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BIG CARP

Top Tens!

Top 10 Day Ticket Carp Fisheries

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

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 Bait Companies

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 Carp Tackle Companies (Terminal)

1	THINKING ANGLERS
2	ESP
3	SOLAR
4	RIDGEMONKEY
5	FOX
6	KORDA
7	GEMINI
8	NGT
9	TERMINAL TACKLE UK
10	CARP ONLINE

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 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
10	ADVANCED ANGLING SOLUTIONS

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



As voted by Big Carp readers!

Big Carp Magazine! *a history of excellence*

BC
ISSUE 318

**NEW
YEAR
SPECIAL**

**Matt Hennon
Larkfield complex:
Fully Immersed**



**Mark and Emma Rose – The Winter Diary
Tom Maker – An Autumn Approach
Tristan Cooper – Colebrook Fishery
Ryan Gibson – Music to my Ears**

Still the proper carp angler's favourite read

NEW



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Happy New Year!

Is it just me or do Christmas's just flash by these days? Maybe it's my age, but it certainly seems that way. Also, the build up to Christmas appears to be much shorter? the rush to buy carp books in particular used to start much earlier, now it's all happening in the two weeks before Christmas. My wife says it's all down to the speed mail order is sent, now you can order from Amazon etc one day and get it delivered the next, or even the same day! Let me tell you it's not been that easy this year for normal small businesses like mine. With the post office on strike, my chosen courier DPD were overwhelmed and the knock-on effect meaning that they could not cope with the extra demand. Hopefully everyone got their orders. And don't forget we have plenty of stock, so if you've got a bit of money for Christmas now's the time to order.

So here we are at the start of another New Year, the shortest day has passed, spring is coming and I've got some great articles this month to get you in the mood to get back on the bank, after the December freeze-up. First up Matt Hennon with a 22-page account of his exploits fishing the Larkfield Complex. One of Kent's jewels in the crown, stunning carp, steeped in history. Matt and his pals had some great times fishing for its residents.

Regulars Mark and Emma Rose have been 'aving' a few just lately, some very nice carp popping up on the social media, including some PBs! This month, is the first in a new 'Winter Diary' series that will run over the next few months, well done guys, great angling.

Tom Maker has also been prolific on social media, catching a huge number of big carp, here's a few tips how he does it.

Speaking of PBs, Tristan Cooper returns this month with the first of two articles, resulting in a fantastic scaly big mirror next month. By the way next month will be a 'Winter Special' with lots of advice from some high-profile anglers on now to catch at the toughest time of the year.

Ryan Gibson is also no stranger to the pages of Big Carp and he's been catching a few too, including some winter whackers. A great article again this month from this consistent catcher.

Free Line Magazine is an Off the Beaten Track and River Carping Special this month, we know how much you love a bit of covert carping! Add to these loads of 'carpy' humour, all the latest tackle reviews and 'carpy' news and competitions and there's something for everyone again this month.

I hope you have been enjoying our two free monthly carp magazines, Big Carp and Free Line, see them both here – 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, we would love to hear your tale. There are no picture or word limits. Simply email your article to 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. WITHOUT YOUR INPUT THERE WILL BE NO MAGS!

Have a great winter 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 if you would like to see the deals and our media information pack.

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Dave Levy.



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ShockLeader

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

Angling Trust smash target to sign up 50 angling clubs for litter clean ups

An Angling Trust initiative to sign up 50 angling clubs to take part in litter collections has reached its target two months ahead of deadline.

In total, 58 clubs across the country have pledged to take part in at least two organised litter collections and will receive free litter picking kits provided by Shimano, our Anglers Against Litter sponsor.

Shimano became the exclusive fishing tackle sponsor of our Anglers Against Litter campaign in April of this year and have been working with the Angling Trust to combat litter pollution around waterways, providing resources to enable clubs to undertake litter picks and encouraging all anglers to pledge their support to 'Take 5' – picking up five items of litter or spending five minutes at the end of a fishing session to collect and safely dispose of litter.

Earlier this year we set a target to recruit 50 clubs by the end of December to undertake regular litter picks. With 58 clubs already signed up and another 31 on the waiting list for next year, at least 116 litter picks will be carried out in coming months.

Steve Frost, Angling Trust Environment Manager, said:

"Litter and plastic pollution can be harmful to fish and other wildlife liv-



ing in and around rivers, lakes, canals, sea or estuary, as well as being an unsightly addition to our environment. Once again, the angling community has come together to help tackle this major issue and we wish to thank Shimano for the financial support which has enabled free litter picking kits to be provided to angling clubs."

Shimano's partnership with the Angling Trust supports the Japanese tackle manufacturer's mission state-

ment to "promote health and happiness through the enjoyment of nature and the world around us" and recognises the importance of preserving our environment to protect fish and fishing.

Ian Latham, Shimano UK Managing Director said:

"We are delighted at such a positive response from the angling clubs and individuals across the country. With over 100 clubs committing to collecting litter in 2023, we as an industry should be proud of our community and the proactive approach to dealing with this blight on the landscape and making the environment more enjoyable for all."

If you are on the committee of an angling club and your club is willing to commit to at least two litter picks a year and send us details and photos, you can apply for one of these amazing kits that includes 10 Anglers Against Litter Hi Vis vests and 10 litter pickers.

All kits for this year have been allocated, but we are now taking expressions of interest for 2023. Just drop an email to: stephen.frost@anglingtrust.net

The Anglers Against Litter's 'Take 5' initiative is run in partnership with the Environment Agency and funded from fishing licence income. ■

Carp Humour



Angling Trust's call for water companies' fines to be invested in the environment accepted by the government

The government has announced that fines handed out to water companies for polluting our rivers will be reinvested into environmental improvements.

Presently, fines paid by water companies - over £141m since 2015 - disappear into the Treasury with no benefit to the environment for the damage caused. This change will mean future fines will be used for environmental improvements such as creating wetlands, re-vegetating riverbanks and reconnecting meanders to the main channel of rivers.

Jamie Cook, CEO of the Angling Trust, said:

"We welcome this move by Defra and the Treasury. We have been campaigning for this change and justice for our rivers, seas and fish from the damage water companies have done for a long time.

"We wrote to MPs in November 2021 calling for this course of action to be implemented. Following a huge amount of work behind the scenes and another year's worth of proactive campaigning on behalf of the angling community we are pleased to see that the government have now adopted this logical suggestion.

"Fish Legal have always worked on the basis of returning damages to the impacted club or fishery where resource is needed to re-build, and we must now ensure that this commitment by Defra is directed to where the resource is required to make a difference for fish and the environments they depend upon.

"This should not be a decision for Defra alone. We have been calling for such a fund to be administered by a national panel run by Defra and the Environment Agency with an independent chair, NGO representatives and technical specialists."

This announcement comes ahead of the COP15 global biodiversity conference in Montréal. Globally, wildlife populations have dropped by 69% since 1970 but freshwater habitats have seen a decline of 83%, and migratory fish numbers in Europe have crashed by an alarming 93%.

Sir Charles Walker MP, chair of the Angling Trust, said:

"This is fantastic news for our rivers. It follows that the polluter pays principle should be extended to the



restoration of damaged water courses. The Angling Trust backed the River Restoration Fund more than a year ago and now it's been delivered."

Further details of this change will be published next year. Given that only 14% of our water bodies meet good ecological status, and none meet good chemical status under the Water Framework Directive, this could make a significant difference if designed correctly. The Angling Trust will be engaging with Defra and the Treasury in the design of the scheme and in how any money raised is spent.

Improving our freshwater and coastal environment is vitally important if we are going to meet the commitment set out in the Environment Act and through the government's own environmental improvement plans. Restoring our rivers back to a near natural state will bring immense benefits, not only to the environment but also to the health and wellbeing

of many people who enjoy the connections with our natural world through our blue spaces. Anglers know this better than anyone.

Stuart Singleton-White, Head of Campaigns at the Angling Trust, said:

"The Angling Trust has been presenting evidence to Defra, Environmental Audit Committee and MPs on just how potentially game changing such a move could be. There is an irony that we can secure compensation for small pollution incidents through a process called environmental undertakings, seeing that money reinvested in improving the environment and helping rivers and fish stocks recover. Yet, when it came to the big damage and the big fines, the environment and our fish get nothing.

"We need to consider the detail carefully; this must be new money and cannot be used to replace the investment Defra have already committed. We want to see a level of independence introduced in how any money raised through future fines is then spent.

"Central to any schemes this proposal will fund in the future is to see improvements to our fisheries and actions to support healthy fish populations across all our waters. Investment in supporting the recovery of Atlantic salmon or improving sea grass meadows as vital nursery grounds for sea bass are just two examples of urgent action this funding can support." ■



Welcome to your Members Newsletter

Welcome to the latest issue of the Angling Trust & Fish Legal Members Newsletter. Today we report on the launch of our annual Christmas Raffle which raises vital funds to support our work to protect fish, fishing and the environment; how sea angling can benefit from an £18m fund; our latest trade associate partner Zerofit who have a special offer for members; the fantastic film we have produced of this year's RiverFest final on the Trent; and loads more! Tight lines! John Cheyne, Marketing, Communications & Membership Manager:



Waterways and wildlife under threat as environmental protections face being axed by new UK Bill

The Angling Trust has joined the campaign to protect the UK's existing environmental protections derived from European Law by emphasising the damaging impact on rivers, lakes and coastal waters should they be weakened or removed by a Bill currently going through Parliament.

This follows the 'Attack on Nature' campaign launched by the Wildlife Trust, RSPB and the National Trust against the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, which has the potential to reverse what limited legal protections our waterbodies, wildlife and natural environments currently enjoy.

In a special briefing sent to MPs and Ministers, the Angling Trust argues that the Bill as currently drafted constitutes a major threat to the protection of our waters.



Hoveton Great Broad fish barrier plan is dropped



Anglers in the Norfolk Broads are celebrating the decision by Natural England to drop their controversial plans to erect barriers to fish movements in and out of Hoveton Great Broad – a prime spawning site for the local bream population.

Leading fisheries scientists and angling representatives had jointly condemned the decision by the Environment Agency in 2020 to grant Natural England a permit to install a fish barrier at Hoveton Great Broad, a private water connected to the River Bure in the northern Norfolk Broads, in order to promote better weed growth.

Get Fishing Fund 2023

The Angling Trust in partnership with the Environment Agency is pleased to announce the return of the Get Fishing Fund. The fund will be relaunched on Monday, 5th December giving organisations the chance to apply for up to £2,500 to get more people into fishing in 2023.



How Anglers Can Feel Free of the Tree Pollen this Spring

It's the peak of the tree pollen season in March and April and this can be one of the worst times of year if you suffer with hay fever and enjoy angling. Several species of tree are pollinating, especially birch, alder, elm and willow. Ash, plane and oak pollen is also around at this time, making it a misery for anglers. However, there are some simple things you can do to help. Airborne allergens expert Max Wiseberg gives his top tips...

"Hay fever is a result of our immune system's overreaction to innocuous particles such as pollen," explains Max. "The body's reaction to pollen is to produce histamines. Normal amounts of histamines in your brain are good – they keep us alert, attentive and awake. But, when there are too many in the body, they produce symptoms including sneezing, a runny nose, itchy and watery or streaming eyes, nasal congestion and a general stuffed up feeling in the nose and throat."

"Some people also experience itching around the face and mouth," says Max, "including an itchy mouth, itchy roof of mouth, and a burning sensation in the throat. Headaches and wheezing can also occur."

"Avoiding the allergen is always key with any allergy, whatever it

might be. So here is a selection of practical tips for anglers."

"Keep the pollen off and out of your body – less allergen, less reaction. Wear wraparound sunglasses when fishing to prevent pollen particles coming in contact with your eyes. Tie your hair up and wear a cap, hat or other head cover to prevent pollen particles being caught in your hair. Use HayMax. The organic drug-free balm can be applied to the nostrils and around the bones of the eyes in the morning, throughout the day and at night to trap dust and pet allergens and more than a third of pollen before it enters the body[1]."

"Avoid fishing when pollen counts are highest during the peak morning and evening periods. Pollen is released early in the morning then travels upwards as the air warms up. In the evening, as the air cools, it moves back down again and the pollen grains reach nose height. Symptoms are usually worst at these times, so avoid going outdoors then."

"Try to find a spot that's way from as many trees as possible."

"Change your clothes when you return home and wash your face or take a shower to wash away allergens so that they can't cause a reaction. A cool compress will soothe sore eyes.

Shower at night before sleeping to remove pollen particles from your hair and body."

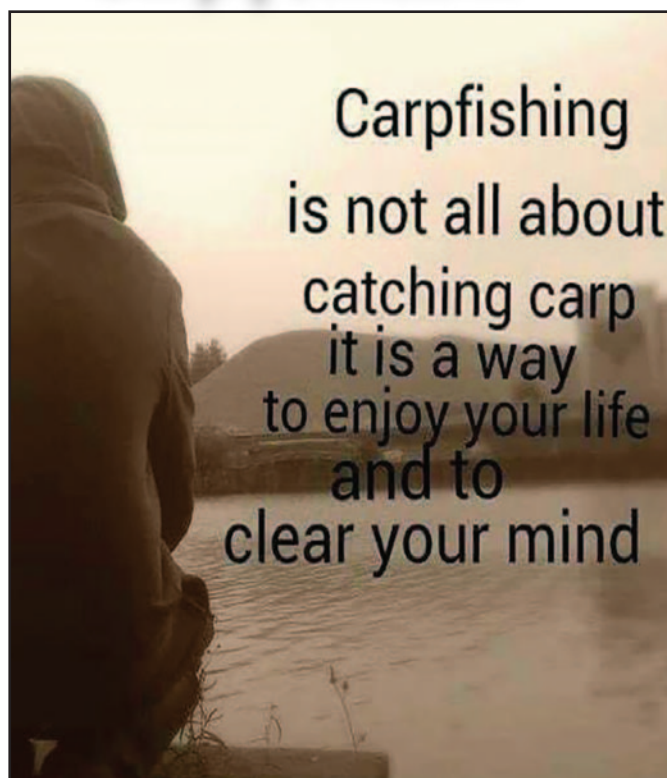
"Dry your clothes indoors rather than on an outdoor clothes line to stop pollen being blown onto it by the outside wind."

"A healthy diet can also help with hay fever. Eating healthily helps to keep our respiratory system strong. Some foods such as ginger or fresh basil, ease blocked nasal passages, helping us to breathe more easily, whilst others such as spinach and almonds contain nutrients that can help boost our immune systems and help our bodies fight sinus and respiratory infections, which are linked to allergies and hay fever."

"If your symptoms are particularly severe or the pollen count is particularly high, or you find that one product is not enough or stops working, you could try creating your own hay fever first aid kit. I suggest that your ideal hay fever first aid kit will consist of one or more natural products, such as HayMax, only one antihistamine, only one steroid nasal spray and eye drops.

Never take two antihistamines together, never take two steroid nasal sprays together, and consult your pharmacist or doctor if you are already taking any other medication." ■

Carpy Humour



Report highlights amazing work of angling community



The 2021/22 Annual Report of the National Angling Strategy features the latest highlights from the angling community following the upheavals and social restrictions experienced in the previous year due to Covid-19. This year's report includes some of the exciting incentives that got underway, such as the Angling Trust's 'Reel Education' schools programme backed by Shakespeare, and Defra's new Fisheries and Seafood Scheme aiming to support recreational sea angling, as well as case studies detailing the amazing work undertaken by the angling community.

Angling clubs: register now for free litter picking kits

As part of our Anglers Against Litter campaign we've teamed up with Shimano-Fishing to offer angling clubs free litter picking kits. All kits have been allocated for this year, but we are now taking expressions of interest for 2023. If you are on the committee of an angling club and your club is willing to commit to at least two litter picks a year and send us details and photos, then why not apply for a kit which include hi vis vests and litter picks?



Day in the life of a fisheries officer



The work of an Environment Agency Fisheries Officer ranges from dealing with distressed, ailing fish to assisting happy, enthusiastic junior anglers. In the first of a three-part series, Phil Mephram joins EA Fisheries Officer Ben Norrington to discover the multitude of challenges that regularly confronts him.

New 2XL and 3XL sizes available with Zerofit - plus free thermal hat worth £20 with any baselayer purchase



Angling Trust trade partner Zerofit, the Japanese baselayer brand, is delighted to announce that the award-winning Heatrub Ultimate baselayer (£55) is now available in 2XL (48-52") and 3XL (52-56") sizes for the first time, meaning more anglers can fish better for longer this winter without feeling the cold.

To celebrate the partnership with the Trust, Zerofit have extended their offer of a FREE THERMAL HAT WORTH £20 with any Zerofit baselayer purchase to all anglers. Just use code FREEHATTRUST when you checkout here.

The Ultimate baselayer is now available in black, green and navy blue in these larger sizes, as well as being offered in small, medium, large and extra-large. Customers who want a grey, red or white version can also purchase these in S, M, L, XL.

Virtual Forum: Important changes to the Reservoir Act

CHANGES TO THE RESERVOIR ACT

Live at 7pm -
Wednesday 23rd
November 2022 (Via
Zoom)





ANGLING TRUST

Funded by fishing licence income and delivered in partnership with the



Environment Agency

Does your club own or lease a reservoir over 10,000 cubic metres in size? If so, changes to the Reservoir Act could affect your responsibilities. In this Virtual Fisheries Forum, the Environment Agency's Tony Deakin takes a look at the changes.

Anglers Against Pollution campaign!



Water quality testing in Cheshire by members of Mottram St. Andrew Fly Fishing Club has inspired a local campaign to clean up a polluted river.

The tests were carried out using equipment supplied through the Angling Trust's Water Quality Monitoring Network (WQMN) initiative, a key part of our Anglers Against Pollution campaign, and provided evidence that there was heavy pollution of the River Bollin.

The WQMN initiative is supported financially by Orvis UK and APTUS tackle and the "Big Yellow Boxes" are supplied by Flambeau Outdoors. If your club would like to get involved, please contact kristian.kent@anglingtrust.net

Double gold for England Kayak



It was a clean sweep for the Angling Trust's England Kayak Lure team in the first Kayak Fishing World Championships at Sobaor Lakes in Portugal. Huge congratulations to the whole team especially to new world champion Mike McGuire.

Preston Innovations - thank you for your support

Preston Innovations, one of the biggest names in match fishing, have agreed to become a Trade Associate partner of the Angling Trust for the next 12 months.

As part of the agreement, Preston Innovations will play an active role in supporting the essential work of the Trust including campaigns to protect waterways for the benefit of fish, fishing and the environment, and growing our sport by encouraging more people to take up fishing.



Paul scoops Pike Champs title



Northampton predator ace Paul Croft is the new British Pike Champion following a tight final event on Cambridgeshire's Fenland Drains.

Southern Water drop plan to abstract water from rare chalk stream after Fish Legal challenge

Southern Water has quietly dropped its application for a drought permit that would have allowed it to continue taking water out of the River Test – even if the river fell below an agreed minimum level previously set for the protection of the Test's salmon population. The application was submitted to the Environment Agency on 19 July but was formally withdrawn on 4 November.

Fish Legal and the Testwood & Nursling fishery near Southampton challenged the drought permit application at a public inquiry in August, arguing that Southern Water had made inadequate efforts to minimise customer demand and to mitigate the potential impact on the river's fish stocks and ecology.

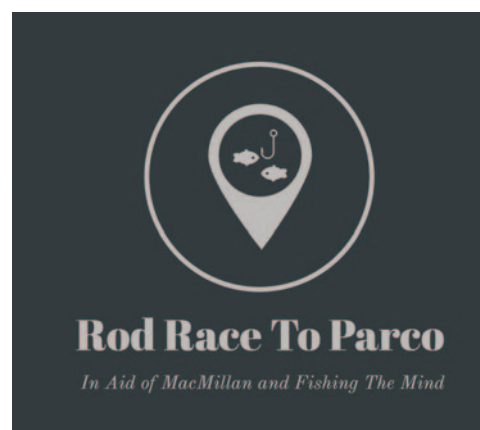
Race to Parco – Charity Fundraiser

Dear Big Carp Magazine readers, Myself, Leigh Garfield and Lee Seddon will set off on a journey of a lifetime to raise money for MacMillan Cancer Support and Fishing The Mind, two charities close to all of our hearts. All money raised goes to the charities; the whole trip is being funded by the ourselves and goodwill from other anglers, companies and fisheries alike. We already have Dave Levy lined up for our Essex stop off at Churchgate Fishery and have ex-footballer Chris Kirkland (Liverpool and England goalkeeper) also lined up for our launch at Hurlston Hall on 11th August. We are current in talks with a few other known anglers to which we will release info as and when we get full confirmation.

We are looking to raise £10000 with a 50/50 split going to both charities. Currently we have raised £465 in our first month of releasing the information on

our gofundme page. During this time we have had so many donations from different companies we decided to run a raffle to be drawn on the launch night. At £10 a ticket with a list of prizes that continues to grow, lake exclusives, bait bundles, terminal tackle, books, vouchers, an iPad and a framed Virgil Van Dijk signed Liverpool shirt. From the raffle we have currently sold 21 tickets from 2000. We hope that we can sell all 2000 tickets giving the charities more than £10000 each. Again, as I have mentioned, all this while funding the whole trip including bait, tickets where needed, food, fuel etc.

We will set off on a rod race from Hurlston Hall Fishery to Parco Del Brenta with the aim of catching fish in a two week period; each pound of fish gets them one mile closer. The journey will feature on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram to share the experience and



hopefully help to raise awareness for these great charities.

For more information on these charities, go to www.macmillan.org.uk and https://fishingthemind.org.uk/. Hopefully you guys find this of interest and it's something that would interest you magazine.

Kind Regards; Matt Scoffham
#rodracetoparco. ■



PAUL RODRIGUEZ

RoSPA issues ice safety advice as weather conditions worsen across UK

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents is deeply saddened by the tragic events at Babbs Mill Park, Kingshurst in Solihull, and extends its condolences to the families and communities impacted by the news.

RoSPA is urging people across Britain to be especially cautious around open waters during the current extreme weather conditions that Britain is facing. With news of the Met Office's current yellow weather warning, where temperatures are set to drop as low as -15 in parts of Britain, RoSPA is concerned that icy conditions could result in further harm.

David Walker, Head of Road and Leisure Safety, said: "With the current weather conditions as they are, it's important that people are especially careful around open waters. If you encounter somebody who is in trouble on or near ice, it's vital that you don't go in too.

"Call the emergency services on



999. If you can, find an object like a pole or a life-ring that they can hold onto and help them stay afloat."

Key ice safety advice

If someone falls through the ice:

- Call the emergency services
- Do not attempt to go out on to the ice yourself
- Tell the person to stay still to maintain heat and energy
- Try finding something which will extend your reach, such as a rope, pole or branch
- Throw the object out and, once ensuring you are stable on the bank either by lying down or having

someone hold on to you, pull them in

- If you cannot find something to reach with, try finding an object that will float and push that out to them
- Ensure that you keep off the ice at all times during the rescue, continue to reassure the casualty and keep them talking until help arrives
- Once the person has been rescued, keep them warm and take them to hospital even if they appear to be unaffected

Press Enquiries: Joseph Tinkler,
Email: Pressoffice@ROSPA.com

Carpy Humour



First professional footballer gets the vaccine.



AQUA LILIUM CLOTHING

THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK



Aqua Liliium Clothing is very proud to announce we have been trading for just over a year now.

The past year has passed with a flash and in the blink of an eye the range has increased considerably.

Here at Aqua Liliium we don't have a blank cheque book, nor are we backed by a big corporation. So, as you can imagine we have to choose carefully what we bring to the market.





We pride ourselves on quality and with the Essex Carp Show fast approaching, I am pleased to announce the arrival of some new additions to the family. If you are lucky enough to be coming to the show on the 28th/29th January, please come and say hello.



You guys really make it worthwhile. If you would like more information, please contact me www.aqua-lilium-clothing.co.uk Alternatively, we can be reached through Facebook and Instagram. Stand out from a crowd!

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You can also reach us through our Facebook and Instagram pages.



Big carp, catch-report-regular Mitchell Miller is back with yet another huge Frimley beast in the shape of this 50lb 4oz common known as 'Blackeye'! This new fifty for the lake falling to an exciting Freezer Bait boilie we have on test to set a new PB for Mitchell.

#mainlinebaits #bigcarp #carpfishing #fishing



A Cold Water 40 and 30!

A three hour evening session last month resulted in these two commons from a rather special days only water for Slyfish owner and A2 baits consultant Dave Buckley. The smaller of the pair weighed just over 30, the other going 41lb! Half a kilo of 12mm @a2baitsofficial Ct fished in the silt with a 12mm mums special hookbait tripped the pair up. The new size 4 SFC longshanks and 15 lb stripper braid completed the setup for Dave. This is a massive result on this challenging venue. Great bait, sharp hooks, good angling #slyfish #a2baitsofficial #carp #carpfishing.

The forecast of VERY strong winds last week made my planned trip to RK Kingsmead change to Grenville, Knowing the fish on Gren love a big wind I set up on the back of the forecast blow, Using the wind it was not too difficult to Spomb the 15kg of mixed size DNA BUG and SWITCH freebies the 140-150yds to the 30ft deep area, Over the trip I went through 30kg of bait. I had 7 bites most coming in the dark hours, All on my long blowback D rigs balanced to slow sinking, Boosted Pink Perils pop ups. 7 fish best 3 going 42lb10oz, 48lb10oz, 40lb4oz Interesting the more Scaley fish is a Grenville grown from egg fish, These home grown Grenville fish Lins, Commons and Scaley are now well into the 40-50lb range!



Staffordshire's Finest

Sixty five acres of huge sailing pit, it all comes down to location and that is exactly how Dale Leeder tempted one of Staffordshire's finest carp.

Having located the carp in a certain zone, Dale went about etching a plan together but it didn't start off that smooth. Racking up a total of five night blanks, something had to give and it was only a matter of time till it all came good.

Having had a dabble on the lake in the summer, he knew exactly what the fish liked, so replicating the same tactic and persisting to fish the same spots was the way forward in order to draw his quarry in.

Dale baiting a big bed at range with chopped and crushed 'The Formula Red + Plum' and 'Vita-lac' pellet with 'The Formula Red + Plum' hookbaits fished match the hatch style. He then adding a 50 pence sized PVA mesh bag loaded with 'Vita-lac' pellet to the hook for added attraction.

The first one of the day, a lovely common of around 34lb known as the 'Missing common'. Shortly after a smaller scaley mirror called 'Bert' at 30lb, but the icing on the cake soon followed and the best looking carp in Staffordshire 'The big plated' at a massive 44lb. A fish that made not only my day but Dale's year for sure.

#TheFormulaRed+ #Plum #Vitalac #RGBaits





Dan Partridge had an October to remember on Northey Park, landing four of the A-teamers over a few overnights. "To say October was kind to me would be an understatement," said Dan. "I took full advantage of the banks of Northey being a bit quieter and regularly baited a couple of areas where I had been watching the fish visit. "During a couple of overnights over a two-week period, I managed to tick off a few of the ones I wanted to catch. They were all stalked less than a rod-length from the bank with constant walking and priming of the spots. "They comprised Crater at 39lb, Boycie's at 36lb 12oz, Scar at 35lb 2oz and Nuggets at 33lb 8oz, all caught on Secret 7 Corker wafers over S7 boilies and S7 pellets."

SECRET 7: - The instant bait; Krill meal-based fishmeal; Packed full of spices and salts; Peach and sweet orange flavour

#dnanortheypark #DNABAIT #REDEFININGQUALITY #secret7 #carp #carpfishing #carpangling #carplife #carpwatch #carpangler #fishing #angling #carpy #thatscarpy #karpervissen #karpervisser #karpfenangler #karpfenangeln #carphunter #carpyshots #carpyscenes #carpyness #carpyorn #bigfish #commoncarp #mirrorcarp #bigcarp .



A new pb for Steve Newman. "Leia" at 48lb 8oz which fell to a Virus pop-up in a solid bag with crushed virus over a kilo of matching freebies. Well done Steve! eclipse-baits.co.uk



Rob Drinkwater - not the best shot, as she so heavy. Still a PB at 53lb 12oz! Fingers, what a fish!



BIG CARP – NEW PB's

With nine over 35lb with eight over 38lb. Biggest 51lb 8oz. Well, what can I say about Jordan's Birthday Social 48-hour trip to Elphicks North Lake. The main goal was to get Jordan a new personal best – Mission Accomplished New PB for him by over 11lb with a common of 42.12 he also had another one of 20.10. Yesterday was our last day and with a change in weather those carp got on the move, fizzing and head and shouldering all over the place in front of me which led to me landing a further 6 fish which included 2 PB's for me which doesn't happen every day. I had fish of 27.08, PB- 35.10 Grassie, 38.02, 38.08, 39.04, 40.08, 40.10, 41 and 51.08. The full vlog of absolute carnage will be going live at the end of January... #keybaitsolutions #castawaypva #impactparticles #rhinotechangling #myyoutubechannel #carpgraftuk.

Adam and Jordan Honeysett



Shimano's Jamie Londors

Jamie returned to the lake for 4 nights in freezing conditions. Without a doubt swim location and approach makes the difference between a blank and putting fish on the bank! Using Shimano Aero Technium Mgs XSD reels paired up with 13ft TX2 intensity rods, Jamie landed 4 fish with these two at 43 and 51 being the best. #shimano #carpfishing #tribal #shimanofishing



last remaining A Team fish for Tim Crump

Tim Crump has landed the last remaining A Team fish on his wish list. Unbelievable run of angling for our Hampshire based Solar Tackle sponsored angler. Here he is with the story.

"So, following on from the capture of the 37lb mirror on the 18th October, I done another work night on the 20th and was rewarded with a 25lb 8oz common, again from the prepared area, a beautiful fish boasting some wicked colours! This all coming straight after losing a fish, pretty much straight after the take just before on the other rod. That's all for that work night, so life continues.

I go about my usual routine with family commitments for the weekend, trying to keep that healthy balance between family, work and my fishing, all the while keeping an eye on the area and keeping the SS-K going in on the spot, using mixed sizes 15mm and 20mm bottom baits straight from the bag when possible.

It's on one of these days on the 26th where I intend on baiting in preparation for an overnighter the following day, and getting home to the family for the lad's football training. An early finish meant I'd have a couple of hours to sort stuff and have a look, much better than 30mins.

A friend messaged me saying that he was doing well and had landed 2 fish that morning and they were starting to show on the massive SW wind that was spreading across the south of the country. Exactly onto my spot!

With this in mind I worked like I had a rocket up my ass to try and get a rod put on the spot for what seemed to be an afternoon bite time. Well, I managed to get there, rods out for 2:10pm with literally the essentials with me and the wind absolutely smashing it into the zone, about as good as it gets. A few spombs of SS-K instead of the usual baiting quantity was used and I sat back and prayed it would work.

1 hour 20mins later, the left rod pulled up tight... that's a bite!

A solid, heavy weight attached to the other end immediately hit the surface, dorsal out of the water for the entire fight, she's didn't do a huge amount, just heavy! Upon nearing the net, I could see how broad and deep she was in the clear water, those huge leathery flanks... now suddenly realising I've got an absolute chunk on the end, which looks exactly like the last of the real bigguns I need to catch, the passenger!

In the net first time of asking, it's definitely the PASSENGER!

43LB on the nose, a new top weight for the fish, and quite possibly the biggest fish in the lake at the time, seriously mega buzzed! And all in a couple of hours!

Off to the lads footy training absolutely beaming that day, couldn't wait for my overnighter the next day, that went pretty well too I guess you could say." Well done Tim!

#solartackle #forthesharpercarper #carpfishing #angler #angling #carplife #fishing #fishinglife #nature #solarbait #ssk



Check this out for an insane looking carp!

Respected Urban Bait team member Rhys Boswell has hit the jackpot with this incredible looking mirror from a tricky Welch water. The Urban Ace used a fully loaded wafter fished in conjunction with a bag of matching crumb to trip up this majestic looking 45lb 11oz fish of a lifetime! A huge congratulations from everyone at Urban, we are all absolutely buzzing for you Rhys. Mega result and well deserved! Available now: www.urbanbait.co.uk.

#UrbanBait #TerryDempsey #FullyLoaded #Nutcracker #RedSpicyFish #TunaAndGarlic #StrawberryNutcracker #Hookbaits #Boilie #FishingBait #CarpFishing #Fishing #FishingLife #Carp #BigCarp #Angling #Angler #CarpLife #CarpAngling #CatchAndRelease



Lee Price with the awesome Apples from St Ives Lagoon at 40lb 11oz a couple of weeks ago.



'The best period of pleasure angling I have ever had!'

That was how Luke Church described his Autumn campaign when he dropped us his latest catch report full of these awesome looking carp which included nine 30s and two 40s up to 45lb 13oz!

Luke said "I turned my attention to a very challenging and tricky Norfolk syndicate lake at the back end of September, a lake which I had just fluttered on from time to time in the past.

The lake is notoriously hard with everything against you; barbless hooks, weed, snags, sunken snags, zebra mussels and large no fishing zones. It has to be one of the hardest lakes I've ever fished and I could honestly say if you're getting into double figures, 10-15+ fish for a season, that would be a very respectable season on the lake as it's a fairly low stocked big pit with everything against you like I said.

Since I started my campaign on there, I have fished 17 nights hooking 30, landing 29 with only 1 loss which really has blown me away because of the lake's challenges. The total tally being 2 x 40s, 9 x 30s (1 repeat), 11 x 20s and 7 doubles. An Autumn harvest like I've never had before. I have caught a PB common which was a lake record common at 45.13. I've also caught a PB mirror a week later at 43.2 (2nd biggest mirror in the lake)

I would say I have had a couple of red-letter sessions for the lake in amongst all that and couldn't seem to go wrong, catching from 5 different swims and 3 different areas of the lake throughout this period. So, as you can imagine I'm absolutely over the moon with the result and I've been really excited to share it with you."

Fantastic result Luke, well done! #FoxEdges #Carp #CarpAngling #Carpy #FoxInternational #FoxInt #CarpAngler #FishingLife #CatchandRelease #Carping #Karpfen #PBCarp



New PB after moving swim at Cottingham Lakes' Pepper by Johnny Penfold

On the yearly social at Cottingham Lakes Pepper, draw a decent peg in the draw peg 9, fished there the first two nights and nothing for my efforts. Wednesday comes round and I thought to myself most of the group is up one end so the water is very pressured at the moment, so after speaking to my good pal, we both decided to move into pegs 1 and 2, despite everyone saying why you moving they don't get up there, etc.

After the move, it was fresh bait and fresh rig time before our final night. Perks of being in peg 1 and 2 you can walk round and bait right over the spot so once the fresh stiff hinge rig was tied and put on out, I was on my toes with pockets loaded with some bait.

Both traps set bait set and the winter night soon rolled in early, was just about to get my head down for some Kip when the R3 gave me a couple of bleeps and the bobbin started dancing, 'was it on, I'm sure it was' struck the rod and yea it was on, typical big fish battle with no sign of fight till close in then she woke up kiting left and right into a near snag, managed to get above it and she soon went over the net cord 'YESSS! The move has paid off'. I shouted to my mate we were both buzzing Petals at 36lb was in my landing net, a new PB and went against what everyone said and it worked out for the best on an already tough session fishing wise.

Rig wise was a simple stiff hinge rig with components from 'carpers' essentials and a cranberry and almond pop up from 5-star baits with the new test bait citrus nut over the spot and I couldn't be happier! Given me a lot of confidence in a different approach come the colder months and goes to show don't sit on your hands get on your toes.



Another PB for Dave Levy!

What a year this man is having! Just a few weeks after netting his 101lb PB and 97lb PB common out in Hungary, Dave has landed his new UK PB at 56lb 10oz!

Dave netted this beast of a common known as 'Charlie's Mate' out of Frimley Pit 3. Here's what Dave had to say:

"My campaign to catch a 50-plus common started a year ago on Frimley Pit 3. I fish hard through the first winter and did ok, this year I've been consistent and felt so close a few times. On the 24 at 7:30 am, I got the bite I was waiting for. The session had gone well catching a 34lb mirror and a small carp on the first night. The second morning, I had a take in open water and in the first few minutes the carp was snagged but luckily the line came free and I was back in contact with the carp. It was a topical big fish fight, slow and heavy. As it rolled, I saw it was a big common and felt nervous, she went in the net first time. I looked in and I knew right away it was the one I joined to catch. She weighed in at a lake record 56lb 10oz. I was made up!"

The tackle was 18lb FluoroCast, three feet of SubZero lead-free leader to a Uni Lead Clip. A short Anti-Tangle Sleeve, 8" of CamoX 25lb and a size 4 Ape-X Beaked Point hook made up Dave's Blowback rig.

"I've had 53 takes this year and landed 51 and that is testament to the hooks and end tackle. My ticket runs till April so I'll hopefully have one of the other big commons before it ends."

#RidgeMonkey #Fishing #Fish #Outdoors



Mission complete, the Big Fully

After catching the B1 big'un which was my winter target I was at a bit of a loose end with regards to where my winter angling was going to take me, so I decided that despite its not overly great winter form I was going to target my syndicate on the Cotswold water park and set myself a target of trying to catch one of the big'uns, but never in my wildest dreams did expect lightning to strike twice within the matter of weeks. After leaving my house at 3.00am on the Monday morning and arriving in the pouring rain at 4.00am I spent a good five-six hours just walking around and looking before settling into a peg, now I'm not going to lie I based my peg choice not on where I had seen the most fish, but a peg that gave me access to a large barn where I could shelter from the dreadful weather that was due to batter me for the three days, maybe adding comfort into my peg choice should be a new thing – because 19 bites later I had managed to land one double, eleven 20s and six 30s and in my opinion one of the best looking fully-scaled I have ever seen at 40lb 14oz. Target achieved!



Martin Locke – Man on Fire

Another week and another chunk of mirror for Martin, someone call the fire brigade this man is on fire.

"No chance of looking for bubblebers this time. Instead, I took to wandering and watching for fish poking their heads out, before setting up.

After half an hour or so of seeing or hearing nothing and with rain forecast, it was down to gut instinct of where to start off, so I opted for a middle of the pond swim and spread the rods out, with the usual 'light leads and light baiting' approach over each of them.

With the middle rod long and the left and right rods in close, I would sit, watch and listen and act on it if anything showed.

It wasn't long before a fish rose and it was right over the middle rod. Two minutes later, the same thing happened on the left rod. What a touch, that's good enough for me I thought, I was buzzing. Less than two minutes after that I had a violent take, but to my surprise, it was on the right rod that pulled up and bent round!

Soon after, a mirror of 29lb 8oz was laying on the mat...

Great start once again.

As you do, when you get one in the early evening, you can't help but think that it won't be the last, but the night passed without a bleep or anything else showing.

I gave it until around midday, all morning I'd been chewing over whether to have a move or sit tight... One of the corner swims was on my mind and curiosity got the better of me, so I upped sticks and moved.

The rods hadn't been out for long, when the indicator on the margin rod leapt into action, resulting in a lovely dark common, a little over 27lbs.

The rod went straight back out and was away again two hours later! One of the other members Ricky, saw what was going on and appeared from nowhere with my net in his hand to do the honours.

Glad he was on hand as this was a long drawn out fight, one of those where you've seen the fish is a good one and just want it to give up in case something goes wrong! All ended well though, Rick slipped the Bow-Loc under a shiny brown mirror which weighed in at 38lb 4oz."

#solartackle #forthesharpercarper #carpfishing #angler #angling #carplife #fishing #fishinglife #nature #solarbait #ssk..

What an unbelievable past time carp fishing is!

Arrived at 7.30am today, and took my time getting the rods out to clear spots – All in by 9.30am. Out of the blue at 4.30pm a One tone screaming bite resulted in 15minutes of powerful battle with this amazing carp sending up huge swirls and long runs under the surface. In the fading light and clear water, I realised what was on the end and just tried to keep calm. A new UK personal best carp! 49lb 11oz common called 'Pinky'. She Picked up a tiny king crab 10ml boillie over a kilo of free baits. What a start on this amazing fishery.

Marcus Watts

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Our monthly reviews on products currently on the market

In this issue:

- Geoff Anderson
- Rod Hutchinson
- Leatherman



Thermal4

- Great warmth and comfort
- 100% recycled polyester
- Highly breathable
- Stretchable



The Future is Yesterday. We take yesterday's waste and give it a second life as sustainable fiber. Thermal4 is made from plastic bottles and fresh hope, to help you do more with less. Thanks to Repreve® technologies we have pushed the boundaries of fabric science and eco engineering even further. If you're looking to increase the sustainability of your fishing clothing, this is the style to help you make it happen. Thermal4 is super breathable and regulates core warmth thanks to the lofted fibre structure. Flat elasticated seams, incredibly soft to the touch yet extremely durable. Super stretchable side panels. Best performance and warmth combined with a second to none freedom of movement. Strong YKK® zippers. Zip guard minimizes skin irritation. ■

Rod Hutchinson Products



The new technologies and materials gradually filter down from the aerospace and Formula One industries to the fishing tackle industry. This has enabled us to entrust our concept of 'the perfect curve' to another range of mouth-watering rods that feature improved recovery for enhanced casting performance. Our new DMX rods are more than capable of carrying the much-vaunted 'DMX' crest. Featuring an attractive, skeletal handle and titanium dioxide lined rings.



If you're looking for a perfect all year round bait, the New Ballistic B certainly ticks the box – a sweet, creamy food bait with a subtle variation of fruit.

Our essential oils are prepared to the highest standards and can give your bait making or stick mixes a great boost.



Consisting of the original Fruit Frenzy and Spring Blossom, creating a natural fusion of two powerful flavours and enhanced by Milky B and Protaste Plus, making it irresistible to carp.



The Rod Hutchinson Particle Pult has been designed to accurately deliver particles, seeds, mini boilies, etc to your chosen area. The moulded mesh pouch stays open, making it easy to load, coupled with strong and hard wearing latex that sends small baits a long way in a tight group. Its ergonomically designed frame is easy on the hand to make mass baiting effortless.



Are you after a higher end throwing stick that is going to give you that extra edge when sending your bait out? The Dream Maker throwing stick is just such a beast. Available as a normal and XL, we have all of your bait delivery covered. Made from high modulus 3k Carbon with an understated matt finish, these throwing sticks are ultra lightweight, making it easier for you to deliver your bait much more easily and accurately for longer than you would with a heavier throwing stick. Coming with a reinforced tip and supplied with a superb quality neoprene carry case to help prevent damage, the Dream Maker throwing stick is sure to last you a long time and deliver your bait time and time again.



The Cabrio Hybrid Brolly System delivers TOTAL flexibility in one all-encompassing system. The Hybrid is based on the speed and convenience of a traditional brolly, in this case complete with a low-profile mechanism, which means maximum headroom, and our 20K Hydrostatic Head ultra durable, ultra waterproof and ultra breathable fabric ensures maximum comfort and performance. This brolly quickly converts into an all-encompassing session shelter with the quick addition of the infill panel or the lightweight mozzi mesh panel. Furthermore, it makes the ideal long-stay shelter with the added space created by the addition of the porch area complete with infill panel or mozzi panel.

Leatherman launches Raptor® Response emergency shears

Multi-tool specialist Leatherman has launched the new Raptor® Response emergency shears, enabling medical professionals and everyday users alike to cut through materials with ease in an emergency situation or during routine cutting tasks.

An ideal addition to any first aid kit for the home, workplace or when on the move in the outdoors, the Leatherman Raptor® Response's compact, foldable shears glide through most materials, from clothing to bandages and thick outerwear, while the micro-serrations on the inner blade keep fabrics from slipping and binding. The tool features the time-tested shears of the brand's Raptor® family but with slimmer handle grips, while the handy ring cutter, ruler, oxygen tank wrench and pocket clip offer additional functionality.

The Leatherman Raptor® Response tools are made from premium stainless steel, while the contoured handle grips are designed for comfort and ease, finished with a durable ceramic coating. Weighing 157g, the tool is available in a choice of Grey, Crimson and Navy and retails at £89.95.

Along with the full Leatherman range, the Raptor® Response is covered by the brand's 25-year guarantee and is available now at www.leatherman.co.uk. ■



Oak Lakes Fisheries

www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk



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

Pipe Lake Record Smashed by Ricky Collett



Here is the fantastic 41lbs 6oz common and the new lake record caught by Pipe Lake member Ricky Collett. He's also caught some 30's in the same session!

Still getting amongst some good fish, this time a cracking 28lbs carp landed in early December by Gary Brennan fishing the Cave swim on the day ticket lake. Lovely fish – good angling skills Gary.



Nice catch for Buddha.



Second carp of the weekend for Richard Draycott is this cracking 18lbs mirror.



Martin Chappell, a Pipe lake member had a family session on the day ticket lake and went home happy and to catch up on their sleep!

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.

Colebrook Fishery

By Tristan Cooper

I made my way out to Colebrook Fishery in Devon where I have caught some target fish for quite a while! I have fished here in the past and I have had a handful of the bigger commons in the lake, but deep down, I really wanted one of my tar-

get mirrors... And this session did not disappoint!

I got down to my swim at 1.00pm on Friday afternoon, where I was greeted by rain and a little bit of wind, which wasn't the nicest to set up in. Nevertheless, I got the rods out onto the spots and put a kilo of the new

GS10 from Essential baits which has been an absolute game changer for me on Colebrook.

At 7.00pm, I had a huge drop back on my right-hand rod, which I pulled into, bringing back loads of slack line, until I felt the fish. I immediately started walking backwards, pulling





the fish away from the snags. Luckily, I turned the fish soon enough to prevent the fish from reaching the snags and then I just had to keep everything under pressure and hope it graced the net with ease. I saw it surface and immediately knew which fish it was. I

even shouted 'it's the Advert Fish!' With the top netting help of the fishery owner, the fish was safely in my net and secured, and now I could really take in the moment.

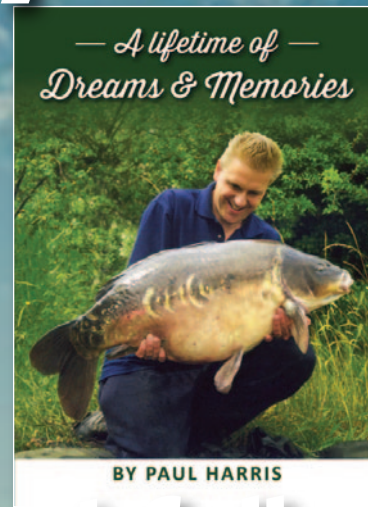
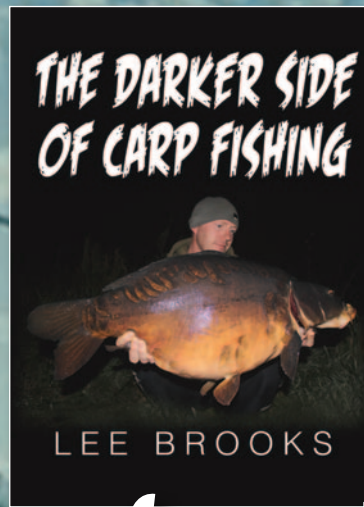
We weighed this stunning mirror at 29lb 8oz and I think you can all see

why this is the most desirable one in the lake.

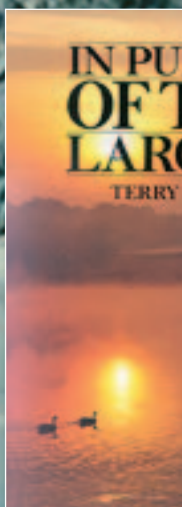
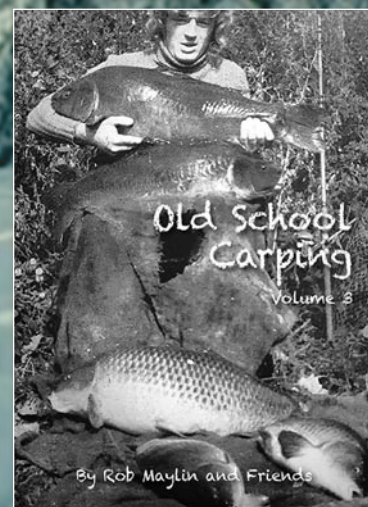
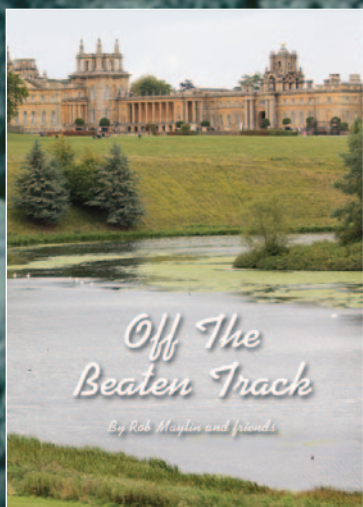
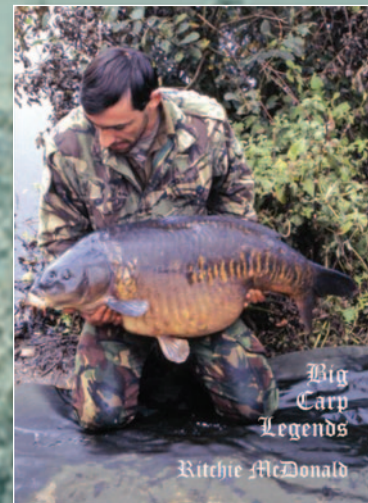
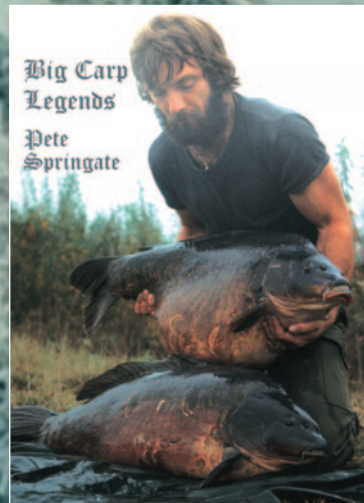
A week prior to this session I also had another stunning mirror known as the Cross-haired Linear. We weighed this fish at 23lb. What a couple of sessions this was! ■



Warm Away the Cold

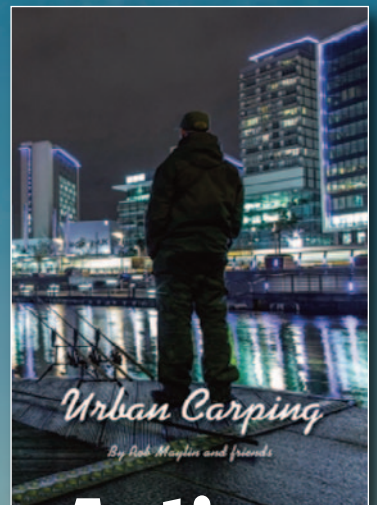
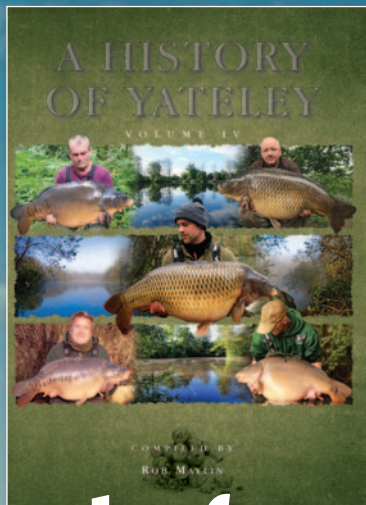


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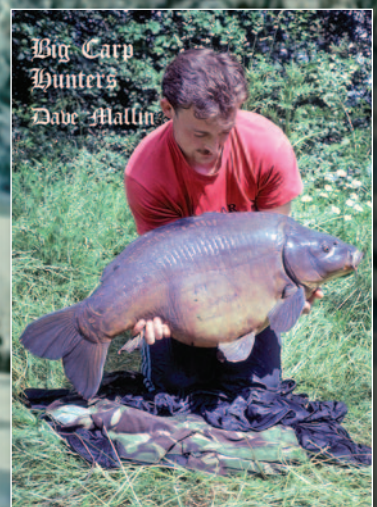
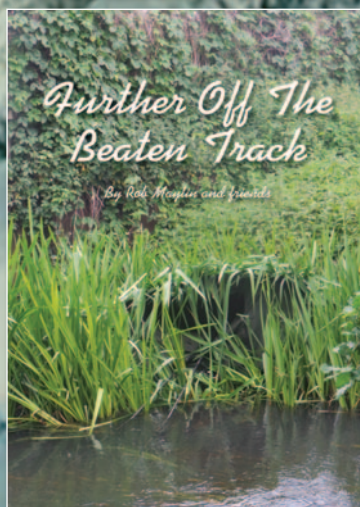
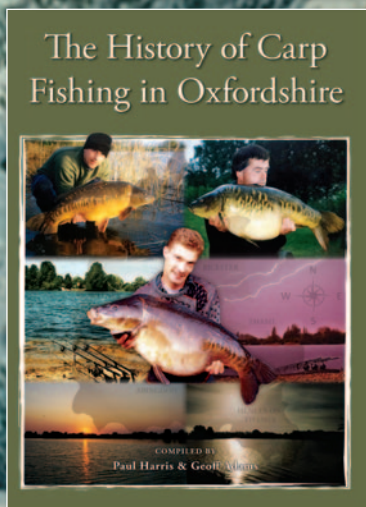
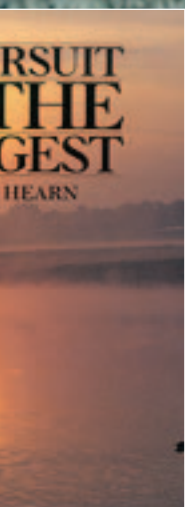
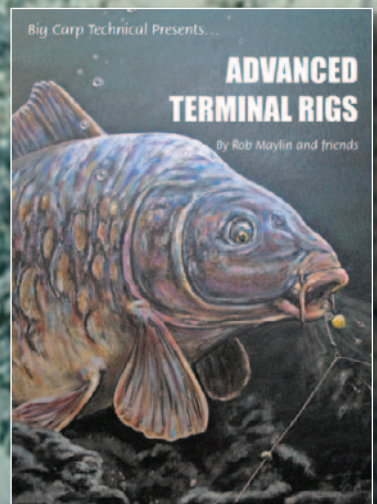
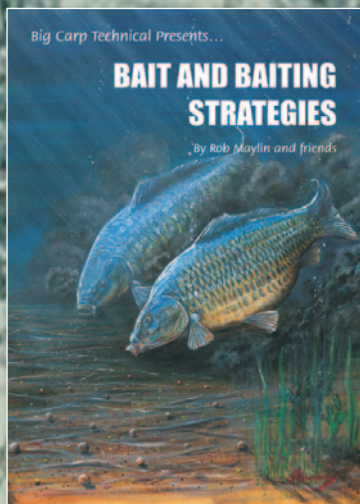
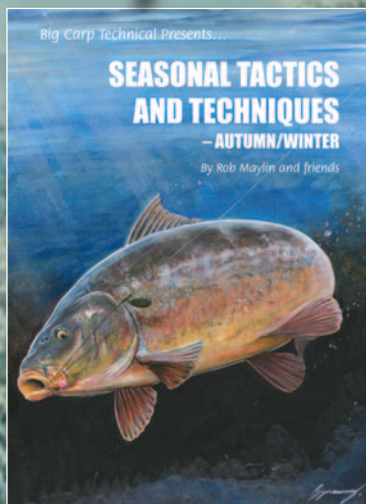


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The Winter Diary

By Mark and Emma Rose

Well, to say that 2022 has flown by would be an understatement. For us fishing sessions have been few and far between. Every time we seemed to have a trip planned, the lake was either spawning or we were in the midst of a heatwave, so trips were cancelled.

The first month of our 'winter' ticket has been and gone (I say 'winter', but we all know winter certainly doesn't start in November). But, after all the ups and downs of this past year, I can't believe I'm sitting here writing this article.



'Winter' fishing isn't for everyone. With long, often cold nights of 14 hours or more of darkness, with the odd spells of frost or even snow, as well as very short feeding spells.

Most anglers choose to pack up until the warmer weather returns. For us that's completely the opposite. Yes, winter brings with it a lot of challenges and certainly tests you, both physically and mentally, but the rewards are great, of fish in sublime 'winter' colours and at top weights. But let's not forget, the all-important, quieter banks and actually having a choice of swims.

The effort you put in certainly makes it worthwhile when you manage to tempt one into the net.

One of the biggest influences to gain a 'winter' result, is choosing the right venue. For me sitting on a 40 acre lake with say 50 fish present, is certainly making the challenge a lot more difficult and definitely stacks the odds in favour of that blank throughout the colder months.

Love it or hate it, social media,



Google Maps etc, have become a massive part of a carp angler's armoury and certainly gives us as

much up to date info on venues that we could probably ever find, making that all important 'winter' venue,





much more easy to pinpoint.

I always try to find a lake with a fairly uniform depth and a good stock of fish. To me this gives you a better chance of a bite or two.

This year we decided on a change of venue and were lucky to get on the ticket for 'Festival Fishery', located just outside of Glastonbury. At less than an hour's drive to the venue, in my opinion, this is also another great advantage, when winter fishing, as you can easily pop down to keep an eye on how the fish are moving.

So, with 1st November fast approaching, the first two trips of the autumn/winter campaign were booked.

This is a venue that we'd done a couple of sessions on earlier in the year, in which I personally had had some good results. (Check out our other previous series entitled 'Inside Out').

With the onset of autumn, it definitely brings up that year old topic of conversation, about the autumn feed up. I genuinely believe that the days

of setting your watch around this, have long gone and bites are certainly harder to come by than they were five or ten years ago.

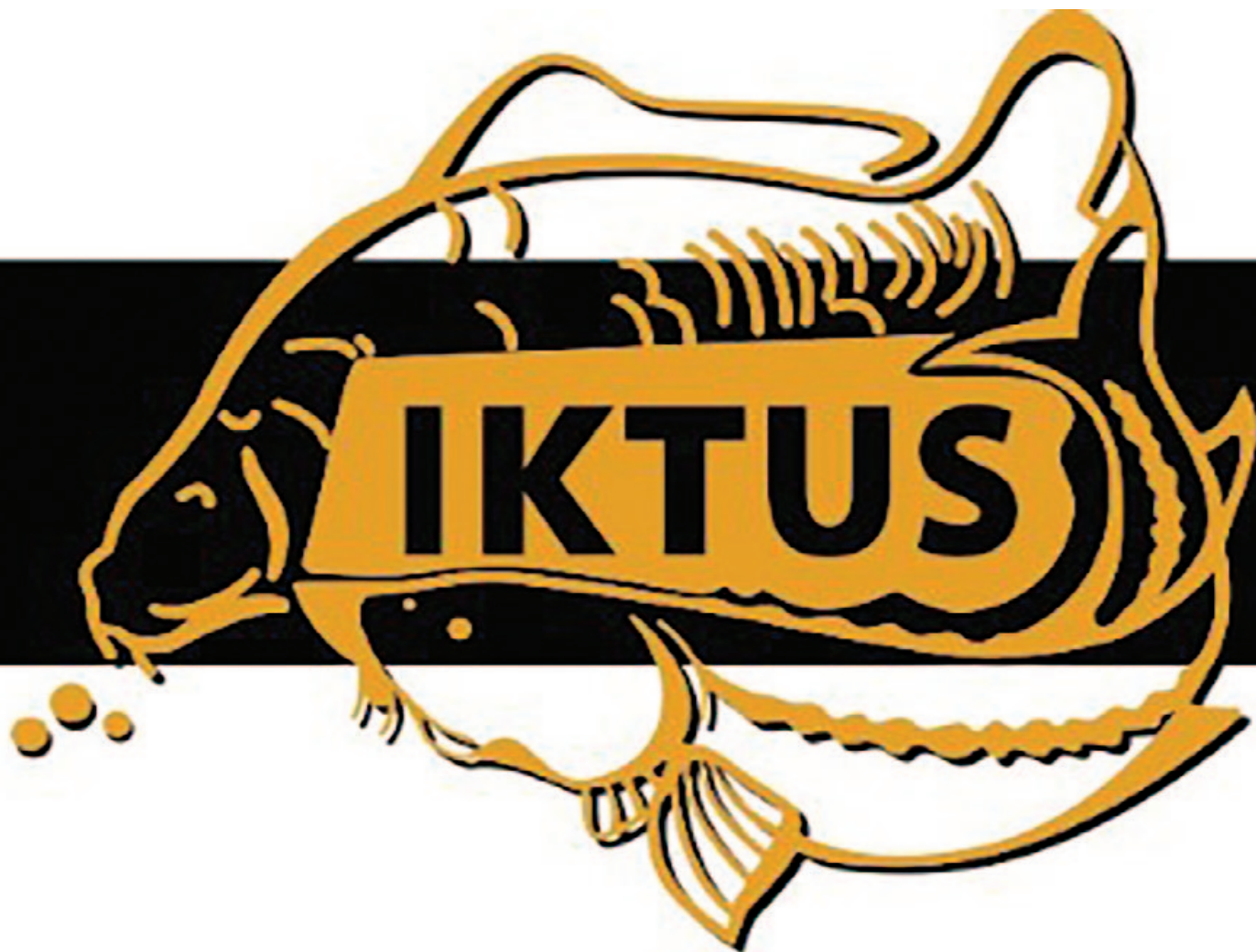
Whether this is to do with the ongoing climate change, or just the sheer amount of angling pressure, as well as more high quality, nutritional bait readily available on the market going into waters, more than ever before. It seems it will always remain to be one of those unanswered phenomena. Albeit, when a bite does come, you're still in with a chance of one of the lake's bigger residents, making an appearance in its full glory.

With the first trip less than a week away, the excitement and anticipation began to bubble away inside me. And so, our preparation of bait, rigs, etc, began.

Again, for me, preparation is key to being successful at any time of the year, but more so in 'winter' when bites are few and far between. We tend to tie up at home, a range of rigs I know we will use in advance, as well as also making sure to have plenty of pre-tied mesh PVA bags, utilising 'Carp Craze' PVA 2 in 1 systems and their Solid Bags, as this helps when on the bank especially in those exceptionally cold, wet and misty conditions. Anyway, enough of me blabbering on. Let's get bankside!

With the cars loaded and the short





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drive completed, we soon found ourselves barrowing the gear to our chosen swims (Oh yes, even Emma's now got a barrow albeit on learner plates, lol).

We were surprised as to how quiet the complex was, being how mild and good the conditions had recently been. As always on the first day getting rods out is never a priority for us as we prefer to set up and get organized, then take our time to watch the water in front of us. This particular time, we had decided upon swims that fished back to back, into two different areas, which gave us a lot more options, especially with the layout of the 'Inside Out' lake.

With a mix of sunshine and showers forecast, we found our spots and went round with a small baiting spoon to put a couple scoops of 'Bait Guru' Salamino Baits and soon to be released Mk2 Boilies, that had previously been soaked in boiling water, mushed up by hand and then given a good helping of the matching Salamino Liquid Food for good mea-





sure.

This stuff honestly smells divine and is unlike any other bait I have ever used, sending signals through the water column the minute it's put in.

With darkness fast approaching, the rods were cast out to their spots and with everything done and dusted we stood with a cold beer and watched as the final hour of light descended.

I had seen quite a few fish moving around my area, so was disappointed when morning came with no action forthcoming during the hours of darkness.

Emma had her own problems with a very inactive volume of water out in front of her and a guy who obviously liked using his bait boat and spod more than having rigs in the water. Oh, the joys of fishing.

Checking the forecast leading up to and throughout any trip and writing the conditions in my Journal is something that I have done for 30 years plus. However, the weather had decided to throw a curveball and had completely changed from what was predicted.

Breaking the news to Emma that we had weather warnings in place and that we were just about to get battered by winds and rain from mid-day, we decided to leave the rods in as long as we could and decided to recast them at about 11.30am.

With fresh baits back out on the spots, we braced ourselves for what was incoming, safe in the knowledge that we were fishing efficiently.

As the storm arrived and started to get pretty ugly, we both sat watching the water from our bivvies and with the rain lashing down, had our fingers and toes crossed that we didn't have a run! (We've all been there). However, just my luck, my right-hand rod armed with a 'Bait Guru' Salamino Dumbbell Wafter soaked in Mexi-Can Halo Hook Bait Enhancer seemed to have other ideas.

Lifting into the rod and knowing from the tell-tale signs it wasn't one of the bigger residents due to the way it was fighting. I thought it wouldn't be long before I was back in the safety and warmth of my bivvy with a brew in hand. This fish though had other ideas and from the way it played, you would have thought it was a 100lb cat.





With the fish finally in the net and myself soaked to the core, the sling was zeroed and my first carp on the 'winter' ticket and session went round to 18lb 6oz. A lovely mirror, not a monster but a lovely start.

With the rod back out and copious amounts of coffee and chocolate biscuits demolished. It was time to redo the rods ready for the forthcoming night. Luckily there was a small break in the weather, so we managed to cast our rigs carefully back out into their spots.

Sat staring into the darkness, I started to think the fish had yet again moved out of the area and as the sun rose the following morning, my suspicions were proven right with nothing between us again.

With the first brew on the go and the weather finally relenting, we were soon interrupted with the sound of

my receiver going into overdrive. With the same rod as the previous afternoon away again, this time a short

battle ensued (of course it would be, the sun was out) with an even smaller but stunning mirror of 12lb landed.



Upon returning the mirror to its home, I decided to not recast straight-away as my middle rod was not too far away from that spot and I didn't want to spook any other fish that may be present.

For Emma, not through lack of trying, the fish were just not having it in front of her and with 30 hours left to go the dreaded 'blank' was starting to look like a possibility.

The rest of the day passed by uneventfully and with one last push the rods were back out for the final night, combined with a Mesh Bag of Salamino Stick and Pellet mix in matching Liquid Food with a couple more scoops of our preprepared 'mush' over the top.

As darkness hit and the rain, yet again, started to relentlessly bash down, the topic of conversation started to turn to our trip for the following week and the swims that we had booked. (All swims have to be pre booked, so your chances somewhat lie in the hands of the long range forecast. No more comments from me on that one...).

After saying goodnight to Emma, I sat in my doorway watching the water till about 3am. As I did not see a single sign of anything moving, I decided to set the alarm for 5am and get a couple hours of much needed sleep.

With the alarm going off and with what had only felt like ten minutes of sleep, I grabbed a bucket and coffee and sat at the water's edge as the sun came up. (I sometimes wonder why I take a chair as I never end up using it). Knowing we had to be off by 12pm, as other anglers were booked, time was certainly running out and to be honest, even though we'd managed a couple, I have to say I was feeling a little disappointed and confused as to why, with the conditions that we had had, we hadn't managed to bag a couple more.

With Emma finally out of her slumber pit, we toasted up a couple of crumpets with butter for brekkie along with the much needed morning coffees. Just as we sat discussing our plan for pack down and what was left to do, my middle rod finally gave a little sign of life and as the bobbin dropped, I lifted into my 3rd carp of the trip.

With yet another mirror safely in the net and a sarcastic "well done"

from Emma, a small but beautiful 16lb 8oz was pictured, then released back into its watery home. 'Bait Guru's' Salamino High Class Hookbait being the downfall this time.

As the previous day I decided not to recast, as this rod was very close to the rod that had done my previous two bites and as the pack down continued my decision was to be proven right.

Literally 15 minutes after releasing the lovely mirror, I found myself to be attached to something that felt completely different from the way that the previous three had fought, with this being much slower in movement and holding deep.

I eventually got my first sighting and knew instantly this was over the 20lb mark, to which I personally still

class as a big fish, even in this day and age.

With the nerves starting to go to pot, after a battle that seemed to go on and on, the net was finally slipped under a lovely dark scaled mirror carp, hooked on a straight out the tub Salamino Dumbell Wafter, weighing in at 26lb 6oz. With my 24 hour on call, live on bank, looks could kill photographer Emma doing the honours, the fish was safely returned.

With that being the final action of the trip and with both cars loaded, I couldn't really complain about the start to the 'winter' ticket. with four stunning mirrors, in 72 hours up to 26lb 6oz. What else can I say? Roll on session two. As we always at 'obsession carp' say, "believe in your dreams!" ■



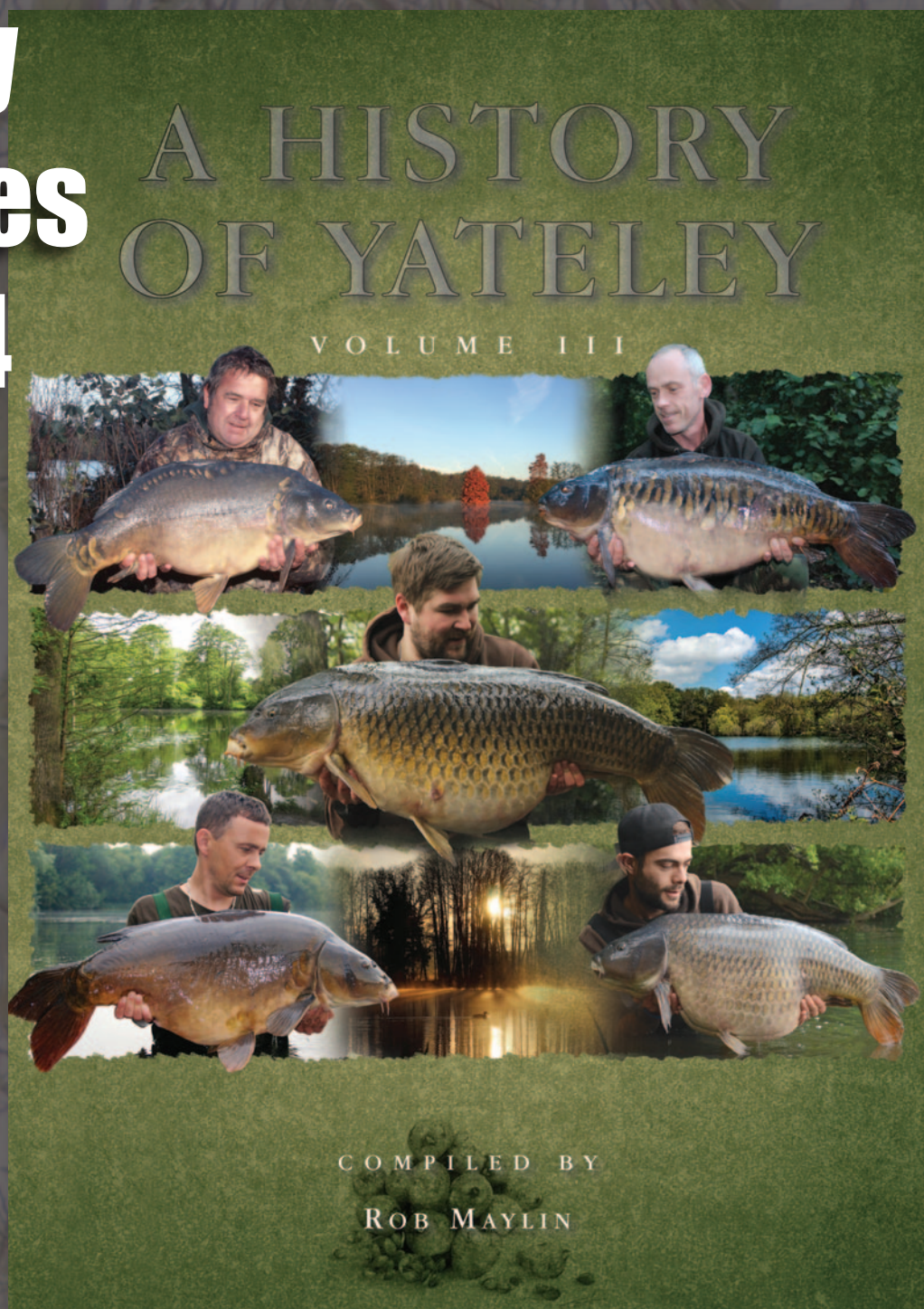
Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

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.

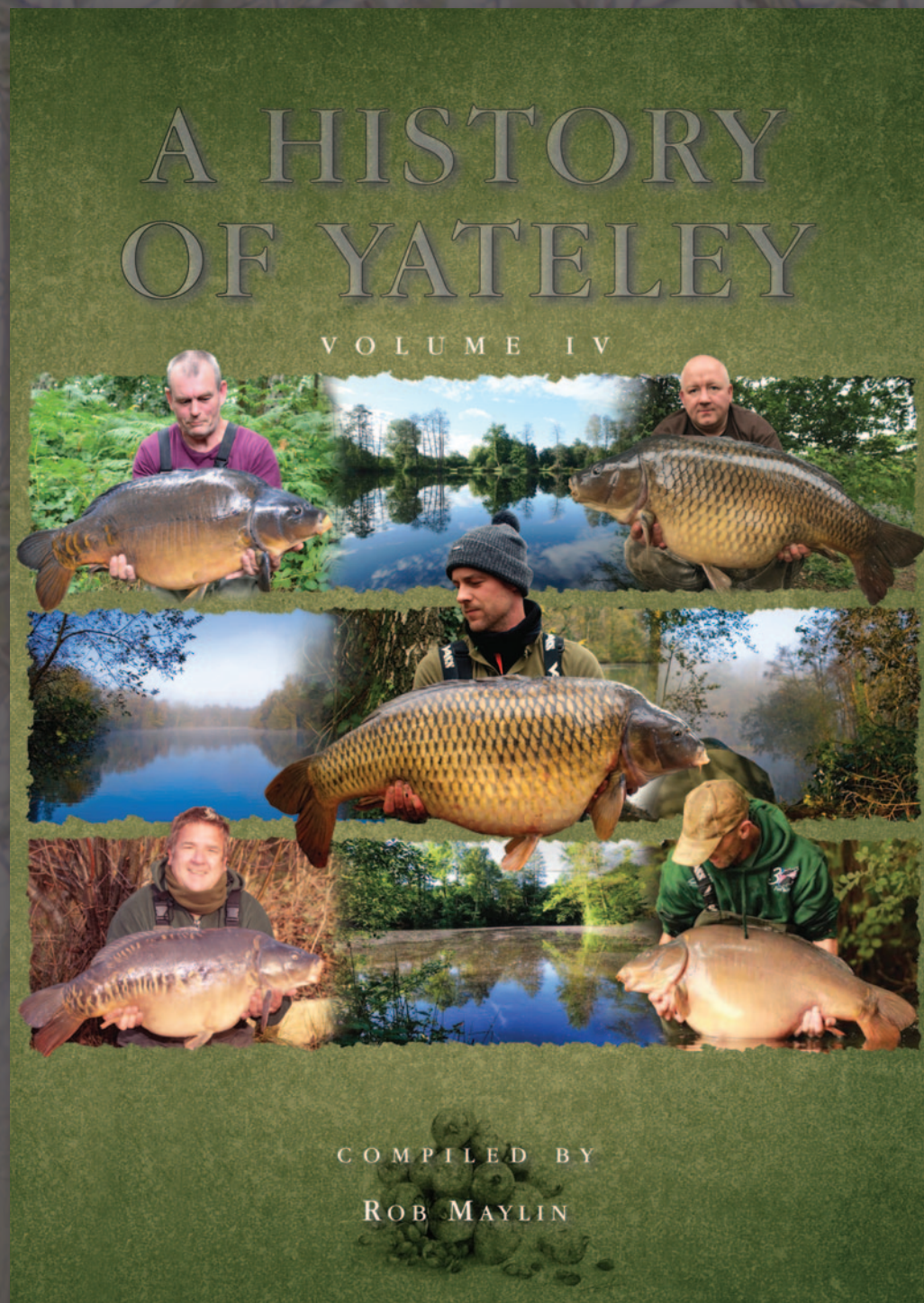
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumphouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

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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Exclusive

Fully Immersed

By Matt Hennon



Rewind a few years to the tail end of summer 2019, my time on a little pit known as Trout Lake had come to an end. I had spent two years on that particular lake, located in the Medway valley. Two years hunting a special old Leney mirror that I ended up catching twice in a week. Mad how it all works out sometimes!

Once I had enjoyed a little break and gone through the battered gear, it was time to plan for the next venture. One that was going to be a big leap, arguably some of the trickiest lakes Kent has to offer! The historic Larkfield complex, made up of four very different waters each with their own challenges. Road and Island, Larky 2, the Ocean and what I had decided to start on, the famous Railway Lake.

The new season didn't start till the 1st of April, so I spent a long winter walking the lake, watching the water and plotting for the spring. When I finally saw my first signs of carp at the end of February, I was absolutely buzzing. The following few weeks I kept seeing them and with no other anglers in sight I was starting to feel one step ahead! Then the C bomb, the

dreaded covid hit and spun the whole world upside down!

With angling being one of the few things we could do, 2020 ended up being more of a challenge than anticipated. The banks were extremely busy which made my plan for focusing on the railway a no go. I started to treat the complex as one big lake, which although I didn't know it at the time was to really set me up for this current season! That year I ended up nicking 1, of roughly 25 originals left, out of the Railway and a few crusty ones out of Larky 2. Not a bad start on an unforgiving gaff that I have witnessed chew up, spit out and send anglers packing never to be seen again!

That next year's angling was pretty much non-existent, I had switched scaffold firms and was working every weekend to catch up on the previous year's furlough that had burnt a hole in the bank balance. However, that November the country park's angling rights were taken over by SWS Fisheries. Run by two chaps I was lucky enough to know, so with the bank looking rather healthy I jogged the weekends on and started to muck in with the boys. Fishing at night and working around the lakes during the

day to start ticking off long overdue swim maintenance and snag removal.

Over that Christmas period and into the new year the fire had been well and truly lit, I had feelings of déjà vu as I began to flirt with all the plans I had previously made before that poxy pandemic! This time though it was different, as I mentioned before, I had done the leg work across all 4 lakes and I had my eyes firmly set on ticking off a few of the parks most sought after residents. It's the most focused I've ever felt!

It was now the end of February and the country had just been battered by those three storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin. I remember being at work on Mile End Road in London during Eunice, we had walked up the road from the site and it was like the film Twister! There were all sorts flying down the street, tents and underwear amongst other things. Even though they had most certainly come from a garden and washing line, the mind has a habit of making alternative suggestions!

Anyway, knowing I had seen fish cruising about just below the surface back in February(!!!) on the Railway, I couldn't help but think the weather would have stirred them into getting



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on a bit of grub. At the time I had been floating around Road & Island, and now that lake you would swear blind had no carp in it at the best of times, so you can imagine how bleak it was during a cold, wet and storm battered February! With that, I decided to put that lake on the back burner until I saw them using specific areas, plus there was a gravitational pull from the Railway that was getting stronger by the day! You know when you just get those feelings, almost like a 6th sense.

I hadn't really walked the Railway since January when Simon Scott had come down to put a few of his babies in the lake, and to be honest, even though it was the first week of March it still felt like January, with it blowing bitterly northerlies! I walked the lake every evening that week hoping to see something to go on for after work that Friday. I hadn't seen a thing as it got closer to the weekend, and with seeing them down the bottom end in previous years when they woke from their winter slumber, if it wasn't for what I was to see that Thursday evening I would have gone on old knowledge.

So it's Thursday evening, and I'll point out at this moment in time I was feeling a bit dejected, I had been telling myself "we'll see them all week, they'll be having it Matt don't you worry". But I had seen bugger all and was convinced I had been missing morning shows. The underlying problem was leaving early for work and there was no way around it. But that evening I was standing on the causeway between Larky 2 and the Railway with my back turned when I heard that unmistakable sound, "got'cha"!! I spun on a 6 pence to see the aftermath of the show out in front of Middle Road. There are 5 swims along that bank, the middle swim being called... Middle Road! Genius!

I was buzzing like an old fridge that evening after seeing a handful more, they were all in and around that zone and I can't tell you how close I was to giving work the big red button. That next morning though I jumped in the work van to see my pal Tappy with a massive smirk on his face,

"we've got a touch today boy, we'll be down that lake in good time". It turned out to be a touch beyond



belief. We had to go up to Slough to take down a tiny scaffold and so once that was down, we were on our toes back to Kent - talk about the planets aligning! It's worth mentioning that the geezer I work with, Tappy, is not only a mate but also a keen angler with a ticket on Larky. That day we stopped off on the way home to get all our supplies, so that by the time we got back it was a case of just grabbing the gear and heading straight down the lake. With everything else seemingly going to plan, there was one last piece to add to the jigsaw - what swim? Middle Road was a longer swim between 80-90 yards, whereas the swim before it, Mopeds, was a lot shorter. All the shows I had seen were covering those areas, so a quick check of the weather app showed a change from NW to NE, so I went straight into Moped! Tappy went into Ted's Corner which meant, worst case scenario, we would have a nice little social, and I knew I would be in for a beautiful bacon and sausage sarnie come the morning! Lovely times!

Before overly committing I went

back through the old notes I had made on spots and clipped the leading rod up to a hump I had previously fished, first cast and it went down with a thump. I wound down to the lead, pulled it back up and dropped it half a rod length shorter, so still a good drop, but it had small strands of eelgrass over the area, winner! With the traps set and a small amount of bait out over the area, I sat back that evening content. Not much happened in the way of activity that night and I just remember retreating to bed with a stomach full of stella in anticipation for the morning.

I always set an alarm for first light and I have to say that that morning it was hard to open my eyes after a few too many Nelson's! I flicked the stove on and let the kettle bubble away whilst I watched the water. Other than it being bitterly cold, not much was going on and with a nice hot coffee in hand I had a little wander next door to see Tappy sitting there with Aidan. Almost in sync, "fragile mate!?" Whilst we were all laughing, I had a liner, I looked at the receiver, then to the boys and just walked back

into my swim. My head was too fragile to be running about so I sprawled out on the bedchair again, better to be safe than sorry! After a few more liners over the next 20 minutes the right hand rod pulled up tight, came out the clip. I could tell straight away it was a stocky but it was a start. I unhooked it in the net, checked the rig over, the hook was still spot on so the rod was wrapped up and sent back out amongst that fresh eelgrass on the hump. A little bit of propolis for the hook hold and it slipped back no dramas! I had both Tappy and Aidan stood with me when the next bite off another stocky came half hour later, it was just a case of repeating the process of before but this time though things didn't go as planned!

A Larkfield legend in the way of Robbo had turned up whilst I was in the process of wrapping the rod back up and his 2 Border Terriers, Mama and Bulldozer who were buzzing as usual, ran straight through my line as I was bringing it back off the distance sticks... yours truly, bird's nest, cheers all the best!

I put the kettle on, made us all a



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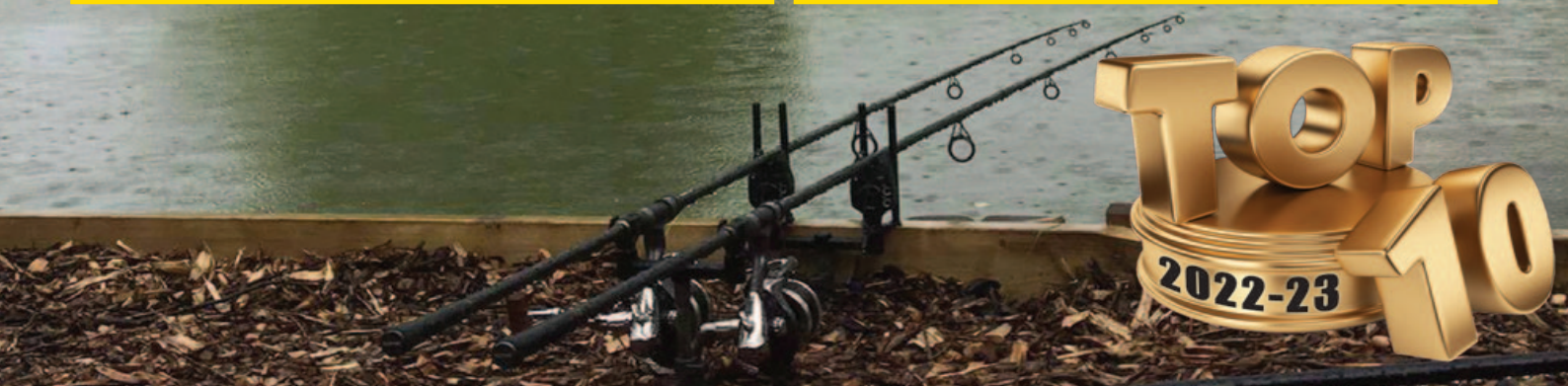
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cuppa and took that opportunity to catapult a few more baits out into the zone. With it still pretty much winter, I had put minimal bait out there, but with them being in the area and obviously feeding, it only felt right. A nice cup of splosh, rod sorted, fresh rig and with equilibrium restored that right hand rod was sent back out. Everyone had filtered off by this point but more importantly Tappy had breakfast on the go! I took a stroll next door, took a seat, and we had a little laugh about what had just happened over a beautiful bacon and sausage sarnie. I remember looking at the time after the receiver signalled a single bleep 10:45... prime time on the railway!! It couldn't have been more than 30 seconds later and that right hand rod went into meltdown. The fish had bolted off the hump and was kiting hard right, there was no stopping it for a while but after managing to get a little bit back on it, the fish started to come back down the right hand margin staying deep. I knew it was one of the proper ones but I didn't need to hear it, so when Tappy broke the tense silence with "that ain't no stocky" I had a nervous giggle and told him to leave off. The fish had another little surge and about 20 yards out broke the surface, that's when my heart rate went up another notch! I had photographed this common for a mate about 18 months previous and to my knowledge it hadn't been out since. Those last few minutes seemed to last a lifetime until it slipped over the net cord. With the fish safely in the net I grabbed Tappy, nearly throwing him in the lake at the same time, and we had a little embrace as the original dark sat there in my net sulking, my net!!! I couldn't believe it! We transferred the fish to a sling so I could free the net up... you just never know! I left Tappy with the task of ringing the boys, whilst I got that right hand rod sorted once again. It must have been all of a couple of minutes after clipping the bobbin on the line and it was away again - another stocky, just as the boys had turned up to photograph the common. Just before we got her out, I quickly popped the hook out of the stocky's mouth, sharpened it and got that rod back out there for what seemed like the 100th time.

Once Ryan was happy with the area for the pictures it was time to



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finally get the common out, unzipping that sling and revealing her dark chestnut brown and golden flanks, I was in awe. It was my time for a cuddle with a slice of Kent history, one of the railway's oldest commons. She behaved impeccably and tipped the rubens at just under 31lb. I'd forgotten my waders but couldn't resist stripping down to my boxers to get in for some water shots, it didn't matter how cold that water was, this was a Railway 30! Once I got in the water, the left hand rod had other ideas. On a tight clutch it started stripping line instantly, I let the common go and jumped straight out of the water. Now I'm standing at the front of the swim in my soaking wet boxers getting

beasted by whatever was on the other end. It must have stripped 30-40 yards of line when it exploded on the surface causing an eruption of water. A perfectly timed heckle by one of the boys of, "that's a stocky"! Once again bringing out the nervous laugh. Although after its initial explosive serge it came in like a dog on a lead, every now and then going back down into the deep water. As it came twisting and turning up from the depths in front of the swim, me and Ryan both caught a glimpse of it and if I'm honest, those last few moments were and still are a complete blur. I can just remember it coughing water then being in the net and celebrating as if Chelsea had just scored a last minute



Kirk's fish.



Kirk's fish.



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Kirk's fish.



Kirk's fish.



Kirk's fish.



Kirk's fish.



Kirk's fish.

winner! Kirk's fish was mine, a mirror that looks like it's come straight out of a canal in Belgium. Big armour plated scales across its back, like roof tiles. Dark steely blue, with a deep yellowie orange belly. Sometimes pictures will never do it justice but when you've got a mate like Ryan on the buttons he always captures the moment perfectly. She was looking incredible and at an ounce under 35 that was the biggest railway mirror ticked off and arguably one of the best looking mirrors left from across the complex. A mega moment, a brace of 30's in Baltic conditions and it wasn't even spring yet. Topped off with it being shared with some of my closest mates. Magic!

Over the next couple of weeks, I decided to swerve the crowds and started to prep an area on the Ocean Lake, a lake that has never truly been got to the bottom of. One thing is for sure though, it's only what I can describe as a hostile war zone! From scuba divers that have been known to cut through angler's lines or tie rigs around features that can be found scattered on the lake bed, to swimmers and paddle boarders treading

water and pushing each other off over the top of your lines. Even the dog walkers that get confrontational about not being able to let their dogs jump in the lake from the swim you're fishing, then a special mention to the nightcrawlers. The ocean is the main lake in the country park so the public car park and main route of access that surrounds it, turns the lake into a different place in the hours of darkness. I've heard stories of things happening over-night but in my experience, other than hearing all sorts of drunken arguments, I have only had the odd drunken person poke their head in my bivvy on their way home. Put all that to one side, the other obstacles are within the water itself. A 50 acre lake with a small family of around 30 carp, which is also full of mitten crabs, eels and monster tench. Plus, a tiger nut ban just to make things a little extra spicy!

With the picture painted, even though any carp from the lake is a mega achievement, there are still a handful of very special carp still swimming around in there. Plus, the mystery of what could still be from years gone by! So, I got to work prep-

ping an area with some particles on the Monday. After the weekend's result on the Railway, I felt ultra-focused now and was prepared to keep pushing knowing that we still had the best months ahead of us. It would be Monday and Wednesday evening bait ups once the kids were in bed, then fish Friday after work and go home late afternoon on Saturday. This had been my routine for a few years now juggling work, fishing and family life. That first Friday night I couldn't believe it when I had a screaming take on dark but as soon as I picked the rod up, I knew it was a Tinca, it was the unmistakable tapping on the rod tip followed by pretty much dragging it in. I sat back on the bedchair with a can of Belgium's finest feeling quite happy that after a couple of bait ups that week I had had a bit of action from the area. I sat up on one of the park benches till late that night with my eyes and ears on high alert for any sign across the big pit, but the night passed uneventfully

even though the tench were very active. I even managed to escape without catching another and getting a good night's kip in the process, with it being my first night on the lake in a few years I kept the beers to a minimum so that I was properly on it at all times. I didn't want to miss even the slightest sign. I was up before the alarm that next morning and when it finally went off the kettle was already bubbling away. It's got a funny old atmosphere, the Ocean, it feels alive like it's got its own soul and with every hour that ticked by I was taking in what became known to me as the lake's own routine.

I remember talking to my mate Dan on the way home that Saturday. He's dabbled on that lake over the years he's angled across that complex, and said something to me on that day that stuck with me. You pay for the privilege to poach that lake! As the weeks went by that comment became more and more apparent in the harsh environment that is the Ocean. After

another two bait ups that following week I was back angling on what was becoming known by the boys as Hen-non's Hill, that evening I didn't even manage to get the second rod out before I had my first tench. By 9 o'clock that night I was already on 5 tench so I didn't bother putting any bait out to try and avoid a night of being plagued by them. I made a tweak to the size of hookbaits before I put all the rods back out and it did help keep them at bay, until between half 2 and half 3 that morning. Each rod one after the other being wiped out by the tinca's. I left all 3 rods out of the water for the rest of the time between then and first light so I could get a little bit of sleep. Ravenous buggers those Ocean tench, I'll point out as well that out of the 9 that I'd caught over those two weeks the average was 9lb with 3 going over 12lb... a tench anglers wet dream! With the rods out first thing that morning and seemingly the tench gone, I drank copious cups of tea as I



Larky Two common.

Dear Santa,
PLEASE No
more socks this
Christmas!

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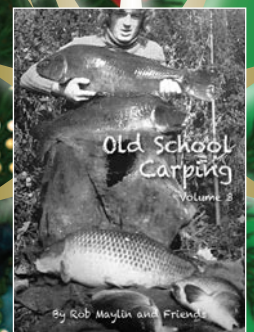
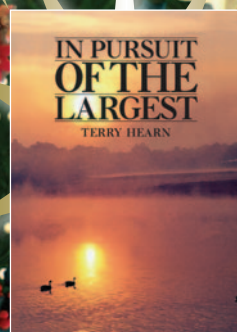
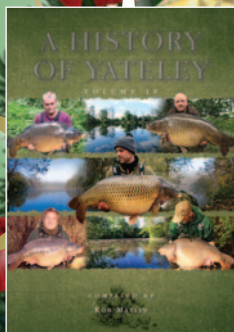
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Larky Two common.



Liam, me, Tappy and his old man after his result on the railway.



Liam breaking his larky curse.



Me and Aidan with Crinkle Tail.

watched the water like a hawk. Then at half 8ish I started to get savage liners across all 3 rods. Where I was using braid and with how the tench had been, I just put this down to them moving back in. It was happening every half hour-ish and it wasn't until half 10, when I was sitting up on the bench having a catch up with Webster, that what I initially thought was another one of these liners turned into a jittery take. Where I was adamant it was a tench I wasn't in a rush to put my waders on so by the time I had got to the rod the fish was already kiting whilst swimming towards me, I had dropped the ball on this one. There was a carp on the end, on my second morning, it was kiting up the right hand margin towards a set of snags and all I could do was pray I could turn it and somehow get it back out into open water for the best chance of finally landing it. I had managed to stop it from reaching the snags and it was coming back down the margin but now the next obstacle was an overhanging willow with a snapped

limb. It had rooted and sprouted new growth in the water on the right hand side of the swim. Before I knew it, that fish was in that underwater forest and the worst part about it was that it was so close but I just couldn't net it. I felt sick to the pit of my stomach but it was the Ocean giving me a vital lesson never to drop the ball, the stakes were too high to be anything less than fully focused at all times! Webster stripped down to his boxers, grabbed the net off me and swam around the limb to try and get another angle on it but by this time the fish had gone.

I was left licking my wounds after that. Bites out of there are few and far between so to get one on my second morning and lose it was crippling. But, I had to think of the positives and one of those was that I was onto something. I had seen what fish it was, an old upper 20 scrapper 30 common that is in the Carp County book. One that I would meet again but in different circumstances! I carried on over the next few weeks but

other than the usual late evening tench not much was happening. I decided that I would carry on baiting but drop an evening, only baiting on Wednesdays and then resting the area from lines over the weekend for a while.

By now we were well into April and approaching the Easter bank holiday weekend, my good pal London Archie was doing a bit on Larky 2 in one of the swims on the causeway in between there and the Railway and after losing one, I was overdue a few beers and a curry with one of the boys so I set up behind him. With it being a bank holiday I was able to push my luck with the Mrs and get an extra night under my belt, touch! That weekend was a no go on the fish front but a lot of beer was consumed whilst putting the world to rights. However, the good weather turning up meant so did the steroid injecting mosquitos, they were out in full force!

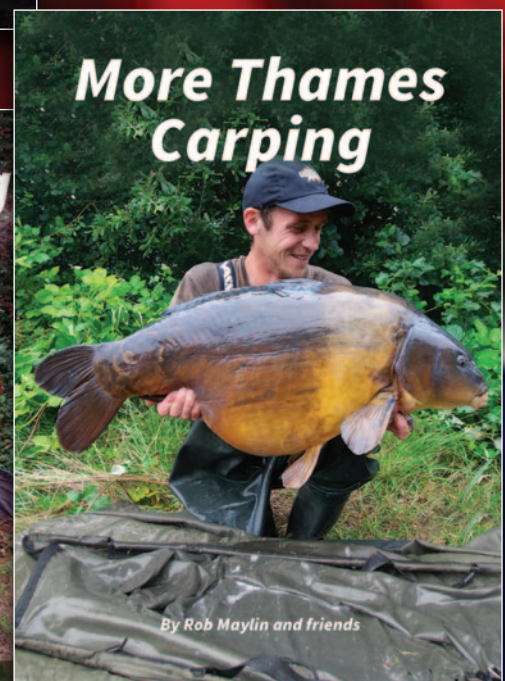
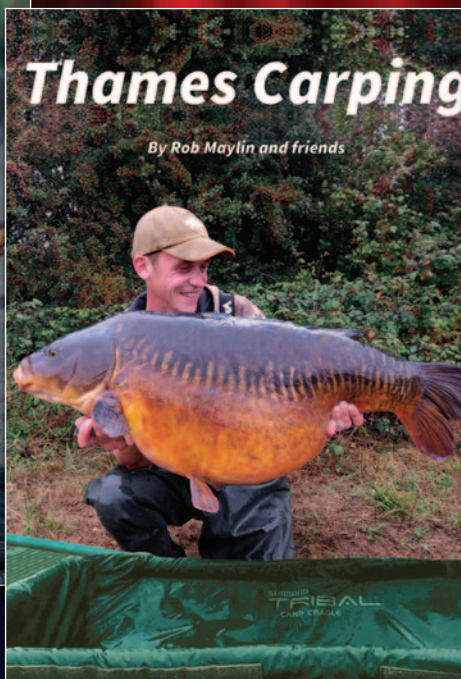
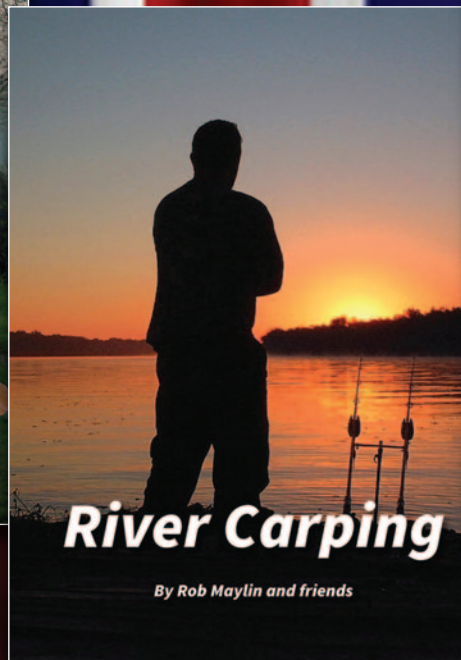
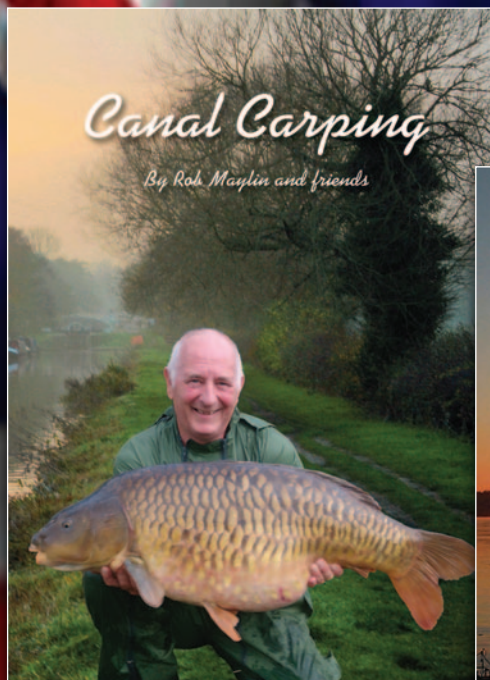
Nothing came out of the Railway that weekend but I had noticed how the birdlife were acting out in the



Me and Dan with the common I lost on The Ocean.

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Ocean Cricket Bat.



Ocean Cricket Bat.



Ocean swimmers.

middle of the lake, giving me a couple of subtle signs. I was going to try and capitalise on this for the following weekend. I hatched a plan!! As we were working in Caterham at the time and Tappy wasn't picking me up until 7am, it meant I could get away with doing a mid-week overnighter and be able to get back home in time to be picked up for work in the morning. This would serve two purposes, firstly it would be to get some bait in the area and second, I would be able to confirm what I thought was happening out there. I prepped some bait Tuesday evening and got everything ready so I was good to leave once the kids were in bed the following evening. It was about 8pm Wednesday when I turned up in the swim and luckily the lake was empty which meant no eyes were on me whilst I

was putting the bait out. I only put 2 rods out that night and after a quick weather check, slept under the stars so that I had minimal stuff to pack away. I was up at 5am with a coffee and pretty much everything on the barrow that next morning, with my eyes fixed on the zone as the light was beginning to break, there was a flurry of a few shows one being a real goodun! Even though I had to reel in and be on my toes for work, what I had seen was gold dust and it meant I had to do my best to get back into that swim that next day after work.

As luck would have it good old Archie was back down on the Larky behind the swim I had baited and as they were proper back to back he put his distance sticks across the swim on the Railway whilst he was wrapping up and getting everything set.

That obviously worked to my advantage as by the time I got down there after work no one had asked him to move them and the swim was still free, once again the planets had aligned and I had had a right squeeze! He got the BBQ on whilst I pottered about putting the house up and the rods were already clipped from Thursday morning before I left, so after checking the hook points and changing the hookbaits it was a case of just casting them out. It was about an hour later, around 7pm Colin had come down from the next swim up to have a beer with me and Archie when my left hand rod signalled a tench bite, it was a strange fight and it wasn't until it got under the rod tip I realised it was the railways scaley mirror. I had caught her a couple of years before but with not having great photos of her, Colin rattled a few off just before we lost the light.

Wednesday evening was the catalyst for setting the wheels in motion and as you can imagine I went to bed that night rubbing my hands together. I was woken up on St Georges Day morning by a stocky and after popping the hook out, Archie treated it and popped in back for me whilst I sorted the rod back out. It was a case of getting it back out there ASAP after what had happened back at the start of March, and it didn't take long before it was away again. This time though it was different it felt like I was attached to a freight train, and after an epic battle, out at long range it was finally a few rod lengths out in front of the swim. One last beeline to some snags and having to give it the butt, the fish had turned and was coming in backwards ready for the net to be slipped underneath it. Because of how tense the fight was I hadn't registered what fish it was until I peered into the net - the King of the Railway, 'Baby Barbs'! Deep red rosy cheeks, dark brown, red and golden scarred up flanks, withered tail, gnarly jaw and tiny spikey dorsal. Literally everything you would want from an ancient old relic, I honestly thought that common was going to go over 40lb but at an ounce under 38lb i was still buzzing. An absolute creature!! What made that moment extra special was the fact I had caught that carp on a day that seemed fitting, there's not many anglers out there that can say they



Giving Dan a soaking after him stalking the Long Common.



Ryan having his moment with a larky common.

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'.

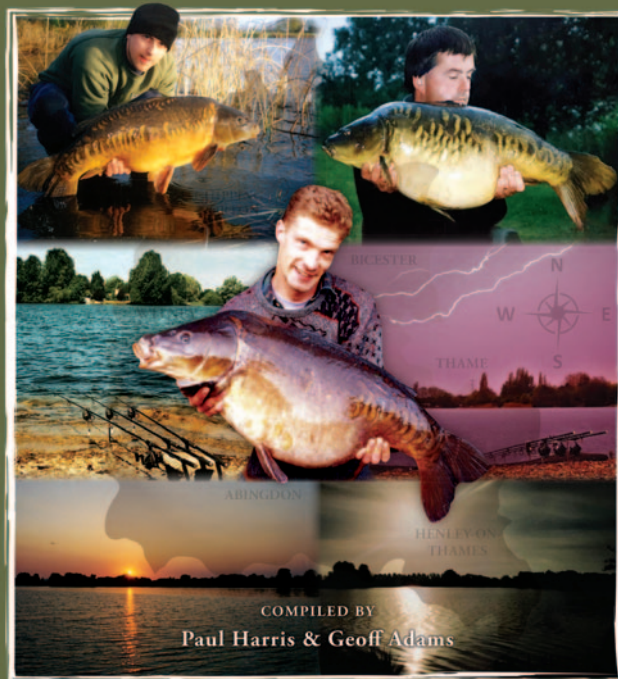
We have brilliant chapters on Newlands from Ginger Robinson and Milton Pools from Stuart Rothwell. Danny Aplin has written about his time on Linch Hill which will just blow you away! His pictures alone are worth purchasing this book.

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...

The History of Carp Fishing in Oxfordshire



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

had king of the pond on St Georges Day!

Ryan rattled off some lovely shots and I had the boys on standby helping out with fish care, in my opinion you just can't beat that camaraderie! It's slowly getting lost throughout the scene which is criminal but such is the way these days. Never forget to stop to smell the roses along the way and take inspiration from what's going on around you! I've been truly blessed by magic moments this year, some of which were witnessing the boys having their own little slice of the pie. Aidan catching Crinkle Tail, Liam finally breaking his Larky 2 curse, being with Dan when he stalked the long common, Tappy finally bagging a Railway original whilst his dad was down there on a social with him, Ryan having his moment with a few crusty ones after photographing so many for the whole group, Nick bagging up after years of torture and lastly, which I touched on earlier, meeting that common I lost on the Ocean under different circum-

stances, and that came just before the Ocean closed for spawning. Danny boy had found them and doing what he does best got a couple of rigs in position without them noticing. I was on edge watching the situation unfold so I couldn't begin to imagine what was going on in his head. I thought the chance had gone when a huge eruption of bubbles over the top of the area appeared followed by a big bow wave back out into the lake. I had been giving him grief about the size of his hooks as a wind up and with the opportunity being too good I couldn't help myself... "Defo saw the hook mate". We were sitting there like a couple of school kids giggling, when I clocked his line pick up and began to start slicing through the water, "Dan you're in bruv!" After a close quarters battle that he eventually won, it turned out to be that common I had lost, lovely times!

Throughout May the annual ritual of spawning had me flicking about around the complex as each lake closed at different stages that month,

I ended up nicking a couple more though. A nice upper 20 common from Larky 2 that very nearly took my rod in with it for a lap of the lake at midnight! Along with an angry male cricket bat common from the Ocean, that I very nearly slipped back without pictures. I'm glad I didn't though because I look back at that picture and remember exactly how I felt at half 5 that morning, finally landing one from that unforgiving slab of water. Snpshots of time to bring it all flooding back!

The real standout for me though was at the end of May, pretty much seeing the Ocean lakes stock when they were spawning. I was up a tree with Dan and Liam watching them for hours, all three of us in silence until we saw the broken back linear drift in close with some horny commons in tow. I couldn't believe my eyes, this thing was ancient. A throwback from the viking ages, I think if they had caught it they would have used its scales for axe blades! It's not often I obsess over certain ones, especially



The original dark.



The original dark.



The original dark.

on a complex that is full of old iconic Kent carp, but she had got me and I was mesmerised with the thought of having her in my album! I think I probably did Dan's head in with it over that two week period the lake was closed as any chance I got the broken back was slid into the convo! I couldn't wait to get going again but I had already made the choice only to fish that lake when it was prime for it to save a savage beating!

Luckily for me an opportunity was about to present itself sooner than I could have wished for at the end of June, Wednesday the 22nd to be precise. I had gone down to trickle a bit of bait onto the area from where I had lost that common back in March. I had done this so many times by now that I went into autopilot, jumping off

the pushbike, slinging my bag off my shoulder, dipping the throwing stick in the lake, loading up the 20 milers then..... BAAAAADOOOOOSH-HHH! I looked up and in quick succession another two big shows over the zone, I instantly blew work out in my head and rushed home to get my gear.

There was no way I was ignoring that. Luckily, I live a few roads away from the country park so I was back down there in good time, and with the bivvy up and the rods clipped ready, I made the decision not to cast out until dark. With a can of Stella in my hand I was back up on the park bench looking out on the lake when a phone call from Aidan came through. An angler over on Road & Island had complained about a kayak being out

on the lake and he asked if I would go check it out with him, I put my bivvy light on and dug the radio out so it looked like someone was home then walked out onto the main road and jumped in his van.

We were gone for about 20 minutes and only on the other side of the complex but I couldn't help thinking I was going to get back to the swim to find that all my gear had gone walkies! To take my mind off it, I filled Aidan in on what had been happening so far that evening and the last thing I said to him just before I jumped out the van was "I will see you in the morning for that group shot once the broken back is in the net" sometimes you just know!

I wandered back down the path to find that everything was just as I had



Scaly.

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left it, with it being close to midnight by this point I quickly got the rods out and retreated to bed. I was surprised when I woke up that morning that I had evaded the tench and managed to get a half decent night's kip. I took my kettle and stove up to the bench behind the swim, made myself comfortable, then began to put the finishing touches to my best man's speech for my mate Gareth's wedding, which was only a few days away!

I had just finished the speech around 11am when a member of the public stopped to talk to me about the lake. He mentioned that in all his years walking around the complex he had never seen a fish out of the Ocean and right on cue, the left hand rod roared off. This time though I was ready, the waders were on and I ran straight down the hill and into the lake grabbing the rod. The fish had buried itself into a weed bed just off the back of the spot so I jumped out of the lake and walked backwards up

the hill to get higher ground keeping steady pressure on the fish.

As I got to the bench I felt the fish kick so I had to wind like a mad man to stay in connection as I ran back down the hill jumping in the lake for a second time. I pumped in a big ball of Canadian and as the weed bed breached the surface about 20 yards out I saw a tail slap the surface amongst it, luckily it couldn't go anywhere and I managed to scoop up the entanglement of water foliage it was hidden within.

As I parted the weed off my main-line and leader, I was shocked at how many zebra mussels there were, which was nearly followed by a cardiac arrest as the broken back linears head appeared! I had forgotten where I was and once I had made sure the fish was safe, I turned around to jump out the lake only to be greeted by a round of applause from a group of oldies out on their morning walk! I obliged and took a bow as we all had

a little laugh, you've got to love a park lake!

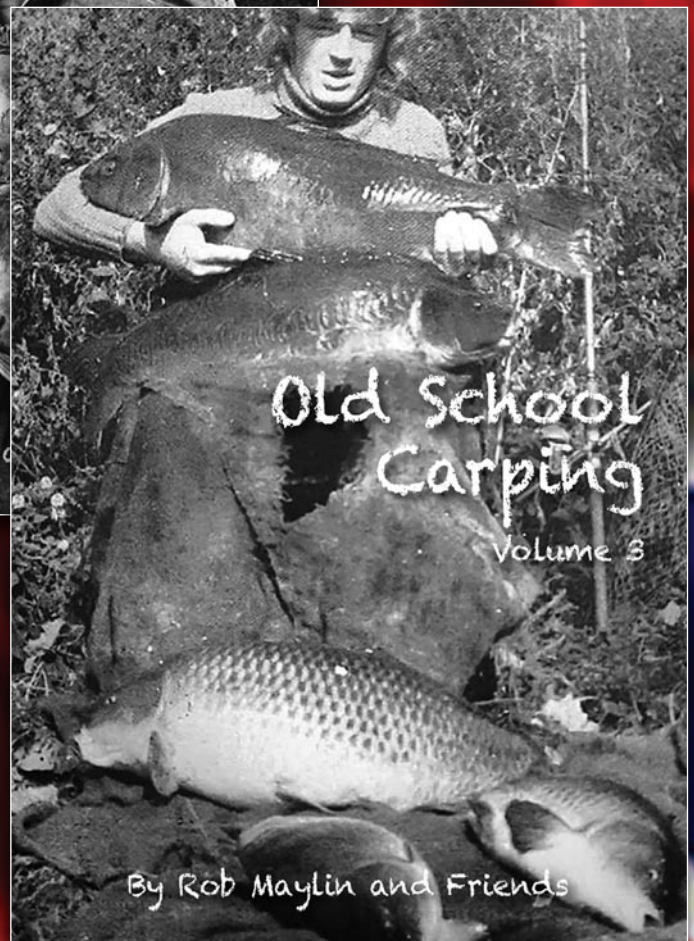
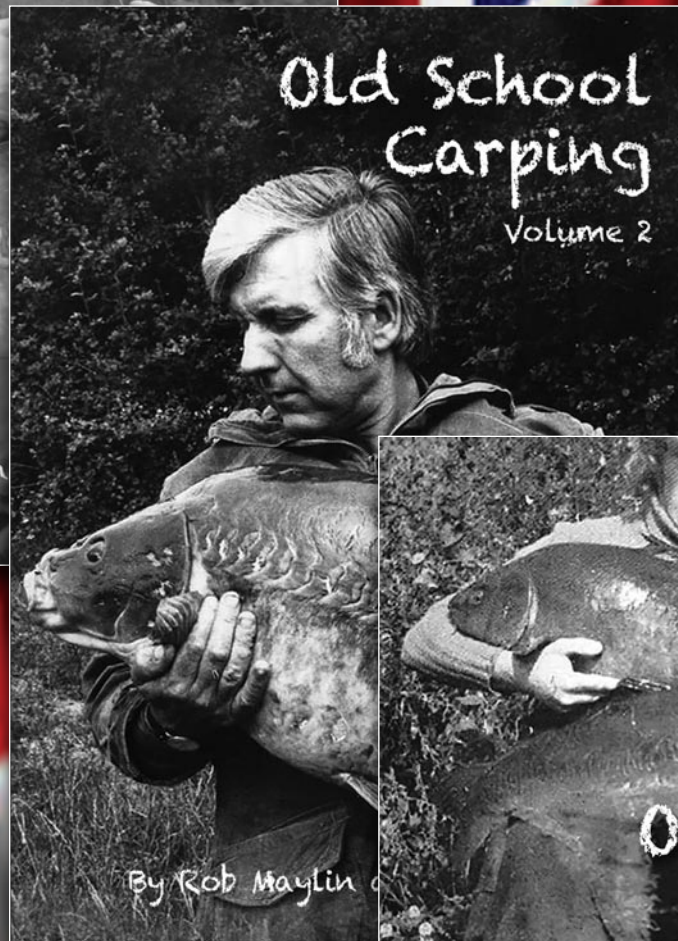
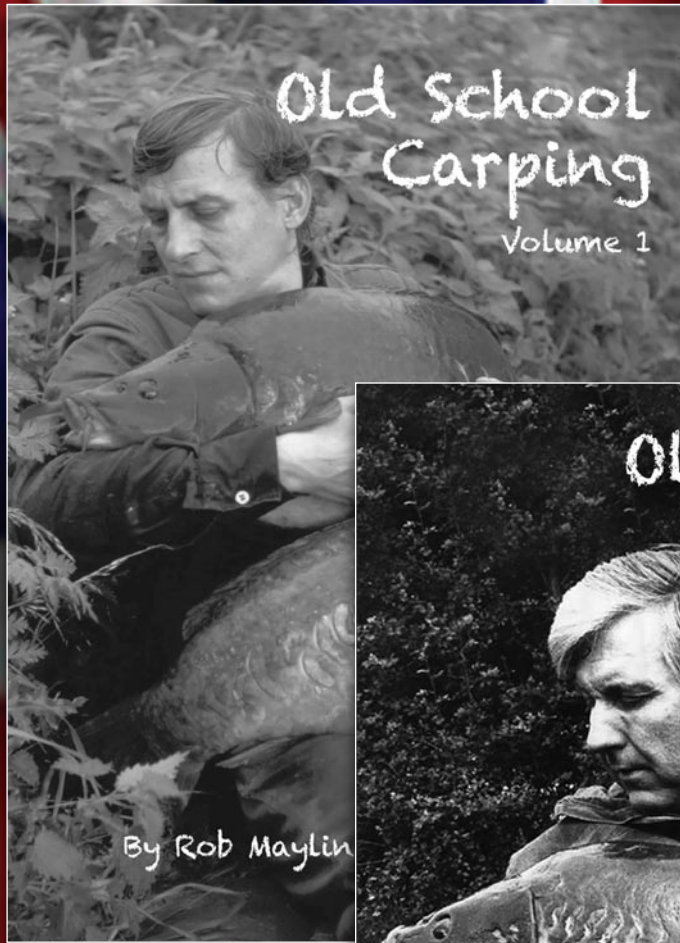
With the phone calls made I sat at the front of the swim and just soaked it all in whilst I waited for everyone to turn up. I was lost for words and if I'm honest, I still am. With it being a month after spawning I didn't want to stress her out too much so Ryan quickly clicked away, even getting that group shot! Then after a few water shots she swam off perfectly.

To me that carp defines the reason I love that group of lakes so much, they have been forgotten about to a certain extent but still hold some of the best fish in Kent. What a mega period for me personally and the beauty of the way I go about my angling means there's still fish across all 4 lakes to add to my album. It's just a case of dreaming big, staying focused, being humble and most importantly just enjoying every single moment. After all, that's why we go isn't it? Be lucky! ■



Scaly.

OLD SCHOOL CARPING SERIES



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An Autumn Approach

By Tom Maker

Having enjoyed an incredible period of angling in recent weeks, we asked Tom Maker to reveal exactly how he has kept the bites coming during a season where many anglers struggle to maintain consistent results.

"I, like many of you I am sure, have had my fair share of autumnal struggles. There's something about this time of year that can either turn the carp on or completely turn them off. The unsettled weather certainly plays its part and having fished through some serious conditions over the last few weeks, it's safe to say it's not been comfortable!

Thankfully, the carp seemed to take a fond liking to my approach, which

on my recent visit to my syndicate saw me enjoy my best session yet in the form of 19-fish in three nights fishing.

"Manilla has cemented itself as a cold-water winner in my angling and it would feel strange to leave it out. The Active version with its paste coating amps up the levels of attraction which suit cold water fishing perfectly. Sticking with the Manilla theme, I complement my mix with a dose of Cloudy Manilla Liquid, to produce a hazy cloud in the water column that fish find hard to resist. Speaking of being hard to resist, I also add a liberal dose of corn to most mixes these days, and in the colder months, I also add in some natural baits too. On this session I used both maggots and casters, which I add in

as and when I want to use them to maintain their freshness.

"As always, I kept everything as accurate as possible, an often-neglected aspect of angling. It's vital that all your bait and rigs land exactly right, and on my syndicate it's key to be as efficient as possible. I needed to put maximum effort in to ensure my rigs landed on the spot on the first try. The fish are flighty at the best of times, so to build a hit, I had to bait and fish with precision.

"During my recent stint, I landed some awesome carp, but the icing on the cake was the capture of my second winter target in as many weeks. A fish I really wanted in my album, the lake's 'Big Fully' at 40lb 4oz.

Tom Maker. #StickyBiats #ManillaActive. ■





Music to My Ears

By Ryan Gibson

With the clocks going back, the after-work rush to get down the lake and get the rods out before dark had become a bit of a non-starter on my usual syndicate water. With it being fished a fair bit still, it was going to be hard work for myself turning up to what is quite often a reasonably busy lake and trying to fit myself in and find spots in between others who already had their swims and areas settled. Having had a great year over here already, I felt it was time to call it a day until next Spring and concentrate on a couple of other waters.

So, on Sunday afternoon, I messaged my good mate Chris Brooks to see whether he fancied a couple of

nights on a little local lake which isn't such a mission to get the rods out in the late autumn gloom and after calling the bailiff, he told us we'd be the only ones booked on for the Monday and Tuesday night which is always music to my ears.

Some of your local to the March area will no doubt either know Chris personally or have seen bits and pieces in the local papers or on social media over the last few months about the ongoing battle he's had this year with a brain tumour and all of the amazing work that has been done to raise money for his ongoing and future treatments and this was going to be his first session out on the bank since he had an operation to remove the tumour a few months back.

Chris got dropped off down at the lake around 3pm on the Monday

afternoon and had a quick walk around before choosing where he was going to plot up for the night and I followed him down at around 5pm once I had finished my day at work. It was just about dark when I arrived and luckily, I saw a couple of shows not long after I got there. One on the nearside of where Chris had set up and one on the far side and after a bit of deliberation, I decided to go on the far side of him into the deeper end of the lake knowing that we had some chilly winds and a bit of rain forecast for that night and the following day.

I soon had the rods in the water with a pink AminoEster pop-up on the left rod down the near margin and an orange SS1 on the right-hand rod which was cast around 20 yards or so to where I saw the show earlier on in the evening. Both spots had around







half a kilo of mixed Purebaitconcepts 12mm VitaMino and 15mm Aminoester which had been prepped up with some of the new Squid & Calanus liquid, a splash of Hemp Oil and finished off with a dusting of the Ester Prep Powder. Chris was fishing in a very similar way to myself, just without the added VitaMino and he had opted for some Ester Active Food Liquid rather than the Squid & Calanus.

We soon settled into the evening and had a good chat which was very much enjoyed after the year Chris has been through and then we finally got our heads down for the night at around 10pm.

Just before midnight, my right-hand rod picked up very slowly and after a short but spirited battle, I had a lovely little low-20 mirror in the bottom of my net which was a very welcome start and gave us a bit more confidence for the rest of the session before pack up time early on the Wednesday morning. I soon had the rod back in the water with a fresh SS1 and a top-up of bait and got myself back in the bag as soon as I could as

forgetting my hoody and being out at the start of November in nothing more than joggers and a t-shirt definitely wasn't the one!

Not too long later I had Chris at the door of my bivvy to let me know he had what he said was, "A half decent one, might even be a 30..." so I put my boots on, grabbed my camera and followed him up, hoping that it was indeed a 30 and possibly even a new PB for him. As he was sorting everything and getting the scales zeroed in, I had a little wander down to his landing net to see what he had. I knew all of the bigger fish in here having caught them a few times over the years and as soon as I saw the width of it, I knew it was at least a 30 and after lifting its tail end up and seeing the top lobe of its fin, I knew exactly which one it was...

In hindsight, the phrase, "You're a bloody knobhead you are..." probably wasn't the politest way to have started the conversation, but after he looked at me rather put out and bemused, I soon let him know that it was at least a high 30, if not a 40 as it was the biggest fish in the lake! I

won't repeat his answer as its most definitely not social media friendly but I'm sure it probably won't take much working out...

Once the camera was ready and the scales were zeroed in, she was lifted onto the waiting mat and a weight of 41lb 15oz was registered to mark Chris's new PB and his first 40 which was a great moment to be a part of and another amazing memory I'll take away from what has been an incredible year of angling for both me and many of my good friends.

A few shots were rattled off and she then swam back into the darkness leaving both Chris and me absolutely buzzing at what had just happened. After everything he'd been through earlier in the year and is still going through now, the magic of angling made it all fade away at that moment in time and it always amazes me how often things like that happen with this hobby of ours, it's almost as if it's meant to be sometimes.

The following day was spent with nothing more happening other than countless cups of coffee and a couple of bacon rolls to keep us going until

around 9:30 that evening when my right-hand rod registered a very twitchy take. Had I not landed it, I would've sworn it was nothing more than one of the lakes big bream but after struggling to net it in the shallow water in front of me, I shot back to get my headtorch only to light up my landing net and see the lakes biggest common laying there looking back at me!

Chris was still awake and soon came up to do the photos for me of what finished off a very memorable couple of nights angling for us both. Considering it was only planned on the Sunday afternoon, having the big mirror, the big common and one other between the two of us wasn't bad going at all!

Last but not least, if any of you who have read through this are able to help towards Chris's fundraising efforts in any way then that would be amazing and mean an awful lot, not only to Chris himself and his family but also to all of us who call him a mate.

I'll leave the GoFundMe link below

if you'd like to read a little more about his journey so far and what is being done and like I say, if you can find

anything spare to help out, we will all be forever grateful
<https://gofund.me/78919a91>. ■



Carpy Humour



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Legendary Carp Paintings



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



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VIEWS FROM THE BIVVY

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Free Line MAGAZINE Rob's Ramblings



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Also available this month,
Big Carp Issue 318.
Miss it and miss out!

Tragic News...

Some tragic news to report in my 'Views From The Bivvy'. Father of three children, Steve Kitcher, was found dead in his bivvy in December with suspected carbon monoxide poisoning, caused by leaving his stove burning with the door down to keep warm.

The social networks were inundated with posts offering both condolences to his family and advice regarding keeping warm this winter. Please let this be the last time I hear of this, we've all done it!



No more stoves on in the bivvy. There is plenty of thermal clothing and arctic style sleeping bags out there. If you can't afford them, then don't go. Stay at home and cuddle up to the wife. Spring is coming, please stay safe.

Here are a couple of the posts I thought relevant.

Alan Cooper wrote:

RIP - PLEASE READ AND TAKE NOTE SHARE AND RAISE IMPORTANT AWARENESS!

Some of you may have seen the absolutely tragic news that a young guy, father to three children and husband died at his syndicate in his Bivvy.

What people need to know is it seems the cause was due to a stove been on in the Bivvy. It's mentioned many times how dangerous it is.

Maybe this tragedy will actually make people see how serious and that it's not just people saying it. If you are on the bank in winter, get a good sleeping bag, a five season bag will keep you warm. A thin comfy hat to sleep in and if you really need that extra warmth a hot water bottle. Don't risk being the next person to be found in their Bivvy lifeless leaving behind family.

Leaving behind anyone at any time is hard, but leaving a wife and kids just before Christmas I can't even begin to think how hard that must be.

Please don't be the next.

DO NOT USE HEATERS AND STOVES IN BIVVYS TO STAY WARM!

Les Bowers said:

This is probably one of, if not, the most important posts I'll ever make on here. Tonight, I found out a friend passed. He fell asleep whilst fishing. Unfortunately, he fell asleep with heater on in the bivvy. He never woke.

Please, please, as winter and the colder nights/days set in, 'DONT' have heaters on in the bivvy or any enclosed space without the door open. It only takes for you to fall asleep or even having it on too long, for a tragic accident to happen. I don't want to hear of this happening to anyone else. If you're that cold, get in the sleeping bag with a hot water bottle or stay home. Don't take chances with it.

Paul Bacon has put up some very informative videos on his Facebook of tests he did with a few different heaters in his bivvy and a carbon monoxide alarm. You'd be very surprised how quickly you'd be overcome with the fumes! I'm so gutted and sad that this has happened to someone I know. Such a kind and lovely bloke with a young family. Please, please, please, take care whilst out on the bank. And keep that door wide open! Please spread the word far and wide. If it saves one person's life, it's done its job.

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Aqua Liliium Clothing is very proud to announce we have been trading for just over a year now.

The past year has passed with a flash and in the blink of an eye the range has increased considerably.

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We pride ourselves on quality and with the Essex Carp Show fast approaching, I am pleased to announce the arrival of some new additions to the family. If you are lucky enough to be coming to the show on the 28th/29th January, please come and say hello.



You guys really make it worthwhile. If you would like more information, please contact me www.aqua-lilium-clothing.co.uk Alternatively, we can be reached through Facebook and Instagram. Stand out from a crowd!

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CARP CHAT

Carpy News

Hoveton Great Broad - fish barrier plan dropped

Anglers in the Norfolk Broads are celebrating the decision by Natural England to drop their controversial plans to erect barriers to fish movements in and out of Hoveton Great Broad – a prime spawning site for the local bream population in the River Bure system.

Leading fisheries scientists and angling representatives had jointly condemned the decision by the Environment Agency in 2020 to grant Natural England a permit to install a fish barrier at Hoveton Great Broad, a private water connected to the River Bure in the northern Norfolk Broads, in order to promote better weed growth.

This was 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.

The extensive fish tracking surveys and a jointly funded Environment Agency and Natural England

Bournemouth University PhD project demonstrated conclusively that: Hoveton Great Broad is the primary spawning site for bream and other coarse fish species throughout the Northern Broads upon which the £100m angling tourism economy of the Norfolk Broads depends. It is unlikely that exclusion of spawning bream from entering Hoveton Great Broad will be sufficient bio-manipulation to reduce phytoplankton densities, increase water clarity and ensure macrophyte recovery sought by Natural England. Previous attempts at bio-manipulation by Natural England have failed in other Broads waterbodies. There is no evidence that alternative spawning sites will be successful and a high likelihood of lasting damage to fish stocks and other dependent wildlife in the Broads.

In October 2020, solicitors at Fish Legal acting on behalf of the Angling Trust and the Broads Angling Services Group (BASG) issued a successful legal challenge against an earlier decision by the Environment Agency

to permit Natural England to install fish barriers in Norfolk's Hoveton Great Broad as part of a plan to promote more weed growth.

The court quashed the permit approval after the Agency admitted that it had failed to put evidence into the public domain and they were forced to conduct a second consultation.

Following further representations from the Angling Trust and scientists at the Institute of Fisheries Management, the Environment Agency imposed far more rigorous conditions on the project including the need to maintain passage for eels, carry out mitigation works and produce an effective monitoring plan.

All of this has proven too much for the project to meet its March 2023 funding deadline and it seems that the funding has now been withdrawn.

The Flood Permit and Planning Consent are also time limited.

The Broads Angling Services Group (BASG) announced last week that the barriers would not be proceeding following a meeting with Natural England.

BASG Chairman Kelvin Allen said: "Climate change has shown just how fragile the Broads are to rising sea levels and although we never supported the project's objectives on isolation and bio-manipulation, things have moved on.

With over a million fish lost this summer to salinity levels moving 35kms inland, a new vision is needed to protect the whole Broads rather than the single private entity of Hoveton Great Broad.

We have agreed with both Natural England and the Environment Agency to work with them in partnership to find an effective way forward



for the whole Broads fishery.

"Martin Salter, Head of Policy at the Angling Trust added: "Whilst we are obviously delighted that this hare-brained, evidence free, waste of money project has been stopped following a vigorous campaign you have to ask how it was ever allowed to get this far.

Natural England should take off their anti-fish blinkers and look at the real reasons for declining water quality including the build up phosphates and sediment from agricultural and sewage treatment works.

"Top fisheries scientists at the Institute of Fisheries Management, who formally reviewed the project, maintained their strong opposition throughout judging the barriers to be potentially harmful and recommended that they should not proceed.

IFM Director of Operations Paul Coulson said: "This was an ill-conceived project from the beginning, which given the mountain of their own costly evidence showing negative consequences to both the fish populations and wider ecology of the Broads should never have left the drawing board.

We are therefore pleased to hear that Natural England are not proceeding with the fish barriers and look forward to them investigating the many other causes behind the poor water quality of the Broads with increased rigour.

"Justin Neal, Solicitor at Fish Legal, added: "From start to finish, this project was bound to fail.

The experts said it was a bad idea, yet the Environment Agency and Natural England seemed relentless in their push to make this white elephant a reality.

The phosphate problem has been caused by years of relentless phosphate pollution from agriculture and sewage. It is regrettable that we had to involve the courts and the whole thing has proved to be a waste of time and public money.

Now, perhaps, these agencies can get on with the job of preventing pollution and improving the environment.

Notes: 1) BASG statement On Thursday, 27th October, BASG met with Natural England to discuss progress with the Hoveton Great Broad project.

These meetings have been occurring monthly since the formal closure of the joint Angling Trust & BASG legal challenge in January 2022.

This year has exposed the frailty that the Broads are facing with climate change and the damaging saline incursion right across the Broads. BASG has pushed extremely hard on these issues and challenged what the statutory bodies are doing to counter this, set against the single objectives of restoration of Hoveton Great Broad.

We are therefore not surprised that

some lessons have been learnt and the current isolation plans have been abandoned, whilst they review the improvements in phosphate levels post sediment removal and general water quality within the Broad.

Focus will now be on monitoring for a wider set of metrics and work to enable cleaner River Bure water to flow through the Broad.

We would like to thank Natural England for their positive open approach in recent months, as we look at new ways in protecting the wider Broads Ecology together.

2) Environment Agency National Fisheries Team response During second consultation, the Environment Agency's National Fisheries Team warned that bio-manipulation schemes are only likely to be successful in 'closed systems' rather than the River Bure catchment which links the Broads and that the Environment Agency had a duty to 'protect and improve' fisheries and a legal obligation to maintain passage for eels.

They also raised concerns over monitoring and questioned whether fish are indeed responsible for the condition of Hoveton Great Broad when it is heavily impacted by nutrients from agriculture and other sources.

More information: Martin Salter – 07976946033

Kelvin Allen – 07850709769

Justin Neal – 07496877006

Paul Coulson - 07960939836. ■

Ashmead Update 2022 "You couldn't give me a lake"

Read Miles' latest blog on Ashmead Fisheries recent work:

Ashmead 2023

Ashmead offers unrivalled fishing for some of the country's finest carp in a unique and spectacular 17 acre wild wetland.

With just eight anglers fishing at any time, Ashmead gives you freedom to fish in an environment rich in wildlife and where the next carp could be the catch of a lifetime. The lake offers packages to suit lake exclusives or individual bookings for 2, 3, 5 or 6 days.

To find out more about Ashmead Fishery, availability and bookings please visit our website linked below or contact us by email.

For enquiries please contact us 01367 253969 or email enquiries@ashmeadfishery.com. ■





Welcome to your Members Newsletter

Welcome to the latest issue of the Angling Trust & Fish Legal Members Newsletter. Today we report on the launch of our annual Christmas Raffle which raises vital funds to support our work to protect fish, fishing and the environment; how sea angling can benefit from an £18m fund; our latest trade associate partner Zerofit who have a special offer for members; the fantastic film we have produced of this year's RiverFest final on the Trent; and loads more! Tight lines! John Cheyne, Marketing, Communications & Membership Manager:

Christmas Raffle 2022 launches - over £4,000 fishing tackle prizes must be won!

ANGLING TRUST CHRISTMAS RAFFLE 2022 HUGE PRIZES to be won!

**JUST £2 PER
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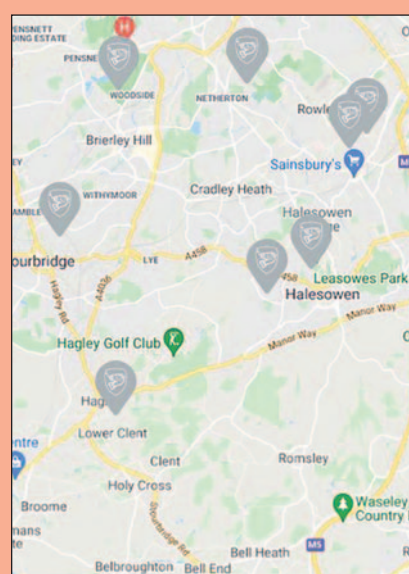
Fancy £2,000 of Daiwa UK tackle? Our Christmas Raffle 2022 has launched and there are some fantastic prizes from brands such as Korda Developments, Angling Direct and Fish Matrix.

Tickets are still just £2 and every ticket we sell helps support our work to protect fish and fishing. Members will be receiving books of raffle tickets with this year's Angler magazine in coming days but if you can't wait you can purchase online now!

Fisheries and Seafood Scheme:

Sea angling community urged to bid for a share of £18 million grants

The recreational sea angling community is among those applicable to funding under the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme which has earmarked £18 million over the next three years for England's seafood sector. It is open to individuals, clubs, businesses (including charter boats and sea angling coaches), and collaborative partnerships from the recreational sea angling community.

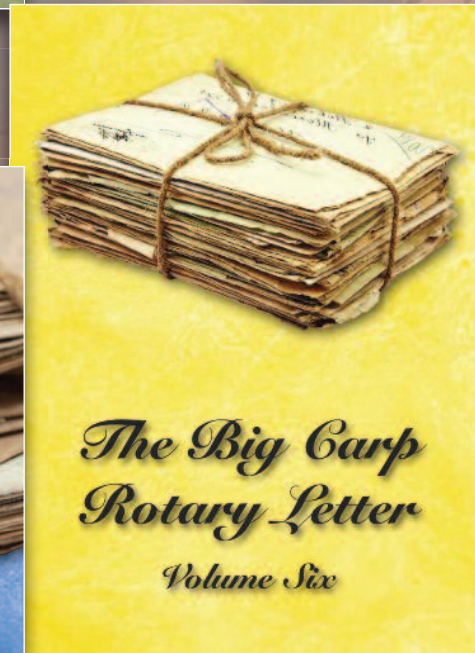
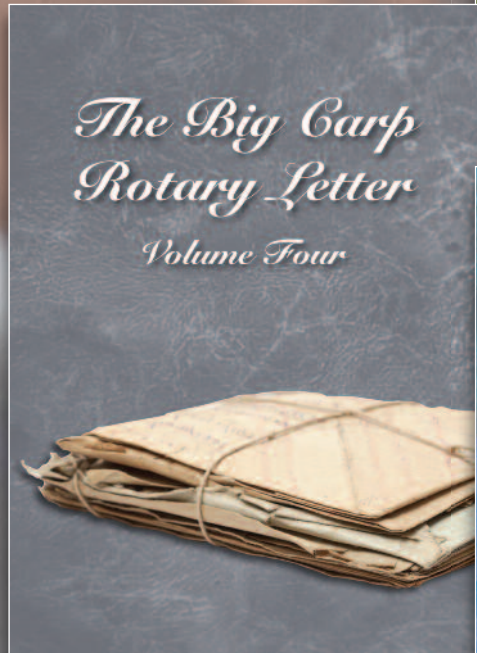
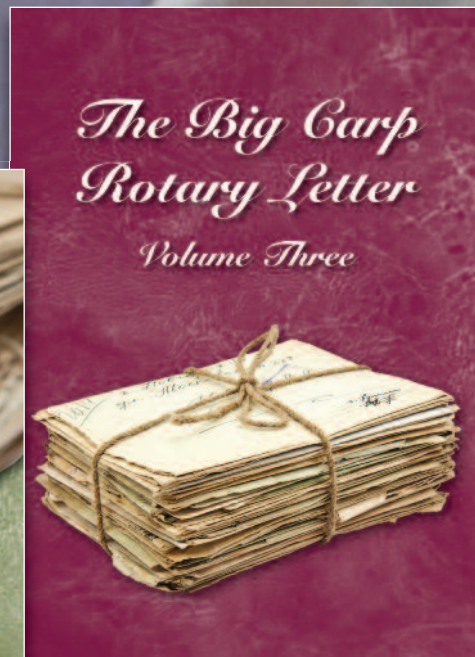
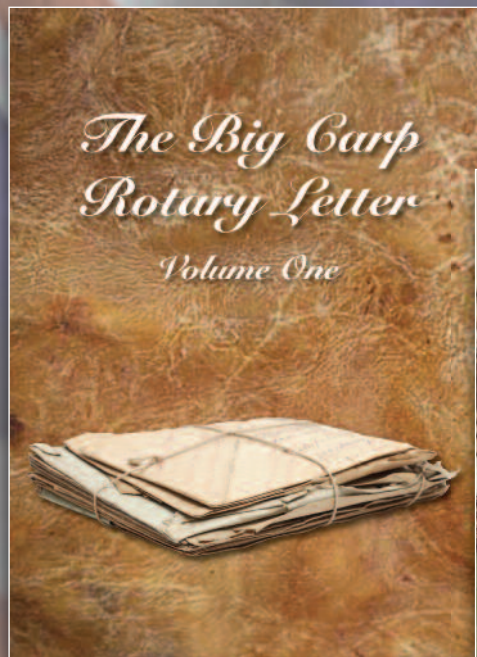


All your fishing info on one map!

Looking for somewhere to go fishing? The Angling Trust Find Fishing Info map features hundreds of venues for you to explore, including how to get there and permit details. You can also search for information on clubs, tackle shops and coaches - and if you are planning to fish a river you can check on the latest river level. There's also a facility to submit a new entry or amend an existing listing.

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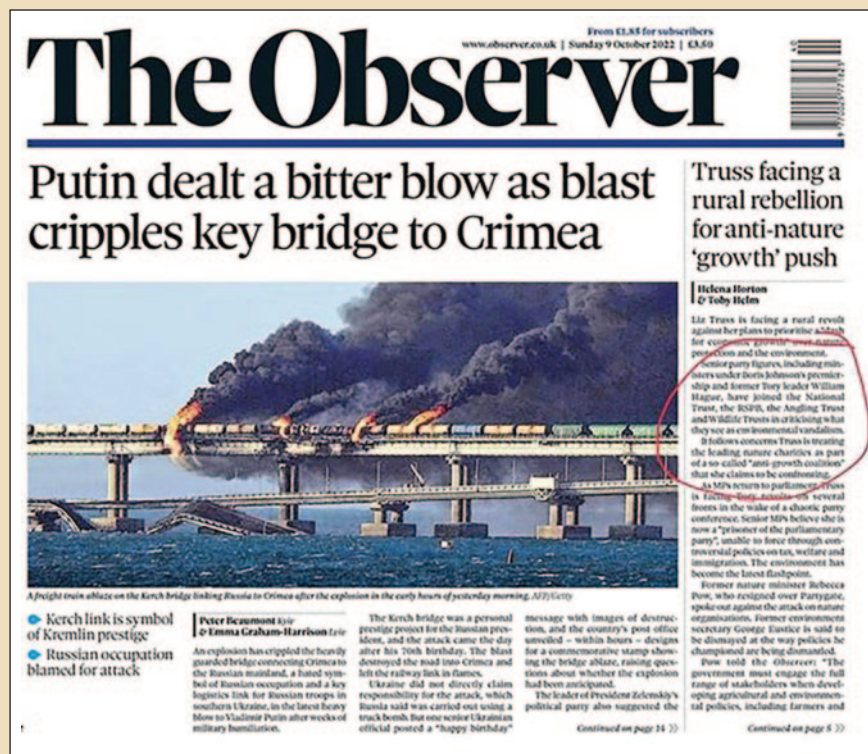
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Angling Trust makes front page headlines over campaign to halt government's plan to weaken environment protection



The Observer
From £3.85 for subscribers
www.observer.co.uk | Sunday 9 October 2022 | £3.50

Putin dealt a bitter blow as blast cripples key bridge to Crimea

Truss facing a rural rebellion for anti-nature 'growth' push

Helena Horton & Toby Helm

Liz Truss is facing a rural revolt against her plans to prioritise a dash for economic growth over nature protection and the environment.

Senior party figures, including ministers under Boris Johnson's premiership and former Tory leader William Hague, have joined the National Trust, the RSPB, the Angling Trust and Wildlife Trusts in backing what they see as environmental vandalism.

It follows concerns Truss is treating the leading nature charities as part of a so-called "anti-growth coalition" that she claims to be confronting.

As Mrs Truss is preparing to return to Downing Street, several letters in the wake of a chaotic party conference. Senior MPs believe she is now a "prisoner of the parliamentary party", unable to force through controversial policies on tax, welfare and immigration. The environment has become the latest flashpoint.

Former nature minister Rebecca Pow, who resigned over Partygate, spoke out against the attack on nature organisations. Former environment secretary George Eustice is said to be dismayed at the way policies he championed are being dismantled.

Pow told the observers "The government must engage the full range of stakeholders when developing agricultural and environmental policies, including farmers and

A freight train derailed on the Kerch bridge linking Russia to Crimea after the explosion in the early hours of yesterday morning. AP/IC/IC/IC

Kerch link is symbol of Kremlin prestige
Russian occupation blamed for attack

Peter Beaumont & Emma Graham-Harrison

An explosion has crippled the heavily guarded bridge connecting Crimea to the Russian mainland, a hated symbol of Russian occupation and a key logistics link for Russian troops in southern Ukraine, in the latest heavy blow to Vladimir Putin after weeks of military humiliation.

The Kerch bridge was a personal prestige project for the Russian president, and the country's post office unveiled - within hours - designs for a commemorative stamp showing the bridge ablaze, raising questions about whether the explosion had been anticipated.

Ukraine did not directly claim responsibility for the attack, which Russia said was carried out using a truck bomb. But one senior Ukrainian official posted a "happy birthday" message with images of destruction, and the country's post office unveiled - within hours - designs for a commemorative stamp showing the bridge ablaze, raising questions about whether the explosion had been anticipated.

The leader of President Zelenskyy's political party also suggested the

Continued on page 5 >>

The Angling Trust made the front page of The Observer recently in our campaign with other national wildlife organisations to stop plans to weaken environmental protections in the UK.

Senior members of our campaigns team spoke to delegates and ministers at the two main party conferences to warn of the dangers to fish and fishing from plans to water down what few protections our rivers and waterbodies currently have in the face of mounting problems from sewage and agricultural pollution.

As part of their 'dash for growth' the new government has decided to abandon its previous pledges to protect the environment and announced de-regulation plans which will make life easier for developers to destroy precious habitats.



Special offer for members as Zerofit joins the Angling Trust

The Angling Trust is delighted to welcome Zerofit as Trade Associate members! The Japanese baselayer brand manufactures award-winning products with their brand leader Heatrub Ultimate Baselayer proven to be five times warmer than a standard baselayer. To celebrate the partnership, Zerofit have a great offer for Trust members.

WATCH: RiverFest 2022 final on the Trent

A fantastic weekend of match fishing culminated in Welsh international Lee Edwards winning the RiverFest 2022 championship and a cheque for £14,000. Sit back and enjoy our film of the RiverFest 2022 final in all its glory - bustling barbel, bin lid bream, and reams of roach all play their part as our cameras follow all the highs and lows across the weekend.



Free litter picking kits for angling clubs

As part of our Anglers Against Litter campaign we've teamed up with Shimano-Fishing to offer angling clubs free litter picking kits. All kits have been allocated for this year, but we are now taking expressions of interest for 2023. If you are on the committee of an angling club and your club is willing to commit to at least two litter picks a year and send us details and photos, then why not apply for one of these amazing kits that include High Viz vests, litter pickers and bag hoops?

Life Premier membership: Special edition version of the JW Young Classic Heritage Centrepin reel



Here at the Angling Trust, we've always tried to make membership affordable for everyone, with current adult membership starting from just £30 per year. However, we have also always offered a Life Membership option for those who can afford to front load their membership fee and help boost the funds for our essential work. Now, thanks to a partnership with one of the most historic tackle manufacturers in the world, we have an exciting new option – Life Premier Membership.

Life Premier Membership at £850 not only gives you all the existing benefits of being a member of the Angling Trust for the rest of your life, it also comes with something rather special - the first 100 people to join as Life Premier members will receive a special edition Angling Trust version of JW Young Classic Heritage Centrepin reel.

Fisheries Forums



Our popular in-person fisheries forums are up and running and we have events in Preston, Exeter and the Midlands in coming weeks. They are free to attend but you will need to register. For a list of dates and more information visit the Angling Trust website:

Silver for Team England at World Feeder Championships



The Angling Trust Preston Innovations England Feeder team has won the silver medal in one of the toughest World Feeder Champs ever staged. Hosted on a 600 acres lake near Kinrooi in the east of Belgium, the England lads finished with 73 points overall, an agonising two points behind the winners Serbia on 71 points. Much fancied Hungary took the bronze with 74.5.

Fish Legal appeals High Court decision over River Wye



Fish Legal has asked the Court of Appeal to look again at the Cardiff High Court decision to refuse to look at the planning decision by Powys County Council to grant permission for an expansion to a poultry unit in the River Wye catchment.

Earlier this year, the Council granted planning permission to double the size of the IPU near Builth Wells next to the Wye from 90,000 birds to 180,000.

The High Court in Cardiff refused permission for Fish Legal to proceed with a judicial review challenge in a hearing on Monday 22nd August.

Kibsee Humour – Carpy Times

Rob, I bought a sweater from a tackle shop the other day, but it was picking up far too much static electricity. So, I returned it yesterday. They gave me another one free of charge.

A bloke comes home after a 4 night session on his local lake. As he comes through the street door, he hears really heavy panting coming from his bedroom. He runs upstairs, bursts into the bedroom, and finds his Mrs laying on the bed fully naked with one of her hands holding the left side of her chest. She goes, "It's my heart, it's my heart!" He goes to use his mobile but it's out of power, so he runs back downstairs to use the house phone. As his ringing 999. His son starts tugging on his camouflage jacket. His son says "Dad Uncle Phil is naked in the wardrobe." The

bloke runs back upstairs, straight into the bedroom again, pulls the doors off of the wardrobe, and sees his brother Phil, crouching down naked. He says, "You no good b****d. I let you stay here rent free. What you doing walking around my house naked scaring the life out of my poor son, and wife for, you idiot!"

Back in the mid-eighties quite a few bait companies started selling spray flavours. An old mate of mine gave his girlfriend a five pound note, and told her to pop up to the local tackle shop, and buy a bottle. He told her you can get spray flavours like Passion Fruit, Tutti Frutti, Strawberry Cream. He said when you get back home you can spray a bit down below, before a spot of love making. She thought to herself it sounds a bit kinky, but I like it. She said to him what flavour should I buy. He said to her, surprise me. Three hours later she came back with Tuna flavour. Actually, it didn't taste too bad. I can see why the carp like it.

In the eighties, and nineties there were many cult-like carp fishing tackle shops. Like The Tacklebox, Yateley Angling Centre, Penge, Erics,



Trafford, Leslies of Luton, Hounslow Angling Centre, Bob Frost, Harefield Tackle, Brentwood Angling, Tackle Up. The list started to get very long. Though one popular shop with pike anglers all over the country in the nineties was Harris Angling. On a Friday night many anglers liked to meet up the Harris. Some travelled miles for a Friday social up the Harris. Many in those days loved it up the Harris. You'd say to a fellow pike angler, "You going up the Harris this weekend!" They would reply with something like, "Yeah, don't you worry I'll be up the Harris this weekend if the Mrs lets me!" Girlfriends and wives didn't mind their other arfs going up the Harris. because if they were up the Harris they knew where they were. They had wonderful times up the Harris!

FISHING Younger carp anglers seem to have missed out. Many don't know how to make a boilie themselves. Or what ingredients might be in their boilies. Have you ever heard that one before when talking about bait making? I bought some powdered water once, but I didn't know what to add to it.

The youth of today. We used to have standards, we had rules that we kept to. Some bloke in the eighties got caught having a sexual encounter with an Alsatian Dog in his bivvy at Aquatels lake. He never fished there again after that. It not only made the local rag, but it even made the fishing weeklies. He was ridiculed for it. You never did things like that. Sheep were the limit. As I say we had rules! Five years ago, a young carp angler got caught making love to chicken at a lake in Sussex. Word went around the lake like wild-fire, but no one blinked an eyelid. As though it was perfectly normal to stuff a live chicken at a lake. Three years ago, a young lad was fishing in Dorset, and got caught having his way with an Alpaca. No one still blinked an eyelid. Well one angler on the lake even commented they do have lovely eyebrows though.

Last week some young chap of about nineteen got caught tweaking the nipples of a giraffe at a lake in Kent. No one blinked a ***k'in eyelid!

We had rules back in the day. We had Murphy's law. Rob Murphy was a local carp angler. Who was older than us when me and my mates used to fish for tench. He was an angler we looked up to, back in the early eighties. He was a cool dude. He would chat up women in pubs, and say to them, "Fancy coming back to my pad. It's on twenty acres of land". It was a bivvy on Aquatels lake.

Talking of bivvys. You hear about two man bivvies, but you don't ever hear of two women bivvies. Bit sexist isn't it? Though I must admit if most blokes see two women sharing a bivvy. They'd be thinking lesbians. I haven't got anything against lesbians myself, longs they let me watch the videos. That's why I got into watching women's football in recent years.

Apparently in Kent there is a farmer who has bred the first ever talking sheep. Its first word was "Lock-eeeeee!". A week later it could say a two word sentence. "Push harder".

You sometimes don't realise how

CARP Watching

These specially commissioned paintings are now available to purchase due to popular demand. Available in three different sizes once framed in either a Perspex clip frame or light wood natural frame and looks amazing.



No.1 – THEY'RE 'AVIN IT!

It depicts the typical 'heads down tails up' scene, which occurs beneath the surface when the carp are really on the feed.



No.2 – MARGIN MONSTER

It shows a big-framed carp beneath the overhanging tree branches, patrolling the snags and weed beds in its search for food.



No. 3 – CARP ON!

This is what it's all about, the 'take', as our quarry makes its last mistake, the hook goes in, the buzzer sounds, carp on!

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lucky you are. As a kid I wrote to 'Jim'll Fix It' twice, asking to meet Gary Glitter. No reply both times. Clearly, we know now I had a lucky escape. Though a school friend of mine Dave wrote in asking to meet Farrah Fawcett of Charlie's Angels fame. He got an invite onto the show to meet her. I said to him a week later. What was she like? He said she was a bit over friendly, a bit touchy-feely, but I don't think it was her. I asked him why he didn't think it was her. He said, because she was wearing a shell suit, and her breath stunk of strong cigars.

You should always listen to advice from older anglers. It was Lee Jackson who taught me how to catch crabs. Well, he wasn't far from the coast at the time. He told me the best bait was a good size winkle. Apparently, crabs love big winkles. Also, when crabbing it's a Kent tradition to wear a white Captain's hat, and before crabbing with a line always say these words out loud for luck, "Alright sailor!" The first time I met Lee Jackson was in the early nineties. He was even going thin on top then. I remember thinking wooden bed head boards have never been kind to tall fella's. Though why do they call him the 'Python'!. Is that a secret top crab bait he never told me about?

Don't believe everything older anglers tell you though. Older anglers kept telling me in my youth that in parts of the world near to countries

like China and Thailand. The opposite sex female genitals go in a different direction, to the Western world ladies. After visiting Kazakhstan in 1999, for a fishing trip that by some would be considered as a total disaster, because of high levels of flooding in many areas. I discovered very fast this myth was a total load of rubbish. So those harmonica lessons turned out to be a total waste of money as well.

Quite a few anglers now use lamps, and torches that stay on all night. Some have red light bulbs inside them. Which is causing serious confusion amongst the dogging fraternity. It actually caught me out twice.

I can't keep up with modern times. Everything seems so different now. We never ever had bisexual carp

angling on TV back in the day. Man love. Pink fishing rods, and cowboy hats. What's that all about? We didn't have anglers like Tom Dove or Neil Spooner smiling on our TV screens in the eighties, and nineties.

The world is changing fast. So much carp angling online now. I was on Youtube the other day. Check this out. 'Underwater Answers with Rob Hughes'. At first I thought I might have been viewing Lubetube. There was Rob Hughes fully rubbered up in a divers outfit. I thought to myself if Simon Crow turns up now wearing only cowboy chaps. I will definitely watch all of this. I was never confused!

Have it large! Doctor Kibble (Kibsee)

Penny by Dr Kibble



The Police asked me to produce a visual likeness of an angler disguising himself as Pennywise after talking to witnesses, at lakes in the Surrey, and Hampshire regions. Apparently, he jumps out on anglers. Trying to scare the wits out of them. Leaving the best swims for himself. Apparently, he answers to the name of Nigel, and has been said by some anglers to disguise himself in various other costumes in the past also. Take care, Kibsee.

Carp Humour



Preston Innovations to support the work of the Angling Trust as trade partner

The Angling Trust is delighted to announce that Preston Innovations, one of the biggest names in match fishing, have agreed to become a Trade Associate partner for the next 12 months.

As part of the agreement, Preston Innovations will play an active role in supporting the essential work of the Trust including campaigns to protect waterways for the benefit of fish, fishing and the environment, and growing our sport by encouraging more people to take up fishing.

Aimed at the serious match angler, Preston Innovations offer a wide range of quality products that suit many different styles of fishing and with something for everyone - from the casual angler right through to professional match winners.

Preston Innovations have one of the strongest and most formidable team of anglers, the likes of Des Shipp, Lee Kerry, Andy May and Andy Power are all regular faces in product development meetings, so it's no wonder their product range is so impressive and extensive.

Adam Rumble, Media Manager for Preston Innovations, said:

"We are delighted to be supporting the Angling Trust as a Trade Associ-



ate member. During the pandemic, the Angling Trust ensured the voices of anglers around the country were heard and demonstrated the positive impact angling has on our well-being. Now they are leading the way in the protection of our waterways from pollution, been successful in encouraging more people to take up fishing and ensuring the future of our great

sport is secure."

Adam also has a message for anglers who are not yet members of the Angling Trust.

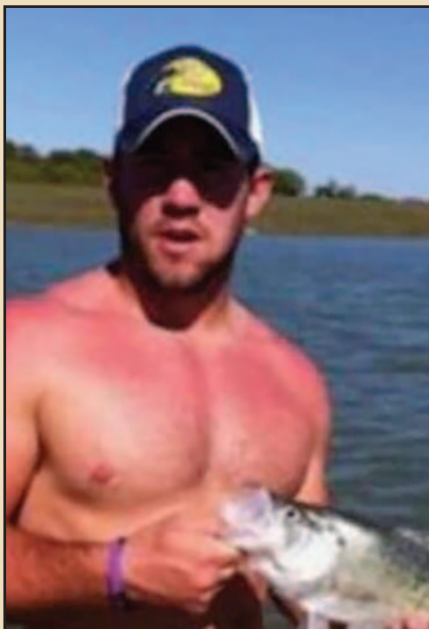
"I appreciate the financial difficulties faced by many families across the country at this current time, but the small annual membership fee really can make a huge difference to the future of angling."

John Cheyne, Angling Trust Marketing, Membership & Communications Manager, said:

"We are delighted to welcome Preston Innovations as an Angling Trust Trade Associate and to form a partnership with one of the biggest names in match fishing. It's clear that Preston Innovations are passionate about our work to protect fish and fishing, and fully support our initiatives to get more people to take up fishing. I look forward to working with Adam and the team throughout the year."

Carpy Humour

This is what I looked like on day one of my fishing trip...



Waterways and wildlife under threat as key protections face possible repeal

The Angling Trust has waded into the campaign to protect the UK's existing environmental protections derived from European Law by emphasising the damaging impact on rivers, lakes and coastal waters should they be weakened or removed by a Bill currently going through Parliament.

This follows the 'Attack on Nature' campaign launched by the Wildlife Trust, RSPB and the National Trust against the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, which has the potential to reverse what limited legal protections our waterbodies, wildlife and natural environments currently enjoy.

In a special briefing sent to MPs and Ministers this week, the Angling Trust argues that the Bill as currently drafted constitutes a major threat to the protection of our rivers, freshwater waterbodies and estuaries.

The briefing paper focuses on some of the potential impacts on fish, fishing and waterways. In particular, the Water Framework Directive - which drives up water quality in rivers and waterbodies, Farming Rules for Water - which incentivises good practice to reduce agricultural pollution, and the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations - which have driven up standards in the treatment of sewage effluent bringing a number of formerly 'dead' rivers back to life.

The Trust is also highlighting the importance of maintaining the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (2019) which designates invasive species of concern and sets out rules to prevent their introduction and spread. It underpins an invasive enforcement regime, includ-



ing criminal sanctions for people introducing invasive species such as the American signal crayfish, pennywort, and killer shrimps which can devastate native wildlife populations and destroy fisheries.

The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order is the only piece of current legislation that works to prevent the introduction of invasive species. Other legislation regarding invasive species works only to prevent their spread, and does not contain powers to stop their introduction in the first place. The weakening of the Order would open a breach in the UK's defences against invasive species.

There has been vigorous opposition to the government's plans including from former Prime Minister William Hague, pollution campaigner and Angling Trust ambassador Feargal Sharkey and a host of countryside and wildlife groups.

However, at the moment there is little sign of any U-turn despite the

fact that strong resistance is anticipated from the House of Lords.

Angling Trust Chair Sir Charles Walker MP said:

"The current legally enforceable regulations around water quality and invasive species are essential environmental safeguards. The Angling Trust's professional team will be working with MPs, Ministers and their officials to try and ensure that these protections are maintained and, where necessary, strengthened."

Angling Trust Policy Chief Martin Salter added:

"It's time the angling community made its voice heard on measures that threaten to undo years of hard work to gain some measure of protection for the environment upon which our sport depends. We have enough trouble as it is with rogue pollution from agriculture and storm sewage overflows without removing the legal framework which enables action to be taken against those who deliberately damage our waterways."

DEFRA has the largest number of regulations and protection that have been brought into UK law from the EU. Evidence presented to the REUL Bill committee (November 8th) now estimate that DEFRA would have to review, amend, or scrap by the deadline of December 31st, no less than 835 different regulations and laws. This will paralyse the work of DEFRA at a critical time, when the need to respond to the biodiversity and climate crises has never been more urgent. Those environmental regulations not dealt with would automatically fall.

Watch out for details of how anglers can contact their MPs on this important issue. ■



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Press release

WizWool Corespun Gloves – when comfort is essentiel



- **Advanced Corespun yarn**
- **86% Merino wool**
- **Stretchable**
- **Warm when wet**

Get ready for new fishing adventures with our brand new WizWool Corespun Gloves! Our new model has significant increased strength - with the desirable properties of natural merino. 86% super fine merino wool, praised worldwide for softness, breathability and temperature regulating benefits. In addition, merino wool is 100% natural, renewable and biodegradable. The gloves have a sweat-wicking lining, so your hands stay nice and dry. Not only do your hands remain hot even when they are wet, you also get a great freedom of movement. Our Technical Merino fiber is temperature regulating and the gloves can therefore be used from autumn to spring. Rubber dots provide a solid grip on the fishing rod, even when wet. Last but not least, the gloves do not absorb odors. You can find the gloves in a full glove version or fingerless - whatever suits you best! ■



Wide-Fit Ladies Wellington Boots

Over 25% of women have calves too large for traditional Wellington boots.

Wide calf welly specialists Jileon have just launched a brand new purple version of their groundbreaking ladies' boot in response to a Facebook vote by fans.

Fashionable and versatile, this new addition can be worn in summer and winter with all kinds of outfits.

With 26% of women having a calf size too large for regular Wellington boots, Jileon have created a stylish range for ladies who don't want to compromise on comfort and style. They are the widest fitting wellies in the UK.

Jileon's extra wide fit wellies feature a brilliantly simple expanding insert making them a comfortable fit for ladies with calf sizes from 45-53cm. They also come with a thick padded insole for more comfort.

Perfect for a long walk in the country, or for shouting on the side of a sports field, Jileon Purple Wellies combine practicality with style for the plus size woman.

Jileon Extra Wide Fit Purple Wellies are available in sizes 4-8 from www.jileon.com

About Jileon:

Launched in 2006, Jileon are a family run business, focused on providing a range of high quality wide calf and funky wellies at a good price, backed by exceptional customer service.

Website: www.jileon.com ■



My Fish Poster

Got a special catch?

Life is too short for awful mobile pictures and fish you only remember by memory - now you can get your dream fish up on the wall in a 1:1 scale.

Choose from select European species and add your fish' length and weight, date and place of catch, and enjoy a masterpiece made with a Scandina-

vian and minimalistic drawn line with My Fish Poster! At My Fish Poster, we offer both tailor-made portraits of the fish of your life on top of our collection

of existing art works by some of the world's most talented fish artists. "We aim to give anglers the finest fishing art for the home by dragging the angling out of the fishing shed and into the living room.

To set up conversations about angling at home and generally increase awareness of the passion we all share" - Jakob Sørensen, founder of My Fish Poster.

A healthy aquatic environment is essential for a healthy fish stock, and that is why we naturally care about the environment when it comes to the production of our products, which are produced responsibly.

"We are anglers ourselves and know that angling is much more than just catching fish. It is a lifestyle and a passion filled with good memories, friendships and nature experiences", Jakob states. With My Fish Poster fishing art, we offer you a small part of your fishing memories up on the wall, so you can enjoy the good moments at the water's edge every day! NB!

If your magazine is interested, we can accommodate collaboration agreements that will benefit your readers. ■



Contact information Get more information and more/larger pictures at:
Lærke Mai Klarskov Jensen at press@myfishposter.com
www.myfishposter.com

Zippo prepares for winter with launch of new rechargeable hand warmers



The compact Zippo HeatBank 6.



The Zippo HeatBank 9s comfortably fits in a hand or pocket.



Zippo HeatBank 9s - Black.

Zippo has extended its range of heated products ahead of the winter season. The new HeatBank 6 and HeatBank 9s rechargeable hand warmers provide hours of warmth, and also double up as power banks, keeping users warm and connected while out on fishing trips.

With the press of a button, the HeatBank 6 delivers up to 50°C of heat, with three settings and indicator lights for heat and battery level. The rechargeable 4,400mAh lithium-ion battery provides up to six hours of run time and will also recharge other USB compatible devices. The compact Zippo HeatBank 6 is 10.8cm high by 4.4cm wide by 2.4cm deep, and it weighs 142g. Available in green, blue and orange, the retail price is £29.95.

Designed to comfortably fit in a hand or pocket, the dual sided HeatBank 9s will provide warmth of up to 50°C for as long as nine hours, with six heat settings. Indicator lights show the different levels and the status of the 5200mAh lithium-ion battery, which can be recharged using a USB cable. The HeatBank 9s will also recharge other USB compatible devices, making it ideal for fishing, travel and time outdoors. The Zippo HeatBank 9s is 12.4cm high by 6cm wide by 2.4cm deep, and it weighs 156g. The retail price at £39.95 and it is available in black or silver.

The Zippo HeatBank rechargeable hand warmers are in stock now at <https://berryuseful.co.uk>. ■



Zippo HeatBank 6 - available in three colours.



The Zippo HeatBank 6 doubles up as a power bank.



The Zippo HeatBank 9s doubles up as a power bank.



Dream Maker

CARBON THROWING STICK



Princeton Tec

Axis Rechargeable Led 450 Lumen Water Resistant Head Torch



Updated for this year the lightweight micro-USB rechargeable Axis Rechargeable features a more intuitive interface, smoother dial operation and updated aesthetics. An ambidextrous and glove-friendly side-mounted button lets you choose between four different beam settings (red, spot white, flood white and dual) and the surrounding dial provides dimming in all modes. Dial up for fast-paced activities such as trail running or power down for close range tasks. The built-in battery power meter lets you know when you're ready to go and the sealed lithium rechargeable battery uses regulated circuitry to provide consistent output. If you're ready to ditch wasteful, single use batteries the Axis Rechargeable is your new go-to partner.

Specifications

Power:	450 lumens
Lamp:	1 Maxbright LED w/ spot beam (dimmable) 1 Maxbright LED w/ flood beam (dimmable) 2 Red Ultrabright LEDs (dimmable)
Burn Time:	15 Hours
Batteries:	Lithium Ion Rechargeable (built-in)
Weight:	2.9oz / 83g with batteries
Water Resistant:	IPX4 (splashing water)

Refuel Led 250 Lumen Water Resistant Head Torch



Updated yet again, the newest version of the ReFuel now boasts 250 lumens of dimmable white light. Other upgrades? A painstakingly reengineered battery door featuring sturdier components with a larger lip for easier access, as well as the ability to fine tune your light output with the new dimming feature. The ReFuel is extremely simple to use and takes advantage of our asymmetrical single arm bracket. This design makes directing the light effortless and reliable once on your head. The large, easy to find button controls on/off and with a press and hold, dims the light to your preferred output. Refreshed and Reengineered, the ReFuel is ready to reconnect you to the great outdoors.

Specifications

Power:	250 Lumens
Lamp:	4 Ultrabright white LEDs
Burn Time:	42 Hours
Batteries:	3 AAA Alkaline (included)
Weight:	2.8oz / 78g with batteries
Water Resistant:	IPX4 (splashing water)

Snap Solo Led 300 Lumen Water Resistant Head Torch



Snap Solo's unique design features a magnetic head unit that can be easily detached from its base, empowering it to become the ultimate multi-use light. Snap Solo can be worn as a traditional headlamp, used as a handheld flashlight or attached to any magnetic surface to brighten the area around you or your workspace. Snap Solo features 300 lumens, a 155-hour runtime, and one simple switch that is used for activation and switching between high and low spot beams, as well as a flash mode.

Specifications

Power:	300 Lumens
Lamp:	1 Maxbright LED (dimmable)
Burn Time:	155 Hours
Batteries:	3 AAA Alkaline (included)
Weight:	3.5oz / 99g with batteries
Water Resistant:	IPX4 (splashing water)

Helix Li Rechargeable Led 300 Lumen Water Resistant Lantern

Whether the evening brings you to the back yard or the backcountry, the Helix Li Rechargeable packs the goods.

A micro-USB port powers up the rechargeable battery that allows this lightweight lantern to put out a bright beam that's easy on the eyes – perfect for around camp or in your tent.

Helix Li Rechargeable has a unique control surface that is free of buttons, yet gives access to a dimmable white mode well as a dimmable red mode for low profile use. The Glow-in-the-dark collapsible globe and folding legs help Helix Backcountry Rechargeable to shine over a wide area and pack down to fit easily in hand. The Helix lantern design also incorporates several hanging and spotlight options. The globe can be removed to swap the diffused glow to a direct spot light.



Specifications

Power:	300 lumens
Lamp:	1 Maxbright LED (dimmable) 2 Red Ultrabright LEDs (dimmable)
Burn Time:	110 hours
Batteries:	Lithium Rechargeable (built in)
Weight:	5.4oz / 155g
Water Resistant:	IPX6 (powerful spray)



N I T E

WIN £500 worth of kit to make your Autumn awesome

Darker nights and colder days require high performance kit that can stand up to the elements and help you make the most of the season.

That's why we've teamed up with LifeJacket to give one lucky winner the chance to win one of our MX10 field watches AND £200 worth of LifeJacket Skin Protection!

How to enter:-Head over to our Instagram account. -Follow both @nitewatches and @lifejacketskin. -Like the Nite X LifeJacket competition post. -Tag a mate in the comments to encourage them to enter.

Good luck!

COMPETITION TIME

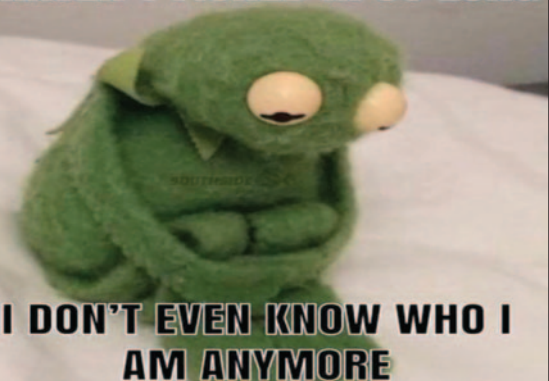


Carp Humour

EVERYONE IS A PRO ANGLER
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FREEZING...THEN WE GET TO SEE
WHO THE REAL ANGLERS ARE



I HAVEN'T FISHED IN SO LONG



I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO I
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Secret Lake Success

By Ashley Irvine

Well I don't really know where to start, but here goes... My good friend

Josh and I had been fishing the secret lake for some time without much success. For nearly a year I had been walking the banks of this huge pit looking for a sign but to no avail. We had concentrated on a certain area for a while now, baiting up religiously every week, but all for nothing; these elusive carp were well off the beaten track and were never going to be easy to catch.

We decided a move would be the best idea. By fishing a different bank I could hit an area of virgin water, so I

was feeling confident. I could see the area was extremely weedy so decided to fish three naked chods. I baited two of the rods with Xcel Baits VNF 16mm pop-ups and the other with a KSC 16mm pop-up. I cast out the first rod, which was baited with the VNF pop-up and got a nice donk, so I was happy. I sank the line and was playing out some line when I saw my line twitch. At first I thought maybe a rudd or a roach had swum into the line, but then in total disbelief I saw the line started to tighten up. I turned and said to Josh, "I think I'm in, mate" and wound down... and I was in. I was in shock; the rig had only been in the water for a maximum 30 seconds!

I could feel straight away it was a good fish, and within a few seconds it

had run about 30 yards and was heading for some buoys. I couldn't stop it, and it made the buoys. I slackened off and let it take line, and then I turned to Josh and said, "Get the boat, mate," and off he ran. I couldn't do anything; the reel was screaming, but I couldn't give it any pressure, as there are mussels all over the chains that hold the buoys to the bottom. After what felt like a lifetime but was only a couple of minutes, Josh was there with the boat, but by this time I'm guessing the fish had taken around 150 yards of line.

I quickly got in the boat with Josh, and we were off, heading for the buoy. When we reached it and got the line from around it, it was solid! I gave it a little pressure and started to make



some line back slowly! I could feel the line grating on something. I wasn't confident in getting the fish in, but then it stopped grating, and I could feel the fish fighting and shaking its head. I started to gain line quickly, and soon the fish was under the boat, but I think seeing the boat spooked it, and it was off again. I couldn't believe the power of this fish; it must have towed us 50 60 yards towards a reed bed. Just as it got there I managed to turn it, and that's when I got my first glimpse of the fish, and that's when my heart jumped into my mouth, as it was a massive unknown mirror.

I got it up on the surface and tried to net it, but the net was twisted so I gave the net to Josh to untangle. Then it was up on the surface again just beside the boat, so I said to Josh, "Just net it, mate," and after a couple of attempts was in the net! I let out a big "Ooooooosh!" at the top of my voice and had a little glimpse in the net... it was a huge 40. My arms and legs were like jelly; we must have been out there for 30-plus minutes. Then we made the long row back as the fish had towed us halfway down the lake. I got the retainer out and got the fish in it in the water, and then



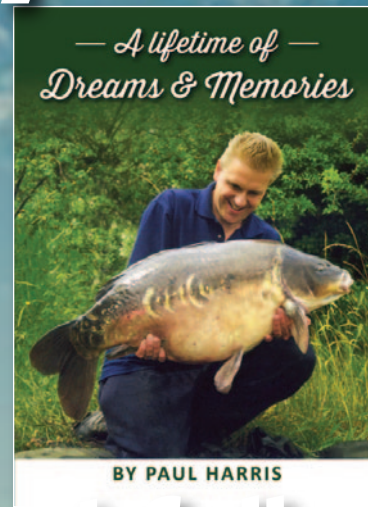
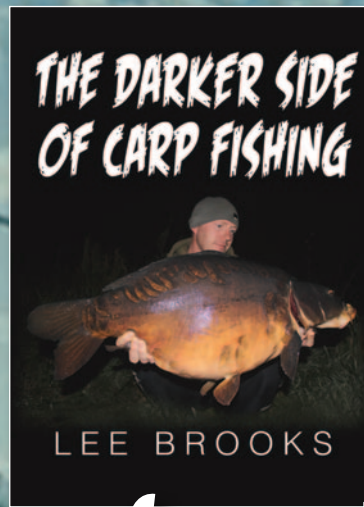
lifted him out. He was a lump, and I said to Josh, "He's 40+-plus, mate." I got him to the mat, opened the retainer and was in awe! What a fish! I could also see it was a male fish, as it had the little lump down its head.

I got him on the scales, and they settled on 40lb 3oz. I was buzzing! Eleven months of hard work all paid

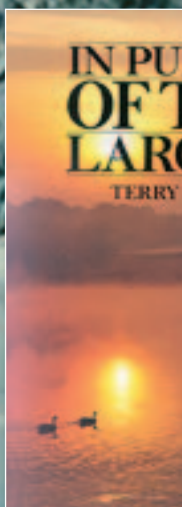
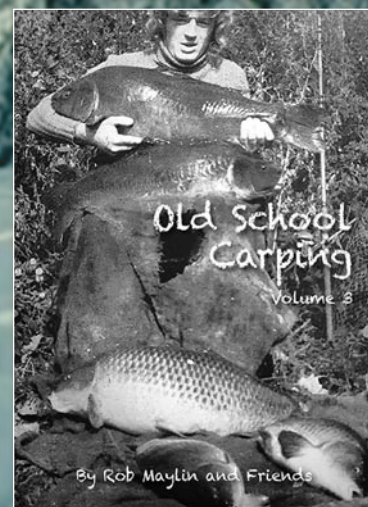
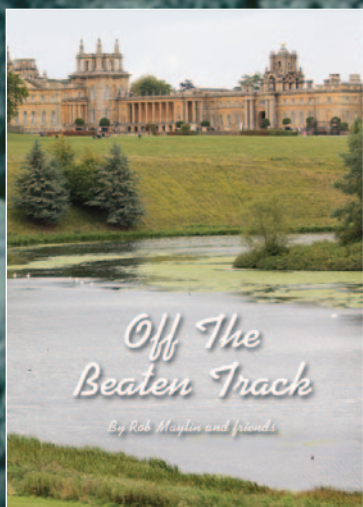
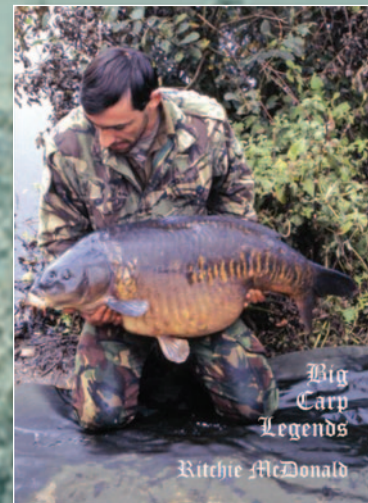
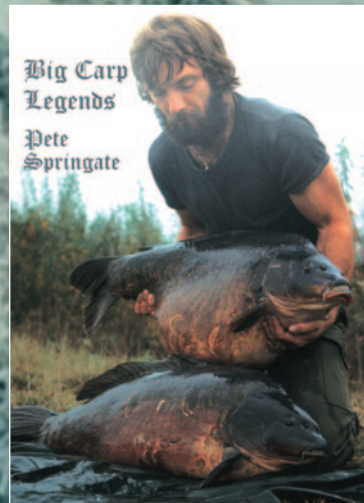
off... All the baiting up all the walking had been worth it for this fish! And if I don't catch another fish this year I'll still be a happy man. And lastly I'd like to say a very massive thanks to Josh. I wouldn't have been able to do it without you, mate. Also a big thanks to Shaun at Xcel Bait for making the pukka bait! ■



Warm Away the Cold

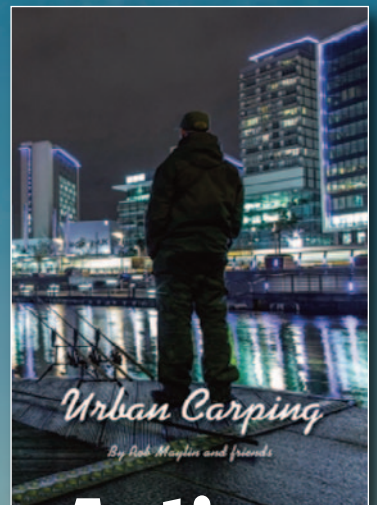
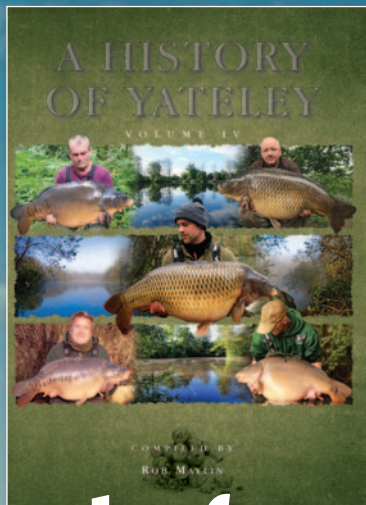


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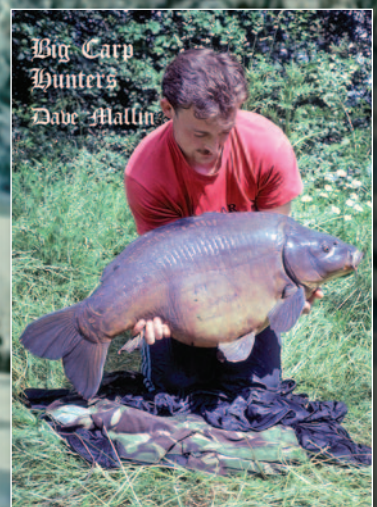
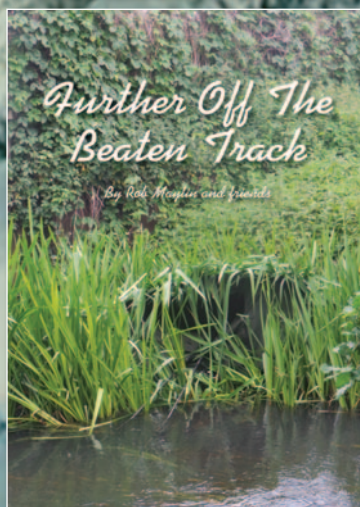
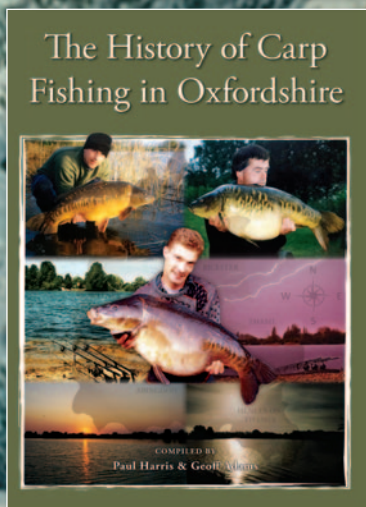
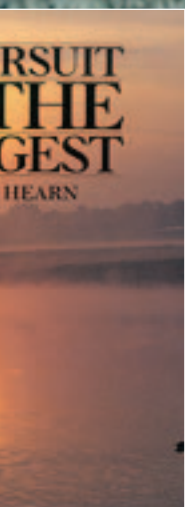
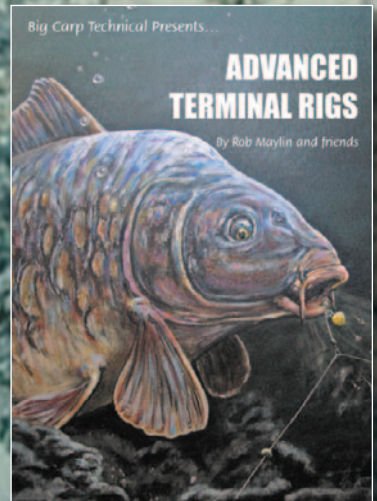
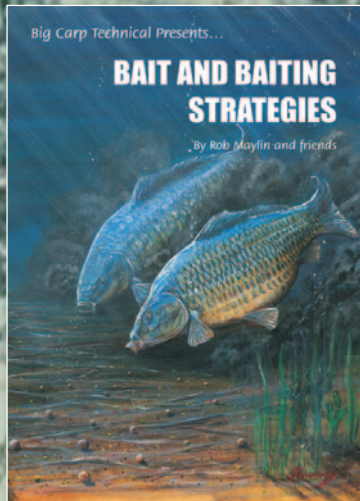
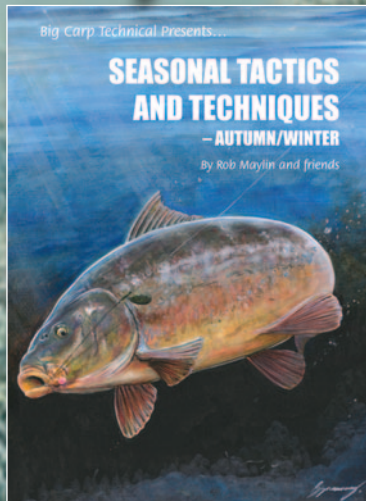


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No Publicity Water

Secret Diary Of The Urban Myth by Terry Dempsey

Rob: So here we are entering the second week of September; the summer holidays are over, and the kids have gone back to school – thank Christ for that. So it's back to normal, back to working and back meeting up with my old mate Tel after the summer holidays – nice. Regular readers of Big Carp will know that the last time I got together with Tel was a little while ago now. It was after his big hit down at his syndicate in Kent, and if you remember he had that fantastic scaly 42lb fish that hasn't been caught for donkey's years, along with another couple of really good fish. The Urban Bait empire has grown out of all proportion, and tackle shop after tackle shop all stock his awesome bait. I have been using it all this year; I have had all my fish on it,

and they are up on the Urban Bait website if you want to have a look. There are a couple of big articles coming up in the magazine on my fishing and it has all been on the Nutcracker, so get on it. Consequently with the growth of the company Terry has realised that it is not all a bed of roses having a bait company. There is a lot of work to be done, and the one thing that suffers is your fishing time. Despite that, Terry has been out doing a variety of different sorts of fishing since we last met up. He's been out to the Ebro, done a little bit on his syndicate water and has also been fishing a no-publicity water in the Colne Valley. This is the bit I am really excited about, as he has had tremendous success with fish to 40lbs there. So, Tel, you're pretty busy at the moment with the bait?

Terry: You could say that, Rob; I

have been busy all year. I don't think there has been a day this year including Christmas time that I haven't been working; I always seem to find something to do. On the fishing front I had a brilliant spring on my syndicate lake; I got in there early, I found the fish, I baited it right, and I had seven fish up to 42lbs. After that it was a little bit tough for me. Every time I was going my spot was taken; I had people pretty much queuing for the swim that I had all those fish from in the spring, and I could never get back in that swim again. I did fish another couple of swims on the lake that I had fished in the past that I had put a bit of bait in, and I did take another two or three fish. I had a lovely common, and I had the most fantastic looking 29lb 12oz mirror. It's probably one of the nicest carp I have ever seen on the bank – really, really



Check out this fish that has blown us away here at Urban HQ that couldn't resist Barry's Nutcracker hookbait dusted in the deadly Livercracker powder over a bit of hemp that finally tripped up this awesome looking carp.



40lb mirror landed on the new Tuna and Garlic pop-ups.

long. It was immense and just unbelievable – really dark with pebbled scales, a proper linear, one of the nicest carp I have ever seen in the years I have fished.

So what a brilliant spring I had. It was a bit of break in the year for me; I didn't carp fish for a good few weeks, and to top it all off I went and did something that I am not used to doing – I went fishing abroad. I have never done much carp fishing abroad as you know, and I can count how many decent carp I have caught on one hand. This place was really different to the places most lads go; it was river fishing on the River Ebro. A lad on my Colne Valley lake, Bret White, who I have known for many years, has a place in the Mequinenza, right in the hub of the carp fishing on the Ebro. I didn't really know what to expect. Bret had shipped a lot of bait and tackle out there and he has a boat with a big motor on the back. He told me all I needed to do was to take my tackle box and some bait. Being a big river, I wanted something smelly, so I took the Red Spicy Fish with me. We took plenty of hardened barrel hookbaits and pop-ups and went out there.

My first day's fishing out there was the most amazing experience... It is such a wild place, and the nature

around the river itself is immense. Between vultures flying around our heads and seeing massive catfish rolling that just looked prehistoric, I had never seen anything like that before – four or five-foot long tails slapping the surface and heads like you see in Africa. After a while we looked for the carp. It was a big river, and with the aid of the speed boat we were shooting up and down it. We eventually found the fish in a couple of areas all dug into massive weedbeds. One of these weedbeds was probably a mile long and probably two or three hundred yards wide. The carp were crashing in the weed, so we decided to fish up against it, and we moored up the boat, say forty yards off this weedbed. We baited it heavily straight away with the boat, and we cast tight to the weed. We were using short eight or nine-foot rods for boat fishing with quite soft test curve, fifteen pound line and normal carp rigs, but we were using fifty-pound Korda Armour Braid Leader as hooklinks, as the catfish would bite through any normal hooklink material that we use back in England – you know how tough they are.

It didn't take long for me to see my first Ebro fish on the Red Spicy Fish. Bret was in straight away, and he

caught a cracking 29lb common. The fish are like a different strain of carp; they are real wildies. When we were growing up carp fishing, we always wanted to catch wildies; they were six or seven pounds, but these things were in their 20s and 30s and even bigger, and do they fight! Over the period of four or five days that we were out there we were baiting up these areas and fishing only in the mornings and evenings because it would get so hot in the afternoons. We would bait as we were leaving, and get back on the spots a few hours later. We ended up managing about twenty carp between us, including several 30s and I caught my first ever river 30. It was an unbelievable fish, and I will always remember it, as it clunked me around the head. I have never had a fish clunk me around the head so hard.

I had played this fish for about ten to fifteen minutes, and he was going mental. I reckon he had another ten or fifteen minutes left in him, and all of a sudden he got caught up in a big lump of weed, which was my one bit of luck. Once he was in the weed, he didn't know what was going on, so I wound in this big bed of weed and inside was this fish. But it still wanted to fight, and he had another twenty



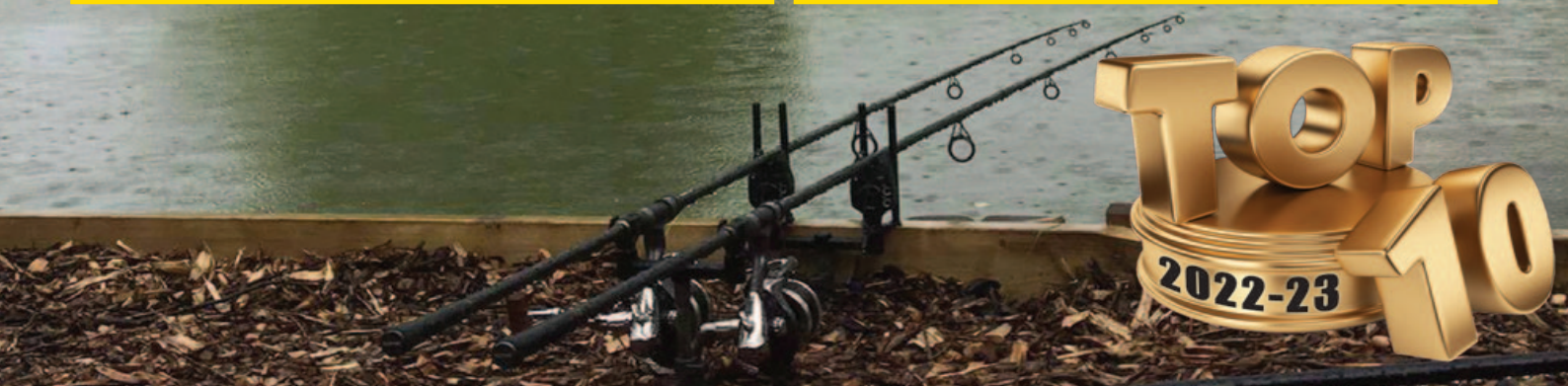
Ancient 35lb mirror hooked over a big bed of Tuna and Garlic.



Cracking 37lb common on the Tuna and Garlic.

BIG CARP TOP TEN

Carp Fisheries





James "Jaycat" Rossatti with a stunning big mirror from the prolific Urban-backed Sundridge Lakes syndicate in Kent that just couldn't resist a big bed of mixed sized Nutcracker.



Just look at this stunner for our man Kentish Stu down in deepest Kent! As usual Stu laid down a bed of the Nutcracker that had been marinated in our awesome Livercracker powder.

minutes left in him. When I got him on the bank, he beat the shit out of me, Rob. He had a thick wrist to his tail, and he smacked me so hard I can still hear the ringing in my ears; it was like something out of a cartoon film. In fact I have never been frightened of a carp in my life. I jumped back, I looked at it, and I said to Bret, "I ain't touching this any more!" He was so angry!

We had a brilliant trip; there were so many experiences in amongst that fishing that I will never forget. One of the major experiences for me was when we were going home, and there was a dam, which was about a mile away, and the water was really clear there. The water was really murky where we were fishing; it was coming down like a flood from the river. We were getting weedbeds wiping us out, but this was another arm of the Ebro, and the water was gin clear. I was at the front of the boat with my shades on, and I could see in the clear water.

All of a sudden I saw a big school of thirty and forty-pound cats, loads of them all around the front of the boat. They were eating minnows that had died on the surface. There was a big dam with loads of water coming

down, and some of these minnows were getting caught up. Apparently they were baby zander. These cats were coming along and taking them, which was absolutely amazing. Not fishing for them is one of the regrets I had, as we had to go home that day. We told the guide, and he went in there the next day and took about twenty cats off the top, floater fishing for cats using minnows as bait with just a bit of foam.

It was a great experience, but since then my fishing has been poor really; it has been slack. I really struggle to get out, as I have been so busy. Normally the summer holidays is the best time for me because my mother-in-law comes over and looks after the kids, and that is the only window I had. I decided on a couple of weeks when I could fish. The first week, my plan was to get back on the syndicate. I got back down to the syndicate and did a couple of nights, but I wasn't really feeling it. I was putting bait in a few areas, but I wasn't really getting on the fish, and it wasn't really happening for me. I had to go and meet someone in the Colne Valley, and when I went over there to drop some bait off I was planning on

going back to the syndicate the following day, but I popped my head into another lake that I had fished in the valley on and off for the last thirty years. I know the lake well, and it just looked right – it really looked good.

I got up early the next morning and went straight back down there. It is a day-only lake; you can't fish the nights. I went back down there in the morning, sat on the lake all morning watching for fish, and I saw a couple show. It is quite a low-stocked lake, so if you see a fish showing you know you are in for a chance. I prepped the area with a big bag of Tuna and Garlic, loads of salmon oil and loads of Liver Cracker – really smelly stuff that I want to use on a sixty to seventy-acre pit. I filled the lot of it in and then I left it. I sat a couple of hours, and didn't see anything there, so I put my bait in and went back the next morning.

As soon as I got in the swim at six or seven in the morning, while setting up my rods, a big mouth came up straight over the spot. For the next hour I sat there with two rods out there with light leads so as not to spook them. I sat there thinking that they must have moved off. After a



Customer of Mersey Tackle and Bait Dean Murray laid down a big bed of our Red Spicy Fish and was rewarded by this 28lb 14oz absolute stunner for his efforts.



Lee Dickel is certainly on a roll at the moment on the Nutcracker. After landing a 42lb 12oz mirror he went onto to land this stunning scaly one from the Dell Syndicate that just couldn't resist the deadly Nutcracker.

couple of hours of sitting there, I didn't see anything else, but then all of a sudden, the left hand rod's line tightened and it bent over. It was a steaming take and I was into a fish. My heart was going like a good'un because it's a tough old lake to get a fish from... a really hard lake. I got it in the net shortly after. He didn't scrap that hard, but he got caught up in the weed. It was probably of the oldest carp I have ever caught, Rob, and I've caught a few old ones. It was probably a lot older than me, put it that way – probably as old as my dad. It weighed in at over thirty pounds, and I was over the moon. It was another week before I could get back in that swim.

It is quite a busy lake, and I couldn't get back in that area at all, but I used another big bag of Tuna and Garlic on another spot. I didn't see any fish, but I knew that the bait was doing the job, you know. That morning I could see them fizzing on me. I got my rods in early, about 6.45am, and they were fizzing all over me, so I knew that there were carp there. About 10am it got quite warm, and I thought, that's it now; I am not going to get a take now. I was only doing a few hours, and I was going to work later, going

back to doing the bait. I was sitting there preparing to pack up, and it was away, the left-hand rod again, the tip bent over, and it was whizzing off the clutch. This fish fought a lot harder; I must have been fighting with it for a good fifteen minutes. He was taking line off me, and I could see he was a good common, a big, beautiful, dark fish. I could see it in clear water, and my heart was in my mouth. I got him in the net, a 37lb 10oz common in absolute mint condition. It was a big, dark warrior with a big sloping gob – an awesome fish, and I was so over the moon. I'd had two fish from there in a couple of mornings, so I had to give it another day.

The following day I couldn't get back over there, but I had to try. After a few phone calls, I was back on the gate at 6am. Another two light leads were on the spots, and I was sitting there wondering if they were there or are they were gone. I never saw a fish all morning until 9.30am and the same thing happened. From the same spot on same rod, I had a screaming take. This fish absolutely fought for England! It was trying to take me round an island, steaming its way down to the left, and I nearly had to wade into the next swim it took me so

far along to my left.

It must have been twenty-five minutes that I was playing him, but it seemed like a lot longer at the time. I got him in the net, and it was another one of the really old stock of Colne Valley mirrors, probably over fifty years old. It was one of the big girls as well that has been out to 46-47lbs. It was still 40, but it had dropped a bit to 40lb 8oz.

It was a brilliant bit of fishing; I would like to go back and do a bit more on there. I did go back for another two days on two mornings, but it did not look the same. There were quite a few anglers around, and it just didn't look right, but I am sure there are a few fish there now waiting for the next time that I go down... that's what I am hoping anyway. Tomorrow I am off to the syndicate for the weekend. I'm struggling at the moment for time, as I have to pick my son up from school every day and take him to school on the other days that I don't pick him up. I am struggling for time, so I have to do a weekend, which isn't like me. I normally do a night during the week, so I am doing Friday to Sunday. I have the green light from the missus and hopefully the next time I see you, I will



Barry Notcutt finally netted his obsession! Check out this fish that has blown us away here at Urban HQ that couldn't resist Barry's Nutcracker hookbait dusted in the deadly Livercracker powder over a bit of hemp that finally tripped up this awesome looking carp.

show you the pictures.

Rob: I will be getting together with Tel in a few weeks' time. I have another week session planned, and I am going to be using the Nutcracker again. It's funny Terry saying he hasn't had much time and it hasn't been great, but it didn't sound to me like he was having much of a hard time what with three fantastic Colne Valley fish, and all big'uns, a great trip at the Ebro and some out of his syndicate. That is what it's all about – making the most of the time that you get. Obviously Tel has been doing that, and well done, mate. Before we finish up today I just wanted to mention the tackle shops that stock Terry's bait. I keep seeing him up on Facebook standing outside tackle shops with bags of bait. I noticed you in my local tackle shop, Yateley Angling, and I have also seen you standing outside Bristol Angling. Which other tackle shops stock the bait at the moment, Tel?

Terry: I am losing track of how many tackle shops we are in now, Rob. Last year it was in about eight or nine, but we must be in over fifty tackle shops now. Over the last few

days we got into Manor Farm in Essex it is a farm shop, but it is also a good bait shop. They sell a lot of pellets stuff like that. The shops are on the website. What we have been trying to do is let our customers know, and we are always posting and telling people about our new shops. We've got in another two shops in Hasting as well – Wieland's and Pete's Tackle. One shop that has done really well for us is Fat Fish Tackle in Canterbury, and we are also in Harefield, which is great for me, as I have been a Colne Valley angler for so many years. Harefield Angling is the shop that I use more than any other, as I have been fishing in that area for years. We are going in all over the place, even in Rotherham the other day, a big shop called Angling Republic. We are taking it one step at a time, and the most important thing for us is to look after the customers that we have already and who we have been with since day one. We are growing slowly, slowly and making sure we are getting the bait out on time. The Nutcracker is the craze – it is our best selling bait by far – but for me I am still sold on the Tuna and Garlic. That

is my secret weapon, as I say.

Rob: I get asked a lot on Facebook which tackle shops stock Urban Bait, so have a look on their website where you will see the local stockists, and always remember that if your local tackle shop wants to stock Urban Bait, give Tel a call, and I am sure he will pay a visit if it is a suitable shop. One last thing before I go... I am inundated with requests for the Urban Bait subby deal. We did it over last Christmas for a three or four-month period, and I will be talking to Terry about getting the deal again, so watch this space, and watch out for the next exclusive secret diary of the Urban Myth.

Terry: Also, Rob, we have the last few Urban Myth books now. Rob has plenty of them – probably more than anyone else in the country. I am sure they will all be gone soon, so I would jump on that. There are a couple of shops that we have given some to, but there are not too many of them left, so I would get a copy before it's too late.

Rob: Thanks, Tel. About time you wrote the second one, mate. See you next month. ■

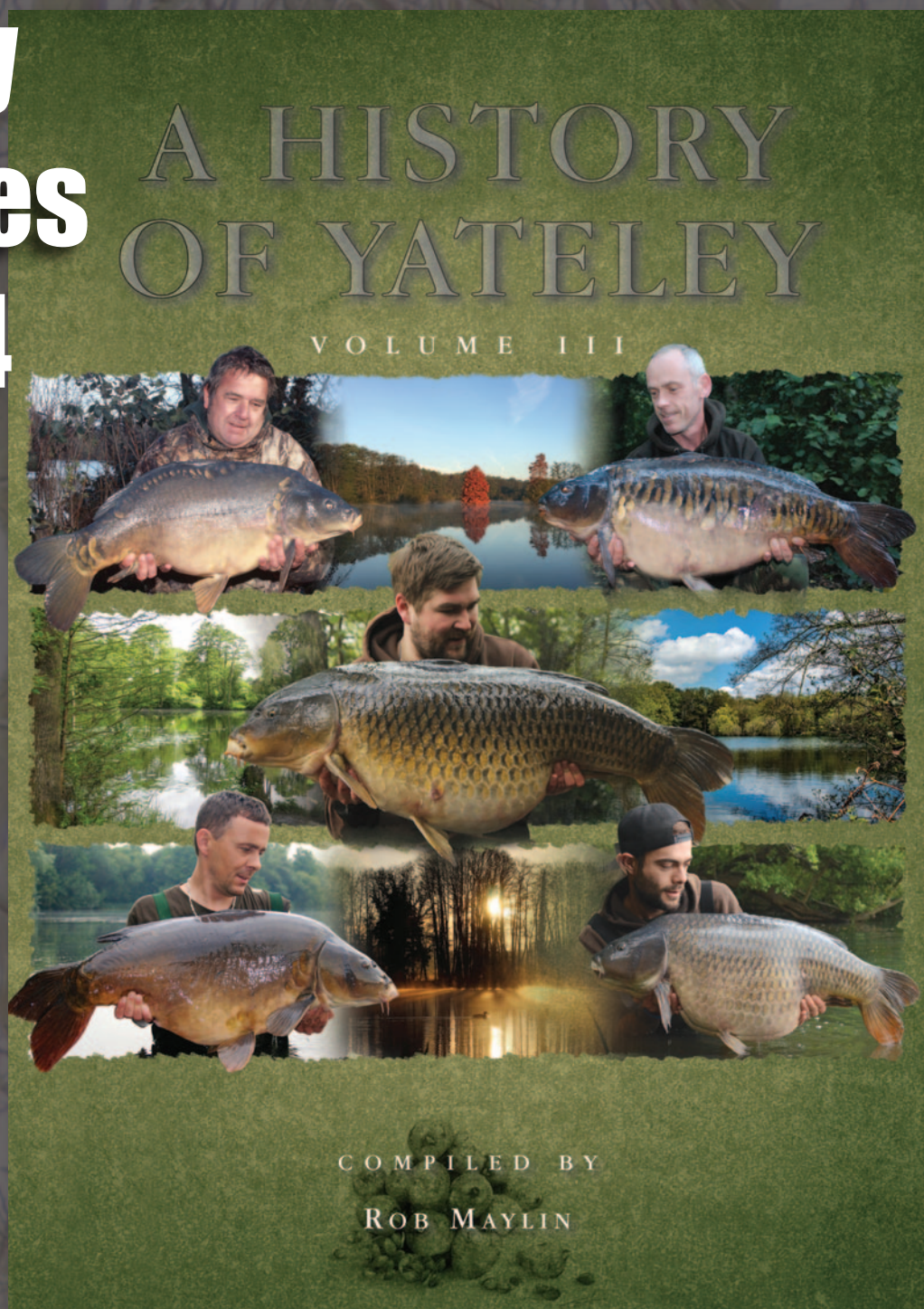
Yateley Volumes 3 and 4

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.

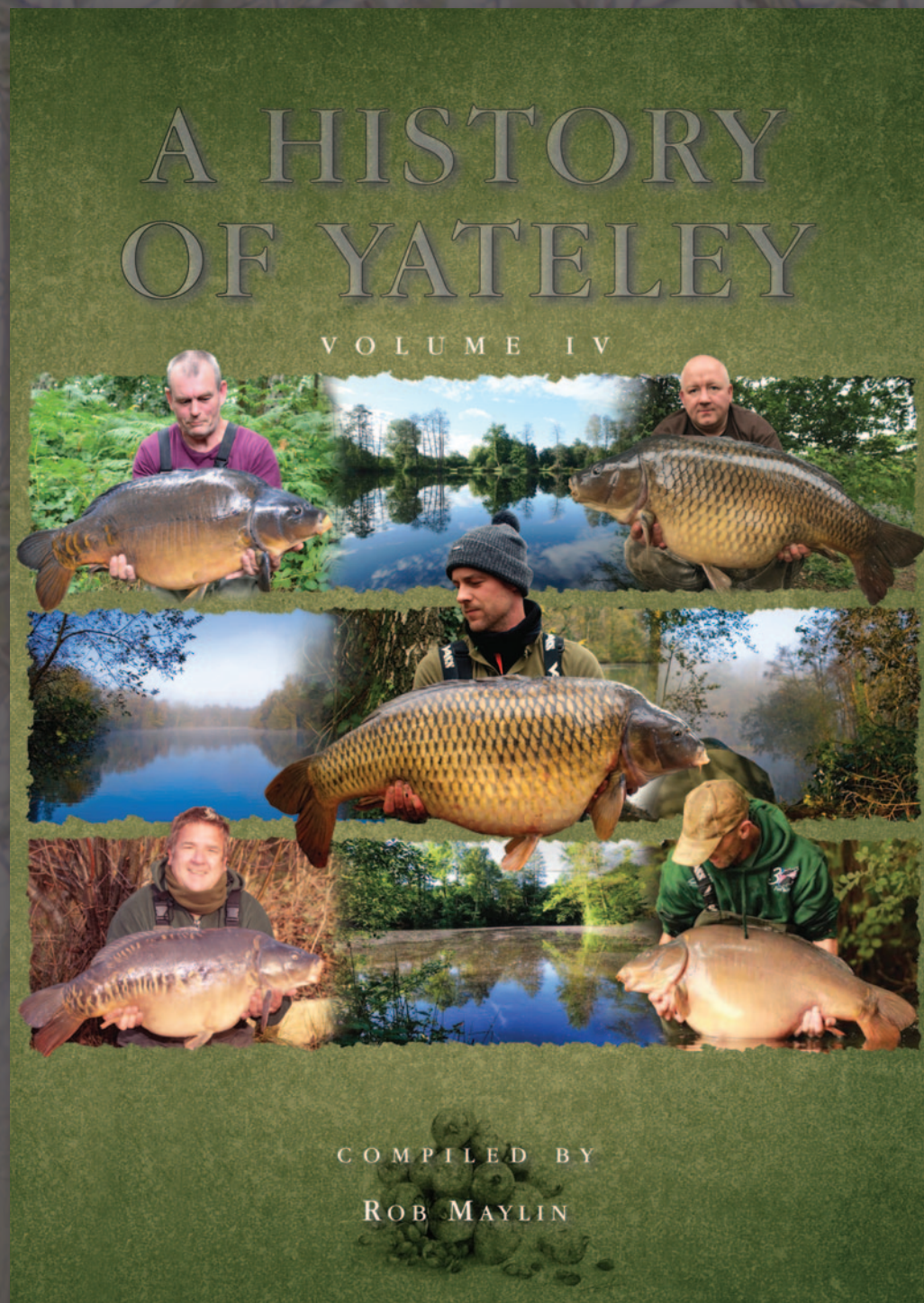
Volume 3 contains chapters on the North Lake, The Split Lake, Horseshoe and Pumphouse. The Pads Lake, Car Park, Moulsham and Mill Lane.

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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Secret Lake

By Mitch Godfrey

Tackling a big water has always been top of my agenda... There's nothing better than catching unknown fish from unfished waters for me, and I'm always on the lookout for waters like this, as rare as they may be. So when a pike-angling friend told me he'd been fishing a large pit, and that he'd had a few including a 30 my ears started twitching. If a water does 30lb pike then surely there's a chance that it could hold a few big carp too? On enquiring, he told me he'd never seen one, but he only really goes there in the colder months, and it's full of weed all summer.

A weedy pit has to hold a lot of nat-

urals, so my thinking was, if they were in there, there was every chance it could hold a lump or two. So I told myself as soon as I got the chance I would investigate.

I had to wait a week or two for the chance, but in the meantime my mind was often on the thought of this and what my attack would be. On arrival at the lake, I was armed with a rake, and 5kg of Poloni boilies and 5kg of tiger nuts. My friend wasn't wrong; the lake was indeed full of weed, but I was surprised at the size of it, and it was also joined to another lake of about the same size. This was right up my street, and having looked at the weather forecast I knew there would be an easterly on the day I'd planned to fish it, so off I went down

the western end of the lake to look for likely spots.

At this time all I had with me was a rod, spod and lead to have a plumb around. The day was warm with not much wind, and there was a good chance to spot fish, as they would probably be up in the water. The weed was up to the top in a lot of places, and having a cast around I was struggling to find any clear areas at all. I must have been there for three hours casting into weedbed after weedbed, always using the tree line shadows to find an area, but time after time the lead was jammed solid. By this time my back was killing from hauling in Canadian pondweed, so I decided to take a break and reanalyse the situation.





As I sat there the tranquility of the lake took a hold of me, and I decided by hook or by crook I would find a way and not to give up, even if I had to use a chod, which I very rarely catch on and is always my last choice... and besides, I could always use the rake...

My time scanning the water was totally wasted, with not a fish to be seen, not even a bream. The only things moving were the cormorants, and even they weren't catching, but it was a lovely water, and one I certainly wouldn't mind blanking on. So as I struggled to get up with my aching back, I was determined to find a spot. I thought about another half an hour of plumbing around, and then I would get the rake to work, but my very next cast came back with silkweed (you know the stuff that lies close to the bottom that's like cotton). Result! At least it wasn't that Canadian stuff.

After a good cast around the area I found an area of about 10yds diameter that seemed clear of elodea, but covered in silkweed. Happy with this, I proceeded to chuck in all the bait I had with me before I started the job of

clearing the area of branches and trees, well, enough to make it fishable anyway. My plan was to return for the next three days to bait and fish on the fourth.

On my return the next day, I again took a rod with me to check the bottom. My hope was that the fish would be on the bait and the silkweed would be breaking up, but all I found was a dozen or so tufties, and the silkweed firmly in place. So out with the bait again – this time a kilo of each. The third day had the same results, and I really wasn't fancying my chances, but the wind had now switched to an easterly, so at least one thing was going to plan. Out again with the bait – this time 2kg of boilies only.

So finally the day had arrived. I travelled really light, with just the bare essentials and one rod. I really don't see the point of fishing two rods to a small area. The night was going to be dry with a breeze, so no bivvy. I'd eaten well before arriving, so no food – just a flask of hot water, some tea bags and milk (some things you just can't do without). My sleeping arrangements were a little unorthodox,

being a hammock slung between the trees. It's homemade and very simple; I'd slept in it a few times in France and Thailand and found that if you sleep in them diagonally you're just about flat, and they are very comfortable, so I wasn't too worried. I used a light duvet, which went underneath and over the top. It also doubles up as my chair, as they are very comfortable to sit in. Everything was very easy to carry. My floatation sack folds up into my unhooking mat, as do my rests and landing net, which then gets slung over my shoulder, the rest goes into a rucksack and I'm ready to go.

On arriving at the swim I found no tufties, only a solitary heron, which soon took flight with its usual squawk. There was a nice chop blowing straight into the bank, and things looked good for a few fish (if there were any in there). My rod was ready to go, only needing the bait to be applied. I'd gone for a Poloni pop-up on a 360° rig with a Fox Arma Point size 6 LSC hook, 10in hooklink with a semi fixed 1.5oz lead. As I came to cast I found that I had no idea where

the clear spot was, as the chop had killed the tree reflections I had been using for guidance. This meant that I would have to have a plumb around again, and I had a little swear to myself that I'd not marked the line in advance, as this was the last thing I wanted to do on my day of fishing. But needs must, and at least I wasn't fishing at distance, probably only about 20-25yds.

My first cast landed with a thud that felt like gravel. Gravel?? Now that hadn't happened before, and after a few more casts I'd found the spot and got the middle marked out on my line with black marker pen. I had also found that the silk weed had indeed been broken up, and instead of the bottom being covered in it, I was just getting the odd bit coming in with the lead. As this was the case, I opted to also put a bag of crushed boilies on my hookbait as an extra attractor. I cast the bait, watching for the black mark to come off my reel, and then quickly wound in before it hit the bottom until the mark was

back on my reel, then stopped quickly and let my lead hit the bottom. This way I knew I was on the money. Then I catapulted about 50 boilies over the top. Happy with my presentation, I then proceeded to set up shop as I'd only got about half an hour before dusk.

As soon as it got dark proper, I was getting liners, and I knew it wouldn't be long before something happened. As it happened I had to wait a couple of hours before I had the take that made all the effort worthwhile from a lovely common. It wasn't the biggest in the world but uncaught and unnamed, a proper wild fish. My liners died after this fish, and the night was silent, but I was very happy with the result, and was already planning my next trip. I decided to come back the next night, as the bait had been going in, and it seemed a shame not to. So in went the bait that I had left; I photographed the fish, and off I trudged, a happy man.

On my return, things were really quiet, with not a beep or sign of any-

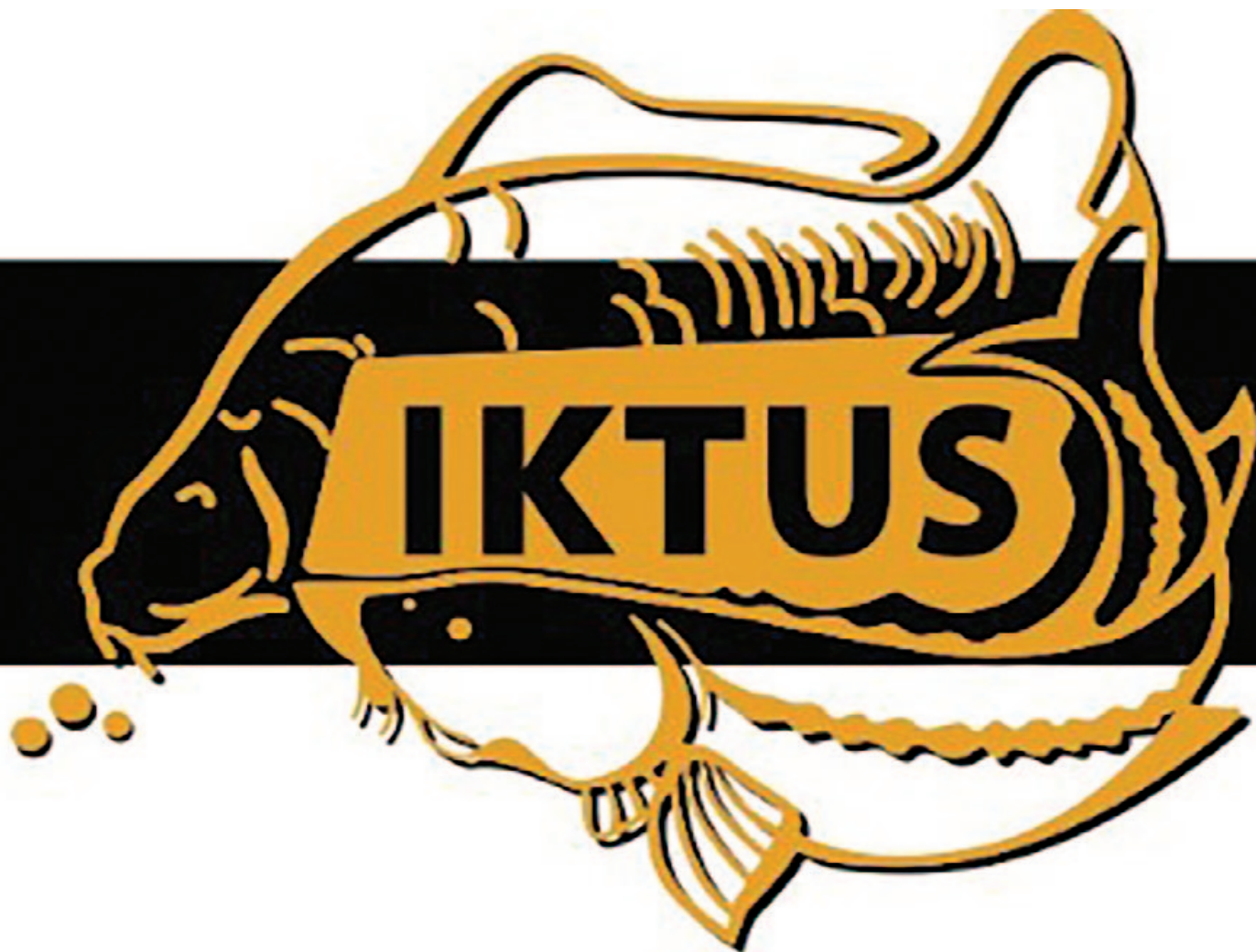
thing until midnight when a large fish boshing over my bait woke me up. Then the liners started, and I only had to wait half an hour this time before the line started to peel off the reel and the Delks burst into life.

This fish wasn't coming in easily and weeded me up plenty of times. I lost count of the times I had to put down the rod and wait patiently for the fish to dislodge itself, and it was probably a good hour and a half before the net slipped under another lovely common.

Since then I have visited the lake five times, and with no prebaiting, I still managed a couple more fish, again lovely looking commons giving really good accounts of themselves. All in all I would say it was a result, and well worth all the efforts. I've just started another baiting campaign and plan to give it more time to see if I can get a proper lump, as I believe it's possible it holds mid-30s if not a 40 or a 50. All the fun of the unknown! Fingers, legs, arms and eyes crossed!

Tight lines, 'til next time. ■





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Chronicle Fishing

October 2015 - Lake Review Crowsheath Fishery

Crowsheath Farm, Hawkswood Road, Downham, Billericay, Essex, CM11 1JT

This October we are excited to be writing about a fishery that has become a very special venue for the Chronicle team, and such is the effort and hard work put in by manager Nick Kearsey, Darren Veitch and their team, our original review is now factually outdated. With major work being undertaken throughout the last couple of years, Nick feels now is the right time to let everyone know how far this fishery has moved forward, so we again set our sights on Crowsheath Fishery, newly sponsored by Deception Angling.

With our original review now being almost three years old, we were really looking forward to showing some of the changes made to what was already a super venue. Arriving back



in the immaculate and very spacious car park, you can't help but notice the first major investment here at Crowsheath with the new shower and toilet block facilities. This instantly made our stay that bit more comfortable when fishing on longer sessions – a massive plus for the lake in our eyes. But even this will soon become outdated with the plans to improve further by removing the outside facilities and moving them indoors. Taking a look and a walk around the main 8.5-acre lake you can see it's had plenty of work and maintenance undertaken across the whole fishery, while the surroundings would not be far from the fairways and putting greens of some top golf courses. One of the major difference we noticed was the removal of one side of the

main island that use to created two smaller bays. This is now completely open and free-flowing, giving the lake a lot more open water, with more freedom for fish to move around the lake. The swims are well spaced out and always gave you plenty of water to fish, but with the reduction of a few swims around the whole complex, it has further increased the space you get without the worry of bothering your fellow angler. Still the swims are close enough that social time on the bank with friends is not something you will need to worry about.

The main lake holds some exceptionally stunning fish with carp reaching into the high 30s, with a possible 40lb fish named 'Stella' rumoured to still be in the lake. To complement this, Crows has a large



head of 20s and lots of mid to high doubles as a good average size you will catch. One fish in particular, a stunning linear, which was caught on our very first visit to the lake and then a mid-double, is now a mid-20lb carp, this time being shown off by Peter Skrivanos, owner of Deception Angling and is testament to how well the fish are doing here at Crowsheath. But don't be fooled by the beautiful surroundings and stunning fish; this is a lake that can sometimes test your skills as an angler, but the rewards are more than worth it, with so many of the carp being absolutely beautiful and there's always a good chance of a PB! We would advise listening to the expert advice of Nick and his team; they are always on site to help point you in the right direction and give the best tactics to use when arriving at Crowsheath. Remember for a small fee of £3 for a return per angler, the bailiffs will collect you from the car park and chauffeur you around the lake to your desired swim using their golf carts and large trailer. (Please remember buggy service is restricted to certain times of the year so please call ahead for details).

The lake itself is clay lined with many features and changing depths to find under the surface, so as always get the marker out to find what might be the hotspot on the lake. But, if you fancy something a bit special, you can download the 3D contour map of the entire Crowsheath complex for free, so as not to disturb your swim too much when fishing.



There is also plenty of other stuff going on at Crowsheath, and now under new association with Deception Angling they are holding an annual Deception Angling carp cup, which was a huge success only a few weeks ago. The father and son team of Ben and Barry O'Connor took first place, followed by the Chronicle team pairing of Kevin Goss and Paul Wood coming in second. Third was the Deception team of James Heffer and Jamie Holme, while rounding off the event with his food and hospitality was Nick who made the event fantastic for everyone involved.

Also at Crowsheath there is a smaller catfish water holding the UK



record mandarin wels catfish among other top specimens to 92lb and a half-acre pleasure lake, which holds some pristine uncaught fish with carp to 15lb. So if you want a change of scenery and to hook into something different, or even take your kids out for a bit of fun fishing, they have it all here at Crowsheath. Nick has since put into place a superb breeding and stocking program to ensure the quality and future for the fishery, so only the best handpicked carp are chosen to go back into the main lake with the rest of the quality stock being used for the expansion of the pleasure lake.

Safety is always a priority at Crows with Nick, Darren and the bailiffs always on site and Nick living at the centre of the fishery. So any information you might need or problem you have, he is only a short walk or phone call away. There is also a boat on site, so give the guys a call if you are unlucky enough to get snagged up with a fish. (Never pull for a break).

The option of buying bait and a few tackle items is also here at Crow-





sheath, so ask Nick for details. Featured are the specially made Pink or Brown 'Crowsheath Specials', which work extremely well anywhere. They are made exclusively for the fishery, all from a fishery management's perspective, so they are very good! (There are also matching pop-ups of each colour).

All in all this is one of the best and most visually stunning lakes you are likely to come across for a day ticket water. With excellent prices and great value deals and memberships, it's definitely worth giving Crowsheath a visit; it's a fantastic fishery with even



bigger plans to come in the future, so it will only be getting better. For the entire up-to-date goings-on at Crowsheath Fishery please visit www.crowsheathfishery.com or

catch them on Facebook or Twitter. If you would like Chronicle Fishing to showcase your lake in Big Carp Magazine please visit www.chroniclefishing.co.uk for details. ■





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The Farm Lake and The uncaught Monster Common

By Charlie Shipman

Nestled deep in the picturesque Cambridge countryside lies a little hidden gem, a lake of about three acres surrounded by miles of open farmland. This low stocked, challenging water provides anyone lucky enough to fish it the chance of some stunning old English carp. The rectangular farm lake is approximately three-and-a-half acres in size and pretty open to the elements; however the reed fringed margins give way to a wealth of submerged water greenery, and in the summer months the shallow margins become choked with Canadian pondweed and silkweed making the prospect of angling even more chal-

lenging. The shallow margins slope off dramatically to depths of around 20 feet, and slowly begin to level out at around 40 yards out with various humps and deep holes.

One of the best descriptions of the lake I was given was, "Imagine an upside down pyramid." The lake is teeming with natural life including a good head of signal crayfish, adding to the difficulty of the venue, but also providing a stable natural diet for the big elusive carp that call this tricky lake home. The exact number of carp in the lake is unknown, with 80% of them being commons as well as a couple of big sought-after ghosties. There are at least six fish in the Farm Lake over the 30lb mark and a couple closer to 40lb, some of which are

absolute stunners.

I first fished the lake in 2012 and really struggled. I managed only two fish that year and was put off by the difficulty of the venue. I fished ten consecutive nights without a fish and decided to concentrate my efforts to another water where I was catching consistently. It wasn't until a year or so later when I saw a picture of one of the big girls that I instantly regained interest in the water. I fished the lake hard in 2014 and have had amazing results from the off. The start of the season I managed to catch the jewel of the lake in the shape of a superb 36lb'er.

Due to work and family commitments my time on the bank was limited, and I found myself fishing short



The little big common.



The uncaught common 40lb 06oz.

sessions before work for a few hours and maybe getting one night in the week down the farm. At every opportunity I would drive down just to walk the banks with my dog Dexi, looking for signs of fish and keeping my spots topped up with bait. The areas of the lake that I have been targeting are very weedy, and by keeping a constant feed of bait I managed to keep my spots relatively clear. The only downside to this is that the bait robbing, rig munching crayfish would move in and set up camp on my nice clear channels in the weed making my precious time spent fishing even more frustrating to say the least. However my efforts were paying off...

I fished the farm lake right through the summer months, and I was perfecting my weed fishing skills. I was averaging a fish a session at this point. The highlight of the summer for me on the Farm Lake was a recapture of an awesome carp named the Little Big Common at a new top weight of 37lb 15oz. I was chuffed to bits, but in the back of my mind I was wondering when I would bump in to the Uncaught Common I had seen... How many recaptures would it take before I would have this fish in my net? After a few more sessions and a few more recaptures I began to lose interest, as I was catching carp that I had caught before. So I began to con-

sider my options.

April 2015 I got myself a ticket on the famous St. Ives complex, an amazing place steeped in carp fishing history. I was now spending most of my free time at St. Ives, mostly walking the banks with Dexi, trying to get my head around the immense size of the place. I concentrated my fishing between the Shallow Lagoon and the Long Reach Pit. Fishing on St. Ives was tricky for me because of my limited time, and I believed that due to the scale of the place my 24-hour sessions didn't cut it. I think that I needed more time for the fish to move in on my bait. However I did manage a couple of lovely little commons from the Reach, and just as the fish were spawning I managed to catch one of my target fish from the Shallow Lagoon, a fish known as the Sheffield Linear, an absolute stunner of a fish. I was absolutely blown away by this capture, but all I could think about was the Uncaught Common from the Farm Lake!

Shortly after my success on St. Ives I decided to concentrate all my time and efforts on catching the Uncaught Common from the Farm Lake. It had developed in to an obsession, and I was truly focused on my goal. One afternoon after work I drove to the lake for a scout about, armed with a bucket of parti mix and a few kilos of

Venom Baits Maple Nut boilies. As I walked up the bank to the lake I could see fish nutting out and chasing each other as they were in the height of spawning. I put the bait over my spots in between the weed and sat watching the fish for an hour or so. They smashed the reedy margins to bits as they thrashed through the weed to spawn. I positioned myself behind a small bush out of sight and watched two big commons glide through the weed trying to get to one of the big ghosties to spawn...

Then out of hole in the weed came a huge pale common, absolutely dwarfing the other two fish. There he was, the Uncaught Common, as big as a bus. He is a deep-set, pale fish, nearly as wide as he is long, with his upturned snout-like mouth, a proper old English character and a really special fish! He sat in the middle of the shoal looking like a submarine. I had spent a lot of time on the lake, and this was one of a few times that I had seen him. I was watching in awe of this magnificent creature, and it only fuelled my desire to catch him.

As time passed my fishing was getting less and less due to my girlfriend expecting the birth of our second son, so I would soon be put on red alert and couldn't stray too far from home. With the changing seasons autumn brought with it a new weather front

and a band of low pressure, wind and rain. I was itching to get down to the lake for my last chance, before my daddy duties were put on me. After some cleaver negotiation skills on my part I got the green light from the missus to do a 48-hour session on the compromise that it would be the last one for a while. So immediately I began to prepare for my forthcoming adventure. The plan was to lay down a big bed of bait and fish sliding chod rigs over the top. This is a method that has served me well all year on the Farm. I air dried 6kg of various sized maple nut boilies and soaked 10kg of hemp. I then tied new rigs and sharpened all my hooks. Preparation done I set the alarm clock for 05:00 the next morning. Sesh on!

Fig 2. Bait and rig.

The following morning I arrived at the lake. I was delighted to see that I had the lake to myself, which was not surprising as the weather had taken a turn for the worse. It was a dull, over-cast day and a strong westerly wind was blowing the rain over towards my prebaited spots... Perfect! I set my marker float up and cast it the 60 yards along the bank just behind the large weedbed where my clear channel was. I then began to spod the parti mix, hemp and Maple Nut chops out. I decided to put all three rods in the channel in a line towards the centre of the lake at various depths, hoping that over the two days I would intercept fish as they travelled through the weed, and hopefully snag the big'un. I then scattered 3kg of boilies in a row over my baited area with the throwing stick. My sliding chod rigs were then positioned within two rod lengths from each other, with colour matched Maple Nut pop-ups tied on each rig.

With the rods out I felt confident for a bite. I settled in and put the kettle on for the first brew of the session. I had a single bleep on my middle Delkim as the bobbin shot up. I sprang in to action immediately to strike the rod. I wound in only to find a whittled down stump where my Maple Nut pop-up once was. It had been clawed to bits by the pesky crayfish. As well as the nuisance crayfish a family of tuftie ducks had started to gather over my baited spot, slowly growing in numbers and helping themselves to my carefully positioned bait. I quickly tied on a replacement bait and got the rig back out on the spot. My lead hit the deck with a lovely firm thud, and it felt perfect for a bite.



A few hours and a few more crayfish attacks later I received a violent take on my middle rod. I picked the rod up just as I noticed a tuftie resurface in front of me 60 yards out, so I decided not to recast the rod. I thought that if anything the duck picking up my hookbait would have nicely repositioned my rig on top of any weed in the swim. Instead I picked up my spod rod and cast directly at the nuisance birds. As the spod landed the birds took flight away from my spot to leave me in peace.

I threw the spod rod into the reeds, and I managed to get five paces from my rods before my middle rod went in to meltdown. I had a single bleep on the Delkim followed by a flat toner. I pounced on the rod and banged in to what felt like a freight train. "This ain't no duck," I shouted to my dog Dexi as I was instantly flat-rodded. My reel screamed as the line peeled off and the fish motored towards the far end of the lake. I knew straight away that I was in to one of the big girls. My knees turned to jelly and I began praying to the carp gods... please be the Uncaught!

The fight seemed to last forever. The fish stayed deep the whole time, dragging me from one weedbed to the other. I could feel every head shake, twist and turn that this powerful fish made as I slowly brought him closer towards me. A huge boil of angry water erupted in front of me as

I slipped a huge, pale common over the cord of my landing net. I put my rod down and gingerly peeked inside into the net, even though I already knew what I had got... I had done it! The elusive Uncaught Common. I was overjoyed, and all my hard efforts had finally paid off.

I readied the mat and sling and lifted the beast to land. I took a few moments to appreciate such a magnificent fish before I slipped her in to the retaining sling. I got on the phone and assembled some troops to help with the weighing and photographs. With the fish safely in the sling, I sat back and cracked open a nice cold beer to settle my nerves.

A short while later two friends of mine, Biscuit and Ashton, arrived to offer their congratulations. The boys came armed with cameras and a few beers. We wasted no time and got straight to weighing the common. With the scales zeroed we offered up the bulging sling to the Reubens... 40lb 6oz... what a lump! As Biscuit snapped away, I couldn't wipe the grin from my face knowing that I had finally got hold of the elusive Cambridgeshire Uncaught Common! My campaign was finally over... on to the next one.

I also managed to score extra brownie points with the missus when I arrived home a day early... job done!

With thanks to James Moule and Ashton Blyth. ■



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Off Limits

By Gareth Wooffindin

The fish came from a local nature reserve that is heavily policed and frequented by the local birdwatchers. I first heard a snippet of a rumour about a lake that had done a special fish, and after quite a lot of subtle digging I narrowed it down to three possibilities. After walking the first one on the list, it could be discounted as it just didn't fit what I had been told. The second one felt right straight away; it was overgrown and looking awesome. I started walking

and looking, always being careful not to wear anything carpy or leaving anything on show in the car park.

After three or four visits I had still to see a carp even after looking in some amazing looking spots, and I was seriously starting to doubt that the lake even held carp. However, I decided to just sit in the most open area where everyone let their dogs swim and feed the ducks. After twenty minutes a small common slid across in front of me. Well, I know it had one carp in but not the special fish that I was searching for.

This all happened three years ago, and what followed was two years of looking and walking and dropping a subtle sprinkling of bait into a few areas. I had still only seen eight fish, and the special one had yet to show itself, but I had seen enough to risk the odd quick session in areas that I had prepared the previous winter when the undergrowth had died back, enabling me to create tiny unobtrusive swims that were difficult to find.

The first couple of sessions resulted in no sightings and no fish gracing



the mat. I was starting to feel deflated, and my fishing time was being curtailed by work. On one early morning walk my obsessive side decided that I had done enough, only for it to show itself to me... a solid bar of gold common bigger than I ever imagined! I was amazed! Where had this fish been hiding? Over the next month I upped the tally of known fish to twenty, but time was running out, winter was approaching, and the public made fishing virtually impossible. My frustrations grew.

Over the winter the obsession started growing again, and spring couldn't come soon enough. Over the winter I did some more work on my tiny tucked-away swims in preparation for the coming year. I started walking and baiting as soon as the foliage was thick enough to give me the cover I required. I was taking blending in with the public to a different level, wearing only work clothes and parking in different locations at different times to avoid the overzealous warden who had a habit of appearing at all sorts of strange times.

One early morning I risked wading to an island to check on a baited spot. To my amazement it was perfectly clear with a fish sat off of it. What followed was amazing... A fish that I had not even seen before appeared from nowhere, completely unconcerned by my presence. All of a sudden a mirror of proportions similar to the common waddled over the spot, unseen until now. I knew that this was my chance, but all of a sudden I heard the warden's dog, and I was exposed, stood in the water. I waded as slowly as I dared to the island and spent a tense ten minutes hiding amongst the goose poo while he threw a stick into the bay for his dog. All the time I could see fish sliding over the spot, completely unconcerned by his antics.

Early the next day in a torrential summer storm I found myself tucked under my basha with two rods on the spot. It felt just right, and within half an hour a fish slowly slid out exactly over my spot. They were still there, and I could feel something was about to happen. Slowly the left hand bobbin slid to the top the alarm, which was squawking with the twig shoved into the speaker to keep the noise to a minimum. A bream! I had not even seen a bream in all my hours of walk-



ing. Every movement increasing the risk of been caught I flicked the rig back out an hour later and two more fish showed over the spot. This time the right hand bobbin rose up... Please, not another bream! All of a sudden the spot exploded, fish scattered, and the rod bent double. The fish kited left then right silently. I just wanted it in the net, as I was stood in the water, exposed for everyone to see.

The fish dived into the net at the first time of asking. Relief engulfed me. I had seen it was a common, but was it the one I was hoping for? I

placed the fish on mat, and it wasn't the big common, but it was still a worthy fish. After a very quick picture she slowly slid back to join her friends leaving me to quickly pack away, hopefully to get out of the reserve unseen.

I had been successful, and unseen by anyone, allowing me to return to try for even bigger prizes that I know the reserve contains my. On the way home I began to wonder about the third lake on my list. If the reserve had such special fish, then why not there too? One day I might just have to have another adventure. ■



My Park Journey

By Josh Moran

In 2015 I have not being able to get out on the bank at all, just la few hours here and there, but it still does not stop me from catching. One day I went to my local park at five o'clock in the morning wanting a peg. Everything was full, and the person that was leaving first was not going till 10pm at night. I got there at 9, and he had already gone, but someone

had replaced him in the peg.

There was only one left that no one wants to fish because it never, ever produces fish, but at 6am in February my alarm screamed off resulting in a 23lb 8oz mirror carp (the guy on the peg I was supposed to be on blanked). Result!

Four weeks later the same happened again... I had 24 hours on a peg and blanked. The guy next to me

was packing away, and he'd had nothing either. I had a walk around the lake and spotted three carp. I cast a single wafter off his peg and sat and waited. Three minutes after it roared of, resulting in a 24lb mirror.

And the results kept coming. There aren't many 20s in there, around 15, but I have had 11 of them in two seasons, and obviously I've had loads of mid-teens. ■



Dear Santa,
PLEASE No
more socks this
Christmas!

Wish list:

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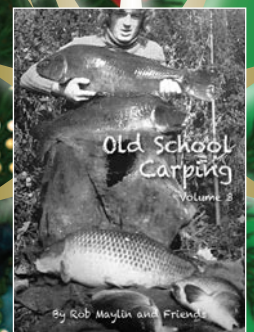
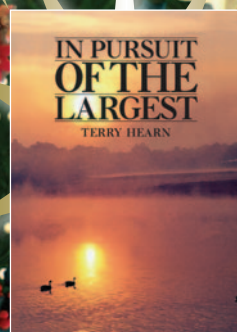
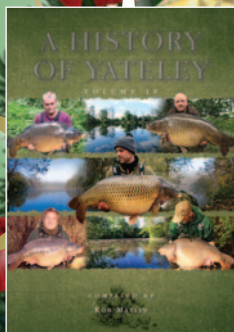
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The Lake With No Carp

By John Harrop-Turnball



I thought I had gotten away with it, but no, the constant nagging from the missus was driving me mad, and I caved in. I agreed to go on holiday at the end of October 2014 with her and three kids. Don't get me wrong; I love spending time with the family. We spend many weeks away, but October is one of my favourite months to be on the bank. Having just had Dave from my target water, Swan Lake on the Bluebell complex, at its biggest weight of 54lb 8oz, and the fact I still hadn't settled on a winter water, I gave my ever suffering partner Heather the nod to go ahead and book somewhere in the UK, with only one condition – it must be near a lake for me to wet a line once or twice over the week.

A few days later and I got the news that we were to spend one week in a caravan at Hoburne on the Cotswold Water Park. Great! I'd had some good results from Bradleys Lake run by Watermark Fisheries and Horseshoe is only down the road, so in my head I was plotting how I could get away for a night to finally fish at Horseshoe, somewhere I had wanted to fish for a

long time – since I was a kid in fact.

Reality soon set in that along with three bikes and enough gear to stay for a month there was no way I was ever going to get my kit to fit in our transport, so I settled on the fact that the website said it had lake right on the holiday park, and with that in mind I threw in a very basic setup including one travel rod, net, unhooking mat and very basic end tackle.

Normally when setting out my stall I like to find things out for myself, but this was different. I'd only manage to sneak a few hours on the lake before everyone was up and awake and demanding I go swimming etc, so I tried to do as much research as possible – after all, there is no better knowledge than local knowledge. First up was the Internet, and normally this would throw up all sorts of info and photos, but nothing... There were a few bits on Trip Adviser, but they didn't really give anything away as to what was in there. Next up was the local tackle shop, and if anyone knew anything it would be them. The Tackle Den is right on the doorstep, literally a long chuck away. I'd been in on my trips to Bradleys, and they had

put me right on the fish (not an easy feat on a 120-acre lake), so I gave them a call. It was an interesting call to say the least; apparently all they had heard about was big tench and bream, which was not what I wanted to hear. I had little to no hope of the actual holiday park knowing about anything in there, but I gave them a call nonetheless. My thoughts proved to be correct – there were catch reports of only tench. The chap I spoke to fished the lake regularly and even said there were no carp in there at all. He did however say the tench went to double figures, so I was still happy... ish.

I had just changed from my ever-faithful Nash Scopex Squid Red to Amber Strawberry, so I threw in a 5kg bag of shelf life along with my very basic kit and off we went... Cotswolds here we come.

After about the hundredth game of I spy, the kids fell asleep, and I managed to get in my own little bubble, and my mind was racing. I'd been told of only tench and bream coming out of the lake; I'd been told there were no carp in there at all, but in my head it didn't ring true. Almost every lake on



34lb of unknown... What else could be in here?



the water park holds carp, and some big old English ones at that. The water park as it's now known is a series of 147 lakes dug for limestone gravel extraction over a number of years. Much of the work stopped in the 70s, and the lakes naturally filled with water, and crystal clear water at that, and there are now 74 lakes that offer fishing. Like I said, almost all hold carp, and this was dug at the same time, so why would this be any different? Even if it had been netted surely one of two big carp would have slipped through the net and remained? Well, I'd talked myself into it, and boy was I excited.

We were soon set up, and along with my bag of bait I was off around the lake. The lake is quite open, about five acres, and one half is tree-lined. I walked the lake and saw something that was going to make things a whole lot harder – you can only fish the top acre of the lake, the rest being roped off for use of boats and pedalos. I also noticed that even at this time of year the weed was top to bottom. I nipped back and grabbed a rod to have a lead about. I found one clear spot at three rod lengths in 4ft of water and put about a kilo of crushed Amber Strawberry, then hit the Sammy Sea Horse disco in the clubhouse! (To be fair it's not as bad as it sounds, and I quite enjoyed it)

5.30am saw me being the only one up on the whole site with kit in my hand, and I was off to the spot I'd baited the night before. I managed to sit there till lunchtime when I got the call that we were doing the family quiz. I'd had four or five tench to about 4lb, so I was happy I'd got a bend in the rod, and I put in more bait

and off I went. I repeated the baiting the next day... I didn't fish, but I sat and watched. After about an hour I was 100% sure I saw a carp. A couple walked round and asked what I was doing. It turned out they were both keen carp anglers who owned a lodge on the opposite bank and had done for ten years. In all their time there they confirmed they had never seen a carp or caught one, only tench, even though they fished it regularly. I told them of my sighting, and they just laughed, but there was something in their faces, a kind of worried look, or was I just imagining it?

The very next day saw me bag more tench, which was good sport to be fair. I forgot how well they scrap for their size, but I was after something special. I filled the spot with what I had on me, leaving around half a kilo for the next day.

I promised the missus I would not fish on the last day, so this was to be my last time out. I needed to keep the tench away, so I baited with three 15mm amber strawberry baits and no free offerings. 11am and I'd had nothing but plenty of knocks. I was half way through packing my bags when I got a single bleep. I froze... "Beep, beep" and I dropped my bag. Then it went... I heard the bobbin hit the rod before the alarm actually sounded. What followed was odd: no fight, no nothing, but in the net was a carp, from the lake with no carp, and it was a lump. The scales went 41lb, and I was ecstatic. I had no one around and the missus wasn't picking up, so I had to do something...

I hate a self take! So there you have it – a carp from a lake that has no carp, a lake that anyone staying on

the site can fish, a lake that has lots of tench, and a great UK holiday that everyone enjoyed!

Fast forward to April 2015, and she's at it again. Can we go on holiday? You bet! Let's go back to Hoburne, but this time, honey, let's go in the summer! So I'm there again, but this time I'm armed to the hilt! No caravan in tow means less gear to carry and more room for fishing kit. This time I've gone all out and hired a luxury cabin. Heather was happy (bonus) and I was happy because like I said I could get my gear in!

What I wasn't expecting was the weed! It was bad but fishable last year, but being August this time I had no chance. Six hours of leading about and I had nothing to report other than weed. It was going to be tough. I got in as much weed as possible to see how long it was and tailored my rigs to suit. I ended up settling on Nash weed clips with a Nash 2oz lead. The weed clip is the only clip I use; it's the only one I've ever had 100% drop the lead and it's perfect for this application. The hook was a size 7 Fang Twister tied simply by a knotless knot to 2ft of my mainline, D – Cam mono in 15lb, which sinks like a brick and disappears. The reason for the long hook link was to guarantee that once the PVA foam melted it would rest on top of the weed.

This year I baited with 20mm 4G Squid I had left over from the BCAC semi-finals, but for four days of fishing from 5.30am to 2.30pm, all I had was tench. That evening whilst rooting through the van I found a new bag of Nash Key Cultured hookbaits. Much has been written about the range of "Key" baits from Nash, but I'll sum up



my personal findings with you quite easily. Since using the combination of 4G Squid and Key Cultured on the hair I have had two lake records, one fish from a 22ft deep seven-acre lake with only eight known fish. This particular fish had been missing for five years. They really do work and are like

nothing I have ever used before.

Day 5, my last day, and tench after tench graced my net, but then I remembered the Cultured. I reeled in and cast one out to the spot and put about 40 4G Squid baits around it spread over 12ft area. I'm not joking when I tell you within eight minutes I

had a 17lb mirror in the net! I can now confirm that there are at least two carp in that lake. Shortly after my son had dropped off my sausage sandwich, the right hand rod was off again, and this time a battle commenced. This felt like a good fish, and to add to the pressure I had an audience – it seemed every dog walker in the world was out. After going in numerous weedbeds AND over the no fishing rope, I finally landed what looked like a good fish. With the gathered crowd applauding, the fish went 34lb on the scales – a great result that I really do put down to the Key Cultured hookbaits.

So, guys and girls, if you ever feel the need for a UK family holiday with a little fishing, give Hoburne Cotswolds a call. I can confirm there are at least three carp in the lake! ■

(Top) 08 The only area of the lake you can fish.

(Below) I was totally unprepared for this old 41lb warrior.



Thames Carping

By Paul Miller

I have been fishing for 15 years, and like everyone joined a syndicate lake and went about searching for and catching carp. After five years of doing this every weekend I started getting bored of the same routine and was craving a new adventure. This was highlighted when one session I started to just walk the lake and not fish but observed the other anglers, and more importantly how much bait was getting put in and where. After several weeks of walking and watching I noticed that every angler would go straight to the same swims and put in on average 2kg of boilies, which meant that some swims were getting 10kg every week. It was at this point I knew I needed a change.

I had heard stories of carp in the Thames so I thought I would give it a go. I started the same way I would a lake by walking and watching the water, but after many trips I saw nothing. So I turned to the Internet and books and found lots of pictures but very little info on what anglers were doing to catch them. The only information that I got was that during their fishing sessions they caught lots of bream so I went back to the river



on the hunt for bream spots and soon picked out several that I would target.

After two weeks of baiting I was ready. I set off after work on the Friday and did the long barrow walk to my chosen swim. I cast out my rods, set up my bivvy and sat back with a cup of tea feeling pleased with myself. I was sitting there for one hour watching all the walkers and small boats going up and down the river

when a Dutch barge went past and completely wiped me out. First lesson learned – use back leads. Not put off, I set about baiting my swim for the next session and went straight to the tackle shop for heavier gripper leads and back leads. While I was at home the experience with the Dutch barge started me thinking about how the flow and the boats may have a massive impact on how my line and my rigs were behaving in the flow, so I got my old fish tank out, filled it with water and put the rigs I use in it. Then I started to push the water around and noticed that my rigs behaved strangely in the flow, so I added more putty and heavier shot so that it pinned it down more. After lots of attempts I got the rig so it was nicely pinned but still worked well.

The next week while I was out baiting my swims I saw an old boy sitting fishing, and I struck up a conversation about fishing and what I was planning. He told me that when he was a younger man carp would show in a marina close to his house, and he used to feed them with bread and corn, but if he wanted them to feed heavily he coloured his corn red. I stayed and chatted to him for a while, and then wishing him tight







lines I went home.

The following weekend I set off, got myself ready in my swim, cast out and sat back. It was early morning when I was awoken to the beautiful noise of my alarm screaming. I jumped up and struck my rod and felt the lovely pounding feeling. I played the fish for about 20 minutes before getting the better of it and got it close enough to see that it was a carp... not massive, but a carp. After unhooking it and having a good look at my prize I weighed it 13lbs. Not big by any means, but I was over the moon with my first Thames carp.

I continued to bait and fish my

swims and have taken many more carp up to 28lb and a barbel of 17lb 1oz, and it has completely changed my fishing. I will never go back to lake fishing; there is nothing like fishing the rivers and having that unknown feeling of what you might catch next. So if fishing the same old swims on your lake is getting you bored and you want a change, get down to your local rivers and give it a go.

River Watercraft

We all know the importance of watercraft when carp fishing, but since moving from lakes to rivers the importance is far more significant. On

lakes you are looking for clear spots, gravel bars and good snags, but rivers are slightly different. Yes you can catch carp on these spots, but I have found myself asking the question, why would a carp go or feed here? For example, if you find a really nice gravel run and bait it carp can feed from it, but barbel will bully them out and eat the lot, and the same can be said for bream because of the sheer numbers of them.

The key features I look for in river carping are man made structures like marinas, bridges and weirs. Carp love them. Also look for really deep channels, as I believe they are motorways for fish to travel. What I found useful is to visit the river in flood and watch the river. Where it's going fastest is where the deep channels are to be found and use that as a template when you fish it.

I fish a lot around bridge supports because I have found that when the river is pushing through, the water hits the support and is pushed down, which gouges out deep channels that the carp seem to love. Also it gives you the added feature of massive eddies at the back of the supports, which are great spots for fish to hold up while on their travels. Marinas are also great because they are like natural lakes that are joined to the river and they are used for spawning and holding up when the rivers are really high. When I am fishing the mouth I think about how the fish will get in and out, because if boats are constantly on the move then the carp will look for the safest way in and out. I tend to fish the deepest part, but you may find that they will travel the margins just because it's away from the boats.

Weirs are great for all fish especially carp. I have taken many great carp from them, and the fight in the flow is second to none. Again I fish the deepest run with the least amount of line going through the flow. One important thing to remember is when fishing boilies use chops, as these will hold the bottom better, and I use a bait dropper to get them down. I have seen many anglers throwing boilies in, and I have watched them flow past me when I have been about 20 meters down from them. I would recommend using red or yellow boilies, as these colours have accounted for 90% of my river carp successes. ■



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A Carper's Path... The Common Affair

By Dave Little

Vantage point... the perfect plot!

The 2015 river season began with the deeply anticipated start as usual for me but with a twist of desperation as I asked the glorious 16th for a delivery of a river carp! I like to fish to enjoy, and I wished dearly that I never agreed to promising a friend, but nevertheless I pulled it off beautifully by netting a 26lb dark looking one-eyed common with a tatty old tail, a true character of the Ouse. Through all my nervousness it just added to the capture on such a significant day in the angling calendar. I couldn't wait to get back!

Next time back on the flow I set my stall in an old familiar swim. My faithful pop-up rigs were sent out a third of a way across the river with some boilies I had nicked off Laney. I lay back and satisfyingly soaked up my view. 'Old Nog' was on look out as usual, but this time precariously balancing on the shoaling sign that indicated the shallows for boaters. For him it was simply perfect fishing grounds, littered with bleak and gudgeon enjoying the rays on their backs.



Every now and again a small wave would also appear as a dangerous, hungry perch would rise from the depths into the shallow water to try and shark a dinner or two!

A couple of mates, Mark Johnson and Lee Kidd, were to join me over the next couple of days while we

chanced our lucks at an Ouse river carp. The weather was admirable, but the river was low level and gin clear. It was once again energised with life both above and below, but maybe too many bream for our fancy. We had a few during the night on all rods, which can take its toll, especially



My son's camera skills put to the test.



Close, but no cigar.

when only wishing and hoping for a carp. Anyway I was left alone for the third night and decided to have a paddle about in my little boat during the day.

The areas I had found by lead and line were favourable and only confirmed what I was fishing over by drifting quietly above. Plenty of good-sized roach and a few big perch dotted about came into picture as well as the Hybrid boilies I had chucked in. The trouble was I was sure there should have been more gracing the beds of the river. All around, between the weed, I noticed the lightly coloured silt bottom was pitted. Golf ball-looking would be the best term of phrase. Something was most definitely having a good sieve through! I was surprised to find so few boilies left after just one bream that night just after nightfall.

I hatched a plan... Now I don't usually use bottom baits and especially not 14mms, as I think that you're asking for trouble with regards to river bream, and this year the Ouse saw fit to fill its flowing waters with plenty of

3-4lb munching, monster, table cleaning snotties. Don't get me wrong; I love all fish that swim, except man-eating sharks, but this year they seem aplenty in the Ouse.

“Rivers and the inhabitants of the watery elements are made for wise men to contemplate and for fools to pass by without consideration.”

Izaak Walton

I ummed and aahed over the matter, but finally succumbed to placing a bottom bait close in next to some lily pads that presented easier in the silty riverbed just in case I spent all night catching bream and wouldn't therefore struggle recasting to the spot. I placed a good helping of matching boilies straight on top with the thought that whatever was causing the pitting would have to seriously put the Hoover on to get to that hook-

bait! A great undisturbed night's sleep had this angler clearing sleep from his eyes.

I had missed the dawn, slept right through, and judging by the boat that had just chugged by, missed most of the morning altogether. As the wake of the boat subsided the constant flow of Canadians and greylags made their way upstream from the fields of the valley as they had done every day, their young obediently following like school children in a line. They were a good 25 metres long, queuing perfectly one after another, well organised and particularly close to where my line entered near to the lily pads. As I looked out at the rod, the tip was furiously bending downwards. “Why is there no alarm?”

Firstly I thought it was the geese responsible, but having picked up the rod I realised my mistake. I had missed the wheel on my Neville with the line, and by pulling it up and ping-pong it through cabbages and lilies I finally connected with fish a good 20 yards upstream. I ran upriver after the culprit, trying hard to stop him get-



ting in the weedbed on the far bank. Catastrophe was upon me, and what was even worse was that two 30ft river cruisers were heading my way! I became a bit of a mini Hitler and demanded the boats to stop. My net, now back downstream where I had started battle from, lay as useless as a wet kipper. It really was a calamity of all calamities. Somehow I managed to land the fish and thank the boaters for not ruining my day by cutting me off like a knife through butter.

Calm had restored itself once more on the banks of the Ouse, and fortunately for me my children had just arrived to take the photos of my Ouse boat-dodging prize. A fantastic, dark, dogged mirror was captured on film (SD card) by my son (thank you, Cyle), and morning celebrations after were all about who could climb the highest in a nearby willow tree. Just perfect...

Well for sometime now I have been wishing, praying and counting lucky stars to hopefully catch a 30-plus river common. I have heard of a couple of sections turning up trumps with these rarely caught creatures. 36lbs is the biggest I've been told, so I'd dearly like to hold such a fish. I came close this year after asking my mum to bait whilst away on holiday. Cheers, mum! She had baited close in, under orders, next to a large willow, and even made out that she was feeding the ducks with my baby nephew so as not to arouse suspicion. Very crafty!

So, turning up to a primed area, I felt like royalty. I fished the usual pop-up rigs around six feet apart in about 5ft of water. A handful of Hybrid over

both baits and it was only a matter of time before the right rod ripped off. The usual hard-fighting river carp didn't let me down. Up and down it pulled me, and my poor old Centiums were creaking at their seams. As time

passed and the fish drew nearer, I noticed it was a good chunky common. I got excited, like a hound chasing the hare, and as I netted the river common I began to hop around like a baby owl. "Is it?" I kept saying. "Could it be...?"

29 and ounces – close but no cigar. So here now lies my challenge. Will the river be kind enough to me? Will it sing sweetly in my ear? Is there a river common somewhere lying in wait like a dragon guarding its gold? Is there such a carp that will hopefully fulfil this angler's dreams? I can only hope so, as I have always done with the flow. Still to this day, after years of trying, I have no idea what is in that beloved river, but somehow it draws me to its watery, willow-strewn banks. The Ouse takes me along its flowing path, and every now and again reveals its secrets like the wink of an eye. So, "Will I or won't I?" is the question that now lies in wait.

Be lucky, all... ■



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After Work River Carping

By Sean Collins

Most of the fish caught from the river were during after work sessions. I was working one day, and I saw on the GPS that there was a river running nearby, so I told the person I work with to pull up, and I went and investigated. I walked over to the river's edge, not being very stealthy, and I spooked something from the margin. I didn't think anything of it; I thought it was just a chub or something, so I took a walk upstream a bit to see if I could find any fish. At that time I had a bee in my bonnet about catching a double-figure barbel, and I could see a few in the shallows on a gravel hump, but I had no rod unfortunately.

I always loved carp fishing,



but I just had a feel for a big barbel, so the next day I dropped in on the gravelly hump. I had the Polaroids with me as well, so I could see a lot more. I saw some barbel mooching around, so I flicked out the rod with a little PVA bag of crumbed boilie and a 15mm Scopex Squid boilie chopped down. I was just watching them for ages but had no takes. Then I saw a fish come up onto the gravel and I was thinking, that's more like it! It went straight over to my hookbait, sucked it in, and we were away. I landed that one at 26lb 6oz, and I was just blown away! First time down there fishing and I had a beautiful common on the bank. There wasn't a scratch on the fish; it was in perfect condition.

I got down there the day after and had two carp rods with bite alarms and everything. I fed a handful of bait and Scopex Squid boilies again, and I had another common of

27lb bang on. I got down there at every chance I could, and I have had about 25 carp out of the river. It was just so much fun because the fish weren't named and were not fish that everyone's caught. There's just something a bit special about those dark warriors; they are beautiful fish. I really got into my river fishing, and I stopped fishing the lake I



was fishing. I was just on the river, and I really got into it, so a month later I booked a winter carping trip to the Ebro. I had some lovely carp out of there as well. I think I had about 16 fish, the biggest being a 32lb 10oz common, but the river was motoring through and all the floodgates were open. ■

Carpy Humour



A true angler keeps on fishing no matter what!





32lb 8oz mirror carp, a new PB for Tony Cooper.



A Stunning Common from Pipe lake by Connor.

Chronicle Fishing

**September/October 2015 Lake Diary - Oak Lakes Fisheries,
Burnham Road, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7BJ - By Chronicle Fishing**

Chronicle Fishing are delighted to announce that Oak Lakes fisheries will be our next featured Diary page every month in big carp Magazine, bringing you all the quality carp this fishery has to offer. Carrying on from our Lake review on Oak lakes this August, we have picked some of the best catches from September and October to showcase this month. The syndicate or Pipe lake, coupled with the day ticket Oak lake, will be the focus of these diary pages, but if anything extra special does come up from the match or predator lake it will get a notable mention.

From the beginning of September up to the end of October both lakes have been fishing extremely well, with valued members Gavin Amos and Taylor Denham probably having more than their fair share of carp but

OAK LAKES FISHERIES SOUTHMINSTER

the Pick of the bunch for us was a 32lb 8oz cracking mirror and a new PB for Tony Cooper, caught midway through September from Pipe Lake, well done Tony on a great achievement. Gavin Amos has definitely been getting amongst the carp recently, with oaks Facebook page littered with his trophy shots. Not the biggest of his captures but a lovely dark 23lb fish, again from Pipe Lake was just too nice to pass up. Next out the hat was Taylor Denham, again having multiple captures from September onwards, we went for a 24lb 12oz carp he caught late on in October for the diary, top angling Taylor keep up the good work.

Last but not least we have an absolute stunner of a common for you, but we are afraid though we didn't get the weight or the angler's full name,

but who cares!! What a stunning fish by Connor and probably the best looking carp out from the last two months, well done that man!! So here we have it, the first diary page for Oak Lakes, it's produced some beautiful carp over the last two months and of a very good size as well but sadly we can only show 3 or 4 fish per diary. The fishery is still fishing very well, so if you fancy a lake with a bit of life left in it before the really cold months set in, get down to Oaks and try your luck. For the entire up to date goings on at Oak Lakes Fisheries please visit their website at www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk or visit them on Facebook. If you would like Chronicle Fishing help showcase your lake in Big Carp Magazine please visit www.chroniclefishing.co.uk ■



Nice 23lbs mirror caught by Gavin Amos.



Taylor Denham with a 24lb 12oz mirror.

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.

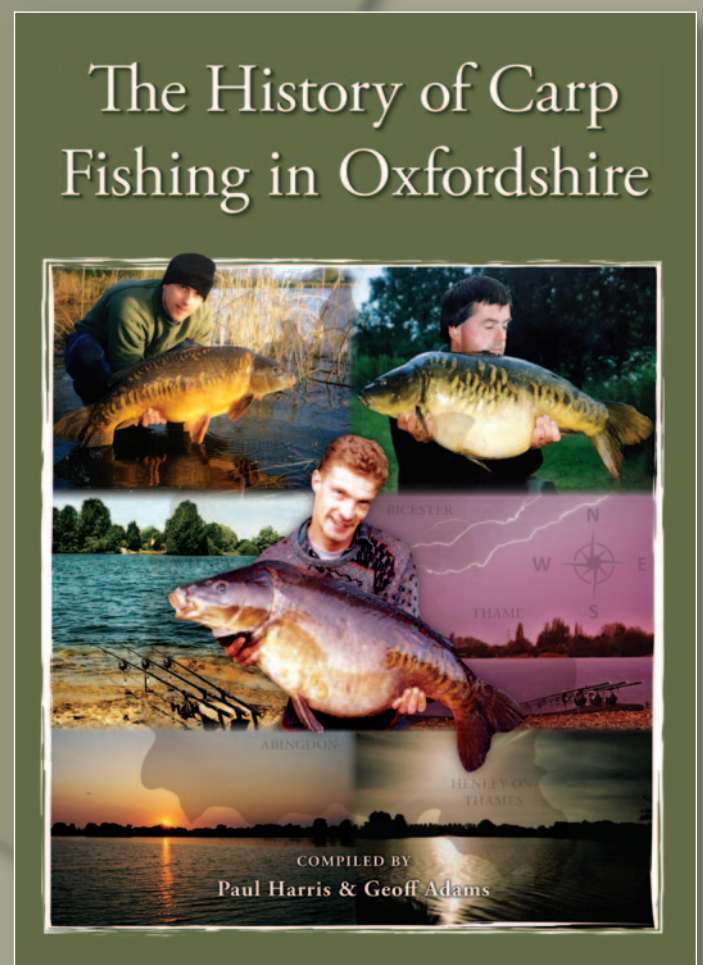
Nick Stansfield is a brilliant young Oxford carper who doesn't shout about his catches. We have two incredible chapters from him from two of the county's most iconic lakes, The Leisure Park and The Big S! Josh Chatfield has written a fantastic chapter which really gives you an insight into how fishing 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

River Thames, Berkshire

By Jo Green

I had been looking forward to fishing this stretch of the Thames for a little while and had spent a few hours walking the banks to try and locate the fish to at least have a little bit of a head start before I started fishing, I couldn't see the point of just turning up blind and wasting valuable rod hours. I decided that the wooded section was the best place to start, so I started trickling in some bait.

It was autumn before I finally managed to find the time to get down to the river and give it a go, and although it was late evening when I arrived it wasn't too difficult to decide which swim to fish, as when wandering down the path with the trolley a carp rolled out at about 25 yards to my left, so decision made... that'll do nicely. The weather forecast was warm for the weekend, and this particular swim had plenty of shade, and it also looked very carpish indeed. The left rod was cast underarm to around 25 yards at 7ft on top of the ledge, and



the other was cast at 50 yards into deeper water.

Early the following day I was awoken by a screaming run on the left hand rod, which produced this stunning river carp. What a way to start – an absolute stunner. I wasn't expecting that, and I packed up one very happy bunny.

Time passed quickly, and it was soon time to head back to the river. I decided to fish the same swim and fished pretty much the same spots as the previous visit, hoping there may be some more carp residing in the area. Almost the same time as the last session, the next morning the longer rod ripped off and produced this mint fully scaled. It was so black and looked like it had been carved from wood, a real Thames stunner.

Sadly I had now run out of time; the winter was soon to set in, and this was to be my final visit down to river. I decided to go a little further down in the woods this time and set up in a

swim that was down a narrow walkway, then into a cave like area just big enough to set the brolly up. Both rods were placed at just a short underarm flick of around 20 yards and fishing on the bottom of the shelf.

Unlike the last couple of sessions there was no early run the next morning, so I decided to stay a little longer, this time until early evening, just in case Mr. Carp might come and see me before I went. Thankfully my gamble paid off, and in the middle of the afternoon the left hand rod screamed off and battle commenced with a very angry carp, and 20 minutes later he was in the net. To say I was over the moon is an understatement, and I managed to save a blank with this cracking heavily scaled mirror – what a corker.

One day soon I am sure I will return to the River Thames. I was very lucky to have had some lovely fish in a short space of time. Who knows what gems the Thames holds now? It's certainly worth the effort to find out when you look at pictures like this. ■

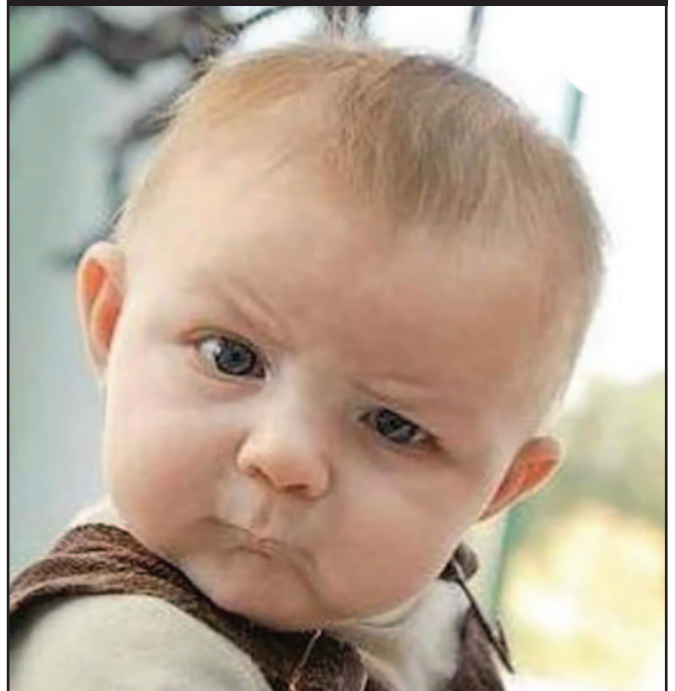


Carpy Humour

**DAY 9 WITHOUT
GOING FISHING**

**LOST VISION IN
MY LEFT EAR**

**Fishing licences are
stupid, you can't even
drive a fish!**



After The Fish Kill

By Mark Bowyer

Well where to start? We had a bit of a fish kill in our local river last year, and most fish were killed, but the odd angler still says there are fish in there,

so I started prebaiting. On the weekend I jumped on with a couple of mates to fish my spots.

On the first night I had a run, but I lost it. It was on my margin rod that I had under a tree on a very tight spot where there were a few snags. The next day I put my rod back out in the

margin on a KD rig with a Krill bottom bait and a chopped down Signature pop-up, and just a few hours later it went off. It was a really mint 15lb common.

I was well made up to see they are still in the river, and hopefully I'll have a few more. ■



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Legendary Carp Paintings



- Basil
- Heather
- The Black Mirror
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- Mary and Mary's Mate



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Finding the Right Spot

By Bradley Purssey

I visited the Thames and had been studying it for quite a few months, baiting up in different areas and continuing to return to see if there had been any action on the bait. There was also a local spot near where I lived that I was really keen on, and I continued baiting that particular swim. I was baiting up every three days with 5kg of boilies (The Carp Company's Icelandic Red and Caviar & Cranberry) in between two boats. After a month of baiting I then came to see a lovely golden patch on the bottom where the carp had been feeding.

As I was about to put the 5kg of boilies in I saw four carp – two low twenties and two high thirties. I couldn't believe what I had seen. I then watched the carp trying to find more bait around that area and then slowly move off. I then put the other 5kg in. I then left the area for at least a week without baiting at all but kept visiting to see if there was any change or anything to see. They were still there but with even more carp trying to find food. This is the point at



which I said to myself, "It's time to get the rods out." I cast my rods out at this spot at about 6.45pm, and within four minutes I had an absolute screamer.

I knew this one was big; it was staying deep, and I battled it for 15 minutes. As I got it close to the margin I saw this lump of a mirror break the surface. I then began to panic, but I kept my cool and eased her into the

net. I could not believe it – first fish, 36lb. I was speechless. As I was weighing this fish my right hand rod ripped off with a nice 26lb common. Through the night I had another three fish: a 15lb common, a 12lb common and a 17lb common. After my session I could not believe how well I had done on my first ever session on the Thames.

My tactics were absolutely perfect.



36lb 4oz.



Never bait up with anything other than boilies if you are fishing for carp if you want real success, and don't be shy of baiting hard.

The results are clear. Here today I am still baiting my swim and I'm having constant success every time I visit. I have seen at least three 40s in

my swim this year but the small ones keep getting in there first. All I can do is stick at it and those 40s will be by my side soon. ■

37lb 3oz common.



Monster Common from the River Trent

By Ricky Bishop

My name's Ricky Bishop, age 25, and I've been fishing ever since I was a little kid with my dad. I never stopped from a young age, and as I got older I got more determined to target bigger fish. I can remember catching my first carp, and after that I was hooked. As I got older I got bored with fishing lakes and wanted more of a challenge, so I started to target river carp.

My friend Joey Mackeral, the owner of Stotabaits.co.uk is a big river fisherman and pointed me in the right direction. It took me a while. We went fishing on a stretch of the river in Nottingham that was known to have big river carp in.

I was using a prototype boilie called Gravel Grenades. We were there for a 24-hour session. I picked this nice bit of slack water on the far side, and I set up my rigs with nice little PVA bags, baiting little and often. Then later on that night around midnight I had a beep on one of my rods, and it just screamed off down the river. It put up a good fight, and my



heart and adrenaline was pumping when I finally landed the carp. It was a nice common weighing 26lb 2oz.

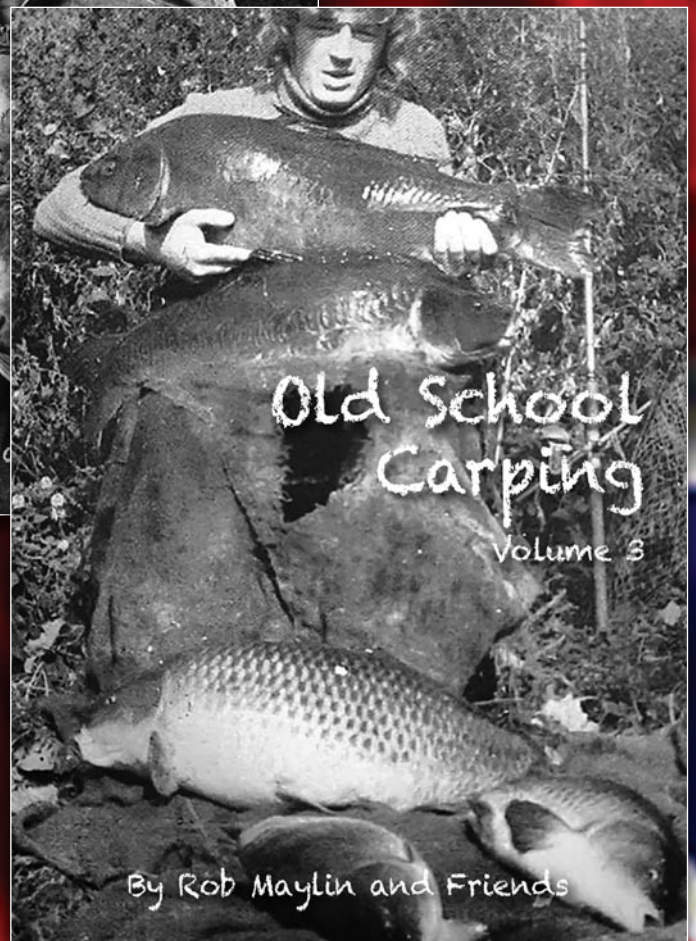
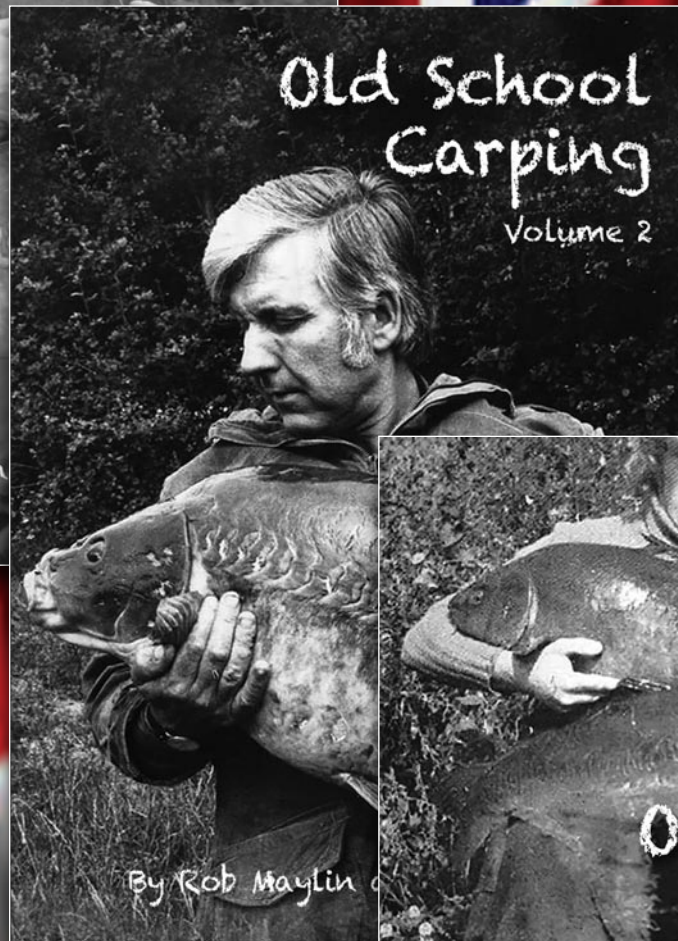
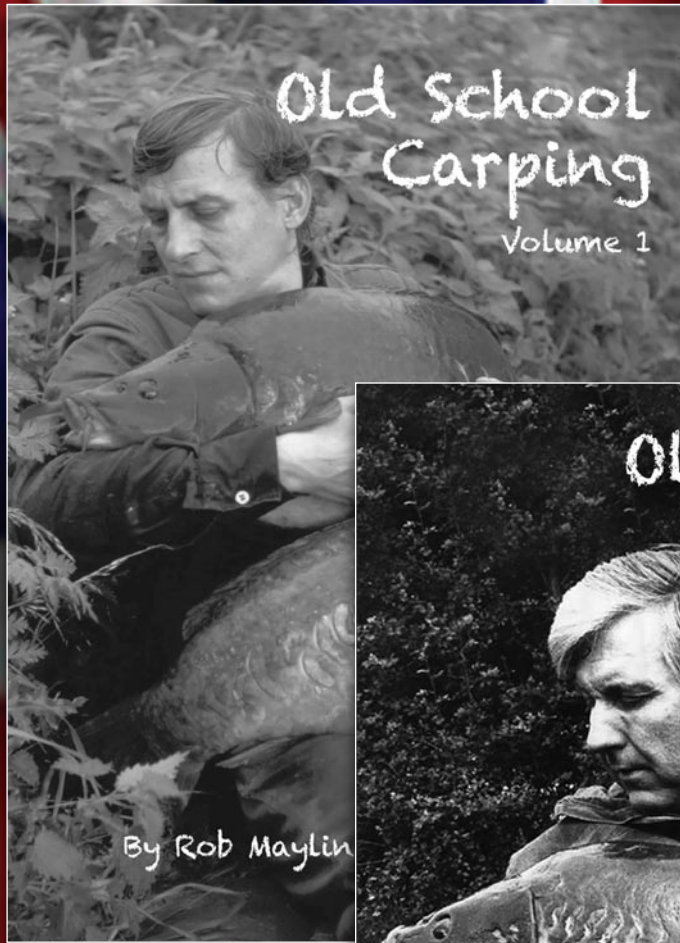
The later on in the session I targeted another stretch of the River Trent and was going to do a 48-hour session.

I walked for along time up and down the river till I found the perfect spot that looked very carpy, with a big

overhanging willow tree. I decided to set up home for 48 hours. I kept baiting up under the tree and down the side, but I had nothing for the first night. Then I decided to make a fresh rig and try a new approach. I set my traps and lay and waited till the following morning, when at 8am I had a take, resulting in a 38lb 9oz common. ■



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River Severn, Worcester

By Sean Smith

After becoming disillusioned with fishing overcrowded lakes, I decided to give river carp fishing a go on the River Severn around Worcester. It was the middle of April, and I put on my walking shoes to go looking for the River Severn carp. I walked for miles on my first day but found nothing. Not to be put off, a few days later when the sun was shining, I was walking the banks again looking. After a couple of hours I found a small group of carp and started to get really excited. I had some sweetcorn with me and threw in a couple of handfuls, and the carp were straight on it. I watched for a while until they had eaten all of the bait then left for home.

That night in bed I couldn't sleep for thinking about what bait to use, and I came up with a fishmeal boilie recipe, which was both nutritious and very smelly. The next day I ordered the ingredients, and when they came I started rolling about 60 kilos over a



16lb 4oz.

couple of weeks. I had arms like Pop-eye after gunning out that much paste, but I hoped it would be worth

it. At the start of May I started to bait up the spot where I'd found the carp. I baited twice a week with my boilies, Red Band pigeon conditioner and maize.

I set up for my first session about 9 o'clock on the 15th June, ready for the midnight start. I was tremendously excited. Bang on midnight I cast my two baited rigs, which were size 4 long shank hooks, tied blowback style to Korda N-Trap Soft. Bait was 20mm homemade bottom baits tipped with 15mm Red Northern Specials. I had a bite within two minutes, but unfortunately it was a bream.

I quickly unhooked it and cast back out. Half an hour later I had a screaming take, which was obviously no bream. My heart was pounding, and I eventually landed my first ever river carp, a 16lb 4oz ghostie. Catching it after all the hard work and on my own bait was a real buzz. During the rest of that session I had four more carp, all around low doubles, and I went home really happy and looking for-



21lb 6oz.

ward to my next session.

I fished a week later and had a right result with my first 20lb-plus river carp, a lovely dark common of 23lb 12oz. I also had a mid-double common of 15lb 8oz. I continued baiting up twice a week, and as I had seen no other anglers fishing the stretch I was confident that no one would jump in on all my hard work. I could only fish one night a week due to family and work commitments, but as my bait was working that wasn't a problem.

My next few sessions produced five carp, all of which were high singles to low doubles, but I was still confident of catching something bigger. I didn't have to wait long for something larger, as on my next session I landed a battle-scarred 21lb 6oz common. I couldn't bait up for the next few weeks as I was off on holiday to Greece, and on my return I suffered my first blank. I decided to lump in a load of bait in readiness for my next session, which paid off big style as I



23lb 12oz

had five carp topped off by my biggest of the season, a lovely scaly mirror of 24lb 1oz.

In total so far this season I have had 39 carp out of the Severn, and I can

honestly say it is the most enjoyable fishing I have ever done. I have attached a few photos of some of the carp I've caught during the season so far. ■



24lb 1oz.

Under Your Rod Tips

By Chris Thrupp

After the successful 300-acre Brogborough bait test with The Thripster Pearl, bream angler and FF Custom Bait partner, Neil Williamson, and I decided to test it on the River Ouse. Various lakes in the Bedford area either have the Ouse running through them or are connected through a marina. Most of the Ouse-fed lakes are close season for obvious reasons, so we chose the Priory Lake. It's 60 acres connected directly to a marina then a broad section leading out to the river. We had been informed ten miles down the river at Wyboston Lakes (which is also Ouse-fed) there had been carp caught that had been caught from the Priory, so we knew the fish travelled down the river entering the lakes.

We made it as difficult as possible for the bait test. We decided on a win-



ter test and set up on the opposite side to the marina because it is a country park with lots of people walking dogs, and a short cut through for cyclists working in the nearby industrial site – it was challenging to say

the least! But we prevailed. It was of special interest to me, as I had met my wife here. We got engaged here and we had our wedding photos done here, so I was very keen to wet a few lines in the Priory.





It was another daunting one, thinking no fish could be anywhere near us, but having full confidence in The Pearl, I knew if they were in the area The Pearl would pull them as it had done on many lakes previously.

Even though it was winter fishing, we managed to catch our fair share, up to and over the thirty-pound mark and they were all in pristine condition. Even Neil, while testing our new groundbait and Pearl juice managed

to bank an old low 20lb warrior of a mirror.

We had found an 8ft channel one rod length out and had all our fish from this channel. Remarkable, as it could have easily been missed with an underarm cast. I found it by accident, plumbing the area after I had seen activity and had liners close in. Never ignore the margins, even in winter... fishing under your rod tips.

Thanks for reading. ■



Neil Williamson 22lb 8oz a PB at time of bait test

I'm Gonna Need a Bigger Boat!

River Cam in Cambridgeshire by Kevin Sanders



It's no secret that my local river holds carp, but they are far from easy to catch. One reason is that access to the best areas is limited. A long walk carrying all your carp gear is not something most people want to do, and to be honest neither do I! So when I was lucky enough to be given an old Avon inflatable boat I knew this was going to be my way of targeting the nomadic river carp. I did a dry run and inflated the boat in the garden to see if I could fit everything I needed in it. There wasn't much room, but I could fit the minimum in it I needed to fish effectively and safely.

I had dabbled with a bit of bank fishing on the river in the past and caught my first river carp, a small but mint common. This time I had the boat so set about baiting a couple of spots that are hard to target from the bank. If I was going to spend time and money bating I didn't want to make it easy for someone else to gain from my effort. But if they did, I would accept it, as nobody has exclusive rights to fish a specific spot, unless they own the venue of course.

When June 16th came around I had to work, so I got everything ready for an evening session. I was thinking of maybe doing the whole night in the boat, but it would not be the most comfortable night's fishing in that cramped space! I got to the river about 4.30pm and set about getting the boat into the river. The excitement was building! With everything loaded, the electric motor set me off downriver. I was cautious about gunning it to the spot, as I wanted to make sure I had enough power to get me back! I did see one carp on the way to my chosen spot. It was a small common of about 10lbs in weight, not far from the area I was going to fish. I wondered if this could have been the same fish I caught a couple of seasons earlier?

A few minutes later and I was anchored up in my chosen spot. The weed was not bad, but the cabbage lilies in front of me would make my lines stick out like a sore thumb! I had my weed rake with me, so I made a clearing to allow a better line lay. I



(Top) Boat and Kit.
(Centre and bottom) 18lb mirror, River Cam



baited the spot with a quarter kilo of my trusty homemade Squid and Shellfish Sense Appeal boilies, a mixture of whole and broken baits. I didn't want to bait too heavily, as if a carp came along I wanted it to find my hookbait easily. My rigs were two hinged stiff links, but with a soft, coated braid main boom just so they presented better on the soft riverbed. I used 2oz leads on clips. The hookbaits were homemade pop-ups of the same flavour as the free offerings, one red and one white. I was not expecting anything to happen anytime soon, as the weed raking might have scared away any carp in the area.

Maybe I was worrying over nothing, as a couple of hours later my rod was bending and the reel screaming as the white pop up was taken by a strong fish! I picked up the rod and was met by a surge of power from the fish. I had to slacken the clutch as it made off downriver. Whenever I turned it, the fish just ran stronger the other way! It tried to take me into the snaggy margin, but luckily I steered it clear otherwise it would have been game over! The fight was nearly over,



and I could see it was mirror. I got it over the net, and as happens so often, it decided it didn't like it and swam out again! I pulled it in again and this time I scooped the net up around it. Got one!

With the fish safely in the net I set about getting ready for unhooking and weighing the fish in the boat. I lifted the fish up and placed it on the

mat. He was nose to tail to the width of the boat. I thought to myself, I'm gonna need a bigger boat if I catch any bigger fish! The hook was never coming out, as it was firmly in the bottom lip. I treated its lip with anti-septic as always. The fish weighed 18lbs and was in mint condition. I slipped it back extremely content that I'd managed to get a fish in my little boat and returned safely.

I carried on fishing into dark but only managed a reasonable bream. I decided I didn't want a night unhooking those, so I called it a day and steamed back to my car. It was dark, but my head torch and handheld Maglite were more than enough to see my way up the river. Suffice to say I can't wait to get back afloat again! Watch this space! ■



(Top left) End rig.
(Top right) Full rig.
(Above) Carp in the net.
(Left) Rods on Boat.

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River Monster

By Simon Scott

This is the first river carp I have ever caught. I have been carp fishing for about ten years but only on lakes and large gravel pits. I saw this fish last year and thought it was about a mid thirty. I went back this year to the same stretch of river where I saw a group of nine carp; they were all between 15lb to 30lb apart from one which was head and shoulders bigger than the others. I recognised this fish from the year before by the few scales on the top of its back. I found a clear spot in the weed where they were patrolling, and I went back to the car to get some bait. I baited this spot and left it for about two hours then went back, and the bait was gone. I rebaited and left again, and the same thing hap-

pened two hours later – I went back, and the bait had gone again. I did this throughout the day and saw all the carp feeding heavily on my baited spot. The last time I baited that day was just before dark. I put in about two kilos of chopped and whole boilies and a kilo of carp pellet soaked in salmon and hemp oil and then left for the evening.

The next morning I was back at the crack of dawn with my rod ready to have a go. I wanted that fish! As I got back to my baited spot I saw tails up and clouds of silt; they were ripping the bottom up for the bait. I knew this was not the right time to lower my baited rig into the water, as I wanted the big one. I left and went to see a friend of mine who was fishing a nearby gravel pit. I went back to the river about 8am. As I got back to the

spot on the river I saw the big girl on her own hovering over the spot. I could not believe my luck. I watched and waited for her to move far enough away so as not to spook her. After about ten minutes she moved. This was my chance! I lowered my bottom bait boilie rig onto the spot and threw a few pellets over the top. I walked my line down the bank and got down to the river's edge, ripping my legs to shreds on the brambles. I did not care, as my adrenalin was pumping. I slackened off my line as I was using 20lb fluorocarbon, and I new this would sink and give me a good line lay.

I sat there for about an hour waiting in anticipation, watching my line, but it never even flickered, but then suddenly it tightened and started cutting through the water at speed. The fish



went straight down the river. I knew I had to stop this fish, as it had already traveled at least thirty yards down the river and was heading straight for the bridge to my left. I tightened the clutch of my reel, and as I did this I could not believe my eyes as I saw this deep slab of a fish come clean out of the water. It turned and went to my right where there was another bridge. I knew that I could not give this fish an inch and turned it again. After this I just held tight and slowly gained line, but she still had a lot of fight left in her. I could see carp following her; I have never seen this behaviour before and was amazed. She pulled into the margins of the river, but I kept my cool and let the rod do the work. Finally her head came up, and I guided her into my net. I kept the fish in my net and phoned my friend who got to me in what seemed like minutes. As I lifted the net I thought it was snagged on something, but knew by this time this was a special fish. We got her on the landing mat, zeroed the weigh sling, and my mate Del held up my prize. I could not believe it



when the scales went 44lb 5oz. We rechecked the weight with me holding the fish, and we both agreed on a weight of 44lb 5oz. I am still in shock

and believe that this was a gift from my mum, as she passed away two years previously, and it was her birthday. ■

Carpy Humour





25lb 10oz, a new PB mirror for Stacey Milsum.



Pipe Lake member Gavin Amos with a stunning mirror carp weighing in at 31lb 2oz.

Chronicle Fishing



**November 2015 Lake Diary - Oak Lakes Fisheries,
Burnham Road, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7BJ**

Well it's been a terrific November for Oak lakes Fisheries, with both

Pipe Lake and Oak Lake fishing extremely well. Even though the temperatures have dropped very low and conditions have been less than favorable with some extremely high winds and high pressures to contend with, the ever faithful Oak Lakes anglers have still been braving the conditions to get on the bank, and for their efforts they are still finding rewards during their time spent by the lake. For the first to get his catch report mentioned, we head over to Oaks lake where Stacey Milsum, and between him and friend Luke Trutwein they managed to find no less than twelve fish across their session. This 25lb

OAK LAKES FISHERIES SOUTHMINSTER

10oz mirror was the biggest of them all, while also being a new PB for Stacey, so well done Luke and great angling to you both.

Next to brave the November cold was team member Ricky Westpfel and his daughters, who, on a short family overnighter on Oak Lake, had this lovely mid double for their efforts. The girls were absolutely made up with it and can't wait to go back; this is what fishing is all about. Back over to Pipe Lake and long standing member Gavin Amos is at it again, catching another 30lb carp to add to his list of captures from Pipe Lake, this time tipping the scales at 31lb 2oz, so it was well worth getting out of the house for.

Last on the catch reports roundup

this month is an angler who managed one of the first 20lb carp out this November. Fishing from 'The Finger' or Peg 13 on Oak Lake, this potbellied carp took the dial to 22lb 2oz; so a great result on this very cold start to November. Overall the lakes are still producing good fish and in numbers too, so any anglers who are thinking of putting away their rods should definitely think again. There is still lots of life left in both lakes, and as you can see from here, effort = reward when it comes to fishing. Good luck on the bank and see you here next month at Oak Lakes Fisheries. For the entire up to date goings on at Oak Lakes Fisheries please visit their website at www.oaklakesfisheries.co.uk or visit them on Facebook. ■



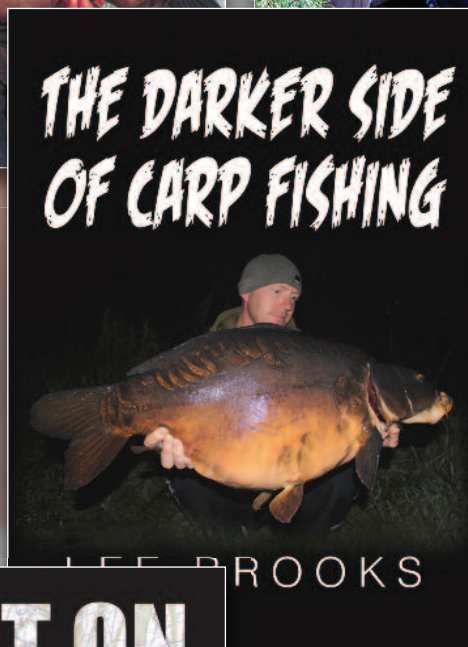
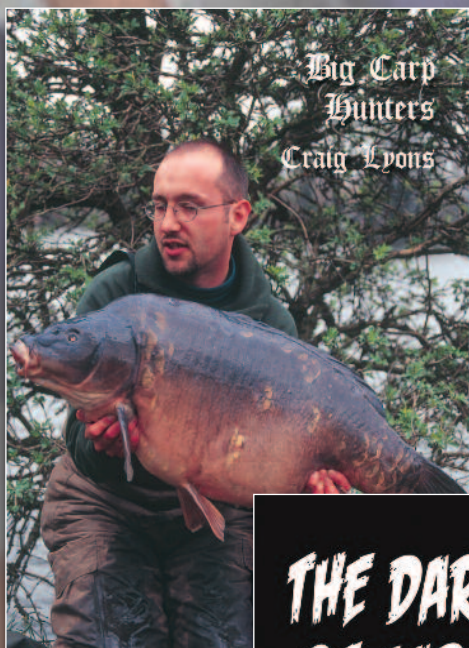
Team member Ricky Westpfel with his children and a beautiful upper double common.



One of the first 20s caught in November, a cracking 22lb 2oz common.

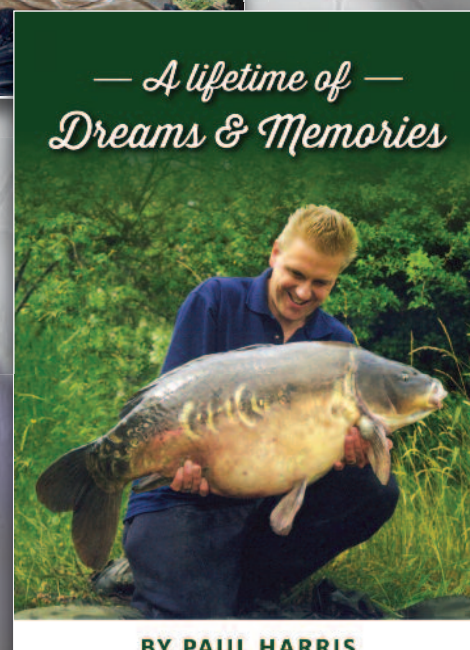
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Adventures on the Mighty Trent

By Lee Brooks

Wild and windy and very carpy.

It was around 7am I received a phone call from a good friend of mine asking if I wouldn't mind calling down to him to take a few photos of a fish he had caught from his boat. You could tell it was either a good fish or a stunner. We had a quick chat before I headed down to see him. His fishing had been really slow, and I thought he would be catching every other night, but the river isn't that easy even if you do live on it in a boat. I grabbed my camera and headed down to see him. He walked up to me with a big smile on his face and the usual "Alright, shag" greeting.

I said, "Let's have a look then!" We took a stroll down towards the boat and there was this impressive looking river carp, an absolute stunner. Although not massive, it was something that would whet my appetite for the coming months I'd planned to fish this season. The river had not long opened up, and with spending every minute down the syndicate lake and doing well, I wanted a change and decided I would start doing more river fishing again.

After a few pictures were taken I had a few cups of tea and lengthy chat about all things carp with my mate. As I was driving home the plans were in motion to start my campaign on the river. I knew there would be more blanks than fish, but that for me was the enjoyment, because one river carp is worth ten syndicate carp, and fishing for the unknown is always something I treasure.

I'd not long since joined a new bait company called Aqua Dynamic, so I was excited on both counts about trying the new bait on my sessions. I didn't waste any time... That evening I headed straight down to river and started prebaiting various swims that looked like they would hold a carp or two in the slack areas. The main thing about this stretch of the Trent is that hardly any anglers fish the swim, so the unknown could soon be the known.

I was putting in a kilo of the Deliverz boilie spread over two swims every other night, or when possible if I was working away. I even started doing afternoon sessions after work for a few hours knowing full well I



wasn't going to catch, but I always like to go against the odds because from time to time I have been lucky in the past, especially when conditions don't look too good.

My mate's catch results have varied so much over the past years. Living on a boat you would think he would be catching every other night, but if the truth be told, it's probably one fish a month, even when fishing different spots near the boat. So I learned that alternating swims with prebaiting etc would be the way forward, and also putting enough bait out to keep them there just in case the bream moved in for a free meal.

I normally use two rods on the river, but this time round I had a third rod

out with sweetcorn on just to keep a check for the bream. As my sessions started so did the blanks. I was alternating different swims and even different stretches and nothing was being caught. I asked local lads about their catch rates, and from general observation the river just wasn't fishing well.

The weather was really warm, and I was praying for some low pressure to come my way. One Thursday evening my mate phoned me and asked if I wanted to spend the weekend fishing a remote part of the river only accessible by boat. I was all for it! He had just got his outboard motor working for his small boat, so after a quick chat I was preparing my bait and gear



(Top) Sunny afternoon stalking.
(Right) Location location.



(Above) Very slack margins.

(Below left) My brother with a Trent carp.

(Below right) The deliverz boilie.

ready for a weekend on river.

Finishing work couldn't come around quickly enough that day, and I must have broken every speed limit to get back, but that's fishing for you. I sent a quick "I'm on my way" message to my mate, and I was heading down to the boat. After a quick cuppa and a bit of banter the boat was loaded, engine fully fuelled and the

lock gates were opening.

You can't beat that feeling of being on a boat just taking a steady trip down the river knowing the location you're fishing probably hasn't been fished before with it being very remote and access is only possible by boat. For all we knew we could be fishing for an unknown record or the river's most stunning carp.

Shortly we arrived at the location, and from my first sighting it was untouched, overgrown with that carpy feel about it. We flipped a coin to let fate decide who was fishing

which side, and I was on the left and my mate ended up on the right. We were in our element, so after setting up I had a good cast around to see what the depths were like. The margins slowly increased in depth from 8ft to 15ft. I have always loved fishing the margins on the river; it's where I have had most of my fish from over the years, and there isn't much flow either.

I planned to fish two rods that weekend, and to test the water I had one rod in around 8ft of water and the other a few rods lengths further out in 15ft of water. I was trying to find out how far out the fish would be travelling so I could hopefully intercept them en route. I bought 4kg of the Deliverz boilies with me this session. I was going to give it the little and often approach using normal and chopped baits just to make things that little bit different. I had heavily glugged all the freebies as well just to give it that extra pulling power for any passing carp.

As the sun started to go down my mate and I had a few beers and talked about all things carpy. The weather was rather cool that evening, and the conditions looked really good for a bite or two. My friend's rod gave a few liners, the bobbin started dancing, and then the humour started... the bream had moved in on his spots, and I couldn't stop laughing. He went on to have a few more that evening, but eventually they gave him a break and we both got some well-earned sleep.

My rods had been quiet all night with not a single bleep on my alarms, which I was surprised by, as my spots weren't too far from mate's, probably 20ft apart due to the swim being very tight. In fact there was only just enough room for our shelters to be put up.



It wasn't until around first light that my mate's left hand rod ripped off, and he was straight out of his bag and skidding towards his rods. He must have played the fish for a minute or so, and then he looked at me puzzled and said, "Its come off! It's come off!" Now normally I would look concerned and say something like, "That's a shame, mate" but we both do take the Mickey out each other a lot, so my response was absolute laughter! First I ripped him about his crappy rigs, then crappy bait... you get where I'm going with this.

I put the kettle on, and we had an in-depth think as to why he had lost the fish, and he got his game plan together and soldiered on... It seemed my mate was getting all the action and I was struggling, with no liners or bream for that matter. I decided to target different depths and space my rods further apart for the rest of the weekend.

As night time passed and early morning was heading towards us, finally my left hand rod screamed off. I wasn't messing about; I was on the rods in seconds and playing my first river carp of the season. It went straight out into the main flow of the river and started heading upstream. I was using 12lb mono, so I wasn't worried, but certainly hoping it wouldn't head for any of the usual river snags



that may be around this particular part of the river. All in all after five minutes of playing and receiving abuse from my mate, I netted a crackling long, dark mirror. It certainly looked like it had been round the block a few times, and I was well chuffed with the result.

I think sometimes people think you can just head down the river and catch consistently, but that is never the case. In fact in my opinion the river is the hardest challenge for any angler, especially when targeting carp. It's all well and good fishing the same spots and catching the same fish, but venturing out into the

**(Above) Sunset on the Trent.
(Below) Old warrior.**

unknown is what it's about for me. So after having that lovely mirror and a few cups of tea, the boat was loaded, and we were heading back. I offered to make some rigs up for my mate as a joke, and you can imagine his reaction... I think it was very funny.

A few days passed, and I hadn't wasted time... The bait was being put into various swims on a regular basis, but the river wasn't giving me any luck; there simply weren't any fish around. My mate wasn't having anything off his boat either, so I was





**(Above) Up river.
(Below) Stunner.**

left struggling with which stretch of river to try out next. I started doing a few afternoon sessions, and over the course of a few weeks I managed to lose two fish on the bounce, which was disheartening, but like always, being persistent and always willing to try was my approach.

My mate called me and asked if I fancied another weekend somewhere further downriver for a change. I jumped at the chance, and it wasn't long before the weekend was waiting for me. The weather forecast for the weekend was overcast with spells of rain, so the weather looked good for a bite. I was just hoping location was going to be right, seeing as this stretch hadn't been fished by anglers

for quite some time over the years.

After a nice 20-minute journey downriver we finally arrived at the chosen location. We had a look around and after the flip of a coin we chose the swims we were going to fish. In the past I had seen carp head and shouldering in this area on regular visits, but that was from the opposite side of the river, so having chance to approach this section by boat was a blessing. The first thing I noticed was how shallow this area was – there was a huge slack where we were fishing so chances are there were going to be a few carp present in the swim.

After a quick depth check I had 2ft in the margins and around 10ft on the edge of the flow, so I put all my eggs in one basket and placed both rods on the edge of the flow. I put out a kilo of boilies spread over both rods and fished an orange pop-up flavoured with The Edge on the rig. My mate was catching bream straight away, and he hadn't put much bait in, probably only a few handfuls on each spot. He finally managed a small carp around midnight, then after that things calmed down, I was getting liners frequently but no fish yet.



As morning passed the forecast was keeping its promise. The skies looked deadly, and it looked like the rain wasn't far away. It was around midday when my left hand rod started taking line very slowly. At first I thought was that it was a bream, but after a few minutes of pulling through the weed, the fight became more intense, and I realised I was into a river carp.

The fish was like lightning, speeding under the boat and heading upriver. After a few failed attempts I finally managed to net a beautiful looking common. I was well chuffed, and just as I was taking the pictures a pinhole of sunshine beamed down on me and my capture through the clouds, and it made the picture something a bit special for my collection. So the fish went back to its wild environment, and a victorious cuppa was made.

I think it's fair to say I get more enjoyment from catching a river carp these days than I do when fishing my syndicate lake. T river fish aren't as big by any means, but they are cer-



Wild parts of the Trent.

tainly worth the wait in my opinion. As the day progressed into night, the fishing slowed down for us. We put some more bait on our chosen spots and got our heads down for the evening. I think my mate needed it more than me with the countless bream he caught the night before, but

it was all good sport.

The following morning we started packing our gear away and headed upriver in the boat. It was a fantastic weekend's fishing – lots of bream with the odd carp, but that's the style of the river... the unknown, the adventure. ■

Carpy Humour

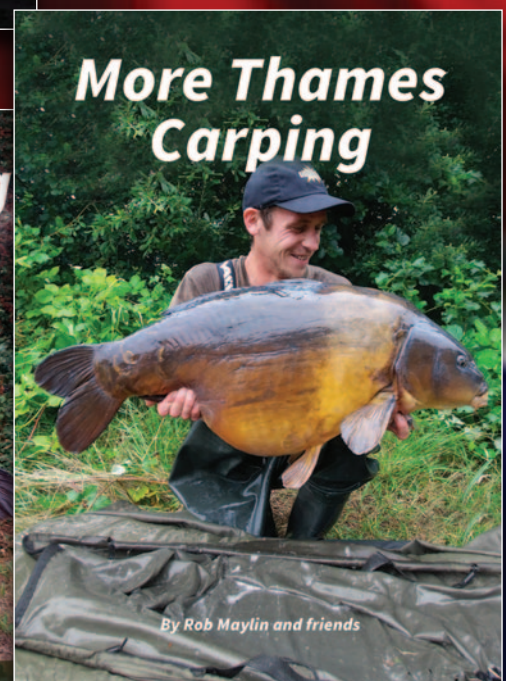
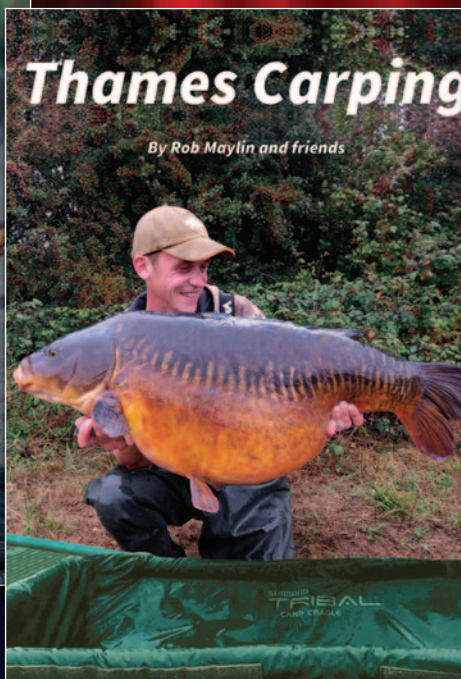
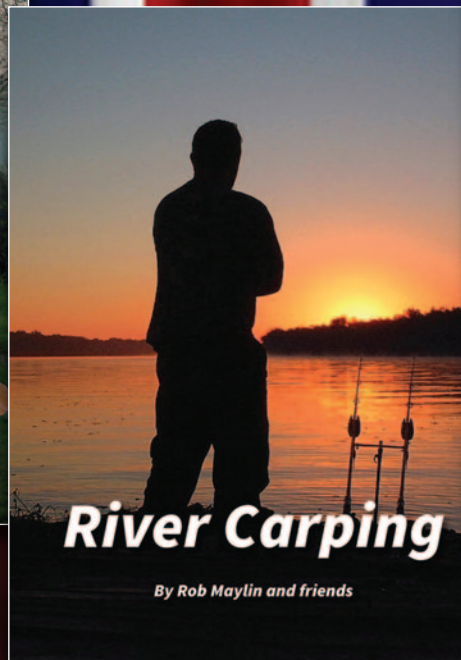
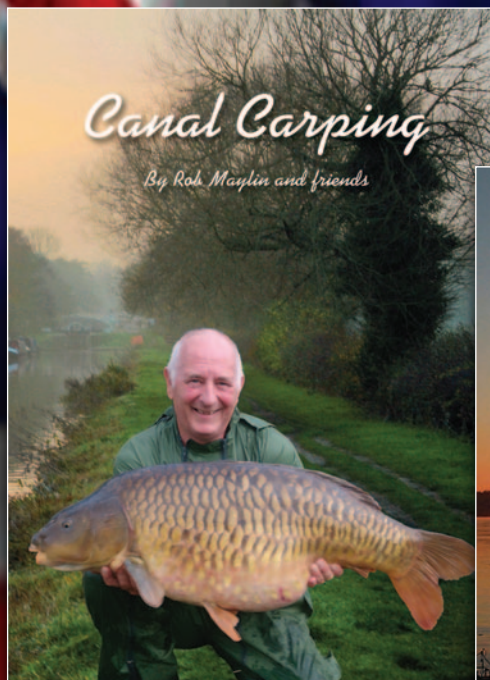


Look me straight in the eye and tell me you didn't buy more fishing gear!



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