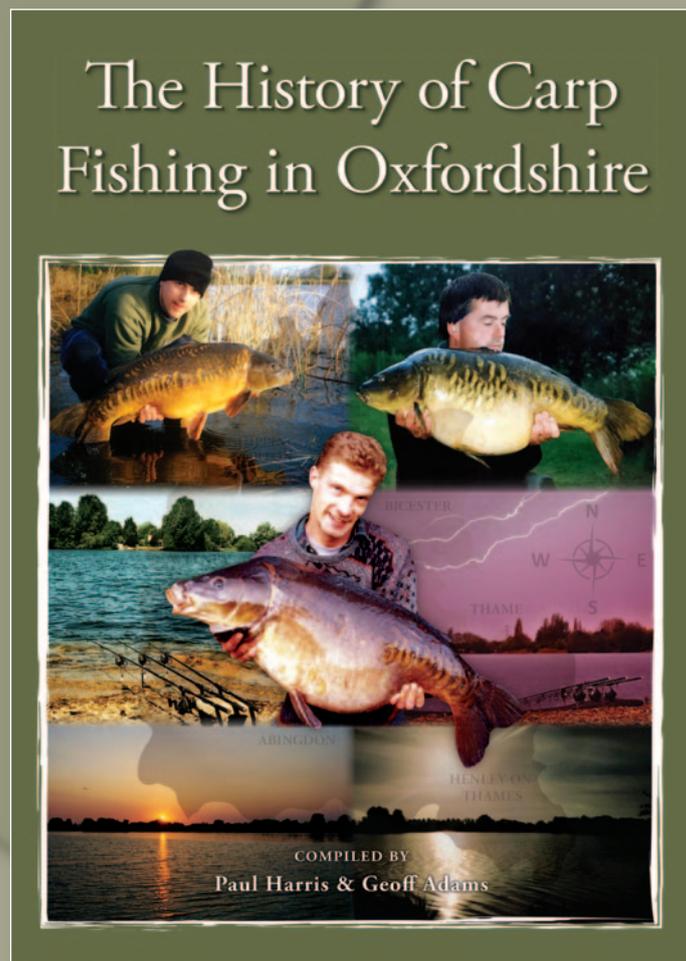
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing on The Leisure Park was back in the day when the Leney's were still about and culminates with his capture of The Big Leney at its biggest ever weight, the iconic 'Paddy's Fish'.

We have brilliant chapters on Newlands from Ginger Robinson and Milton Pools from Stuart Rothwell. Danny Aplin has written about his time on Linch Hill which will just blow you away! His pictures alone are worth purchasing this book.

Nick Franklin has written a lovely chapter on one of Oxfordshire's little known lakes and his account really hits home that carp fishing isn't always about the numbers game. Sometimes it's just you fishing for the unknown! There are superb chapters on Manor Farm from Paul Hathaway and St Johns from Stewart Roper.

If that wasn't enough Paul and Geoff have wrote chapters themselves which cover the stocking history of lakes, how the gravel company ARC played such a big part in the early stockings of Oxford's lakes, the early days of Linch Hill and Linear Fisheries and facts and stories regarding Oxford's other lakes, some very off the radar!

If you like your history, you like carp fishing and love stories of beautiful scaly carp, there is only one book to purchase this year. Here it is...



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**A V A I L A B L E N O W**

# The Incarcerated Carper

By Marc Lyons

**I** first thought of writing this article when sitting in a French jail cell not long after my 30th birthday. While sitting there biting my nails and wondering how long it would be before carping was a possibility let alone a thought, my cell door swung open to the sight of a gnarly old miserable flic (prison guard) slowly slurping out the words (in broken English), "Get your stuff and get out." This was not before the routine strip search, may I add. So from the land of onions, berets and big arse jails to quiet, calm, glass-like mirrored images of a Cheshire mere.

Astbury Mere was the chosen destination. Now let tell you a wee bit about this large expanse of water. Astbury mere was created within a former sand and gravel extraction pit, which has been fully restored to provide a mature lake. In total the lake extends to some 44 acres, and is a very attractive piece of water, set in a



slight valley surrounded in part by trees. This water is extremely attractive with many bars and shelves, some of which you can clearly see. Astbury Mere is owned by SOTAS, and is shared by the local sailing club, so if visiting here bear this in mind.

So there I was starting out on a fairly vast body of water wondering

where to start, but I wasn't here to fish, as this was my first trip, but to lead about and trickle in some bait. The day was one of the hottest days of that year, and I couldn't have picked a better time to be here because the majority of the stock was clearly visible from the high bank outside the information office. As I sat there about 40ft higher than the lake on a sloping hill next to a big blue bear on a sort of totem pole (god only knows why it's there), I watched a group of around six carp cruise up and down the margins as if they were ocean going cruise liners. They were big, bold, and beautiful – nice dark commons, leviathans in their own right, and at that exact moment I knew one or more would be gracing the filet stitch on my net. It would only be a matter of time I thought... It was inevitable.

So with this in mind I left the big blue bear and set off, marker rod in hand and a rolled smoke behind my ear. On my way round it became clear that I wouldn't be alone. Besides a fair few carpers there was a high number of tourists visiting plus locals and their water loving hounds. After a few hours leading about and introducing my chosen bait (5kg of GLM) I was well aware that this place is deep,





deep to say the least. It's over 70ft in places, and at times I'd think my lead had hit deep beds of weed, as I couldn't feel it hit bottom. But it wasn't weed; it was just that the lead hadn't touched down yet. You would find yourself waiting 30 or 40 seconds to feel that telltale thud. These depths felt crazy to me; it was a whole new



ballgame than I was used to, fishing small local estate lakes with depths of around 8ft.

Right then, I knew it was game face time. So with this in mind I headed home to make plans and get my armoury together. My plan was to stay light and stay mobile, but due to other commitments it would be a few weeks before I could return. So when I finally did return at about 8.30 on a Saturday morning. There didn't seem to be much presence on the lake at that time. I had a few places in mind from my previous trip, so off I went pushing the CP through those wooden gates leading down to the path. With my ever-faithful companion Whip (the whippet) tied loosely to the handle of the barrow, I came to a peg on the westward facing bank with the boathouse to my left and the curry house (yes I said a curry house) far in front of me. Three rods were out: two on hinged stiff rigs on washed-out super buoyant pop-ups on and a third rod on a Withy Pool, something of a underused rig. Maybe the bells and whistles put people off, but it's really easy to tie with a bit of, yes you guessed it... practice. This was fished with a pink crave pop-up on.

My first two rods went out in front of me about 90 to 100

yards out in about 40 foot of water on what seemed like very soft sand it felt carpy to say the least I also scattered about 60 baits over each rod. My third rod I waded out to the edge of the reeds and punched it out about 30 yards up the margin to my left in roughly 20ft of water with a 60-bait scattering. With the traps set, I sat back, put the kettle on and started to daydream of what could be. Which Cheshire leviathan would slip up first? Needless to say that first 24 hours went by without a single bleep. I could clearly see fish through my scope showing way out in front of me, but beyond my casting range, probably 200-plus yards out. So as the sun began to set I bore witness to an epic scene as the sun slowly melted into the horizon with only a handful of soft white clouds.

So after a, Indian meal from the local curry house on the far bank, most of which the whippet ate, I retired to the comfort of my bed, hoping to be woken by the sound of my receiver, but to my disappointment that just wasn't to be. I first woke at around 5:30 when the dog started to walk about knocking over my kettle, so now I was awake, moody and mad at this dozy dingo. That was until I saw what was in front of me. The morning mist was a fantastic sight, slowly blowing across the lake – mini tornado-like shapes looking more like partying ghosts. This place is epic, well at least the lake and its contents are.





Kettle on, and a double teaspoon of coffee was on the cards. Not long after the bailiff introduced himself to me, and after a cuppa or three I knew what was in there... a handful of 30s and quite a fair few 20s – not bad for £60 a year, plus a fair few other lakes and private stretches of rivers on the same ticket.

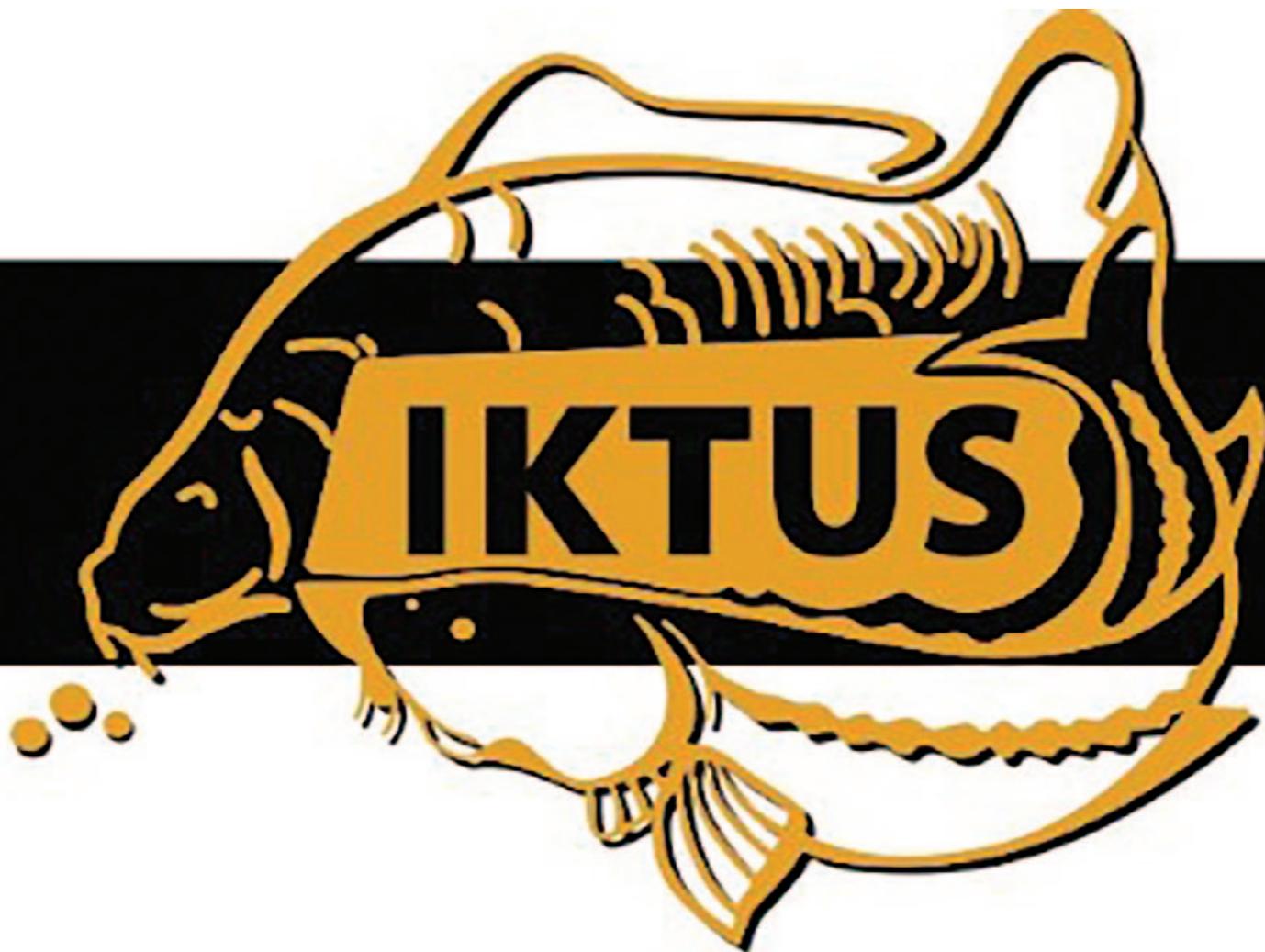
The day was passing quickly, as it always does when on the bank, and before I knew it, it was two o'clock in the afternoon, and about 30 yards out to the left not so far off my third rod, I could see long, dark shapes just under the surface and seemingly moving towards the margin where my final trap lay.

I sat bolt upright on my bed knowing it was on. With adrenaline pumping through my veins, I crept closer to my rods and donned the chesties. After what seemed like an eternity, but was probably about ten minutes,

the bobbin on the last rod swung into life, smashing the blank with some ferocity that it made me jump a little. I quickly picked it up and proceeded to put a bend into the rod with what felt like a good fish. It peeled line off my reel like it was playing games. It must have taken 100 yards of it before I even had any chance to gain some back.

I wound down tight and proceeded into a true tug of war. I was putting line back onto the reel when it decided to for another spurt over towards the right and towards my other rods, but after gentle persuasion and another 15 or so minutes, I finally managed to slip the cord under her. And there she was, sulking in the folds of my net, a wonderful dark common, just over the 20lb mark... Result!

More next time from "The Incarcerated Carper". Wet nets and warm beds, people. ■



# FISHING RESORT



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# Unexpected Brace

Andy Loble



**A**fter months of hard work searching out spots along one of Cambridgeshire's rivers, I hoped I might connect with an elusive river carp. It has been a tough year for river carping, and I knew it wasn't going to be easy.

With low rainfall equalling low flows on the rivers I decided to start my attacks on deep pools with plenty of oxygen. Weirs are always a good holding area for fish when oxygen levels are low in the water. I had three in mind that I wanted to bait up in the hope I could encourage one or two of the very nomadic carp to return regularly for an easy meal. The areas I was looking at I had already seen fish in so I knew I was in with a shot!

At the end of August I began a baiting campaign and kept a watchful eye on each of the spots. I would often run/cycle past the areas on my way to work baiting up as I went! I baited heavily with Hinders Supreme Crème Boilies and CC Moore's Equinox.

I didn't want to introduce any pellet or particle to avoid encouraging smaller nuisance species on to the spots. I very quickly noticed my spots getting clearer and clearer and even spotted the odd fish moving over the areas. This was not to be ignored... After over two weeks of hard work preparing a very tight swim on a sec-

tion of the Cambridgeshire Ouse I was feeling like I was due something for my efforts.

On the way home that evening I went down to the spot, climbed my favourite tree and looked down on my baited area to see a decent mirror carp. It moved off slowly but increased my confidence of catching. Although a small shoal of big bream kept moving through I knew there was more than one carp visiting the area. I chucked in twenty baits on each of the spots and then left it in peace and headed to the rowing club (my new found sport) for a training session! After rowing I headed with gear back to the river; it was 8.30pm by now and the light had dropped massively... a moment of incomprehensible disregard for the environment (I was angry!)

On arrival at the swim I could clearly see something had changed. The access point had been blocked off with willow branches, and then I saw a guy of about 40 in the swim moving more branches around with his daughter! I got his attention, then proceeded to ask what exactly he thought he was doing! The guy had removed pretty much a whole tree from the swim. It had destroyed some fantastic habitat and cover for the smaller fish/fry, destroyed the cover and sanctuary for the larger fish they had previously had and made a complete mess!

I won't go in to the full conversation, however it turned out he wasn't even a member and tried to deny it was him that had done it (fool). His intention was apparently to pole fish it! My arse! With two metres of room behind you and a six-foot bank, I don't think so! Anyway, the person in question was reported to the club. I gave him the disappointed and appalled talk in front of his daughter and didn't swear once! I was quite proud of myself and hope the 'person' in question left with his tail between his legs.

After a few phone calls about the situation I was talked into staying and fishing the spot by fellow Ouse carp angler and good friend Joseph Gacon (part of the reason I started fishing for them in the first place). I was sure I wouldn't be getting a bite until later that morning if at all but hoped the fish might still be patrolling.

I first of all had to remove the bunker of branches created by the... 'person'... and got into my spot. I quickly pulled a lead through the swim to make sure the area was clear of debris from the massacre that had occurred. Luckily everything was looking good. Rods went out on their usual spots and I sat back to enjoy my very late dinner!

Setup has been very simple: 3ft of lead core to a lead clip, a 3oz flat gripper lead and then 25lb hook link material, a size 6 Mugga fished on a





blow-back style setup and finished with a curved piece of shrink tube, finishing things off with a very tidy small back lead to keep everything pinned hard to the river bed. I fished a snowman setup on both rods with 18mm Equinox with a 15mm pop. I didn't bother with a PVA bag as the bottom was very clear now, and I felt it would just encourage smaller fish to move in and feast! It wasn't long before I had a pick up on the left hand rod where the bait had been flicked under the only remaining overhang-

ing tree in the swim. Shortly I had a 9lb 5oz slab of bream in the net! A nice fish, but not quite what I had in mind. I rebaited and got the rod out again, followed by retiring to bed.

It wasn't until 4am that the same rod decided to scream off. I literally flew out of my bedchair to the rod. I'm sure my feet didn't touch the ground! I felt a little disappointed as I played whatever was attached to the hook. It initially felt like a bream rolling around in the flow, but it then woke up a little and decided to mimic a very large chub. It wasn't until my head torch hit it and I could see exactly what I was playing that it decided to wake up and act like a real fish. YES it was a carp, and YES, my first Cambridgeshire river carp and YES, my heart was now racing!!!

The fish tore off downstream giving me a very frantic ten-minute battle before I finally slipped the net under it. I fell backwards slumped on the floor and looked back down into the net punching the air. Finally I had got what I had been searching for. Now size normally means a great deal when carp fishing, but not today. Although it only went 16lb 1oz this mirror carp will always hold some happy memories for me. Not only that, but it was immaculate and a



# BIG CARP TOP TEN

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proper scrapper to boot, but I put a serious of hard work in to catch it!

After the 16lb 1oz mirror I moved off the spot to rest it for a bit, and I had spotted a large number of fish moving around one of the other pools I had been baiting. I managed to get down to the pool the following evening to do a night session with Joe G. Now Joe is a top river angler and has had a number of incredible carp from the rivers over past seasons including a couple of 30s. Sadly I was feeling like I had jinxed Joe, as he had

not had a carp out since I moved into his neighbourhood! To be fishing with him having already landed a carp meant I was going to have to sleep with one eye open, as he had gone a little crazy having not caught in quite in a while!

With everything set up and fish showing both of us were feeling confident of a bite. I had put a mixture of the Supreme Crème/Equinox out on two spots on the far bank with some overhanging trees. I had already checked the areas and was fishing at

approximately 7/8ft onto a mixture of clay and gravel. The leads were going down with a solid 'donk' every time, so I was very happy my rigs would be doing their job should a hungry beast come along!

With work the following day I was tucked up in bed pretty early. Just before first light I was woken by a one-toner on my left hand rod. I was out of the bag and on the rod like lightning, and was into a very good fish! I don't bother with shoes in the night and just wear Seal Skinz waterproof socks; it saves faffing and means you can get to the rods faster! Joe couldn't believe quite how quickly I had made it to the rod but had mixed expressions across his face. I was pretty sure I was going to get a smack – another fish and Joe was not a happy bunny! After a superb battle the fish was eventually slipped into the net and handshakes were exchanged whilst the fish recovered. I prepared the mat, weighing equipment and camera etc. before removing the fish from the water. After weighing the fish we decided not to photograph it but leave it until the morning. We had a group of anglers fishing for food close by who were consuming quite a lot of Lech and Tyskie. We didn't want to draw attention to our catch with camera flashes etc.

With a few hours' sleep and the neighbours finally gone, we got prepared to take photos of the fish we had witnessed earlier that night... the most stunning linear we have ever seen. It was a gun metal grey on top with a milky belly. The scale pattern along its lateral line was made up of an array of a silvery grey mixed size of scales, which were all mint. The fish still had its mouth in mint condition too with the only hook it looked like it had ever seen being my Mugga!!!

Sadly no photos were ever taken of the fish due to a catalogue of errors from which I have learnt a great deal. On going to collect the fish for photographing I was met with a very open and empty retainer! The main errors were 1. Having two people attempting to sack up the fish, both thinking the other had done everything 2. Not taking photographs straight away thinking it would be worth the wait!

The fish was sacked in plenty of water but sadly, and I do blame





myself, I had only pulled the toggle down to close the sack. I had not then tied it off to make it properly secure. Both Joe and I were lost for words. The chances of ever seeing the fish again are one in a million with so many miles of river to chase it. In future I will be photographing fish before placing them into a sack, but only for a short period of time, otherwise it will be photographed and returned straight away! Neither of us will ever forget what an incredible fish it was; it is just a really shame it made a successful bid for freedom! The fish went 24lb 6oz; however size seems irrelevant for such an awesome fish! I quote Joe "Loble... that was almost as bad as losing a family member," followed by many expletives and rightly so!

Moving on... I managed six nights of blanking and decided that the swim had blessed me with one fish, but it was time to move on to swim number three! Both Joe and I were feeling optimistic with river levels being up slightly with a bit more colour pushing through due to a recent fall of rain. I had also seen a decent fish moving over the baited area I had been keeping an eye on.

Joe and I pitched up for another session, one where I learnt how to make a real cup of tea! I didn't know a grown man could be so passionate about a cuppa! I had to show Joe a sketch by comedian Doc Brown about making a cup of tea, which calmed the situation, and we got on with setting up. With a mix of boilies out over my two areas I set my traps and kept my fingers tightly crossed. I was on my fifteenth night, and with two carp under my belt including a river twenty I was more than happy. But I always want just one more...

At about midnight I got a liner, which set my heart racing. I always find it difficult to sleep for at least an hour after getting a liner. You just never know when the bobbin might smack the rod and the line will started to peel off the reel. I didn't have to wait for an hour, as about twenty minutes later the rod sprang into action. An epic battle proceeded with the fish making numerous attempts to break away and head to sunken trees! Eventually, the fish waved the white flag allowing the net to slide underneath it! Now I know the rivers have been tough going during this particular year, but I was def-

initely on a bit of a roll, and whoever had been looking down on me was more than ok to carry on.

Joe and I thought back to the experience of the last fish and decided to learn from our mistakes. It was quickly unhooked and photographed. Due to the hours before daylight it was decided the fish would be released. This fish was not as pretty as the linear but looked like it had a few stories to tell with its huge frame and battle scars. It was 27lb 15oz of pure river beast. I was incredibly overwhelmed; I couldn't quite believe the run of good luck I was experiencing. How much longer could this continue?

I managed to get a bit of time off work, which was a rarity and saw the opportunity to get a two-night session in. An area I had been fishing is known to produce double figure barbel and double figure bream. I had thrown the idea around of catching a 20lb carp, 10lb-plus barbel and 10lb-plus bream within a week! A tall ask you say? Well...

This particular swim was going to require the art of concealment, so I put my new Jack Pyke camo screen and poles to good use. The screen

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allows me to carry on with rig tying, cooking etc. without the worry of being seen – an absolute winner on open, tight swims!

My first night was very uneventful. I knew my baits and rigs worked, but sadly the fish just weren't playing ball. I didn't mind, as I was enjoying my surroundings, and as the sun rose and warmed my face I watched two deer move along the opposite bank completely oblivious to me. This was followed by a pair of kingfishers chirping and going about their daily routine. When it comes to it, it isn't always about catching, but being out and experiencing our incredible countryside and from time to time sharing it with real friends!

Around 11am I decided to create a scent trail. I oiled up some Hinders Elips Pellets with molasses and Nod oil. I know I had been avoiding using

pellets for my previous sessions but now I was after a mixed bag of species. Now.... was it coincidence or was it down to the trail I had created that I got my first bite at 1.30pm? All I know is I was one target fish down. I had banked my first Cambridgeshire Ouse common carp at 20lb 1oz. I contacted my mate Ben Hervey-Murray to come down and get some photos for me, and he obliged.

On Ben's arrival I went to put on the kettle explaining the scent trail and showing Ben the pellets, and as if by magic one of my alarms screamed off, and bang, I was into another fish. This one didn't have the power of the previous fish, but the fight was still awesome. It wasn't long before we saw the distinctive dorsal of a big barbel! I was not expecting this at all as I was well down stream of where the

barbel are normally located. I thought I was going to have to find them, not them find me!

The barbel was a fantastic 11lb 13oz and completed target number two! I couldn't believe my luck – not only had I had these two incredible fish from a difficult stretch of river, but I now had the opportunity to get a brace shot that I may only have this chance ever to experience.

With photos taken and coffee drunk Ben bade farewell. It was only a couple of hours before I got yet another bite in the form of an 11lb 14oz barbel! A 36-hour session, one more carp to the collection and 23lb 11oz of stunning barbel. Strangely the barbel were falling to the very sweet Equinox bait tipped with a blackcurrant and peach pop-up made by a good friend Tom Oliver. The carp took a shine to the same arrangement.

I didn't get to bag the trio, missing out with a bream of 9lb 11oz, but there is always another day. To this day I still feel incredibly lucky to have caught the few but fantastic fish that I did and can't wait to get some more time on the bank of the awesome Ouse. I made some lifelong friends on my short journey and have some everlasting memories that I hope to one day repeat.

I would like to add that Joe went on to break his spell of blank sessions with a cracking 23lb leather carp aboard his new boat. I have no doubts he will now go on to land an absolute monster in the coming season, and I hope to be there to witness it.

*Images courtesy of Ben Hervey-Murray, Joe Gacon and Andy Loble* ■



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# Chronicle Fishing

## Le Queroy

**T**he Chronicle team is back for our first lake review of 2015 after our previous review up north was cancelled due to the lake being more suited for figure skating than carp fishing. Stubbornly we made the journey anyway, but when the boat and sledgehammer we were armed with simply bounced off the ice hardly scratching it we were forced to sample the northern beer rather than the scaly beasts we had come for. Spirit dented worse than the ice we headed back to Essex but all was not lost, as our services were now required across the English Channel in France... It was chunk hunting time!!!

And as Rick pulled up in the Mercedes Sprinter from Harris Hire looking like something straight off the set of pimp my ride, complete with blue neon lights and onboard TV blaring out "COME ONNNNN" and "GET IN THEEERRREEE" from a Korda DVD, it was a party bus atmosphere as we set off buzzing for France and our next lake review...

Nestled in the Poitou-Charentes



region of southwestern France, just outside the quiet town of Abzac, with a population of only 496, is the well-established fishery known as Le Queroy. Don't worry if you haven't heard of it, as you soon will. The fishery has regulars coming back year after year, and it's easy to see why. With three very idyllic lakes to choose from, each stream feed, you'll be spoilt for choice of where to fish, so

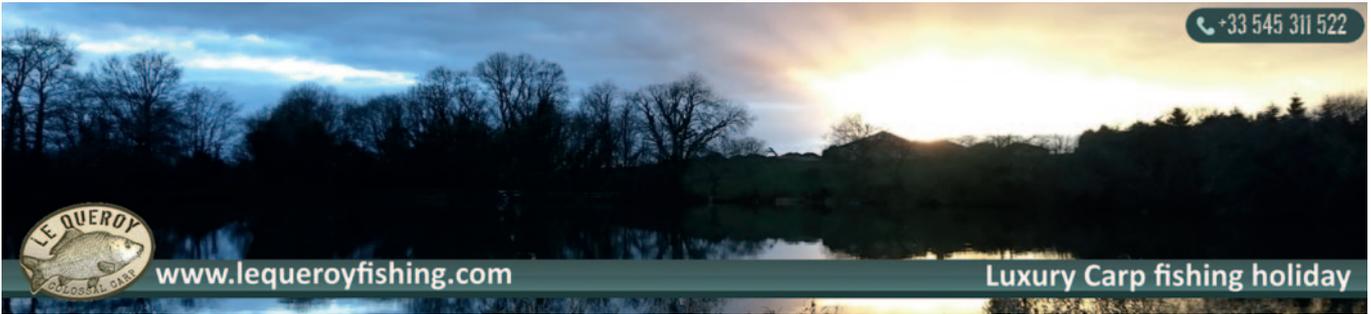
book wisely.

Before we arrived the lakes had been drained down for a stock take and for fish to be chipped, allowing accurate weights to be monitored as well as for added security. The first of the lakes is acting as a stock pond, being a small 1.5-acre water, which as we mentioned was netted and the larger fish up to 65lbs moved. This lake now holds 20s and 30s, however the owner believes not all the big ones were accounted for, so as it stands this lake still has the odd 40lb-plus fish residing in it.

The second lake is the 5.5-acre Napoleonic lake, dating back hundreds of years and with tall overhanging trees dropping naturals in for the larger part of the year, you can easily see why the carp will soon be topping 70lb. The third lake is the 6-acre Elba, which you could be hearing about at a later date. The Napoleonic lake is the one the Chronicle lads had the pleasure of fishing, with five swims holding six anglers (the peninsula being a double swim). The average depth is just over 5ft, with the lake being around 10ft at its deepest. Using a marker rod you will no doubt find holes dotted about the lakebed holding carp up to 65lb with the average easily over 40lb.

The Le Queroy carp thrive on the





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warmer weather and long summers helping make them some of the most exhilarating and hardest fighting carp we have come across to date. Unhooking mats, landing nets and weighing slings are available on request for your use free of charge, so no need for dipping. Other equipment is available to hire like bedchairs, rods and bivvies, which allows you to fly into Poitiers Airport about 45 minutes away, and all you need to bring are your reels and end tackle. Bait can also be purchased from Le Queroy.

Now as if you weren't already dreaming it gets better... When booking the Napoleonic lake you get the added bonus of a French gîte, a cottage if you will, comprising of three double bedrooms sleeping a total of six, each with its own ensuite, which is the toilet and shower facilities for the lake (bed linen and towels are provided). The gîte also comes with a fully equipped kitchen with such luxuries as oven, microwave, fridge and dishwasher along with utensils, plates and cutlery for those who decide to have a break from the bank

or to take their families. In the large lounge diner you'll find comfortable seating with stone fireplace (so you could book in the cooler months), with a good selection of DVDs and English television channels. Outside there is a pool and BBQ area. A chest

freezer is supplied for food or bait and there is a free WiFi signal available.

Now the Chronicle lads were two for two with our previous visits to France, but we knew this one would be a little tougher, it being February and the lake had just been refilled after being drained for the fish to be chipped and weighed. Who knew what mood they would be in – ready to play ball or shying away to the hidden depths of the lake?

We set off for our trip to France in style by finding a gem of a hire van from Harris Hire in Hockey. Only four of us went this time, as unfortunately Kevin was left at home holding the baby, literally. But unlike last time when we all squeezed into a minibus, this van had it all. It seated eight with chargers and TV/ DVD on board with enough room in the back for all our gear. Our journey ran smoothly, stopping on the way for a quick nap and something to eat. We arrived at Le Queroy at 3pm and were immediately met with smiles and a hot drink, after we were shown around the plush gîte. With a short wander down to the



lake we walked around discussing where we liked the look of.

Rick took peg 1 nearest to the track that runs alongside the lake with options to fish into the corner, along the margin or out into open water. Paul took peg 2, which had open water and margins to the left and right both with overhanging trees. Ian and Sam picked the peninsula offering bays to left and right behind them and virtually the whole lake if no one was in the other swims. Paul struck first within the first 40 minutes with a 38lb on the nose, giving rise to false hope, as it turned out to be his only fish. Rick was next and started to get in amongst them in the first 24 hours banking three from 37lb to 40lb. Rick had early success spraying single freebies in an arc over a bed of hemp



and maize, fishing a hookbait tipped with white and then changing to pink when all went quiet. With absolutely nothing happening for Ian and Sam after giving it a good 36 hours Ian decided to move opposite Rick, fishing an inline system blowback style, his boilie tipped with corn, over a Castaway PVA stick with hemp and corn, while Sam continued to roam all around the free water he had now. Ian's move paid off, and within a few minutes he had banked his first, a lovely 45lb mirror. Rick and Ian continued to catch at regular intervals, the biggest at 49lb falling to Rick.

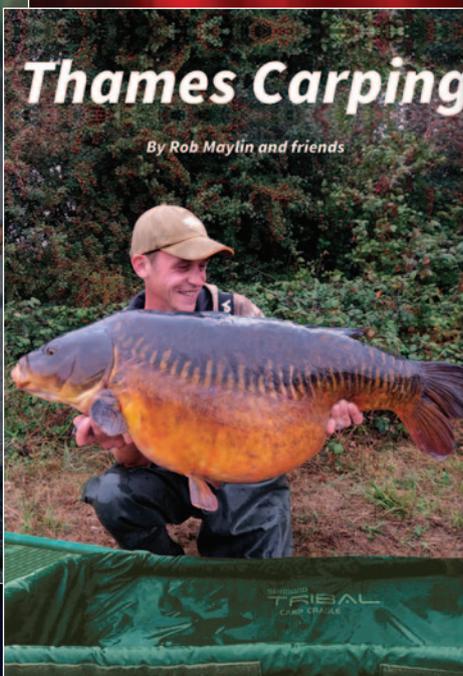
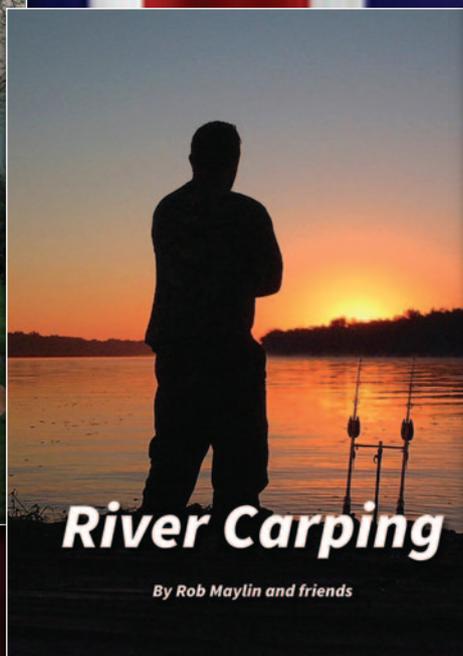
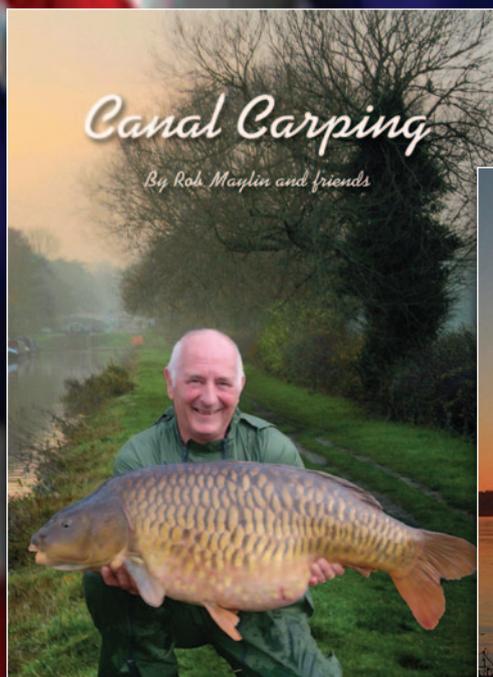
Now with about 24 hours left and still nothing to show, Sam upped sticks and moved into the swim next to Ian. Things were looking bleak, but with just over two hours to go Sam's rod ripped off producing a stunning 44lb common. The Chronicle lads did well by all catching and banking a total of 17 fish in a cold and wet February, easily making it three from three.

In conclusion... Le Queroy is not the biggest French lake you'll ever see, but an extremely carpy one, which will look absolutely stunning in summer with pads and trees in full bloom. It has the characteristics of a beautiful English country lake but with French giants swimming beneath. If things go according to plan you will be hearing about the larger lake at Le Queroy and the secrets that one has to offer... Until next time, tight lines. ■



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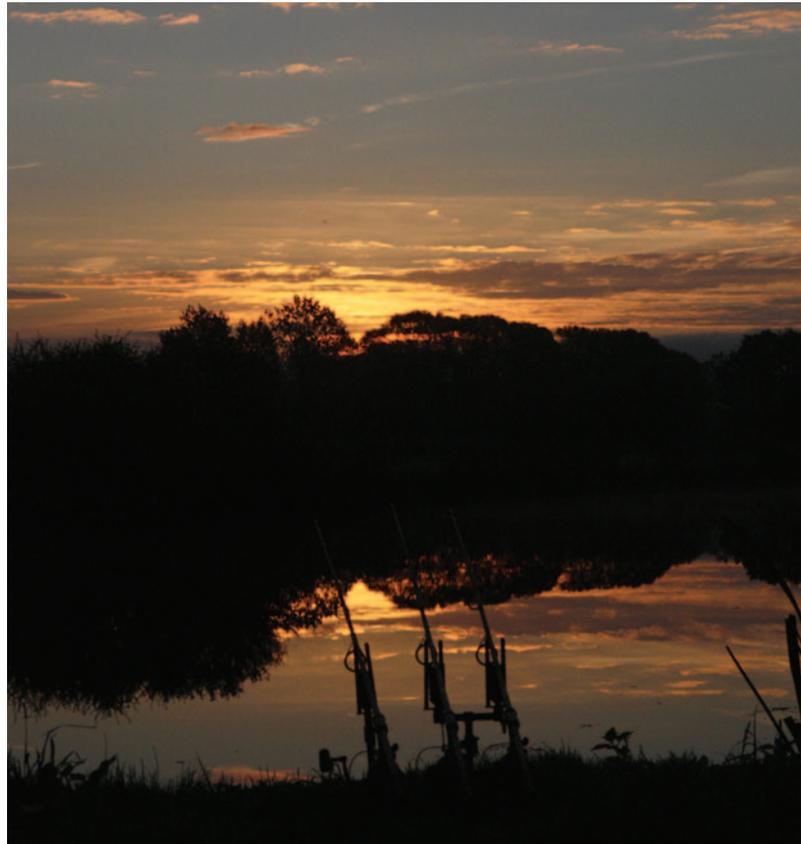
# A Carper's Path... Returning to Source

By Dave Little

**I**t all began as a lesson somehow, a place to begin, a starting point. To believe then that it was where dreams may happen some day would have been impossible. But right there is where it would grow, become larger than life. It would become all my hopes and desires, the itch that could never be scratched, where waters flowed past like the constant ticking of the second hand. Where eventually moments in time were made and were forever played back in my mind.

All summer long the river had somehow been calling me. I was never far away from it, attracted to it like a bee to nectar. I was fishing in the same valley on a nearby lake, and yet somehow I could feel its presence, its sweet smell as the sun lay down behind the tree line and cooled the green fields that surrounded its banks. A calming aroma, dancing and floating above the river's surface as a ghostly, misty figure, twilight was a beautiful place to be in the Ouse Valley. Nature was settling quietly down for the night: birds roosting, gulls disappearing! But on the river, for me it was the time when the underwater nomads came alive. No light, no disturbances, no boat traffic, just a gentle silence. Out into the shadow of the night they would prowl and discover, peacefully swimming against the flow and hopefully finding a boilie or two.

It was a year since I last fished the River Ouse. My son had spent the weekend with me, and I had decided to show him how to catch a perch



from the flow. It was loads of fun, and even on nightfall, with cold feet, bless him, he wanted to stay and catch the big'un! We had had a few, but it was Dad who finally caught the biggest at 2lb 7 oz. Sitting there with my son at the river's edge my mind got to working, and finally lots of memories poured over me. We were just kids playing around on boats back then, sailing downriver catching gudgeon and roach and having loads of fun. Who'd have thought in time those fish

**(Above) Sunrise on the Ouse and a new magical day begins as the river reveals its secrets.**

**(Below left) Twilight in the Ouse Valley and a river is calling...**

would have become what they are? The section my son and I were fishing was also the section where I had caught my biggest river carp and two other 30-plus fish. It was wide and very deep in places with the odd overhanging willow – perfect chub territory, and now once again I felt its magnetic strength. It was irresistible; I had become addicted once more.

The following night after returning my son to his mother, I drove straight to the river. It was still at summer levels and not an ounce of flow was present. Martin Cowell, bailiff to the river had been having a good go that season and had nailed some good fish along the section. I was keen as mustard and couldn't wait to have a go. It just looked so good. It was probably almost three years since I had last fished the section. Excitedly I put the leads into the area where I had nailed the big one those years before, and the area still felt as good. Two Wicked White pops and fourteen matching 16mm freebies produced, by the morning, the goldiest looking common I had seen. It was almost koi like in



**Martin Cowell had also given the river a good go that season. (Bottom) Returning to source and a good excuse to try at the river's perch with my son...**



appearance, but against the autumn backdrop it really looked the part. At eighteen pounds it, as they usually do, fought well even without much flow, and the River Ouse had been kind to my returning.

As of all things good in life I needed more, and it wasn't long before I was back with cousin Lee in tow. BBQ and beer was the plan, but the weather saw otherwise. The kindness that the river had previously offered was soon

to be replaced with the usual surging, boiling mass typical of this time of year. Autumn is a great time of year to track down river nomads, but a terrible time to compete against rain and rising river levels! The whole day was horrid, and for some reason I sat out in the drizzle all day, getting absolutely soaked hoping for a repeat performance of my son's and my results with worm and perch bobbin. Alas, no joy, and our moods only matched the

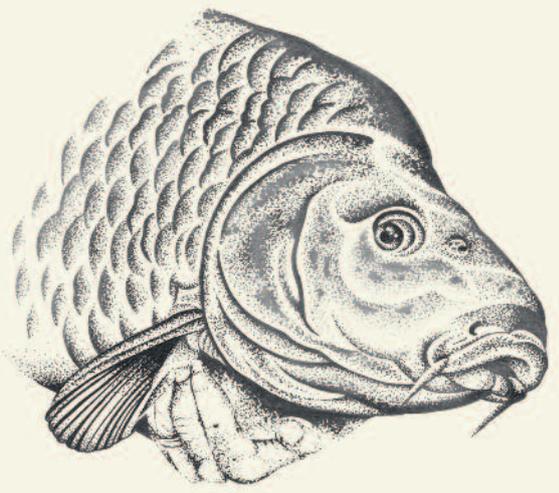
river that was beginning to rise and swell nastily. We watched as its character changed from the peaceful stillness of before to a raging torrent of power. The skies above added their own part, and a northeasterly wind had crept up to strength. It was hideous. I remember Lee saying, "Sod it; I'm done for the night" and zipping up his shelter. I nodded in acceptance and defeat and also bundled in under my broolly, like a drowned rat. I



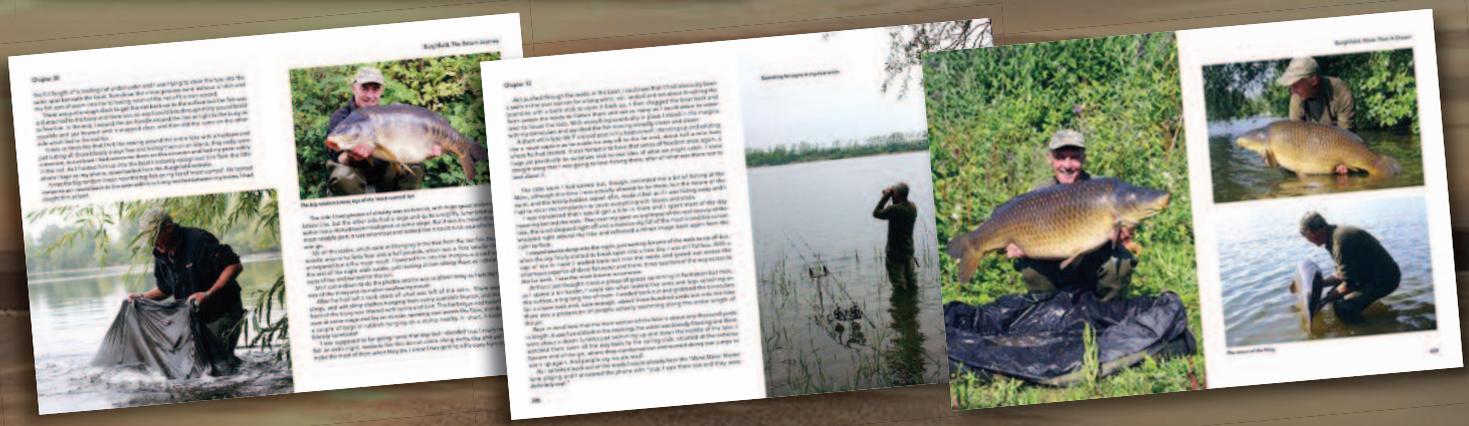
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# Fine Lines

Dave Lane



Now available direct from Bountyhunter Publications is a signed copy of Dave Lane's fourth book, Fine Lines. Whether you are an avid fan and following on from Dave's first books or delving into his world for the first time, you are bound to be entertained, amazed and left wanting yet more of his adventures. Together with his faithful hound, Padwar, he has travelled the land in search of monster carp and catalogued his experiences in his own inimitable style, which is peppered with humour, disasters, bizarre occurrences, and, ultimately, success.



Dave's writing style has always focused on painting the entire picture so that you, the reader, can feel as if you are there on the bank beside him at all times, sharing in the experiences every step of the way. The big carp scene is a weird and mysterious place, and although Dave fishes right at the pinnacle of this strange world, he always seems to find time for a bit of fun along the way, so sit back and enjoy the ride. It's a must read for novice and experienced carp anglers alike.

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stripped off with stove blazing trying to get dry and warm.

It must have been dark only a few hours as I heard my alarm screaming against the wind of the night. "Ah, shite!" This meant getting soaked again. Out into what could only be described as a full-blown storm I threw myself. The rod arched angrily round, and I lifted and heaved back against the resistance. The river by now had taken on an angry dark look, and I could see tree branches out in the middle of the flow that had probably been beaten off tree tops in all this wind. The level of flow had also

raised itself and its pace had increased. The fish I was now playing pulled me stupidly up and down river. I called Lee to my aid as we stood and watched this marlin like creature bully me on the side of Miami Keys in hurricane season, or so it seemed. We were hammered by wind and rain as this river carp beat me up silly, and Lee and I were punished by the wind and rain. We were soaked. What a sight it must have been – two grown men struggling to bring this fish up, but eventually we did. It was a funny feeling as we stood there, fish in the net below. As quickly as possible, a

**(Above) Autumn gold!**  
**(Bottom left) Just part of the debris that caught and towed lines overnight in horrendous conditions.**

rushed photo and was taken with rain howling sideways into us. Back into the now racing river the carp returned and vanished instantly. We were drenched!

We tried our best to last out the night, and by morning a huge pile of line and branches wound up in the margins. It was the river taking back its kindness and present and now setting things straight. I felt a feeling of guilt moving away to still waters and turning my back on the flow and its inhabitants. Forever in my heart I had a place for it, but now it seemed the Ouse was pouring its vengeance past me. Its mood was a chocolate brown rage with jetsam and flotsam in the mix. It was sort of like a fight with a girlfriend and a vase full of thorny roses thrown at your face. It was impossible to fish, so by first light we packed up and Lee was off in a flash.

My stuff now packed into the car, I decided to walk upstream a bit. I got a few swims up and looked across the river. I had half expected a dead cow to float past as I stared across. It was then I looked down at my feet. The





Through high winds and sideways rain, fish landed, picture captured and fish returned.



The Ouse had given up another of its great mysteries...



**Another gem from the river...**

bank was only a few inches above water level. It was obviously up high from rainfall, but it was then that something dawned on me. The river right in front of the bank here was flowing the wrong way. Dumbstruck, I looked closely as bits of weed and leaves went the opposite direction of what they should have. I was intrigued, as clearly further out in the main flow it bellowed down in the correct direction towards Wash and sea. I decided to follow this strange occurrence and walked upstream to where this new flow direction was heading. It carried on a few metres till I saw what was happening. I don't want to give the game away here too much because the river in all its fury and might had slipped up and given away one of its secrets to me. Let's just say after running back to grab a rod and having a good lead about I had found the sweet spot!

Three kilos of boilies to prime the spot, and three days later I was sitting happily back in front of the river, and its mood had changed once more. Its flooded anger had now become a solemn steely blue strong flowing current. It had softened its tone and

was debris free, thank goodness. Good friend David Vaughan had joined me for the night, away from Thorney Weir and the Metts – calming stillwaters – and was having a go on the flow! He was in the swim where I had the last capture, and I was pitched into the swim where waters flowed upstream!

Just before light my old Tournie reel whizzed off as a river carp pulled away from the baited area. Out towards main river it led me, and I pulled back precisely against the flow. The fished came back and ended up trotting up and down in front of me, staying deep and becoming awkward to play. Closer to the surface I could feel the fish continually rolling on the line, and I screwed my face up in anguish. I tried to net the fish, but there were reeds in front of me playing havoc with the situation. A nightmare is all I can say, and after three attempts of netting the playful creature, to my delight and relief the carp rolled in.

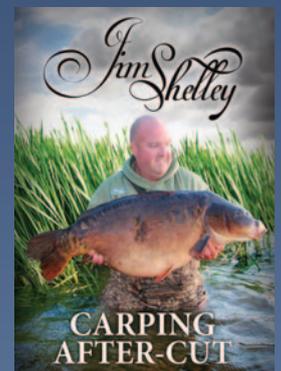
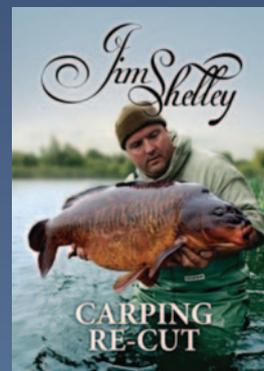
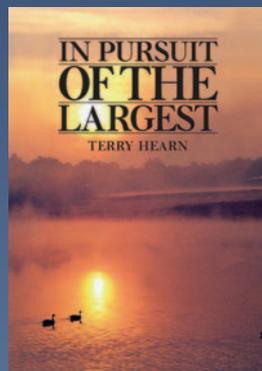
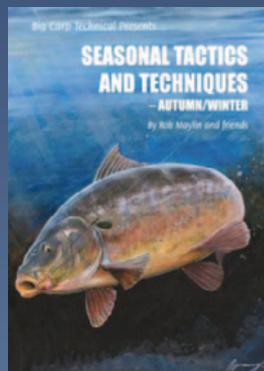
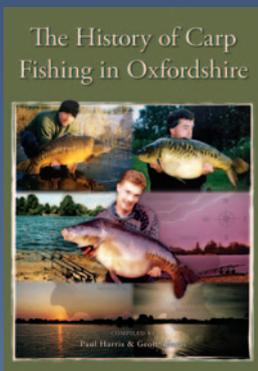
I had more trouble trying to wake Mr. Vaughan up, but when he saw what I had caught he was wide awake. The dark night sky was pass-

ing, and the sun was just creeping up as we set our eyes upon this beautiful dark scaled carp from the Ouse. The river had simply given up another of its great mysteries. Its reddy brown tinged belly separated by a broken pattern of scales disappearing to a jet black back was truly a sight to gawp at. Another gem of the Ouse was once again given up for seeing. At over thirty pounds I couldn't help but repeatedly say, "Oh my days!" I was truly blown away as I lifted carp for camera. First light appeared across the river to greet us, and the feel of its warmth with fish in hand was incredible.

Around mid morning, Martin the bailiff arrived, and we quickly got to talking about the mood of the river and the carnage caused by its temperament over the last few days. He also asked if I had caught anything, which my left rod answered there and then. Whatever had snapped up the trap was now heading at great speed upriver. I picked the rod up, and we both watched in amazement as the steam train carried on thundering upriver and bending my Centium rod cruelly. It had easily run a hundred

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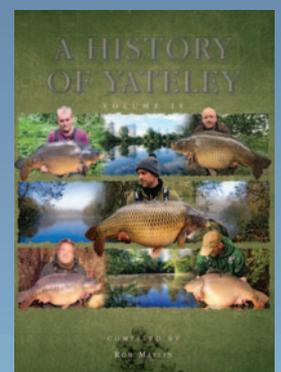
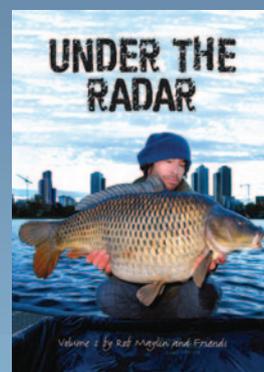
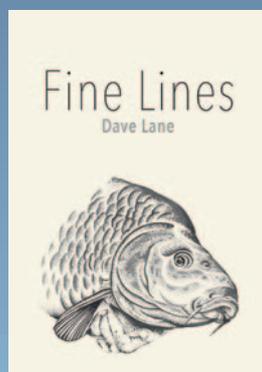
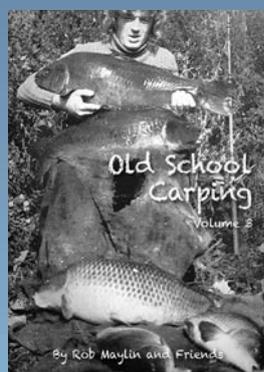
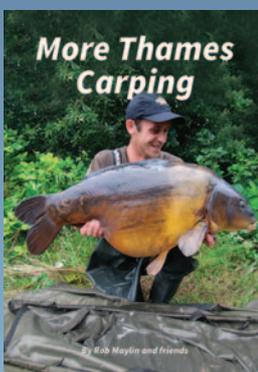


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**(Above) The left rod answered there and then as a steam train thundered upstream!**

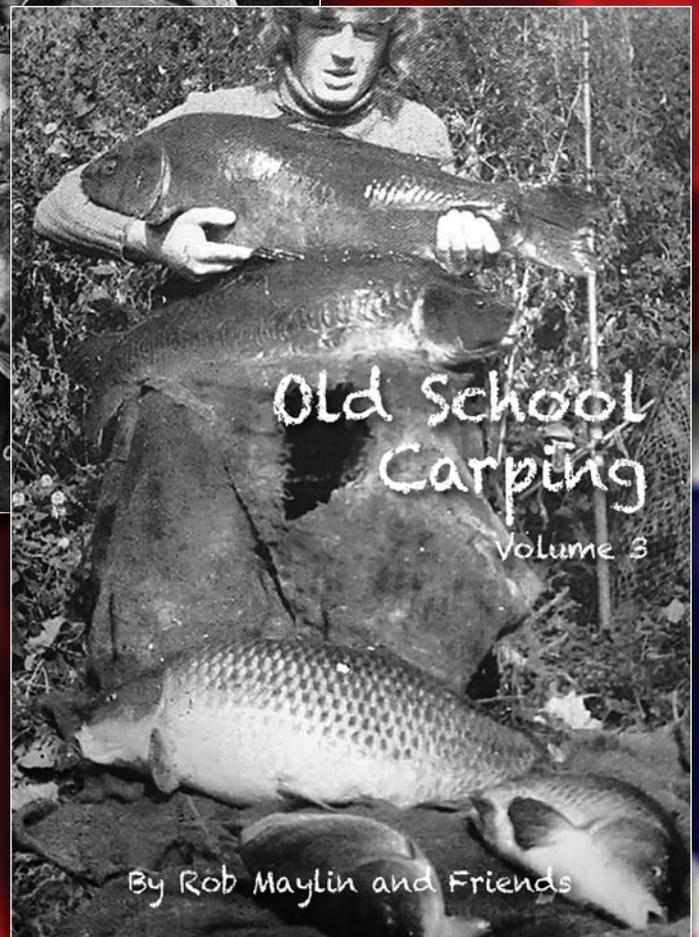
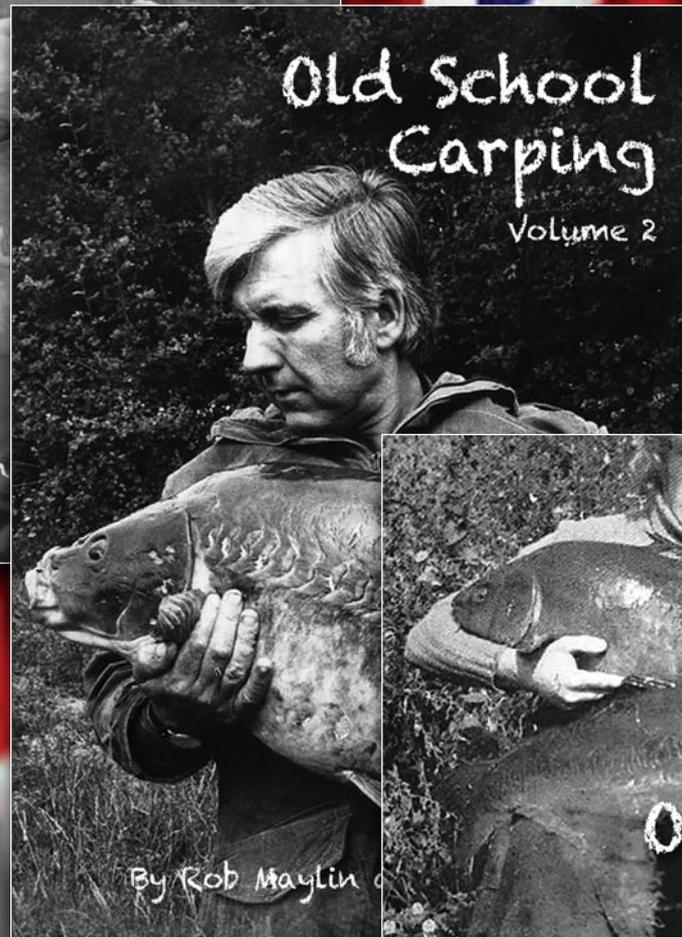
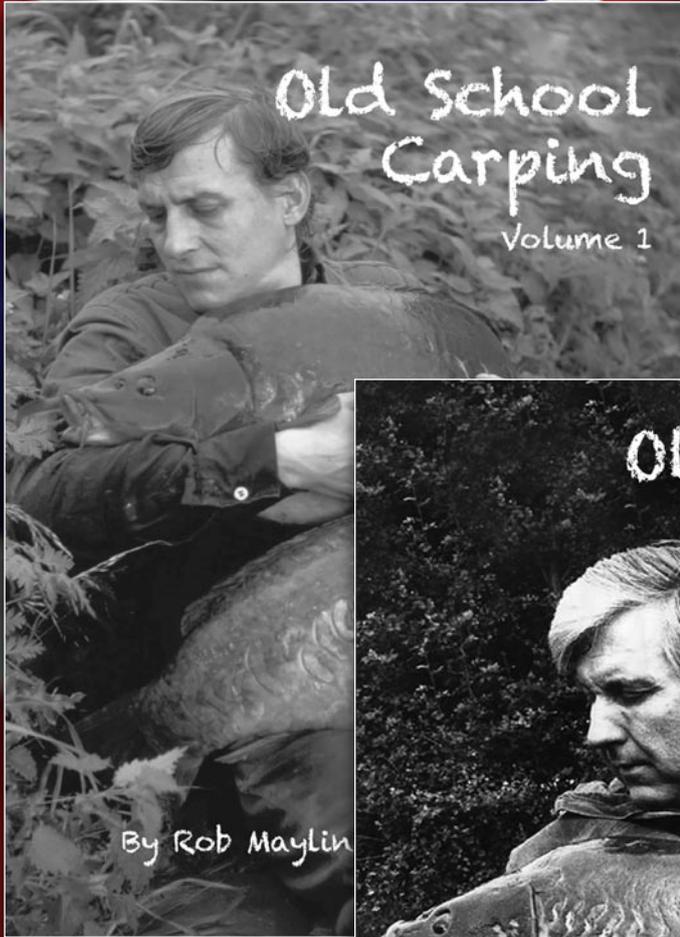
**(Right) Never letting go, forever flowing, forever searching the Great River Ouse...**

yards upstream before I could make any gain on the fish. It was crazy. A while later, and thankfully with Martin at hand to net the said fish, we were looking again at another scaled prize from the Ouse. It was an unbelievable moment. I was punching the air. It had seemed like ages since fishing this section, but here I was sitting, spoilt by the river and its ways. The river had been overly kind, and without a doubt I will always be especially grateful to it for bearing its secrets. Martin snapped happily away at the scaled river carp as the sun made a quick appearance to fasten the mood. At twenty seven pounds this river nomad was every bit powerful looking as the fight that had occurred moments earlier. Into the river I got to let go of the fish and wish it well in all its miles of waterways it called home. Who knows where it may be now? Forever searching, forever drifting, forever along the Great River Ouse.

Be lucky all. ■



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# Upper River Yare Carping

By Dave Peacock

12lb 14oz ghostie.

**T**here were always rumours of carp in the stretch of the upper river. The lakes further upstream had certainly flooded into it many times, but I had never seen any evidence to confirm their presence. In the summertime the small river is generally crystal clear with many underwater cabbages and streamer weed up to the surface. The water here seems much more suited to chub or barbel fishing than carping.

One summer's day whilst working in a garden that backs onto the river, I went for the obligatory fisherman's gaze into the weedy waters, and to my amazement was greeted by the sight of half a dozen carp happily sun-bathing mid river. I estimated the smallest at probably low doubles whilst the largest was a heavily scaled mirror in the mid to high twenties. After watching them for far too long I finally dragged myself away to finish my day's work, but knew I had to gain permission to have a little dabble for them. The spot was literally outside the guy's patio doors and probably impossible to guest no matter how brave I felt!

I had a chat with the guy, and he



(Above) 9lb mirror.

(Bottom) 21lb 8oz mirror.

was happy for me to have a go at catching a few, as long as I took a few pics to show him. In fact he explained to me they turned up every summer in the same spot, and he'd had to restrain his son from shooting them with an air rifle! Unfortunately by now the EA had been along the stretch for the annual weed cutting, laying waste to the aquatic greenery, and unsur-

prisingly the carp had all bugged off not to be seen again that year, but plans were already in place for the following season.

The following year, 2007, a few carp appeared around August time, and I spent a couple of weeks baiting a gravelly depression in about 5ft of water tight against the near margin. In fact the stretch was so weedy at this time of year it was probably the only fishable spot anywhere near to the carp. The tricky part was tiptoeing through the customer's herbaceous border to the edge of the bank without destroying the plants! After a couple of weeks I had fish clearing up the bait quickly and arranged to finally cast a line.

An afternoon session produced two carp, mirrors of 9lb and 13lb 10oz. Unfortunately they were the two smallest fish in the group, and their capture definitely put the remaining fish on edge. As I didn't want pressure to push them out of what was obviously a holding area I decided to continue baiting for a couple of weeks and concentrate on my syndicate water for the time being. Unfortunately before I got back for another go the dreaded weed cutting began early and scuppered my chances for another year. I was starting to realise that I would only get a small window of opportunity every year at what was a small head of carp in a tremen-





**(Above) 13lb 10oz mirror.  
(Right) 14lb 10oz mirror.  
(Below) 18lb mirror.**

dously overgrown stretch of river several miles in length.

Like clockwork the carp again arrived in August, and I decided to start fishing immediately without pre-baiting a spot, and just see what happened. Once again I had a nice syndicate ticket elsewhere so it would be short sessions fitted in around other stuff.

First trip I started in the herbaceous border spot, but in the crystal clear water I didn't really see any signs of the fish that had been resident a cou-



ple of days earlier, so after a biteless hour, I set off for a wander upstream. I chucked a bit of bait into a couple of likely looking spots under overhanging trees where the dark shade had suppressed the rampant weed growth. Returning every half hour or so to check for any activity I found three fish on one of the spots so legged it back to grab a rod and a net.

I flicked the rod out all of 10ft to the edge of the weed, stuck it on the alarm and sat back to await a bite. Within minutes all hell broke loose as a fish steamed off into the weed. After a bit of stalemate with the fish thrashing in the weed I reeled in a straightened hook. Gutted, I packed up, but at least I had found another spot I could get a bite from so decided to bait up every other day until the following Sunday.

The fish responded to the baiting and by the following weekend I had one chubby mirror of low twenties practically following me along the bank to await his grub. Saturday night rained heavily, and on arriving at the river Sunday afternoon the usually tap clear water was the colour of tea. I decided to fish blind and flicked the rod onto the spot that had produced the bite the previous week.

It wasn't long before the rod sprang into action, and after a ponderous and rather uneventful scrap the chubby mirror I had been seeing all week slid into the net. On the scales he went 21lb 8oz, and after a couple of quick self-takes under the trees I slipped him back a bit further along the river.

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The recast rod quickly produced a prettily scaled fish of 18lb, which amazingly had a rusty old rig attached to its bottom lip. A little later, I lost a third fish, which cut the hook link on an underwater snag hidden in the weed, I now know it's a rusty oil drum half buried in the silt. After losing the fish, I called it a day and went home, but not before heavily baiting my new spot.

The following weekend led to mixed success. I had added pellet to my prebait mix as my freezer was rapidly emptying of boilies and tigers, and I had attracted a shoal of bream to the spot. It was difficult keeping a bait in the water long enough to catch a carp before a snotty hung itself. The carp seemed to drift in and out of the swim throughout the day, having a browse and then moving off, whereas the bream hung about even after the bait had been cleared out. I quickly managed a small mirror of 7lb, which somehow managed to fit a 20mm boilie covered in paste into its mouth.

Later that day I then caught a glimpse of a much larger fish in the weed, a big fat common, which I guessed at around 28lb. After observing her exiting the swim I dropped a cobweb PVA bag up against the edge of the weedbed. Within about thirty seconds she popped back out of the weed from nowhere, inhaled the rig bag and all and shot off. Unsurprisingly the hook pulled after a few seconds, and absolutely gutted, I packed away. That was the biggest fish I had seen since the scaly mirror I had spotted the first time I saw the carp. I continued baiting, now without any pellet, and the majority of the bream drifted away after a few days.

On arriving for a quick trip the next Sunday evening there was plenty of activity in the swim near the house, so I baited my banker swim upstream and left it to settle before returning to the house spot. I simply lowered a solid PVA bag onto the small gravel spot, sat the rod on a bank stick and tip toed back through the flowerbed and sat back. Within ten minutes the rod screamed off and battle commenced. Unfortunately this time the mainline cut off in the weed. These



river carp were certainly living up to their reputation as extremely hard fighters.

Pretty pissed off, I was pretty sure which fish I'd just lost, a nice chunky mirror I'd not caught before. I retackled and walked the 100m or so upstream to my prebaited spot. There was already a group of three fish drifting in and out of the hole in the weed under the overhanging branches, so I quickly flicked a rig out and hid behind the tree trunk, peering into the clear water. The three fish returned and I tensed in anticipation of a bite.

The lead fish of the three sucked in the bait and then ejected it, and then the second and third fish each did the same! I was using a pretty basic rig at the time, but not even a flicker of the line at the rod gave any indication of what had happened! It really makes me wonder how we catch anything at all sometimes!

Anyway the rod was quickly reeled in as soon as the fish drifted off, and the old rig, a simple knotless knot braid hooklink was cut off. I replaced it with a stiffer coated braid and a big longs shank hook fished blowback



**(Top) 18lb mirror.**  
**(Right) 18lb 15oz common.**



**(Above) 21lb 8oz mirror.**

**(Bottom) 21lb 8oz mirror on the mat.**

style. I attached a new PVA bag and flicked it back out to the edge of the weed whilst the swim was empty. After a few minutes the fish returned, and I watched as a long, lean common sucked in the bait. It suddenly stiffened and shook its head violently before charging into the weed as the alarm burst into life. I grabbed the rod, and one of the hardest fights a fish has given me began. After much thrashing and tail slapping in the weed I pulled her over the net cord. She was long and lean and around a pound short of the twenty mark, but definitely one of my favourite ever captures, absolutely pristine except for a missing chunk of tail. After all the disturbance I called it a day hoping I'd get in another session before the weed cutting began.

The following week I caught a 14lb 10oz mirror and 12lb 14oz ghostie, a fish that I was really happy to catch as I'd seen her many times in the weed, often giving away the presence of other fish better camouflaged than her. That was the end of the fishing there for the year; the weeds were cut back and the river flooded heavily most of the autumn and winter.

The following summer I was full of anticipation. The previous year I had observed more fish than previous years and was hoping to snare one of

the bigger fish, which had so far escaped capture. Unfortunately as next summer drifted away I'd only seen fish on a couple of occasions, and they had seemed very spooky and reluctant to feed. The nearest I got to a bite was a dark looking common eating half a PVA bag without getting hooked. I waited and waited but no chances presented themselves. It is a small clear river where you literally see the fish pick up a bait, and I just don't feel it's worth fishing if you can only see an empty river. The only fish I landed was a nice chub of 5lb 7oz. These appeared even fewer than the carp this summer, so it was a bonus on a short session.

The following summer was even worse, and I only saw two carp all year, one of which was all scraped up. Looking like it had been rubbed against a cheese grater is the only way I could describe it. The other fish had a missing chunk of tail, and I

thought it might have been the common I caught two years before, but after checking the photos it was a different bit of tail and a different fish.

After a chat with the house owner he told me that he had been seeing a family of four otters playing on his decking for the past few months. It now became clear to me what had happened; either the carp had all been taken by the otters or they had scared them into swimming over the sluice during the floods into the next stretch of the river. I hoped it was the second option, as if they came from where I think they did they must have already navigated at least a couple of weirs. I think the best year's fishing I experienced had possibly come about because otter activity upstream had pushed all the carp in the river (probably no more than 20 fish), to the downstream limit of the stretch, concentrating the low stock into the couple of hundred yards of river. Sadly these days I rarely see even any of the bream or chub in the stretch let alone any carp, but I always look hopefully every time I am there.

Although they weren't the biggest fish, I look back at the fishing I had for those few years with fond memories. It was nice to get away from the environment of the local circuit waters and their known swims and fish to go back to what carp angling should be, man against the fish rather than queueing for swims and battling to keep stuff hidden from other anglers. The one thing I take away from it is that nothing lasts forever, and if I am ever lucky enough to get a similar opportunity, to take full advantage of it before things outside my control take it away. I'm hoping to find the time to have a go at the tidal sometime soon, and who knows? Maybe I will catch up with a couple of those same fish again with a few years' growth on them. ■



# Chronicle Fishing

**March 2015 Lake Diary - Fryerning Fisheries, Ingatstone, Essex By Kevin Goss**

**A**fter a bleak February for the main lake, every angler on the Fryerning members list was hoping that March would see the carp kickstart into action. Still, the fish didn't really begin to play ball until later into the month, and the main lake's account was finally reopened with the capture of the mighty Gurm on the 10th, ever hungry and falling to Chris Hellyar's charms at a huge 52lb 8oz and new PB for him. It then took until the 17th for the next carp to slip up, and with the carp now seeming to get their heads down to feed while finding anglers' hookbaits, another five fish would come out in quick succession, so it looks like they're awake, at last.

Not a record number of carp caught, but Joe Atkinson didn't take long to find his first 2015 main lake stunner in XL Pecs, swinging the dial of his scales to 37lb 8oz. Adrian Hunt, a regular on the lake got his rewards when he hooked into Fourscale' at 39lb 4oz, adding a third to the catch report for March. A fourth was then notched up shortly after by Dave Whitting with a stunning 30lb common. Next out was a 45lb-plus carp, but, doh... Mathew Hughes managed to lose an upper forty when it pulled off a great escape from in his net before it was weighed or photographed... Let's leave that one there!

Last up was new member Michael Jarvis catching Round Tail bang on



**Chris Hellyar with the Gurm at 52lb 8oz.**

39lb and a great start to his new Fryerning campaign. With some renovations being started on the car park lake and a new path being laid, it's now down to the Valley Lakes, for well... a carp fest. With no less than nineteen, 20lb carp caught over the month, Reece Thomas managed to catch 9 of them with one superb angling session - well done! And well done to all for their March captures. April should only get better, so watch this space.

For the entire up to date goings-on at XL please visit the website at [www.xlcarp.com](http://www.xlcarp.com) or

if you would like Chronicle Fishing to help showcase your lake in Big Carp Magazine please visit [www.chroniclefishing.co.uk](http://www.chroniclefishing.co.uk) ■



**Michael Jarvis and his first main lake carp, Round Tail at 39lb.**



**Adrian Hunt finding Fourscale at 39lb 4oz.**



**Joe Atkinson's first Fryerning carp of 2015, XL Pecs at 37lb 8oz.**

# CARPING RE-CUT

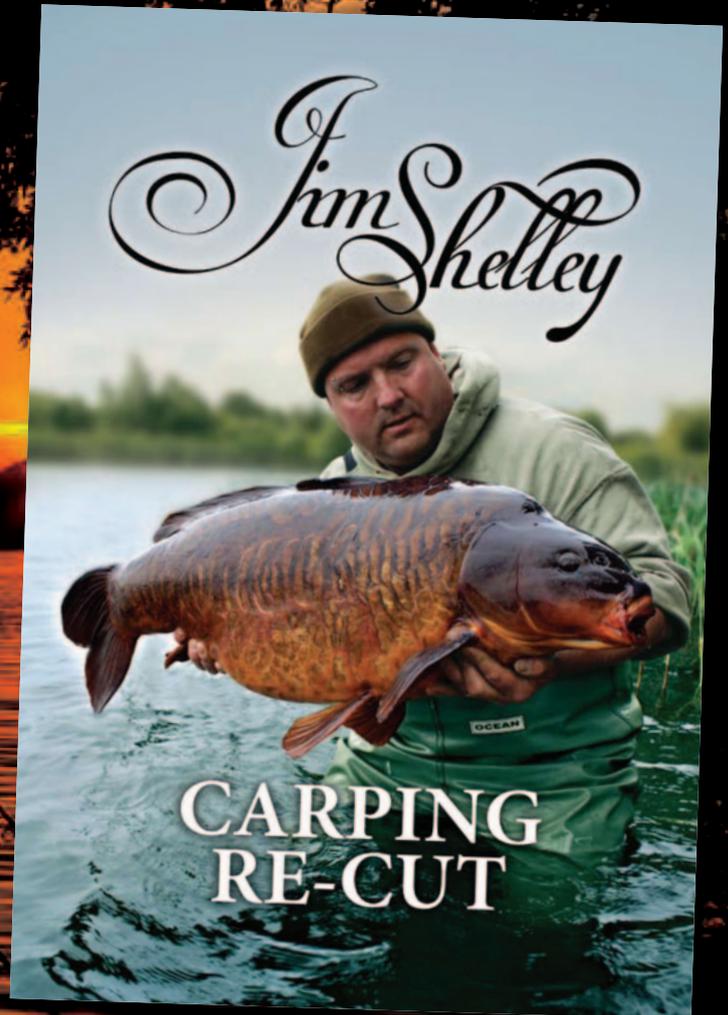
## *Jim Shelley*

Jim Shelley is the UK's most prolific hunter of big carp. He is a carp fishing force of nature and no carp can withstand his pursuit for long. He has carved out a career in carp fishing with an iron will and perspiration, and this book is the physical embodiment of that drive. Every single word is testament to the fact that Jim won't ever give up. He taught himself to write so that he could genuinely say that he'd written this huge book unaided. That is just what he has done too.

Inside you'll find the truth... the whole truth. Nothing has been airbrushed and at times Carping Re-Cut can make for uncomfortable reading. It's gritty, it deals with difficult situations that Jim found himself on and off the bank. Let's not forget, throughout a portion of this book, Jim's wife Jane battled with cancer and if the strain took its toll, then Jim has written about the consequences, and left nothing out! Carping Re-Cut tells the story of a man driven to catch the biggest and best carp out there. There are colourful and touching moments along the way and of course, there are the fish! This book holds beautiful images of many of the fish that captured the hearts of carp men throughout the last decade or so. Eventually, Jim worked out how to catch them all, and the way that he did it is laid bare here for you to read.

So, join Jim on a journey that starts in 'bandit country' near Heathrow, passes east through Cambridgeshire and Norfolk before swinging back via Royal Berkshire, and plunging deep into the jungle that is the mysterious Colnemere, as Jim searches for the ultimate prize, the Black Mirror. One thing's for sure, it won't be dull!

At last the long awaited second book from carp fishing's No.1 angler is available direct from Bountyhunter Publications. Carping Re-Cut is the follow up to Jim's highly successful first book Carping Un Cut and is a mammoth size publication containing over 400 beautiful colour plates, exclusive stories and an incredible amount of huge carp from waters far and wide. Jim always was a great carp angler but over the past few seasons he has evolved



into the ultimate catching machine. Water after water, target after target and record after record have fallen to this sometimes controversial angler, nevertheless no one can deny his ability and no carp is uncatchable once Jim sets his mind to it. Jim's first book was a great read and it's sometimes hard for an author to match the quality of his first book, however this is not the case with Carping Re-Cut. This book is a revelation and no carp angler of any ability, age or status should miss out on what is definitely the book of the decade from the world's greatest carp angler.

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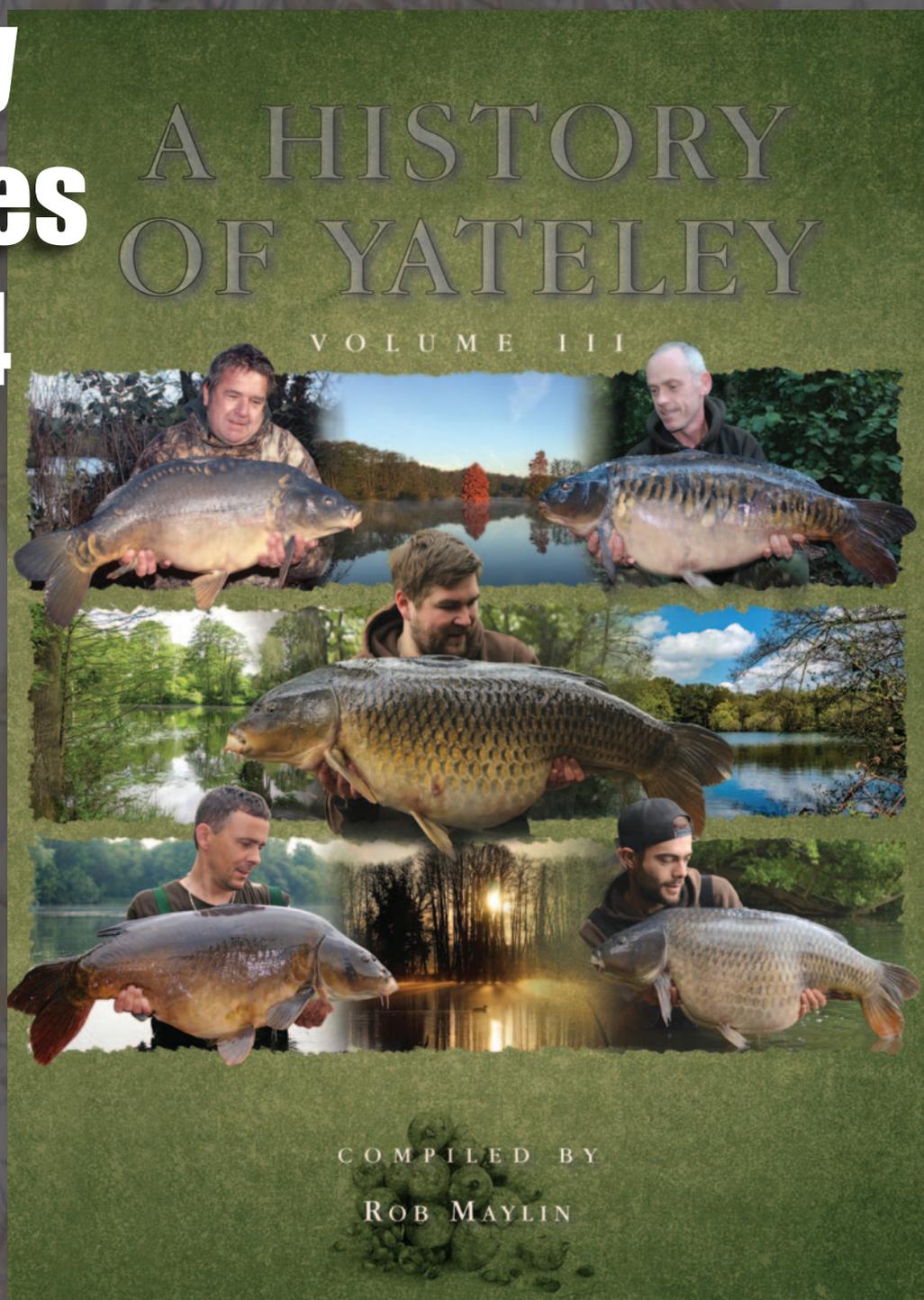
# Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

In the time since the Cemex sell-off, Yateley has had a new lease of life. Although those legendary carp like Basil, Heather and their buddies are now long gone, the new stock has grown and returned Yateley to its former glory. Likewise, its banks may not now be trodden by the likes of Terry Hearn and me, but the anglers that fish Yateley now are just as passionate about the Yateley carp as we were 20 years ago.

Every lake has come on leaps and bounds in this time: The North boasts commons up to 54lb with a handful approaching 50. The Car Park too has numerous good forties. The Split Lake is a real eye-opener with a good head of big fish up to 47lb! You would never have dreamed it. The Pad Lake, South Lake and even the diddy little Horseshoe and Pump House all contain big fish. The Pad has numerous forty-pluses.

Over the other side of the road there is a similar story: multiple forties in the Match, some beasts now in the Copse and The Nursery holding fish to 47lb and maybe bigger, as its anglers keep very secret squirrel about what goes on over there. The Nursery is certainly Yateley's secret jewel in the crown.

Hence the reason for this book... It's been six



years since the first two volumes, and the changes are phenomenal, the fish huge, and only living five minutes from the complex, I felt duty bound to record the history further on these lakes, the UK's true heritage waters. The format remains much the same: the page numbers continue through the volumes. Maybe in another ten years, there will be more history to record, even perhaps a Yateley British record... who knows? Now wouldn't that be something?

I have also decided to include the Yateley lakes on the edge of the old Cemex complex, these being Little Moulsham, Mill Lane, Swan Valley and Sandhurst. Each contain their own

treasures including a couple of fifties!

Because of the sheer size of this project and to do justice to all the lakes there will once again be two volumes.

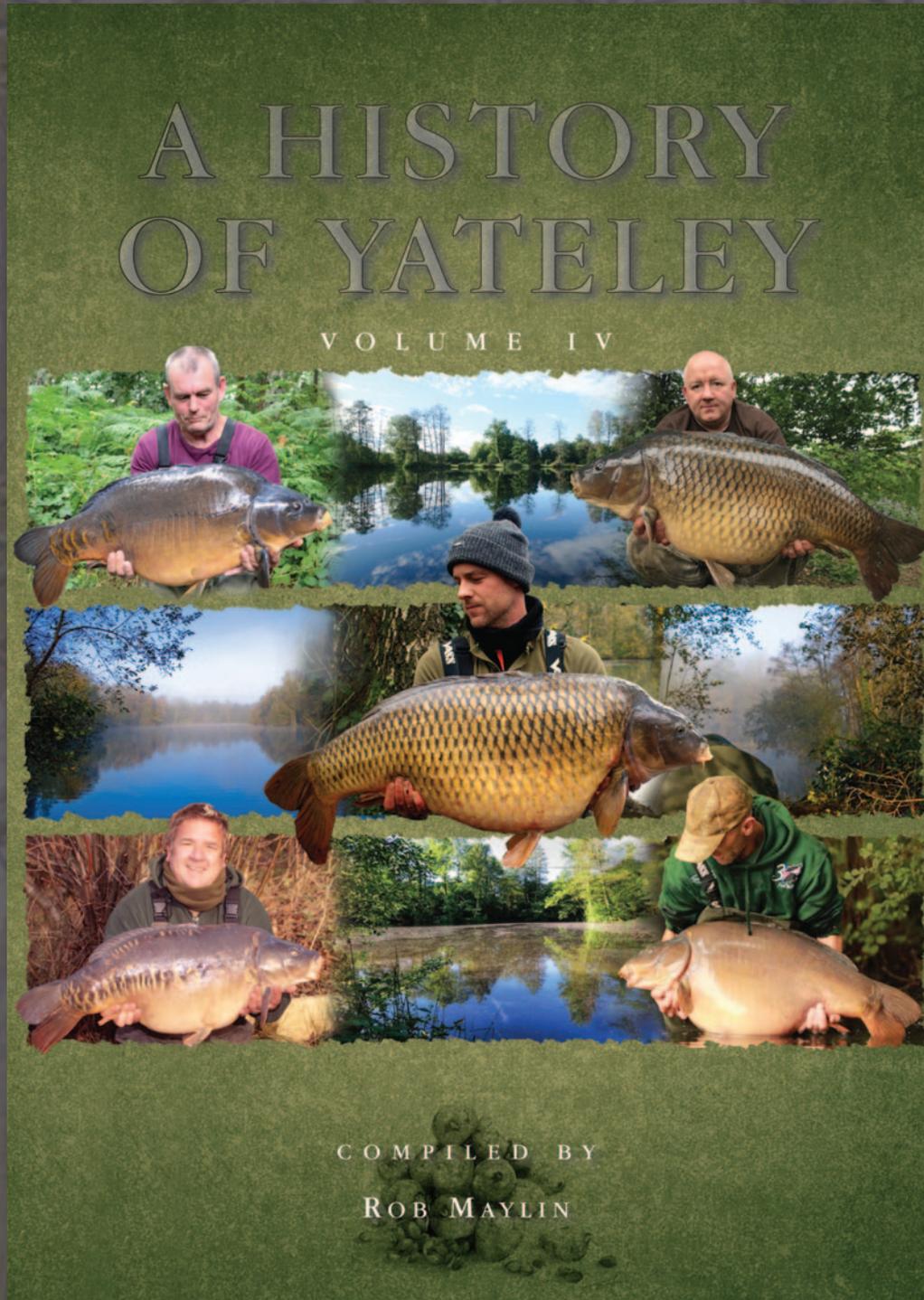
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumhouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

Volume 4 contains the chapters on The South Lake, Match Lake, Copse Lake, Nursery Lake, Sandhurst and Swan Valley.

There are some great introductory pieces from Martin Gardener, owner of Yateley West Fisheries and Ian Gray, Honorary Secretary of Farnham Angling Society, the owners of Yateley East, plus a chapter featuring the famous

Stoney and Friends MacMillan bashes each year. There are stock lists with photos of as many of the new residents as it was possible to get and chapters from the guys who fish there at present – ordinary guys with some great tales to tell of their captures on each of the lakes.

All this is combined with fantastic colour photography throughout, some amazing paintings of each lake and a host of special drawings commissioned for these volumes. These volumes are as much if not more of a work of art as the predecessors. The first two volumes were amazing and received worldwide praise... but dare I say, in my opinion, these two volumes could be even better? A massive thanks to all concerned, and long may Yateley continue! Long live the king of English carp fishing history!



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# River Waveney

By Dave Lockwood

**I**t all started many years before I caught these fish with various sightings of carp around Bungay Common and surrounding stretches of the river whilst I was lure fishing for pike. It wasn't until 2001 that I decided to have a real go for them and prior to the start of the fishing season walked the river around Bungay Common several times baiting a few spots that looked like they could welcome a carp or two. Well for all this effort I only ever managed to sight one fish, and it just happened to be on a part of the river furthest away from the car park! This would turn out to be at least a mile long push with the fully loaded wheelbarrow, winding my way through the golf course paths.

June 16th came around, and this turned out to be a Saturday, so I decided to have a few hours' fishing in the afternoon. There had been a fair bit of rain so the narrow winding river was starting to colour up and push through a bit. Out went the two rods baited with homemade 20mm fish-meals and a decent sized PVA bag



packed full with broken and whole ones. These plopped in with a scattering of free offerings and a few handfuls of trout pellets. After about two

hours the right hand rod ripped off, and after a hectic battle against tree roots and an increasing current I managed to land my first river carp after only two hours of trying this all seemed far too easy, and was I obviously over the moon to have a fish at my first attempt.

So in the following week I decided to make a midweek trip to bait up in a similar area. This consisted of two large buckets full of a mixture of maize, hemp and trout pellet plus a couple of kilo of boilies. All this was deposited with a home made super spod made with three-inch drainpipe and spray foam to make it buoyant. The bait was soon loaded in, and away I went ready to return Friday night. After the exhausting push down through the golf course I managed to get the rods out, baited up just as before with the addition of some spod mix. As I had predicted to myself the bream had been drawn in by the spod mix from earlier in the



(Top) 23lb 3oz.  
(Left) 18lb 6oz common.



week, and after dealing with a couple nearing double figures I switched to a double 20mm and size 4 Kamasan B175.

At half nine one of the rods was away, and to my total shock and disbelief it was the same fish I had caught on the opening day of the season. This went straight back and I rebaited the rod and introduced a few handfuls of bait and a bit more spod mix. Half an hour later the same rod was away again, this time with a different fish that dropped the scales down to 24lb 8oz. Two river 20s in half an hour – not too bad, I thought.

I continued to bait up in the week again and was rewarded the following Friday by an 18lb 8oz common (the biggest river common so far). After another week of baiting up I had the Friday off work so decided to get to the spot early only to find another angler in said spot! He was the only angler on the entire stretch of river! He was overjoyed to inform me that he had never caught so many enormous bream in all his years of fishing this river! (Nothing to do with all the bait I'd been putting in!).

So this called for a drastic rethink, and at the time all I could think to do was to head to a very shallow dyke that split off the main river. This involved an even further walk than the one to the original spot, and by the time I got there my motivation was wearing thin, luckily I saw a couple of small carp in the dyke so set up and baited up in a slightly more reduced fashion.

All through the evening and night I was harassed by inquisitive cows nudging the ribs of my Nash Profile. The only way to shift them was to punch them full on the nose from inside the brolly, which seemed to keep them at bay for a good hour at a time. All this hassle turned out not to be in vain, as during the early hours I managed to get a bite and land a 15lb common. I decided to call it a day on that stretch of river following that capture and head off to find a new spot downstream.

Geldeston Locks was to be the new venue. It looked carpy; it is tidal and has masses of cabbage lilies and beds of streamer weed. I never spotted a

**(Top) 17lb 4oz fully scaled.**  
**(Centre) 18lb 8oz fully scaled.**  
**(Left) 24lb 8oz mirror.**

carp here prior to fishing but just decided from the look of it that had to be worth a go. The usual baiting process followed, only this time I upped it to twice a week. The first session here produced two fish; the first one was a small mirror around 11lb, and the second was a stunning linear with huge scales, which came in at over 26lb. That year I fished this stretch of the river until the end of August and ended up with a few more fish to high doubles.

The following June, 2002, I went back to the same spot, baiting in the same way and just doing Friday nights. I had a few more fish but nothing massive... that was until July 5th! A friend and I decided we would do a two-nighter on this stretch and so went about the normal baiting up routine the week before. After again seeing no fish on arrival we baited up and sat back and waited for it all to kick off. Well, for me it did, and at around 9.30pm I had a ripper of a take. The fish felt heavy right from the start, and with tide flowing out it was heading in the same direction. I called Andy who was a couple of hundred yards upstream in his own spot, and by the time he arrived I had traveled at least 50 metres downstream with the fish not wanting to give up. The fish was eventually netted, and as we



both looked in, we decided it was a bit of a lump. Andy lifted it out of the river and declared this could be a 30 mirror! Once in the weigh sling the Avons were attached, and they bounced round to a very pleasing 32lb 10oz. This was at the time, and still remains a PB for me, and not just from the river.

I fished a few more times that summer, but with no other fish coming my way I moved back onto a local lake. Now after nearly 15 years since I had

those captures I feel motivated to get back to the river and have yet another go. Although things have changed with the increasing numbers of otters in the rivers, I still feel there are a few good fish to be caught, and the appeal of the river for me is the fact that when that alarm blasts off you just never know if it'll be a ten pounder or

**(Top) 26lb 10oz mirror.**  
**(Below) 32lb 10oz mirror.**



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# A Season on The Thames

By Graham Stevens

A wet start to the season.

**B**efore the season I'm writing about, I had only really dabbled with my carp fishing on the Thames. I have fished the river since I was a child mainly for pleasure, in matches and a bit of specimen hunting. But a Thames carp! That was something special! I caught my first one on June the 16th 2007. A very special day in any angler's life, but even more so having lost a total of eight carp in the years before finally sliding the net under one. I'd only had five carp from the river, in the years preceding the 2012 season, all mirrors, two twenties and three doubles with the biggest being my first one at 25lb 8oz.

But I had never given the river the time it deserved and made it my 'target water' so to speak. Having wrapped things up on the lake I had been fishing for the previous seasons, in mid-April. I decided that the time was right, to give it my full attention. If you can't remember the start of the 2012 season, let me remind you... It had rained all though the beginning part of the year and the closed season, the river was up, coloured and pushing though. Usually I would have been walking, boating and looking at the river for the last month of the closed season, but due to the conditions it had not been worth it; you can't see a lot when it's coffee coloured.



Opening day fell on a Saturday, and as I drove along the river on the Friday night it looked like bivvy village. So I was actually happy to have had to work that weekend. I had booked the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday off work anyway. I had intended to start on the Monday morning, but by the time I finished work on the Sunday I was clucking to get out and fish – after all this was the start of my season on the Thames. As I travelled down to the river it became apparent I had pretty much all of the section I

wanted to myself, with the exception of the obvious feature swims and slacks. This could have been down to the fact the weekend was over or due to the conditions. Anyway, I was buzzing! My first Thames session of the season!

After looking at a few swims that I didn't fancy very much and with all the slacks taken by other anglers, I decided to set up on the outside of a large bend, which had a bit of cover on the inside in the form of a tree and a bush to the upstream side of the peg. But that's where my buzz ended, after about ten chucks, casting shorter and shorter, till I was virtually fishing below my rod tips, I couldn't hold bottom! I've got to admit my heart sank a little. By the time the morning came round I couldn't wait to pack up. It was still raining, all three rods had been wiped out by debris, and I had only lowered each one off the rod tip with 4oz gripper leads.

Oh well, back to the drawing board I thought. Dejected, I went home for a shower and some dry clothes before heading round to a mate's house for a cup of tea and to borrow his computer. I needed to find somewhere off the main flow that wasn't being fished. I was looking at Google Earth when I spotted a section of river with



**(Top) My first Thames carp.**  
**(Left) The swim was a tight fit.**



two islands at a slight angle to flow. The islands were not that far from one side, and the main force of the flow was going down the other. Could this be my saviour? It had to be worth a look, so I headed down. When I got there it still looked too pacey, but now armed with 6oz and 8oz grippers, I thought I'd give it a go. I put on a 6oz gripper and ten-bait stringer, cast it to the lea of the island and hoped for the best. After paying out a bit of line to put a bow in it and adding a 3oz captive back lead, it all just about held bottom. Well, for about an hour and a half that is, before all the 'washing' on the line dislodged it. "Good enough for me," I thought. I squeezed into the swim and set up for the night.

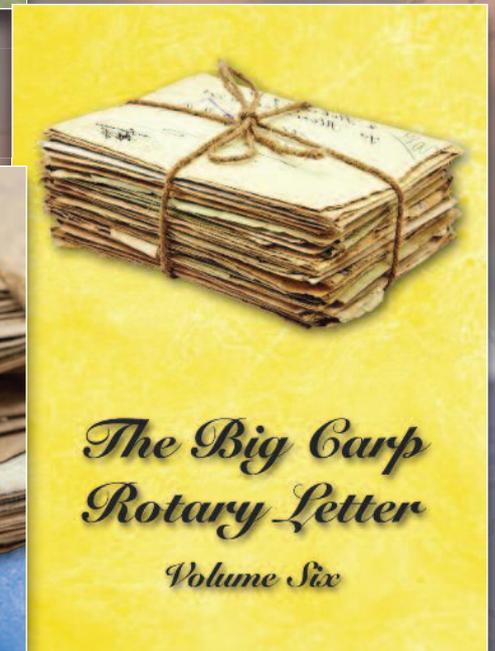
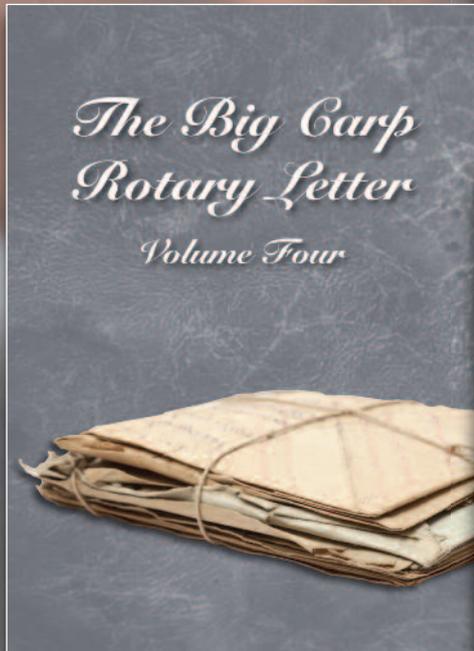
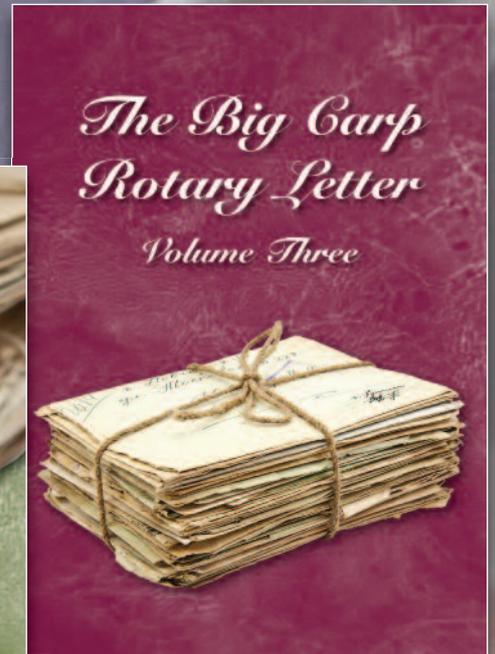
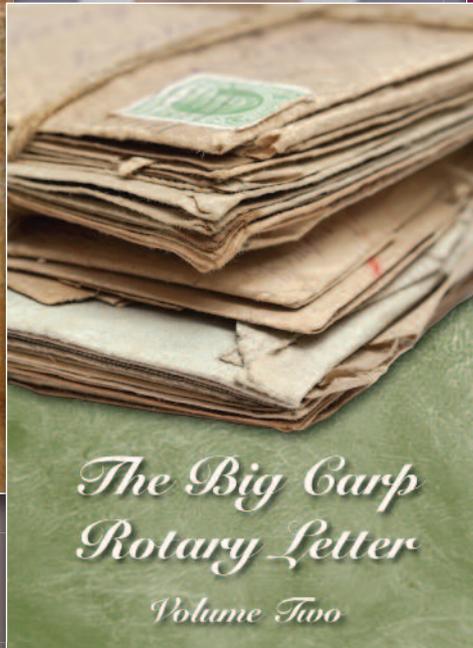
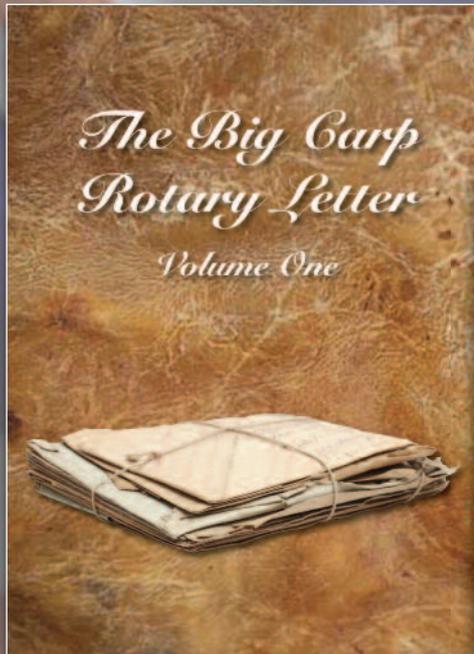
I catapulted about a kilo of Xbaits River Mix boilies to the spot and kept resetting the trap. By the morning I had recast the rod a good ten times, but it did actually look like the flow was steadying out – not by much, but maybe enough to fish it a bit better.



**(Top) My first Thames common.**  
**(Right) A plump Thames common.**

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As I was looking at the crease where the flows were hitting each other off the back of the island, I wondered if any of the baits I had catapulted to the spot might have rolled downstream. So to test my theory, I positioned a second rod half way across to the island and downstream on the crease line. I had decided to fish snowman rigs on both rods with an Xbaits hardened Lobster Thermidor bottom bait and a good old Richworth tutti-frutti pop-up on top, as I wanted something smelly and visible. This was again loaded up with a ten-bait stringer, a 6oz gripper lead and 3oz back lead. The rod wasn't even in the water long enough to make a cup of tea before it ripped into gear, pulling the rod tip round as it shot downstream. I actually thought it was a branch or log or something that had wiped the rod out at first. The possibility of a carp didn't enter my mind until it stopped running downstream and I had it under control. After a heart pumping 15-minute battle, I looked in my net at my first Thames carp of the season and my first Thames common too. It was a proper Thames warrior with a few scrapes and battle scars on both sides. On the scales it went 22lb on the nose and made me a very happy man.

I had another similar run on the same rod during the afternoon, but I only got it about half way back when the hook pulled out. Gutted I lost it, but happy there were a few about.



Just before dark I noticed that the flow had dropped a little more, and I was able to get my third rod out. This was positioned in between the other two rods, towards the large boat tied to the tip of the island on my right. This turned out to be a good move, as at midnight that rod was away in the form of a savage drop back. I hit into it and made up the slack. This time everything went well and before I knew it I had my second Thames carp in the net, in the shape of a plump 12lb common.

There was no more action that night, and I had to pack up at lunchtime the following day. I left happy, but not before catapulting out the last of the bait, as I intended to return as soon as possible. I was using Xbaits River boilies, as they are a mix of four different types. I had said for a while that if were ever to spend any time on the river I would use mixed boilies, as these fish must have seen them all, so give them one of each. I decided to mix up the MC Nut, Spicy Squid, Secret Fruit and Lobster Thermidor. These were about as different from one another as they come, so would hopefully give the fish something they would want to eat, or if not, at least confuse them enough to make a mistake and pick up my hookbait.

As it turned out I couldn't get back

**(Above) One of the prettiest carp I've ever caught.**

**(Left) A misty morning on the river.**

down till late on Saturday night, two days later. I couldn't believe the swim was free, especially given the time I got there. Buzzing at the thought of more Thames carp, I was almost shaking when I was setting up. But I had the rods back on the spots and kettle on by 22:00 and sat there looking at the river. At 22:30 my left hand rod on the back of the island shot off, and after a short fight I came back with a straightened hook! I wasn't happy! I put on a new hook length and reset the trap before getting back on my bedchair and trying to get some sleep. The river had picked up in pace, so I was now using 8oz grippers and upped the captive back leads to 4oz. These were home made using the components from a Fox captive back lead, a pillar drill and a 4oz flat pear, as they didn't make them in that size at the time. I managed to get my head down at 01:00 and at around 03:45 the same rod was away. The same thing happened again! I came back with a hook that looked like a baiting needle. I couldn't risk this happening anymore, so I tied up three new rigs with the strongest



**An armour-plated Thames mirror, (Below) Sometimes just being there is enough.**

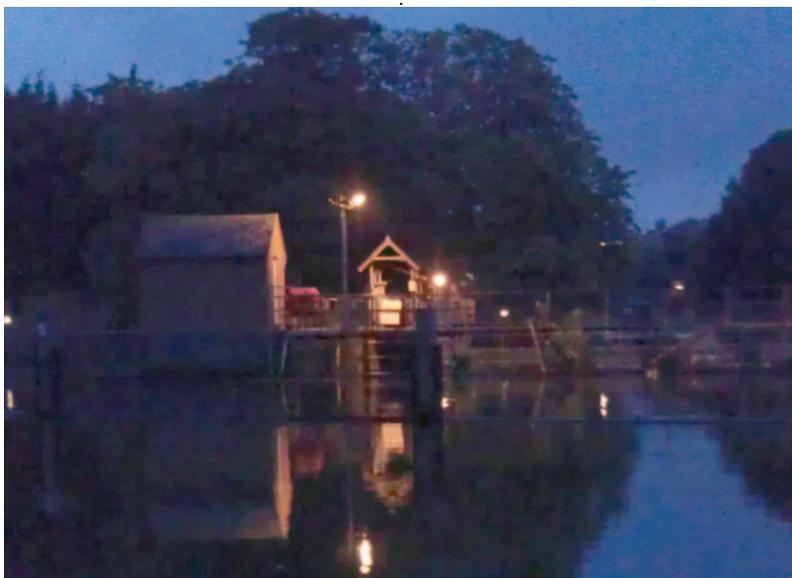
hooks I had on me and reset all three traps. At 05:45 the same rod was away again. This time everything held firm, and one of the prettiest looking carp I've ever had was in the net. On the scales it went 21lb 4oz.

2-1 to the carp, I thought. I cast the

rod back out on the spot, and as I was trying to put the back lead on, but the line kept lifting it out of the water, so I picked up the rod and I was in! It must have taken it as soon as it hit the bottom, despite the ten-bait stringer. This time it felt a lot bigger,

slow and ponderous, just nodding the tip as the line cut through the water. The fish was heading out towards the gap in the islands, and I had to slow it down, so I leaned into the rod and it stopped. I dared to start thinking of my first Thames thirty, and then all of a sudden it went slack. "Great!" I thought. 3-1 to the carp and that one was a big'un too... You just know, don't you? This time something had cut through the hook length like a razor blade. So on with another new hook length and another lead. I was using a lead clip system, and I had now run out of the 8oz leads, the 6oz leads weren't working, so I cable tied a 5oz and 3oz together, which fitted better than a 6oz and 2oz.

The fish didn't seem to mind the rather strange looking lead setup, as an hour later the bobbin hit the rod before falling off as the line pulled out of the back lead, and I was in again! But fate conspired against me and after a short fight I lost it. This time something had cut through the lead



core. "This is getting silly now!" I shouted across the river in frustration. 4-1 to the carp! With a new complete rig tied on and cast out, I sat back and put the kettle on. I rang a friend, John Merritt, and told him what was going on. I think I was looking for some moral support really, which was given, and I continued to fish. Thanks, mate. By now it was 10:00 and strangely enough, I was expecting another bite. I wasn't let down either, as the same bite alarm sounded and lit up in the misty morning, this time I actually landed it!

(pic 10)

An armour-plated 18lb 8oz mirror was weighed, photographed and safely returned to the river. The rod was rebaited, recast and reset. 4-2 to the carp and game on. I had to leave at 11:30 for work, so I started packing everything away whilst thinking about what might have been and hoping for another bite. I'd only packed up the kettle when, you've guessed it, the same rod was away for

a seventh time. "Please let me land this one!" I was muttering to myself. As again this felt heavy, but not as big as the one I lost earlier. The fish gave me the right runaround trying to do laps of the islands, dive under boats and find every snag in the swim, but after some persuasion, I got it to kiss the spreader block and it was in the net. I had a big grin on my face as I looked at the fish. It was a lovely, long linear from an old looking strain, with thin wrist towards its tail and a mouth like a Hoover.

At 26lb and 12oz it was a new Thames PB for me! By now it was time to leave, so with the tackle packed up on the barrow I baited up and left for work. Unfortunately it rained for the following week and the river came back up again and started to push far too fast to hit any of the spots I was fishing before, so I travelled around for the next three sessions, trying to find where the carp could be hiding and I could present a bait to them, but I only caught bream

– not really what I wanted on quick overnights before work.

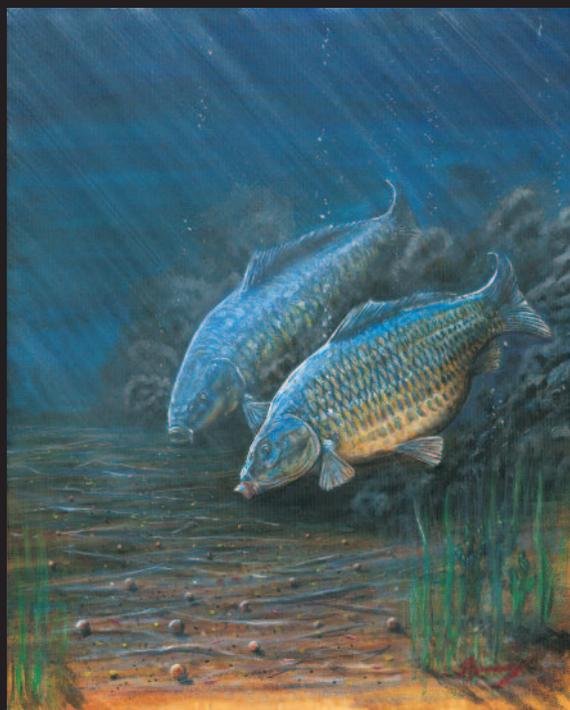
Due to the flow, it wasn't till the start of July I managed to get back in the swim. The river was fining down, and the rods were once again on the spots. This was a midweek overnights, so I was down to the river by 20:00. I was set up for 21:00 and had to leave for 07:00. I was on the phone to one of my friends, Chris Edge, when the middle rod burst in to life. I threw the phone on the bedchair and lifted into the fish... "Hang up, mate. I'm in!" I shouted. The fish went downstream, over my right hand rod and snagged me on a tree in the margins. I could feel it was still on, so I put the rod on the rest, grabbed the net and walked down to where it was snagged. With my Polaroids on, I could see the fish in the water blowing my boilie in and out of its mouth. I stripped off down to my boxers and a pair of flip-flops and went in after it. There's always someone walking past when this happens, and on this occa-



My new Thames PB.

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sion it was an old couple with their dogs. They were chuckling to themselves as I emerged from the water, bright red, soaking wet and carrying a small carp in the net. It was only a wiry, young looking common of 13lb 8oz, but at least I was back on the fish.

I had three bream during the night, so I was wondering if the carp were

starting to move off. However I needn't have worried, as when I was packing away at 06:30 the left hand rod was away with a screamer! It had to be a carp this time. The fight passed with no dramas, and before I knew it, I had a 22lb 4oz mirror in the net.

What I love about Thames carp is that you never know what you are



going to get in terms of strains. This one didn't have many scales, was grey in colour, with a few battle scars and patch of fungus that looked like moss growing out of its shoulder – a true character. I treated its wounds, put it back in the river and went to work. The next time I got down a mate of mine was in the swim, so I went and fished the next one down for a social. I lost one due to a hook pull that I couldn't stop, probably a cat (as the swim was known for one), and my mate only had bream. By now the island swim was getting noticed by other anglers, so I decided it was time to find the carp somewhere else.

It rained heavily for the next three days, so I found some slack/steady water above the weir towards the lock cut at the top end of the section. There were large patches of streamer weed in front of me, which went from the bottom all the way to the surface of the water. For this reason I ditched the stringer and went for a PVA bag approach, in the hope it would all punch through the weed, keep the hook point sharp and present the bait well. I under arm cast all three rods to the posts on the other side and sat back to put the kettle on. I heard a loud bang and looked up to see the bobbin fly off its cord and the rod tip bend down towards the back lead. As I picked the rod up, the line became free of the back lead and cut through the water. A brightly coloured common leapt clear out of the water like a dolphin! This was one angry fish, almost violent! When I got it in the net, it turned out to be a 14lb ghostie – my first Thames ornamental!

I had nothing else on that trip, and I couldn't get out again till mid-July. By now the river was flowing even faster than before. I had to go looking again! I must have driven around 20 miles looking for a likely spot but couldn't make up my mind. I eventually settled on the area towards the lock cut again, but this time the weir above the bottom of the section. Three rods were cast to the posts on the other side with ten-bait stringers and threw out around forty baits around each one.

The night passed without a bite, but as the sun came up over the horizon and I was thinking about packing

**(Top) A wiry Thames common  
(Left) A true character.**

up the right hand rod burst into life. The fish jumped clear out of the water just like the last one, but then fell off. A little puzzled, I reset the trap and started to pack away. The same rod went again and ended with the same result, bizarre. They were only small commons, but they all count on the Thames. I left for work thinking, "I've got to get back here quick!" and I got back on that night, but I only had a bream.

A mate had joined me for the trip and I wondered if there were too many rods out for carp to feed, or maybe I'd spooked them. I had a rare day off that day and decided to give it till lunchtime. We had everything packed up by 14:30 when the left hand bobbin hit the rod butt. I was on it in a flash, and from the start I knew it was a good fish. It was all a bit hairy because it was so tight for space in

**(Top right) My first Thames ornamental.**  
**(Below) I broke my Thames PB again.**





the swim and with the boats going in and out of the lock; I had to "give it the butt" as my friend Nick would say. My rod tip was past the end of the handle when my mate netted it. It looked massive in the net, an old scaly mirror with a few scares and a beady black eye. We lifted it out of the water, unhooked it and put it on the scales. It went 27lb 2oz; I'd broken my

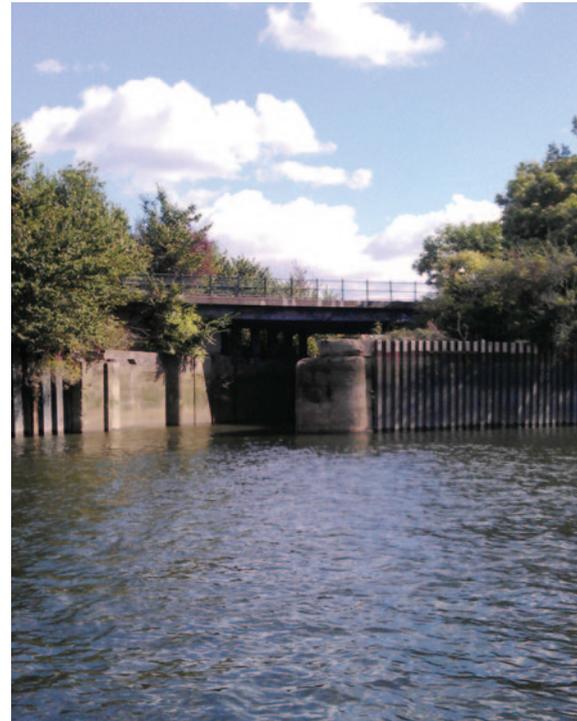
Thames P.B. again! My mate, who was fishing with me at the time, went on to catch the same fish, one month later and three miles away.

They truly are nomadic in the river, although I'm sure there are a few resident fish that don't leave their section. I only did one more session at the lock after that, catching six bream. By now the river had calmed

down, and I was sure the carp were on the move again. The next time I was out, I managed to get back into the Island swim where I had started the season. I had all the rods in position to the usual spots in no time at all. I then made a cup of tea, put the brolly up and went to bed. I had three bream in the night and was wondering if I should have persevered with the lock cut. That was until the left hand rod had a savage drop back and then tightened to the tip again. It fought like a big bream and before too long I had a 21lb 14oz 'Thames Simmo' in the net.

I did one more session in the swim catching a barbel and a four bream. Unfortunately then I had to put my tackle into storage. The studio flat I lived in with my wife and growing daughter was far too small for all of us, so to make room, the tackle was sacrificed, and I got my head down on all the overtime I could get. This only lasted a couple of months until mid-September when my wife was fed up with me climbing the walls indoors and a friend said I could keep a bit of tackle at his house, which was a lot closer than where it was stored. The river was back up, so I went for a look at the lock where I had the 27lb'er. It

**(Top left) Fought like a bream.**  
**(Below left) After a two-month break.**  
**(Below) The entrance to the tidal lake.**



was a midweek overnighter again, and the swim looked good for a bite, so that's where I settled. Glad to be back, I couldn't get any sleep so stayed up drinking tea and tying up hook lengths. It was still raining, but I couldn't be happier. Sometimes just being there is enough.

It was about 01:00 when my bite alarm on the middle rod lit up and started to scream. After a short battle in the dark, I had something in the net. I turned on my head torch and looked at my prize. It was a 21lb 12oz common, a much cleaner looking fish than the first one of the season, and I was happier than a pig in mud.

I did some self-takes in the rain and returned the fish to its home. That proved to be my last trip on that section. To put the cherry on the cake for the year I wanted to end it with a tidal carp. By now the river was in full flood, and with the winter tides looked unfishable, so I had to find somewhere off the main flow. My friend Johnny Curd had told me that his club, Barnes and Mortlake, had acquired the fishing rights to the 'Thames Young Mariners', a tidal lake of the Thames between Teddington Lock and Richmond.

I was lucky they were taking on members and joined up straight away. Due to the poaching that used to go on before the club took over, you have to book in to fish it and only if another member is present. You also



cannot fish during the day due to the swimmers and boats. This suited me fine, as I could only fish the nights anyway. I got to the 'lake' in darkness and joined Johnny, Del and Craig for social. The 'lake' was quite shallow at around five to six foot, with a silty/choddy bottom so the rig choice was clear. Two chod rigs with homemade luminous pink Indian Spice cork balls were cast out, just short of a couple of buoys out towards the middle of the lake. I then spread about

fifty Xbaits River Mix boilies around each one and sat back for a tea and a chat with the lads. At around 01:00 one of my rods burst into life, and after a ten-minute battle I had a scruffy 17lb common in the net.

My first tidal carp! Yes, not from the main river but definitely a Thames fish. In November I had joined another club, mainly for a certain 'Big Pit' but it also had the bonus of a private section of the Thames around a racecourse. It was nice fishing a private section, but with the river in such a bad way I didn't get a bite from the carp, and after ten blank sessions I called it a day. Now it was towards the end of the season, I kept thinking about the 'Mariners' and had arranged a social with Craig, as it was his birthday. I managed to winkle out a 19lb common and Craig had 17lb common birthday carp and also his first Thames carp!

All in all, I did thirty sessions on the river that season, mainly quick overnights, landing thirteen carp and losing seven. In all I had eight twenties and five doubles. I was happy with my return especially given such limited time and the fact the river wasn't at its normal level for the entire year. The river is never far from my thoughts, and maybe this coming season I will return. ■



(Top) My first tidal carp.  
(Left) My second tidal carp.

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# The Great Ouse: Still Addicted

By Joseph Gacon

I love it when a plan comes together.

I had been trickling in baits every other day for a good two and a half weeks before a mad March session on a marina fed by the river. I wasn't sure this was one of my best plans, but my friend Karl was really going through some troubled times at home, and I needed to get him out of the house. Unused to the newly acquired length of leash that he had been given, he seized the opportunity and joined me for a freezing overnight session accompanied by northeasterly winds and some leftover mulled wine from Christmas. I hadn't completely written off the chance of catching a fish, but the Facebook pages and the river lads I knew had been quiet for a while. Karl and I had always fished together since we were kids, and I knew that just being there would give him the chance to take a breath and step back from the craziness of recent events. For him the sessions represented a much simpler time when there was no one to provide for, no pressures from working excessive hours to pay off a mortgage and to live beyond his means.

The stove was on, and the world was being put to rights whilst mulled wine was warming in the kettle. We were enjoying being out on such a clear night (like young boys again). As schoolboys we were S.A.S. wannabes that were always camping out and making fires, and whilst the strong northeasterly wind cut like a knife it



was a readily accepted challenge. I had been extremely lucky to be offered the chance to test a new range of outdoor clothes by Jack Pyke, and on this night I couldn't have been more grateful. It felt almost unfair as I clearly had an advantage over Karl who was starting to visibly feel the effects of the winter wind. He looked cold and needy like Tiny Tim as I refilled his cup with mulled wine, and just then... a single bleep on one of my alarms. "Oh yeah, what is this... ? Go on then, you little sauce pot!" Another bleep... then another... before the clutch started to slowly tick away before going in to meltdown.

I lifted my rod from the stand into a heavy bend accompanied by cheers and laughter from my slightly inebri-

(Above) Brolly in dawn mist.  
(Bottom) Two March commons.

ated best friend. This was the first time I'd had heard him laugh for months; he was more excited than I was... in fact he was ecstatic! "Yeah baby, the boys are back in town, ha ha! It's never too cold for us, well done, Joester me old mucker! He he!"

After what seemed like a lifetime of listening to my line whining and whistling like a banshee in the wind, Karl slipped the net under a very impressive river carp. "Yes Joester, well done my son... man I miss this! WOO HOO!" This was a very stocky fish that went 23lb 9oz. Both of us were totally happy with this unexpected turn up for the books. The last





of the mulled wine was consumed and an uneventful night followed. The following morning Karl brought a cup of tea to my brolly, and we sat down, still happy with the accomplishments from the night before. Whilst discussing the battle the same alarm again gave a single bleep... "Ooh, go on, go on!" Then a slow build up of bleeps followed before it went into meltdown! Karl was once again going nuts as I lifted the rod into another solid kiting fish. Another hair-raising turbo charged battle followed before he slipped the net under a muscular river common. Like peas in a pod this fish weighed 23lb 12oz. After photos the mood was great, and as we packed up I was sure this session offered him some positivity. I thought this might be the turning point my friend needed to get back on its feet again.

Being a man of my word I had a promise to uphold, and at the beginning of the season I targeted the Weir

Pool swim that my friend Andy Lobal had done so well in. A change of job meant Andy had to move away from the area. He had taken a couple of double figure barbel and a mid 20 common at his feet in this swim. He phoned me just prior to moving, stating, "Joe, you must fish the Weir swim and not tell a soul; you must find out what other secrets it holds." As he spoke I pictured him as a medieval king on his deathbed, or as if he was a father handing down a great tradition to his son. Unfortunately my sessions in the swim were not as romantic as Andy's final parting speech, and after one barbel and 20 or so 5lb chub I had to move on.

My lifestyle still only offered me quick overnights; I had taken my boat and targeted various different areas known for throwing up fish but these too had failed to produce on these occasions. Fish had been caught there in the past, but I'm almost certain that none of them were

from quick overnights, but from lengthy campaigns and determined anglers who kept returning and consistently baiting over and over again before the fish moved in. Although I was loving my new little fishing boat, and at times I was convinced I was Jack Sparrow as I zig-zagged down the river shouting to people that I knew, "Take what you can, give nothing back!" it was time for a new plan.

I booked three weeks leave from work, and set aside this time to track my quarry. I had stocked up on baits and spent the nights prior lying in bed planning my course of action. Where to start my campaign first? One of my closest friends Lorenzo had moved to Thailand some fifteen years ago. We had kept in touch, but I hadn't seen him for three years. Coincidentally he messaged me to tell me he'd be back in England at the same time. He's a kindred spirits and the type of friend that no matter how long you had been apart, you could just take up where you left off and laugh at the same jokes as if it were yesterday. I suddenly felt my loyalties torn... I was now double booked.

Of course I had to take Lorenzo out on the boat and drink Peroni like we were twenty-one again, but I had an itch that I really needed to scratch. I had prebaited an area in the centre of town that had given me numerous twenties and a 32lb mirror in the past. I had not touched it for a couple of seasons though because the area had become too busy with anglers, and a family of otters had taken up residence close by. My plan was to kill two birds with one stone: take Lorenzo to the pubs by boat, and when he walked home, chuck the rods out. Great plan but the best laid plans seldom work, I did get to watch otters play however, and I had drunk too much to fish responsibly, so I decided to cut my losses, get my head down, and think about fishing another day.

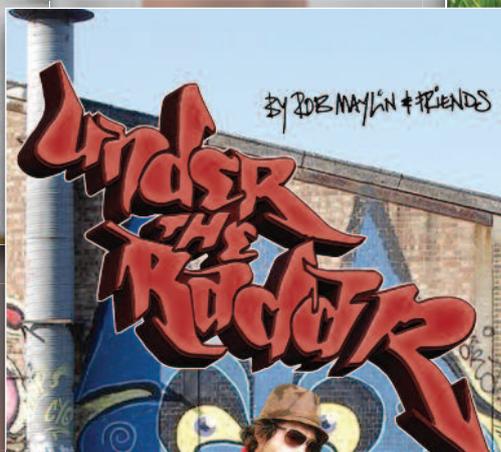
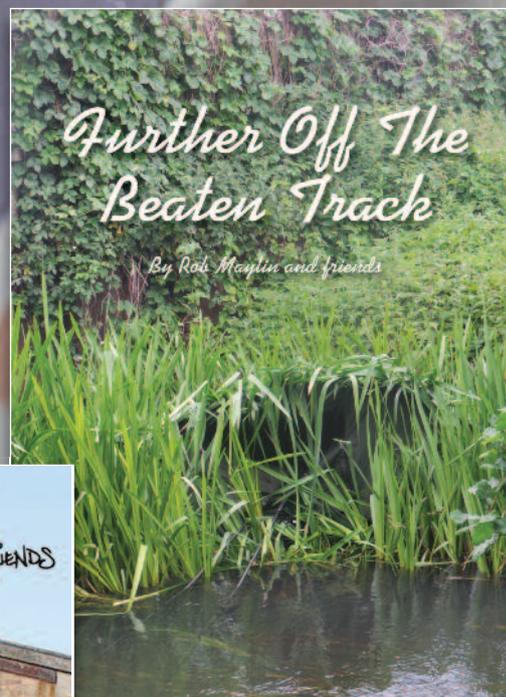
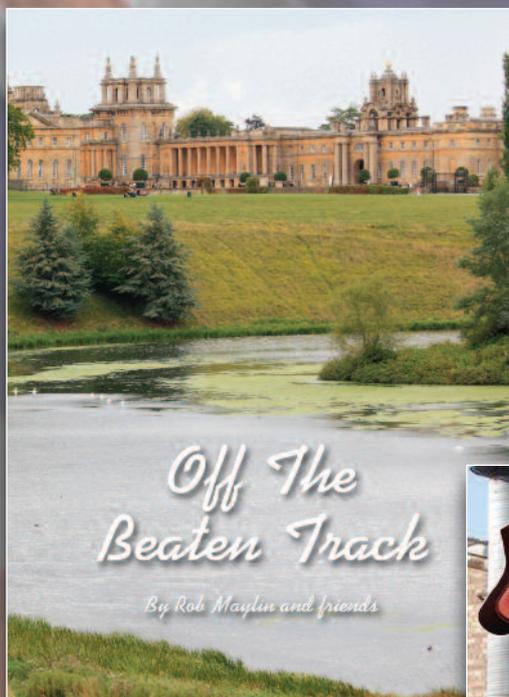
There was a marina close by that had produced some good fish for me in the past. The problem was the residents in the luxury flats opposite had decided that they no longer wished to view anglers from their windows. They had deemed that fishing was to



(Top) Narrow boats at sunset.  
(Left) Lorenzo and me in the boat.

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be banned, even though I was going to be on the opposite bank and on a public footpath. I had spoken to the ranger, and explained to him that on previous occasions I had called the police because I had witnessed people trying to break into their boats. He agreed that having a good set of eyes there at night was better than none, and that the problem was residents associated fisherman with large groups of teenagers that had revelled on the banks keeping them awake all night by screaming, lighting fires and smashing bottles.

I knew there were sometimes fish in there, and I knew that I was starting to exhaust other local possibilities. I was a grown-up now though, and while sure that I was on public land and breaking no laws I definitely

didn't need any negative publicity. Although my previous season had been full of great adventures, it was time to tip the balance in my favour and go undercover. Having received complaints in the past from people that lived some 200 yards away across a large body of water, I knew better than to stir the hornets' nest unnecessarily, so I decided to ditch the brolly for some camo netting that I threw on top of my bedchair. The only thing that separated me from the vision of the very bored and very trivial residents was a small clump of reeds. As you can see my camo netting blended with the reeds perfectly, and whilst causing absolutely no

harm to anyone, I had a feeling of smugness as I set up after dark... "Let's see if you can see me now?"

I had a friend who had lived in one of these luxury flats. He would buzz me in to the marina, and in exchange I would sometimes leave a bottle of beer on his doorstep. I would walk out quietly after dark on the floating pontoons and scatter some Mad Baits chops around them before making haste my escape. On other occasions when he was not at home I would Spomb the same area from the opposite bank (again after dark).

On my first night returning to one of my favourite haunts, this time after dark and as a commando, my rod screamed into action. Within seconds of lifting my rod I felt an unfamiliar grating that could only mean the fish had kited straight under a moored boat. I was grimacing and gingerly retrieving line, fully expecting my line to be cut at any second when everything went solid. "Nah, I'm not having this!" I stripped down to my boxers and entered the black waters, wading out to my chest and burying the rod tip hard below the surface. The grating again started, and it was horrible. Slowly my rod tip pulled closer toward me until I felt a smooth movement. The fish was now free and kiting in the opposite direction as if it were freshly hooked!



**(Top)** My bedchair tucked behind a small clump of reeds was invisible. **(Above)** You never know what may float by when fishing urban areas. **(Right)** Mirror carp.

After walking round a large reed bed to my right, I finally managed to net the fish in the next swim. Luckily I had taken my landing net with me, and I looked down with my head torch on to see a beautiful scaly mirror. Right then it occurred to me that a lot of anglers may have pulled for a break back there. This fish was stunning, and with only a few hours of darkness left I decided to sack it until dawn, when I could get a picture that did it justice. Luckily I am a light sleeper and awoke hearing something smashing through the reeds. My worst fears were recognised, and

my head torch caught the eyes of a hunting otter in my margin! Shouting and clapping, I took my trousers off, entered the depths and lifted the fish to the bank. Being forced to take photographs in the dark was the lesser of two evils and at 24lb 12, it was a rare jewel on the river and well worth every effort. I decided to take a walk before releasing her.

I had a hard-fighting and beautifully dark common next, only 16lb but every river fish is a needle in a haystack, and I was over the moon with this pretty little one. In the morning another scrappy little common

managed to keep my heart in my mouth for minutes as it charged around under the tip, tearing line from my clutch with no regard for anything, and blissfully unaware of its size. Despite it only weighing 13lb 10oz my arms were aching, and I was exhausted.

Mid morning I heard a fish bosh to my left, and I sat up quickly, just in time to witness a repeat performance. I had a chod on standby and fired it past the telltale rings, stopping the line with my finger and skiing the bait back to the centre of a widening target. I repositioned my stands so I



Autumn carp at 25lb 9lb.



Autumn – dark common.



Autumn – pint-size scrapper.



Autumn – repeat capture.

could leave my rod there, using storm poles like stilts to enable my line to clear the marginal reeds in front of me. My swim now looked like Step-toe's backyard, but I wasn't there to take photos of my rods.

An hour later the rod gave a single bleep, and I sat up on my bed to witness the tip nodding viciously as the line lifted from the bottom, telling me that a fish was hooked and moving swiftly towards me. Winding down quickly I was again met with that solid weight that instantly brought a smile to my face.

This fish was a repeat capture – one of the two fish I had landed in March, but this time weighing 24lb 14oz. I took one more common on this session weighing 25lb 9oz before going home. Some passing dog walkers looked intrigued as to why a large, bald man was standing in his boxer shorts whilst punching the air in the cold river. As I walked back to the bank I offered them good morning, made my apologies and slipped my trousers back on. Obviously non-anglers, they couldn't believe the size



Pouring another cup of tea.

of the fish I had caught on their doorstep and happily took these shots for me.

The Great Ouse is getting busier where I live. The last two summers had brought glorious weather, resulting in a massive influx of river users. This coupled with a sizable increase in predation meant finding fish was definitely becoming harder. I am concerned about the future balance of

our rivers, and I guess only time will tell. In the meantime every bar of gold I end up holding increases in value. Locating travelling fish can be hard; but if you don't care what anybody else is doing, you're willing to take a chance by walking into the unknown and you're not expecting overnight results, your local rivers offer something different. Urban or outback – I love it all. ■

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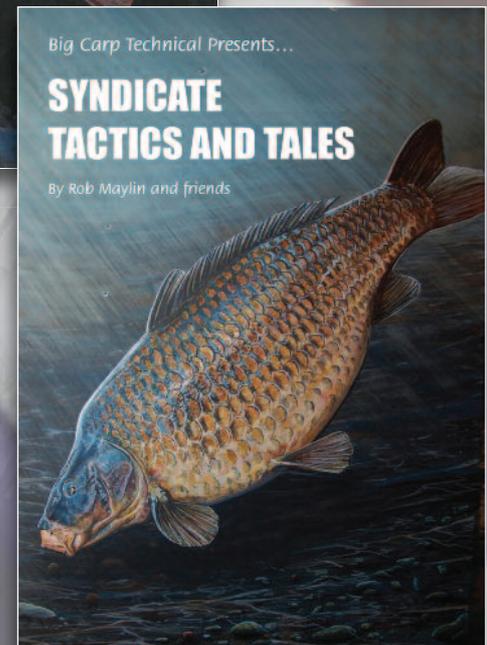
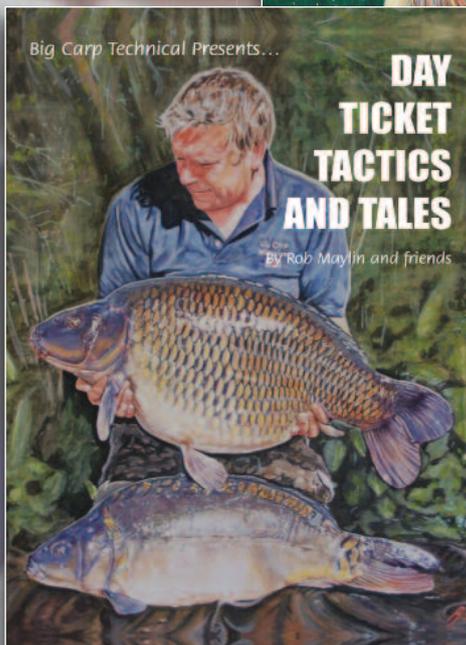
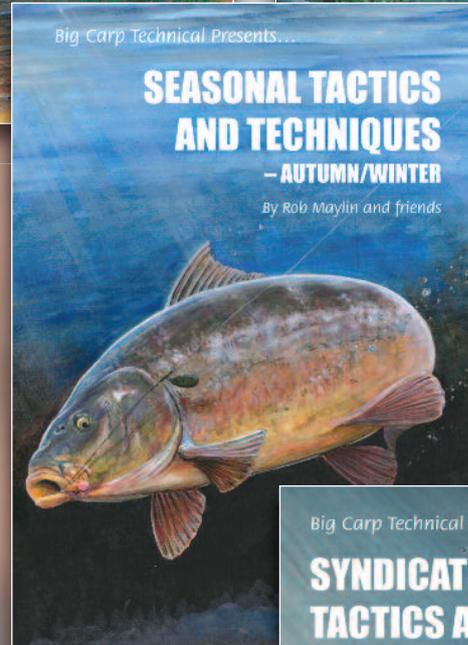
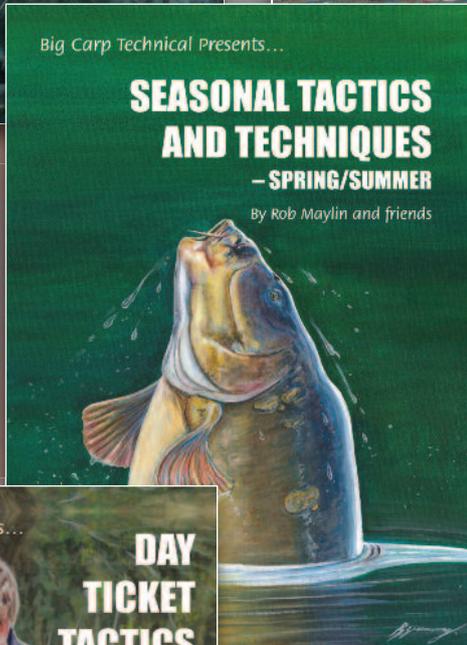
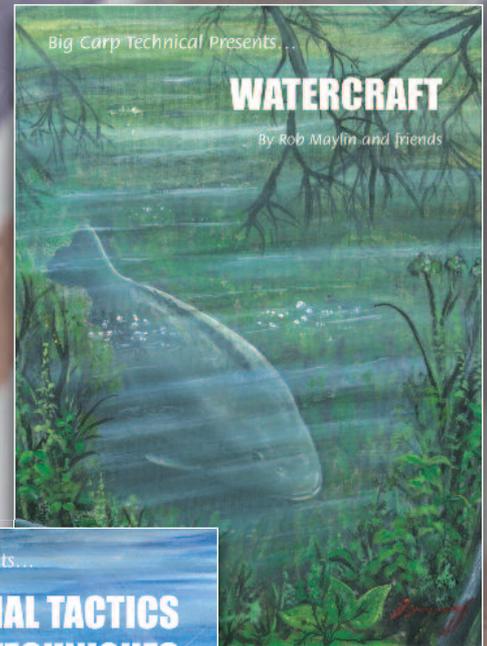
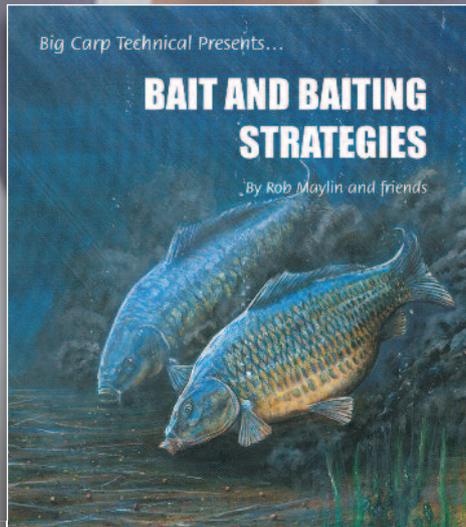
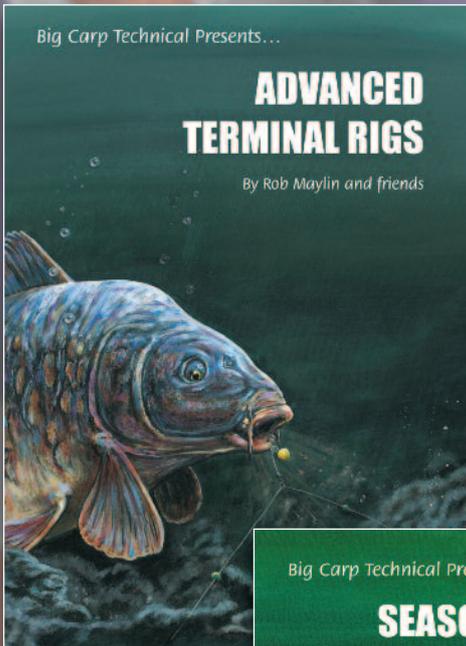
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# The Mighty Trent

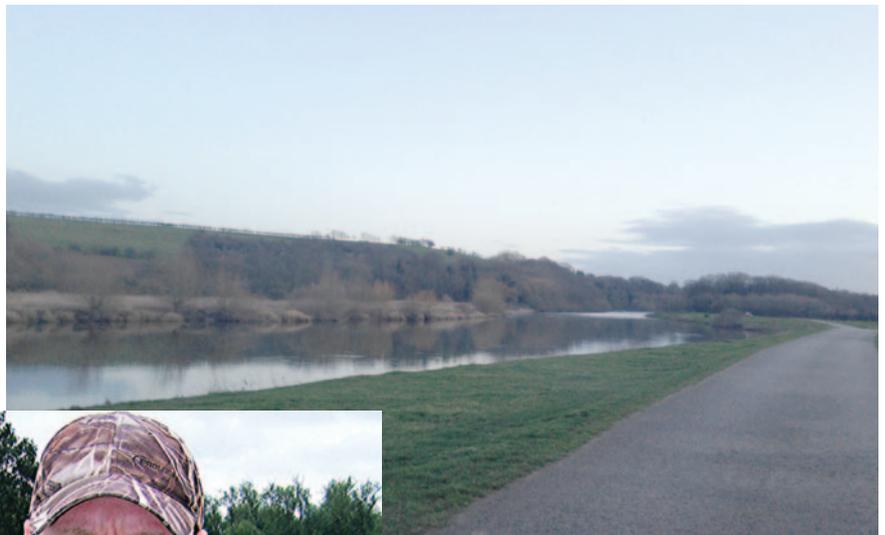
By Lee Brooks



Searching for the unknown.

**M**y passion for fishing all started on the river Trent. I remember as a kid pestering my dad if I could go with him at weekends, and eventually he let me tag along. It was from there on that my dad taught me the basic watercraft skills and basic knowledge on how to catch my target fish, which later helped me adapt it to my carp fishing on lakes etc. It was the late 80s so silver fish, tench, bream and gudgeon were the prime targets, and it seemed back then you could catch just about anywhere you chose to fish on the Trent.

Now a day's river fishing seems much harder, especially for carp. I guess there's always the usual hotspots that the locals fish, but sometimes it's nice to find a secret little stretch that holds carp, which is sometimes easier said than done. I guess it's not what you know it's who you know when searching for big river carp... I always find myself doing the odd session on the Trent when I need a break from fishing the syndicate lake or guesting I'm doing at the time. It's certainly fishing for the unknown that's for sure! Most of



all its peaceful and away from the busy crowds, which is what appeals to me the most, and I suppose it brings back good childhood memories. My methods for fishing the Trent have always been really simple: if I'm prebaiting then I'll fill it in with particle a good three days before fishing, or if the fish are visible and I'm on them then I'll sprinkle a few boilies out and not waste time.

My travels along the Trent have seen me fishing the Newark stretch, which is good for barbel and the odd carp, and around the Gunthorpe area near Colwick in Nottingham. One particular session saw me wandering the riverbanks of Newark one summer's day. I noticed a few carp

**(Top) Coming through fast.**  
**(Above) Trying to locate the carp.**  
**(Left) Low twenty from Gunthorpe stretch.**



patrolling the margins near a bridge, so I spent a few hours watching them move up and down a 100-yard stretch. I didn't waste time; I baited two overhanging bushes with a few boilies and quickly plumbed the bottom. All was clear and the rigs were in

place. Luckily the van was loaded with all my gear so a night session was on cards if I didn't catch, especially on a hot summer's afternoon.

All was quiet and the fish clearly weren't feeding; they were just chilling and occasionally moving up the

margin near the bridge 20 yards away from the baited spots. One thing was for sure: I knew the fish had seen the bait, so it was just a matter of time... A few more hours passed so I decided to get the brolly set up for the night. I was sure it wouldn't be long before the fish would visit the spots and start to feed. Just after dark I started to get a few liners on the left hand rod. The fish were there, and it was just a matter of time, but for some reason the night was really quiet and apart from the odd bleep I didn't get any action.

It wasn't until around mid morning when the left hand rod ripped off, I quickly hit into the fish, and it headed straight up the left hand margin ripping 30-40 yards of line off. After a few minutes of steering it away from the snaggy bushes I could see a lovely chunky common slipping into the net, a nice low twenty and I was well chuffed. After catching the common the fish had clearly headed down the river, so I packed my gear away and started roaming the banks again. I always keep everything light, so within minutes I can be on my travels and hopefully on the fish too. I love how unpredictable fishing the Trent can be; you could blank a full season yet the following season bag up frequently...

Gunthorpe has always been a good area for catching carp, and there have been a few big'uns caught too over recent years. I always like to head down there and watch them when they're spawning in the warm afternoons after work. It gives you a good idea what you're going to be fishing for and how big they are if you get close enough. Most of my sessions are quick overnights with the occasional weekend sometimes, so I always try to keep an eye on the swims I'm going to fish prior to arriving.

A few weeks later I returned to fish the Newark stretch again, but this time I prebaited heavily with particle on the Wednesday and planned to do a weekend. Weather was really hot that week, but I was still confident of catching. I'd prebaited the same spots as last time, so I put the rigs in place

**(Top) Low twenty from Newark stretch of the Trent.**

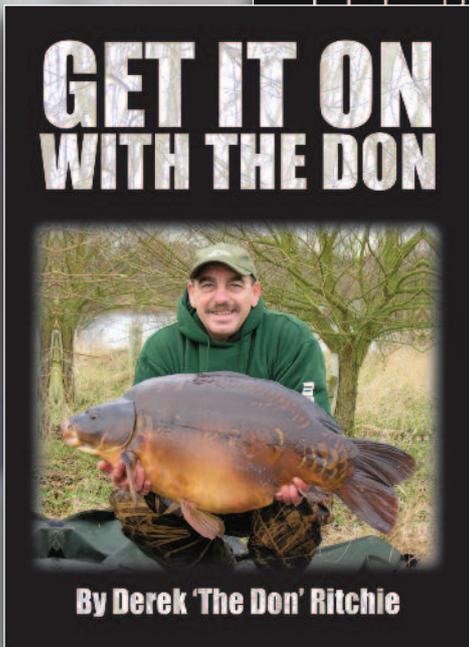
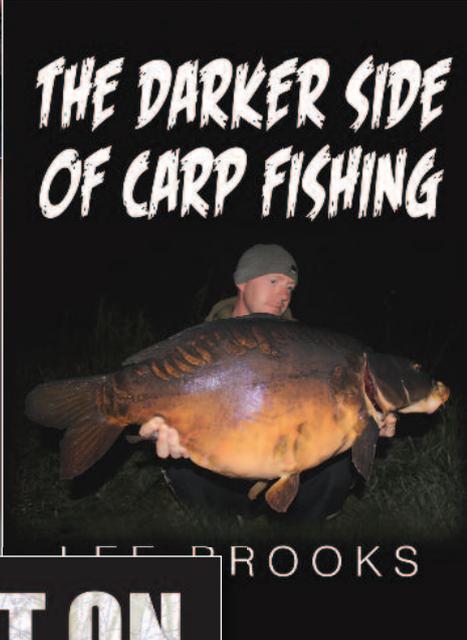
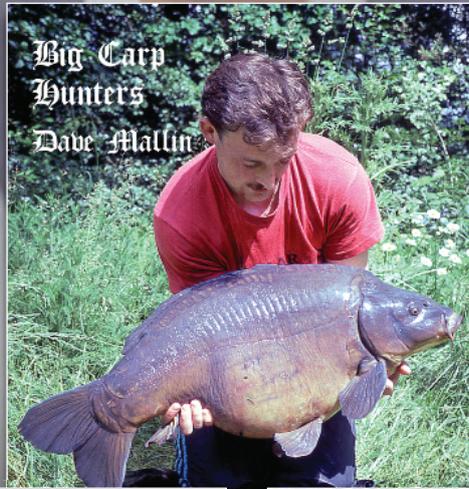
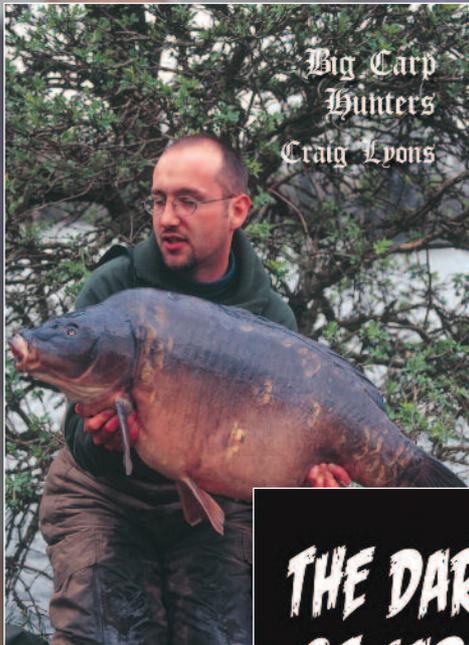
**(Above)**

**(Left) Quick overnighter on the Gunthorpe stretch of the Trent.**

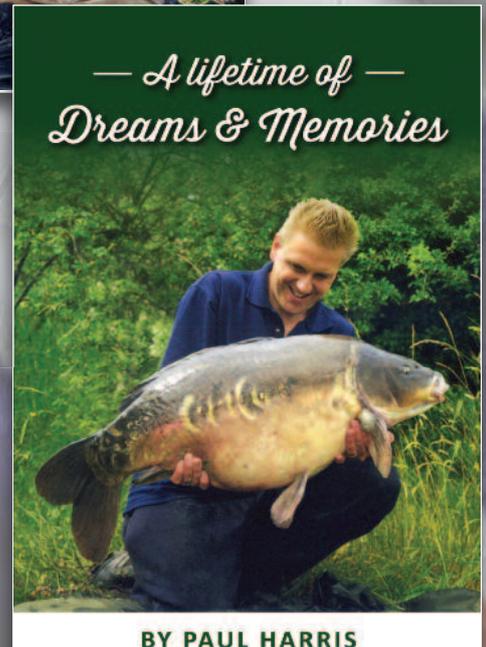


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and few handfuls of crushed boilies for good measure. There were no signs of carp in the area so I was going to fish just the night and move on if I didn't have any luck.

My mate came down for a chat, and it turned into a bit of a social, so I ended up staying till the following afternoon, which was a stroke of luck because the night didn't bring any-



thing. It wasn't until midmorning that I managed two small commons, which were very welcome. After speaking to another angler nearby I found out that the river hadn't been fishing well recently, so I couldn't grumble with the results I had, and the prebaiting seemed to have worked well too. I did a few more sessions on that stretch but blanked every time, so plan B was to head down to Gunthorpe. I decided to fish the next few weeks on the Trent before returning to the syndicate lake and hopefully catch the target I wanted (which I did).

It wasn't long before I was speaking to a friend, and he said he had seen some big carp showing further down the stretch. I also quizzed him about what fish he'd had out of this particular stretch over the years. He'd fished the Trent all his life, and his watercraft and angling knowledge was something "special" in my opinion, so when he spoke I listened.

After a long chat I didn't waste time; I was heading straight down there for a good look, and the van was loaded too, so a night session was on the cards. Within a couple of hours I noticed a few carp in the area, so I scattered some boilies out and placed two rods on the edge of the bait. Within ten minutes of casting out, the left hand rod was paying out line at a slow rate, and soon a small chub was in the net. To be honest I was expecting a few chub from my previous ses-

**(Top left) Average common from Newark stretch.**

**(Left) Immaculate common from Newark stretch of the Trent.**

**(Below) Afternoon stalking.**







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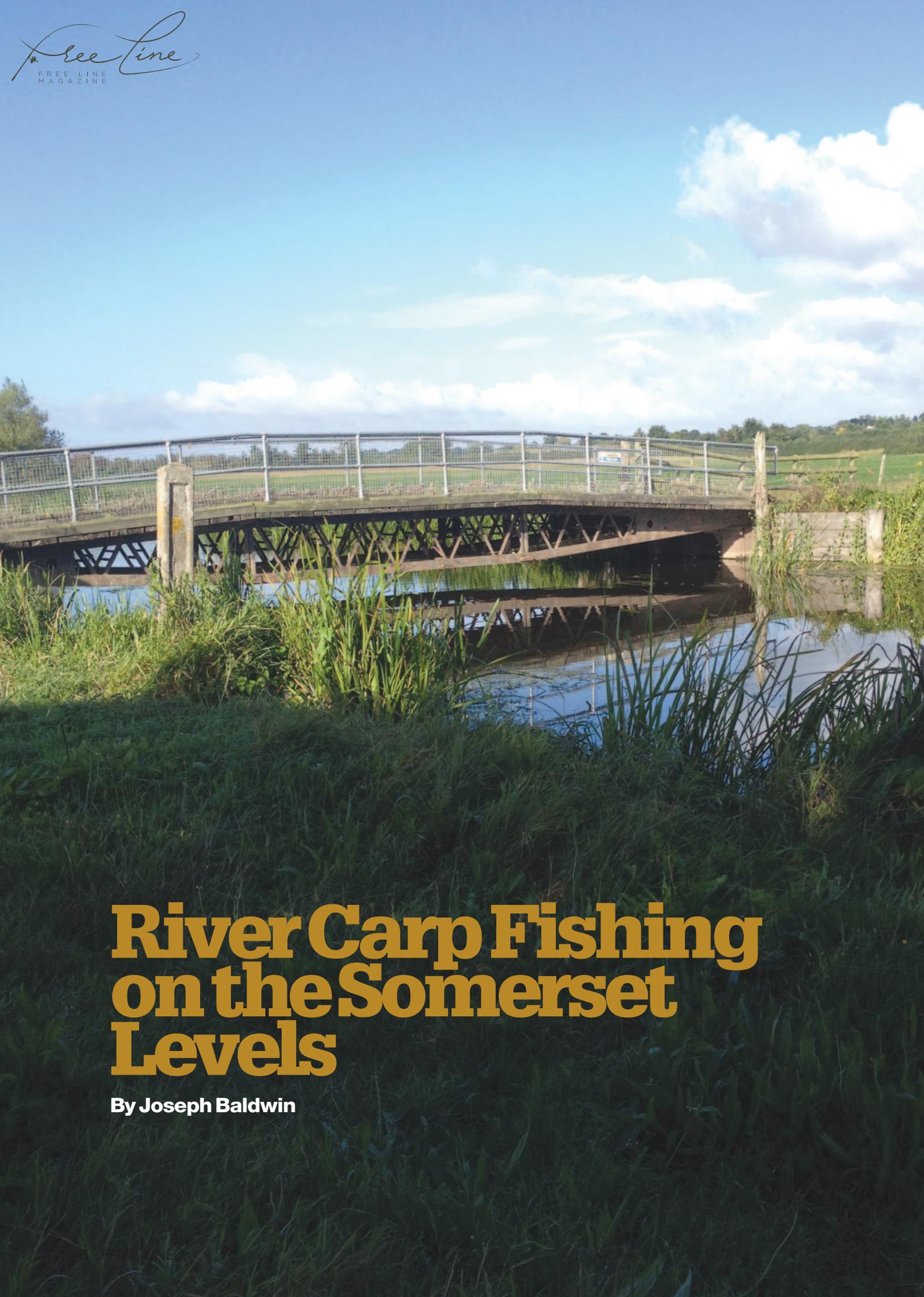
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# River Carp Fishing on the Somerset Levels

By Joseph Baldwin

**I**n my opinion the biggest key to carp fishing is location, whether it be on a drain, river or lake. Generally speaking they are creatures of habit and frequently visit the same places day in day out, but I have found structure is key. The second key ingredient is bait. Once I have found a likely spot, I always prefer to do a bit of prebaiting beforehand. I normally do three days' baiting before I want to fish the spot unless there is a lot of weed, and then I would probably bait heavily with Vitalin or pigeon conditioner for two or three weeks until the spot is fishable. I am a firm believer that robin red is a key ingredient to river carp fishing, purely because of the leakage rate. It will draw any other flavours out of the bait into the water columns downstream, and they will track the taste upstream to find the bait. I very rarely throw whole boilies in; I find halves or chops work much better... A, they do not roll off downstream and B, the leakage





is a lot faster.

Third is just being aware of your presence on the bank, especially in low lying areas of Somerset, as the majority of the banks are peat and are

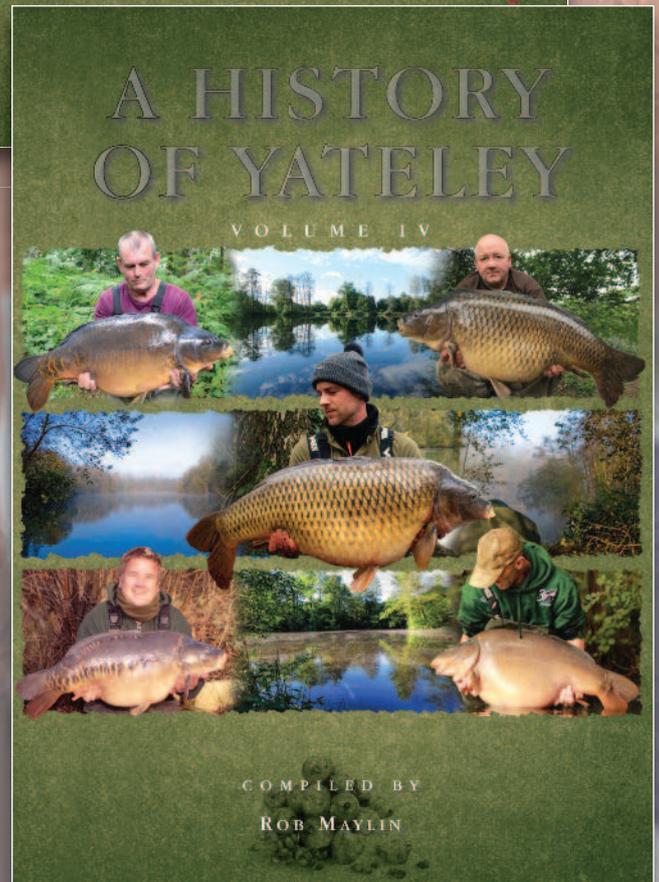
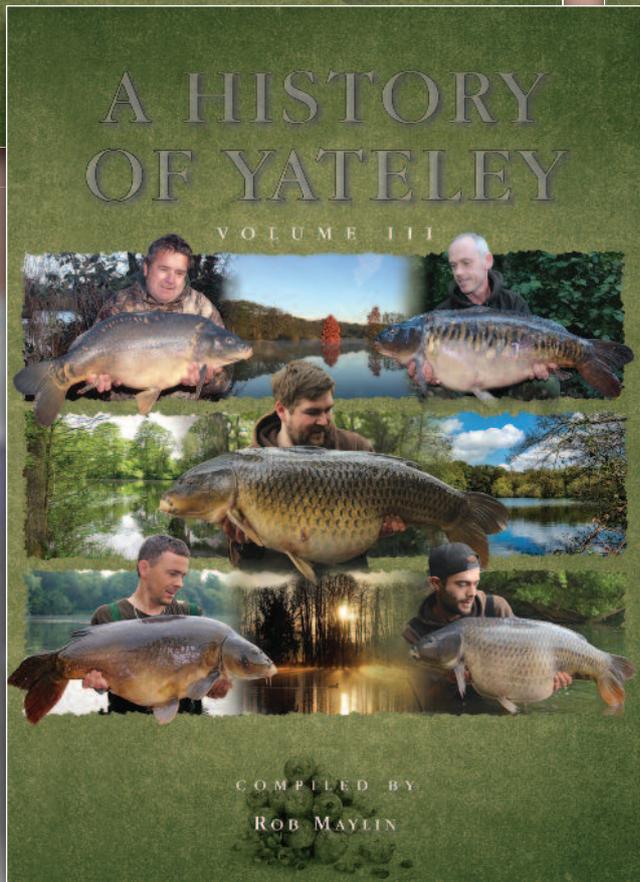
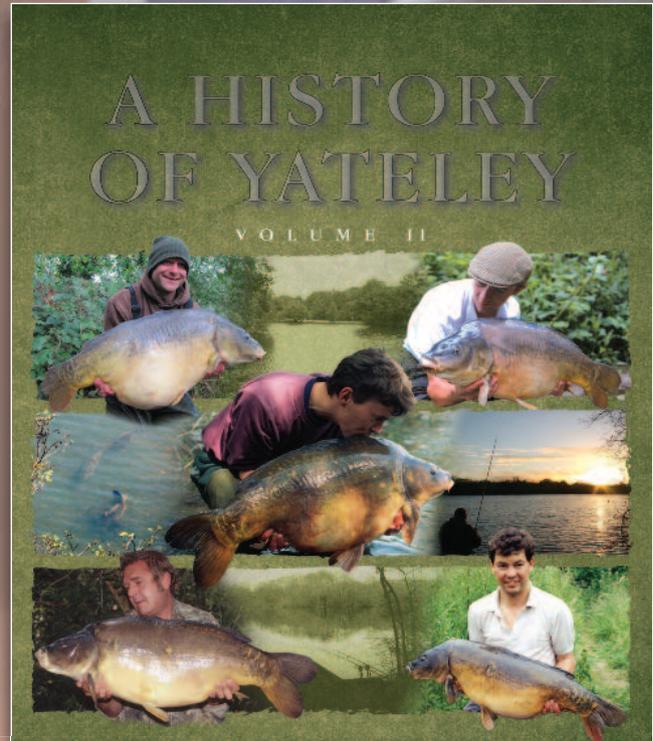
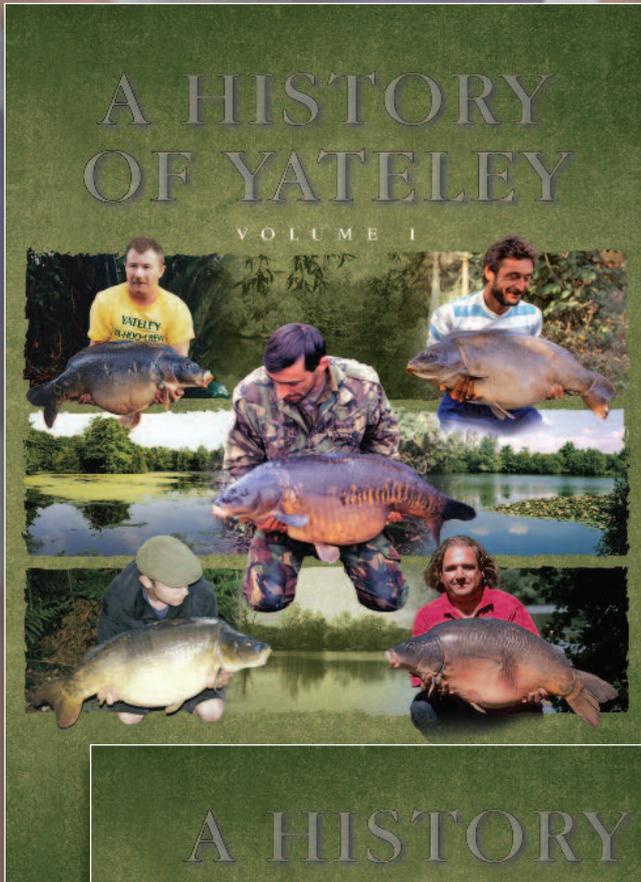
almost alive with the water content and water table height, and they just do not seem to tolerate noise like their lake cousins. The main reason they draw me back time and time again is

that you never know what you are fishing for. They very rarely have names, and with fish like these that go over 30lb you have got to give it a go. ■



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