

Est. 1883

---

# **B.A.A.NEWS**

---

Tel 01562-882116 Fax 01562-882126  
Email [baajnw@btinternet.com](mailto:baajnw@btinternet.com) Website [www.baa.uk.com](http://www.baa.uk.com)  
Facebook [www.facebook.com/BirminghamAnglersAssociation?fref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/BirminghamAnglersAssociation?fref=ts)

---

January 2015

## **Nordley winter shoots cancelled**

See page 2

## **New BAA website to go live soon**

Updates will be published on Facebook, the existing website and BAA News.

## **Happy New Year and tight lines for 2015**

# Bailiffing

## 'Watch out there's a bailiff about!'

During 2014, Association bailiffs have so far reported nearly 2400 visits to individual venues, checking over 4000 anglers. Of that number, 254 were removed from our waters for not having a membership or day ticket. This means that around 6.5% of anglers checked fished without membership compared with over 7% during the previous year.

This is good news and we hope that the activities of our bailiffs is making a difference and will continue to do so throughout 2015.

Please continue supporting all BAA bailiffs when you see them on the bank, they are volunteers and are doing their bit to keep our waters safe places for us all to fish.

Happy New Year to you all.

Kevin Pearson  
Superintendent Bailiff  
Birmingham Anglers' Association



## Executive update



### Nordley shooting

The agreement with a shooting syndicate to use Nordley for shoots on alternate Thursdays through the winter as reported in the October 2014 edition has been cancelled due to shooting taking place outside the agreed dates and when members were fishing the pools.

### Bailiff recruits

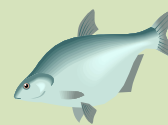
6 new bailiffs have been recruited recently bringing bailiff strength up to 50+.

### Uckinghall bank

A contractor has surveyed Uckinghall Pool to advise on repairing the erosion of the windward bank. The contractor recommends the positioning of rocks in the pool along this bank and topping off the rocks with soil to re-establish the bank.



# Fishing news



## Cold day at Coppice



21lb 06oz common (Colin Weed)



18lb mirror (me)

Kev of Birmingham with a report from Coppice. Arrived at 7am on the 13<sup>th</sup> December to an ice covered lake. In the 29 hours me and Mr Weed were there we had 2 carp out, but they were nice looking and a nice weight too.

Thank for a great year and wishing you all at the BAA a great Christmas and fantastic New Year.

Thanks Kev of Birmingham :)

# Fishing news record

## for last 6 months

fish/catcher	lb	oz	location	method	date caught	BAA News edition
<b>Barbel</b>						
<b>River Avon</b>						
Steve Evans	13	0	Marlcliff	Luncheon meat	09/08/2014	Sept 2014
Jim Clarke	9	5	Barton			Sept 2014
<b>River Severn</b>						
Dave Hutton	12	2	Ladyham	Hair rigged Spam	27/09/2014	Nov 2014
Gaynor Wade	9	0	Arley Harbour Inn			Oct 2014
Pete Jones	9	0	Ripple		27/09/2014	Nov 2014
Neil Perkins	8	14	Hampton Loade	Pellet		Sept 2014
<b>Bream</b>						
<b>River Severn</b>						
Mark Webb	8	8	Lower Severn	Worm/caster hook bait		Sept 2014
Pete Jones	7	10	Birds Meadow	Corn		Oct 2014
Colin Townsend	6	0	Birds Meadow			Oct 2014
<b>Pools</b>						
Graham Beck	4	8	Coppice		October	Dec 2014
<b>Common Carp</b>						
<b>River Avon</b>						
John Care	10	2	Wasperton	Double elips pellet	03/08/2014	Sept 2014
<b>Pools</b>						
Dan Hancox	22	3	Coppice		26/07/2014	Aug 2014
Colin Weed	21	6	Coppice	Lake ice covered	13/12/2014	Jan 2015
<b>Mirror Carp</b>						
<b>River Severn</b>						
Pete Jones	16	12	Ripple	Double red maggot	27/09/2014	Nov 2014
<b>Pools</b>						
Kevin Smith	18	0	Coppice	Lake ice covered	13/12/2014	Jan 2015
Paul Badger	16	4	Coppice	Homemade boilie	26/07/2014	Sept 2014
Kevin Smith	15	13	Coppice		15/07/2014	Aug 2014
Kevin Smith	15	9	Coppice		15/07/2014	Aug 2014
Kevin Smith	15	1	Coppice		15/07/2014	Aug 2014

## Chub

### River Severn

Peter Wade	5	10	Arley LB			Oct 2014
John Morgan	4	13	Holt Fleet	Worm	30/06/2014	Aug 2014

### River Teme

Brenda Williams	4	7	Lindridge	Trotted maggot	21/08/2014	Sept 2014
-----------------	---	---	-----------	----------------	------------	-----------

## Perch

### Pools

Graham Beck	2	10	Coppice		November	Dec 2014
-------------	---	----	---------	--	----------	----------

## Pike

### River Avon

Jamie Gormley	15	0		ledged sardine	24/08/2014	Sept 2014
Spud	12	0		Float fished deadbait		Nov 2014
Harry Treadwell	9	0	Pershore	Float fished single maggot		Oct 2014

## Roach

### River Severn

Neil Perkins	2	4	Hampton Loade			Sept 2014
Neil Perkins	2	1	Hampton Loade			Sept 2014
Neil Perkins	2	0	Hampton Loade			Sept 2014

## Tench

### River Avon

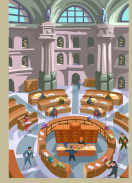
John Care	5	0	Wasperton	Double elips pellet	03/08/2014	Sept 2014
Gordon Beardsmore	4	11	Pensham		31/08/2014	Oct 2014
Darren Imms	3	8	Bidford RB			Sept 2014

### Pools

Graham Beck	3	0	Coppice		October	Dec 2014
-------------	---	---	---------	--	---------	----------



# Archive extracts



Below are extracts from the January 1958 and 60 editions of the Midland Angler, the forerunner to the BAA News.

## *Strictly for Specimen Hunters*

### *When the Fish Refuse to Feed*



## TRY THE 'COW DRINK DODGE'

A WEEK or so ago, when I went to fish a smallish river, I chatted with several of the other anglers present and discovered that they were members of a Specimen Hunters' Group.

They were dead keen, but a very mild week followed by a Saturday night frost severe enough to cover the adjoining canal with an eighth-of-an-inch of ice had the effects I feared, and the drop in water temperature seemed to have put the fish right off. So much so that up to 1 p.m. no one had taken a single fish.

I had myself been fishing two or three extremely fast runs with tiny pieces of crust fished ledger fashion in the hope of tempting a chub or two, but that too had met with failure—partly due to the conditions and partly due to the presence of too many anglers and the unavoidable noise they created.

I then decided to try and catch a few dace and roach and put together an 11ft. match rod with a dumpy little float about three inches long taking only one medium shot. I chose that short float because I intended to trot down a very shallow swim, for which purpose it is of course ideal. But how many anglers appreciate that obvious fact? Many of them put on a float so long that when shot to leave about ½ inch above the surface, the bottom end is nearly ploughing a furrow in the river bed!

says

NORMAN WOODWARD

I fixed the single shot on the line only four inches from a No. 6 hook which was to carry a single maggot for two reasons:—

1. The bait would be kept well down so that it trickled along the bottom naturally.
2. Any bite would show immediately the bait was taken.

Under adverse conditions such as those encountered on the day in question, when fish are not inclined to feed, if you do not hook your fish instantly you seldom get a second chance. It is therefore a sound idea to spend a little time getting your tackle right at the outset. For if you do succeed in getting the fish to feed they may soon go off; and if you have to change tackle you may miss them altogether that day.

The swim I chose had a cattle drink at its head—which was precisely why I chose it—and before I started fishing I went upstream about ten yards to some shallows where I proceeded to stir up the bottom with my feet. Then I came back to where I intended to stand and stirred up the bottom there, too.

After putting in a few maggots well upstream I started trotting down, stirring up the bottom every few minutes and adding a few more maggots, and after about 10 minutes I hooked a roach nearly a pound in weight. During the next 45 minutes I also had a few good dace and several more nice roach.

Then, much to my surprise, for I thought all anglers knew how to make the most of cattle drinks, two members of the Specimen Hunters' Group who had been watching me made a remark which prompted this article.

"That's a good dodge," they said. "And it works too."

Perhaps there are others who also do not realise that there are always good fish in or near cattle drinks, and that they live there because the cattle provide them with food thrown into suspension when they stir up the silt.

The fish not only associate such stirring up with the presence of food, but will often feed automatically when it occurs, even when fish in other parts of the river refuse to do so.

The fish I caught only fed for a short period it is true, but stirring up the silt brought them "on" and no one else caught fish that day. It could happen to you, too, so next time you visit a river and can't catch fish—try the cow drink dodge. It's as old as the hills, but it still works.



FOR PIKE IN PLENTY . . .

says PETER STONE

## Try Swimming The Stream

TO me there is nothing more unnatural looking than a fish anchored in one spot and swimming around in small circles on the end of a trace. Which is one of the reasons why a couple of seasons back I gave up paternostering for pike.

Maybe the old-fashioned method has accounted for many fish in its time, but I could not help wondering how many big old pike had taken a 'look see,' become very suspicious, and made off without being tempted.

So I changed over to something different — swimming the stream. I also changed my rod, for the 8-ft. or 9-ft. rods put on the market as pike rods are quite useless, unless you fish from a boat. Pike are usually found near a bed of weeds, and when you try to pull a pike over them with a short rod you pull the fish into them. You just can't help it.

You need at least an 11-footer, certainly not less, fairly powerful and with plenty of action. Mine has a test curve of 3-lb. and therefore takes a 15-lb. line. A No. 6 hook on gimp, a piece of cork 2 inches across and a barley-corn lead completes the outfit.

You then simply find the depth, plug the cork so that the live bait is about a foot off the bottom, and cast out. Fish close to your own bank first and, as the tackle drifts down, walk along the bank with it for about 20 yards. Then retrace your steps, cast a little further out and repeat the performance until you have covered the whole water.

Believe me, this method is far better than paternostering. It has helped me to catch hundreds of pike up to 14-lb. But I was not satisfied, I wanted to catch a big one, so I changed my tactics again.

I had read about dead baits luring pike but somehow never fancied them. It did not seem right for a pike to pick up a dead fish. Nevertheless I tried it.

I used the same tackle apart from two items — the No. 6 single hook was replaced by a No. 4 treble, and the float was dispensed with. Why not snap tackle? The answer is that I do not like snap tackle. Unless I am asked otherwise I like to return my pike, and a pike after having a snap tackle removed from its jaw is usually in a pretty sorry state.

bait lying motionless on the bottom and then making his way oh, so slowly towards it?

That is how really big pike work, no hurry and no fuss. I know, because I have watched them on numerous occasions. In fact I am more than ever convinced that, if you knew the whereabouts of a good pike, a dead bait is the thing to try. Live baits will do their utmost to



*How many big and crafty pike of this calibre have taken a look at a bait tethered to a paternoster and decided it wasn't worth the risk?*

It is an interesting fact that I did not get half as many bites on a dead bait as I did on a live one. But what is more important is the fact that the fewer bites came from better fish, thus proving the old saying that big pike are lazy.

Can you imagine old esox lying inside some rushes, his nose just poking out until he sees a shining

swim out of sight. A dead bait cannot.

Give them a trial between now and March and you may be surprised at the results. But don't forget to pierce the dead fish's swim bladder. Unless you do, the bait will rise towards the surface. And dead fish suspended in mid-water will catch very few pike.

### IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL FOR TACKLE DEALERS

Several well-known tackle manufacturers are to support a scheme that will enable tackle dealers to attend a course of instruction in angling, under the auspices of the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation.

For £14 14s. 0d., which includes a week's stay at the Palace Hotel, Grantown - On - Spey, any tackle dealer will receive a week's intensive instruction from one of the leading

professionals in the country — Captain T. L. Edwards.

Further information can be obtained from Mr. J. W. McCallum, Millard Brothers Ltd., Diana Works, Carfin, Motherwell.

### LADY ANGLER LANDS 57lb. SALMON

The heaviest salmon caught in Norway in 1959 was killed by a lady angler, Miss Mette Toubro, on the River Nansem. It weighed 57lbs.

# Now is the Time For a Specimen

says BILL DAVIES

THE last two months of the coarse fishing season is the time when the persistent angler meets with the largest specimens of chub, roach, perch and pike. While it does not follow that all specimens and the rewards they bring in prizes, etc., are taken by the experts, there is no doubt that many of them are, not because of more opportunities or better luck (a factor which anglers are prone to believe is inseparable from the sport) but because of the application of ordinary skill, supplemented by a persistent method of search and a closer study of the prevailing conditions.

Many anglers with years of experience guard the methods they employ most closely, and frankly you cannot blame them. Be that as it may, one cannot expect to capture a very large chub with a small pellet of paste or a single maggot on an 18 hook to 7x nylon. It does sometimes happen but the chances are remote.

A No. 8 hook on 3x gut or the equivalent in nylon baited with a fair-sized morsel of cheese or a lively worm may produce fewer bites, but when a fish does take it is almost certain to be a good one.

This idea of big baits for big fish does not necessarily mean that the bigger the bait the bigger the fish. It simply ensures that the lure is large enough to out-face the small-fry but is large and tempting enough to provide bigger quarry with an appetising mouthful. The same applies to pike. A minnow will often produce plenty of runs from fish of 1½ to 4 lb., but a four or five ounce dace, perch or roach usually attracts fish big enough and strong enough to elbow off the track the smaller brethren who seek to deprive him of his lawful prey.

The chub is a great favourite of mine at the "back end" of the season. It is rarely that chevin loses his appetite and strangely enough his digestive organs do not seem to be unduly affected by severe drops in temperature. When in his winter quarters a worm is a good bait, providing it is kept a week in moss to toughen it up and get rid of excess grease. Too much grease in a worm makes it soft and flabby, so much so that even when impaling it on the hook it sometimes breaks in two.

Some friends of mine who specialise in winter chub fishing use a benzedrine tablet to make the worm lively. They crush a tablet in water then immerse



Chub—an ideal winter quarry rarely affected by temperature changes.

the bait in it for a few seconds before starting to fish. Having seen baits so treated I can vouch for their liveliness and luring capabilities. Ledgering with worms will also take good roach but the roach is allergic to weather changes and may be difficult to find when the thermometer drops. The perch is another cold weather fish I like to catch, not only for the sport but for his table qualities. The flesh of a January or February perch is white and firm and as tasty as any trout. There is nothing in the fish line I like better than a perch fillet fried in deep fat and oatmeal.

A two-hook paternoster, the bottom hook baited with a lively worm and the top with a minnow or small gudgeon, is the ideal tackle to go searching for a specimen. Not forgetting, of course, that a perch usually takes the bait tail first and a wait of a few seconds is therefore essential before setting the hook.

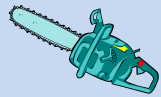
We now come to pike, the last of the winter quartet. A tiger in every sense of the word, a large pike is no fool and although the brain inside its ugly head is small it is still capable of creating a lot of trouble for the angler once the battle is joined. In my career I have taken over 100 pike of 20 lb. and over in this

(Continued on page 21)

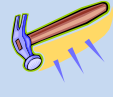
## NOW'S THE TIME FOR A SPECIMEN (Cont.)

country, Scotland and Ireland, and each of those large pike fought differently. Some Scottish loch pike leaped about for all the world like a fresh run salmon, others fought it out deep with flashing runs, while some of the largest have sulked and have had to be pumped all the way to the gaff. Much has been written about the large pike in Ireland, and although that country holds the record, my contention is that Scotland will take some beating. What is more, most of the fishing is free or can be had for the asking.





# Fisheries report



## Work party activities

During December until finishing just before Christmas we continued the work started in November at Nordley on Pool 6, cutting back all the trees and vegetation on the bank alongside the field to improve the amount of light reaching the water, reducing the summer algae and hopefully improve the fishing.

We discovered a leak in the bank we were working on letting water out of the pool into the gully that runs alongside. The level in the pool is currently being maintained by a good flow from Pool 5, but we are making arrangements for a fix.

We will be back this month to complete the job.



The leak



Progress so far

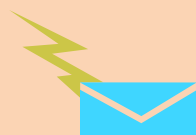
## Fladbury BAA sign



On the road bend between Fladbury and Jubilee Bridge someone has ripped down the access sign to our downstream meadow, pulled out the stakes and thrown it in the ditch, they have also removed a sign from a tree. The tree sign has been replaced but we will wait to see if it is repeated before putting the meadow access sign back up.

## New Arley footbridge

A new footbridge has been installed on Arley left bank across the gully between meadows 2 & 3, opposite Kinlet near where the large tree is in the river. The bridge has hand rails on both sides, a swing gate with a steep step onto it on the Arley side. Thanks to Glyn Price-Hunt for reporting this to us.



## Readers' letters



If you have any items, thoughts, issues you want to air in the BAA news, please email it to [baajnw@btinternet.com](mailto:baajnw@btinternet.com) titled for attn of BAA News Editor.

When sending in a comment can you please let us know if you don't want your name included?

The Editor will act as moderator for items to be included.



Dear BAA,

Warning to all members who fish canal and river sections.

### Canals and Rivers Trust – Friend or Foe?

I've lived alongside the Birmingham Fazeley canal for 30 years and have fished the BAA section for the last 3 or 4 years. I'm writing because of the actions taken by the Canals and Rivers Trust over the last few weeks.

Their chain-saw crews have decimated the far bank on the BAA sections, removing every single tree on all stretches. All that remains are stumps and a few bushes here and there.

I fully understand that it's a working waterway and that trees causing an obstruction need to be removed, but what they've done has been to completely remove far bank cover. This will have a long-term detrimental effect on fish, bird and wildlife populations. We could well see a drop in fish numbers in the future.

The riparian zone is vital for a freshwater habitat. Fish use the branches that extend into the water to spawn on and for cover from predators. But the importance of overhanging branches goes much further than this. Leaf litter that falls into the water is essential as it forms the foundation of the food chain. This is especially true of a freshwater habitat like a canal, which doesn't have nutrients washed-in as a river does.

It's not just fish that have been affected by the over-zealous chain-saw gangs. Moor hen and coot nesting sites have been destroyed along with kingfisher perches.

I noticed that where the canal runs near the RSPB reserve, they've left all the trees intact. Interesting that the trees weren't touched there – does that mean that they understand the importance of riparian vegetation and didn't want to tangle with the RSPB?!

As I understand it, the Riparian Law basically states that the owners of navigable waters can do what they like. But come on! The Canals and Rivers Trust are supposed to be a conservation body. How can they justify total clearance of so much bank-side vegetation, destroying fish spawning sites, bird nesting sites and disrupting the ecology of the whole (BAA) canal?

Roger OMalley

## Match Reports

**If you want to report the results of a contest you have organised on BAA waters, please email details.**

### Blue Ball AC

**Sunday 16th November**

**Booked for Swifts Water,  
River Avon, changed to  
Shernal Green,  
Birmingham Worcester  
Canal**

		<b>lbs</b>	<b>ozs</b>	<b>drms</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	B Wellings	2	3	0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	S Whittall	1	5	8
3 <sup>rd</sup>	P Mason	1	3	0





## Foam in rivers and still waters

What are the causes and what should you do?

**At certain times of year we get a lot of calls about foam in rivers and still waters. This can be a natural event with no adverse environmental implications; alternatively this can be a sign of pollution. This information sheet explains how to tell the difference and when and how the Environment Agency should be informed.**



### What causes foam on rivers, lakes and streams?

Foam is a natural phenomenon that occurs on many lakes and streams. Foam is produced when molecules such as fatty acids act as 'surfactants' interfering with the surface tension of water and allowing air and water to mix more easily. These molecules often float on the surface of the water as a thin film. Turbulence from waves, currents and wind cause the surfactant molecules to trap small bubbles that make up the foam.

#### Natural foam

Naturally produced surfactants, usually a fatty acid, are released from decaying organic material, but are also released in small amounts by living organisms. When dissolved in water, organic compounds are referred to as Dissolved Organic Carbon (DOC). The brown water that drains bogs and wetlands is also high in DOC

due to the high productivity and slow breakdown of plant material in these ecosystems.

#### Un-natural foam

However, not all foam is natural. Certain man-made products, including detergents, can cause foam.

In addition, human activities that cause an increase in algae or aquatic plant growth such as the introduction of fertilisers can cause plant and algae blooms and an increase in foam production.

#### What are 'surfactants'?

Molecules that act in a way which interferes with the surface tension of water. There are many natural and synthetic surfactant molecules.

### Is foam harmful?

Large amounts of foam can accumulate in certain areas of the river, especially downwind and within eddies, or just downstream of turbulent water, for instance below weirs. This foam is usually harmless; in fact only about 1 % of the foam is made up of the foaming agent which is usually a naturally occurring fatty acid. Most of the foam is simply air and water.

However, foam caused by synthetic products such as detergents, may be a sign of pollution that is harmful to fish and other aquatic life. In addition excess foam can be due to artificial nutrient enrichment of the water causing a nuisance algal bloom. The foam is not toxic, but the removal of oxygen during decay of an algal bloom can cause fish kills.

### How can I tell what kind of foam it is?

Although it's difficult to know for sure, foam from various sources can have different characteristics. Most foam in rivers is natural; foam caused by excessive nutrient input may be accompanied by other environmental impacts such as dead fish.

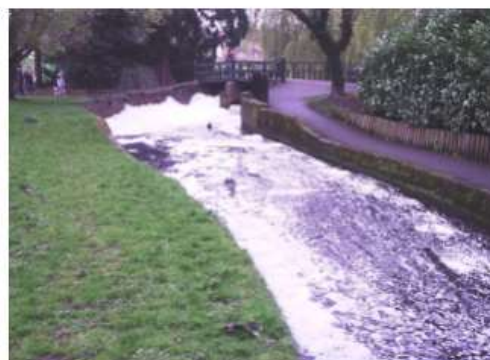
[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

1 of 2



### Natural foam

- May start off as white, but often becomes light tan or brown in colour as it collects sediment and organic matter.
- Natural, earthy, fishy or fresh cut grass smell.
- Occurs at many locations and accumulates in eddies and sheltered areas.
- The foam can persist for some time gradually diminishing in size.
- Found where water is agitated by high wind, turbulent water or waves.
- Often seen on windy days or following rain storms that encourage the transport of natural organic compounds.



### Man made foam

- Appears white in colour.
- Foam will smell fragrant, perfumed or soapy.
- Usually occurs over small area, localised near source of discharge.
- Generally will accumulate near the source of the synthetic surfactants and should not occur over large distances.
- Modern detergents are biodegradable. Foam will dissipate quickly once the source of synthetic surfactant is removed.
- Generally not related to natural events such as rainfall, high flows, or windy conditions

## When and where am I most likely to see natural foam?

In productive, or naturally nutrient-rich, lakes and turbid, tannin-rich rivers. However, clear nutrient-poor rivers can also have natural foam forming in the right conditions.

After rain, on a windy day, or in an area of water turbulence such as below weirs and in tidal areas.

In autumn when trees drop their leaves, when aquatic plants and algae begin to die and decompose.

As water temperatures rise and decay processes accelerate; this results in the release of organic compounds.

During soil erosion events such as high flows that result in input of nutrients from surrounding land.

## What if I suspect foam is the result of pollution?

It is important that if you suspect a pollution event you inform the Environment Agency as soon as possible.

Please use the Incident Hotline, and provide as many details as possible.

**In an emergency or to report an incident call  
0800 80 70 60 (24 hours)**

*Follow us on twitter:*

@EnvAgencyMids and @EnvAgency

*Read our blog:*

<https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/>

*Contact us*

Tel: 03708 506 506 (office hours)

Email: [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk)

customer service line  
03708 506 506

incident hotline  
0800 80 70 60

floodline  
0345 988 1188  
0845 988 1188

[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)





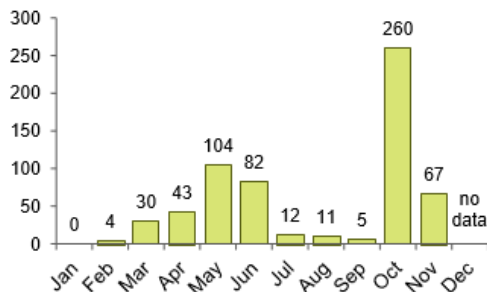
## Severn Angling News

Winter 2014

The magnificent River Severn, the longest river in the UK is home to salmon and coarse fisheries as well as a number of rare fish species. This newsletter is a chance for us to tell you what we are doing for angling in your river.

### Salmon migration 2014

We have been counting fish reaching the Afon Tanat (tributary of Afon Vynwy) to monitor movement of Atlantic salmon migrating back to their spawning grounds from the sea. We have already seen the best run in this tributary since 2007. Conditions for salmon movement were good in May and early June, then as the river water levels fell so did the numbers of salmon reaching the Tanat. Wet weather this autumn brought the fish upstream resulting in a peak count of 260 during October. We are hoping this leads to a successful spawning in winter.



#### Counts of salmon moving up through the Afon Tanat resistivity fish counter in 2014

While fish are only counted in this small area of the upper Severn catchment, we can use this as an indicator of a successful migration along 150 miles of the River Severn to reach this point. More work is being carried out easing fish passage over barriers and removing barriers where possible. Along with other species, salmon will benefit by reaching their spawning grounds in the best possible condition to spawn and contribute to the next generation.

[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

**The open season for salmon starts on 1 February, but you *must* release any salmon you catch until 16 June**

#### Why do we have a restricted open season for salmon?

Close seasons and restricted open seasons aim to maximise the number of fish contributing to recruitment. If fish are released carefully and handled as little as possible there is every chance they will survive to spawn. Mandatory catch and release from 1 February until 16 June is targeted at protecting the multi sea winter 'spring' salmon. These are larger than autumn migrating grilse and produce more and larger eggs. Catch and release also promotes survival of kelts, post-spawning salmon that if allowed, may return to the river and spawn again.

#### Reporting catches of salmon

We have recently started a free online service that allows salmon and sea trout anglers to submit catch returns online, throughout the year. All you need is your rod licence number and postcode. More information leads to better management. Try submitting information online here: [www.gov.uk/catch-return](http://www.gov.uk/catch-return)



### Non-native Severn sturgeon

Sterlets, a non-native sturgeon, have recently been caught on the River Severn. It is legal to sell these in the UK as ornamental fish to stock into garden ponds if there is no risk of them escaping. Unfortunately when these grow bigger, they are sometimes released into the wild. There have also been prosecutions of fisheries for illegally stocking these fish for angling.

Releasing pet fish into the wild is illegal and irresponsible. They can carry diseases, eat native fauna, cause problems for the local ecosystem, and interbreed with native fish.

### What should I do if I catch one?

If you catch a fish that you think is non-native, we would ask that you do the following:

- **Hold on to the fish.** If possible retain the fish alive and unharmed; use a keep net if possible.
- **Call our Incident Hotline.** We will try to get to you as soon as possible to identify the fish and remove it if it is non-native.
- **Take photographs.** If you have to release the fish these will help with identification. Show as much of the fish as possible, and any notable features. Email details to your local fisheries officer or to our general fisheries email: [SHWGFBG@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:SHWGFBG@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### Cold weather preparation

We don't yet know what this winter holds, however, we would always ask anglers and fishery owners to consider cold weather issues.

Past harsh winters have resulted in fish kills in still waters due to a lack of air exchange. Consider keeping an air hole open during very cold weather, but do not break any ice! If you would like to arrange an advisory visit, call your local fisheries officer

Bank sides can become eroded and slippery in winter and even small streams can be powerful. Be prepared and safe when angling

Game fish are in spawning condition. If you accidentally catch a salmon or trout in the close season, this must be returned immediately, alive or dead, and with the least possible injury

### Environment Agency blog

What do we do? The work different teams complete is often unknown and unseen by the angler on the river bank. As well as fisheries officers and environmental crime officers, a variety of people work behind the scenes to make our rivers better. This includes improving water quality, reducing pollution, reducing the negative impacts of development, and measuring improvements in rivers and still waters.

A great way to follow some of this work and the people that carry it out is to check out our blog: <https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk>

### Your rod licence money pays for...



**The rescue of coarse fish trapped on Worcester racecourse after flooding**

### Fish Focus: Roach



#### *Rutilus rutilus* red-eyed roach

- A shoaling silver fish common in lowland areas.
- They are deep-bodied with red fins and eyes
- They are very hardy and can tolerate warm temperatures, polluted and even brackish water
- In early summer, roach attach their eggs to weeds; spawning is most successful in warm summers.
- Roach have small mouths so need to get quite large before they can be caught on rod and line.
- Due to this a year class of roach sometimes seems to appear 'out of nowhere'.

**Contact your local fisheries officers for more details on these or any other issues**

**Sam Chapman**

Tewkesbury office  
01684 864498

**Brecht Morris**

Tewkesbury office  
01684 864517

**Liz Etheridge**

Shrewsbury office  
01743 283477

customer service line  
03708 506 506

incident hotline  
0800 80 70 60

floodline  
0345 988 1188  
0845 988 1188

[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

2 of 2

## Landmark case puts Water Industry in the Dock over public accountability

**21.11.14**



**Fish Legal will confront 3 Water and Sewerage companies at the Royal Courts of Justice, London, for a 4 day trial from 24 - 27 November 2014 that will have industry-wide implications, to argue that the public should have a right under 'freedom of information law' to know about the companies' activities that affect the environment in England and Wales.**

The November hearing could be pivotal in changing the way the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 are applied to these, and other, now privatised utilities, to make them as transparent about their activities as organisations in the public sector (which they were formerly part of). Fish Legal wants to access environmental information on behalf of its angling membership, because the water industry does untold damage to fisheries and the water environment, which is not fully disclosed to those affected, or to the Environment Agency.

This is a battle Fish Legal has fought since 2009, when it asked various water companies to come clean about the sewage they were dumping into rivers and coastal waters through a network of combined sewer overflows, but the companies refused to accept the public's right to know. Fish Legal's lawyers, representing member clubs, riparian and fishery owners, have often been refused access to water company environmental information (e.g. related to pollution incidents) under the 2004 Regulations. The Regulations would apply a strong duty to disclose requested information that they hold and within a fixed time-period, but the water companies currently reject this in favour of providing what they want to give on a voluntary basis, and within their own time frame. Fish Legal believes this undermines transparency and public accountability for widespread poor environmental performance.



In 2013 Fish Legal took its case to the Grand Chamber of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in Luxembourg, to define key points of EU law underpinning the operation of the 2004 Regulations. The UK government intervened and took a stand supporting the companies' 'right to secrecy'. However, the CJEU's Judgement now provides a legal test that can be applied to the water companies to decide if they are subject to a disclosure duty to the public. Argument over this will be heard by the Upper Tribunal at the Royal Courts of Justice in November.

However, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has intervened once again and issued its own judicial review challenge against the jurisdiction of the Upper Tribunal to hear the case. A move Fish Legal sees as an obvious attempt to derail its appeal. This means that Fish Legal must now fight two sets of proceedings to succeed.

**William Rundle, Head Solicitor at Fish Legal conducting this case, said:**

"This is a major case for Fish Legal members which has taken many years to come to fruition, but if we succeed it would be a "game-changer" in our relations with the Water and Sewerage Industry. It would make our attempts to conserve the environment and uphold the rights of anglers much easier, because these utilities would be legally required to reveal all when asked about pollution they may have caused, rather than be able to maintain secrecy if it suited them. Success would also give the wider public a 'right to know' by being able to get environmental information from these companies on the matters that concerned them, and could enforce that right if necessary."

He further said:

"I firmly believe that greater transparency within this multi-billion pound Industry is desperately needed, as it will be a driving force for greater accountability to the public, and thereby better environmental performance – which is in all our interests."

**Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive of the Angling Trust & Fish Legal said:**

"This very lengthy, expensive, but vitally important legal battle has been funded entirely by the subscriptions and donations of tens of thousands of anglers, angling clubs and fisheries who are members of the Angling Trust & Fish Legal. Our members make this pioneering legal work possible and we are very grateful to them for their generous support to enable Fish Legal to take on the twin behemoths of the water industry and the government."