



Sussex Branch Newsletter



OCTOBER 2019

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE!

The Autumn Auction is now on Thursday 24th October

at our usual Patcham community centre venue, with viewing starting from 6.45 pm and the Auction promptly starting at 7.30 pm.

There are nearly 300 lots of generally high quality and include a number of donations and Branch-owned lots up for auction, so it is hoped that you will all do your best to see that the auction is well attended.

Ways you can help making it a success:

1. by coming along and having a bid or two
2. by bringing as many friends as possible
3. by telling as many non-branch members about the auction and encouraging them to come along.

The auction is open to everyone.

If you can't make it on the night, you can leave bids for any lots via Roy Gurney, and we will see you get the best deal up to your maximum bid.

The catalogue is available via our website –

www.sussexflydressers.org.uk

or phone 01273 581519 or e-mail

fdgsussex@gmail.com

CHIDDINGSTONE CASTLE

Sadly we had to decline our invitation to have a stand at their show due to the lack of volunteers (though at the last minute two willing, but regular "life savers" did come forward, but after the decision had been made).

These shows are a great opportunity to meet other interested people and to see a bit of the "other side of life". Why not give it a try next time an opportunity arises?

BRANCH TROPHY DAY

DUNCTON MILL–Sunday 27th October

This is our premier event when a multitude of trophies are up for grabs. Get your entry in now to Peter Winder: phone 01273 973499, e-mail

peter.winder@btinternet.com

or Roy Gurney on 01273 581519, e-mail

fdgsussex@gmail.com

VENIARDS JUNIOR AWARD



Mei Akiba with her prize

Veniards have generously gifted an award of their "Fly Tying Beginners Pack" to our junior fly tyer of the year, Mei Akiba. Mei was reluctant to be photographed being presented with it by Alan Middleton, though whether it was shyness or being in awe of the maestro is not clear!

Mei now joins her mother as a prize-winner, as Naoke took runner-up in the main Guild for novice trout fly.

The Future of Outings

Our Events Organiser, Alan Wells, points out that there have been some events which have struggled to get enough participants over the last year, so if we are to provide events which suit the membership, it would be helpful if you could complete a questionnaire, a copy of which is attached, to let us know your thoughts.

One of the attractions of Branch activities in the past has been our extensive fishing programme in addition to fly-tying, so please let us know

Chalk Springs- The Harrison Way.



When prospective new members ask me about the benefits of being in the SFDG, I usually talk not only of the fun of catching your fish on something you have created yourself but also of the font of knowledge about fly fishing itself which you have on tap from the club's members. I had not fished Chalk Springs for something like five years, partly due to commitments to other events but also due to a lack of success in the past. Having done quite a lot of my early fly fishing on reservoirs or stillwaters which did not have very clear water, I had struggled to master the techniques involved in sight fishing in clear waters and had caught fish more through luck than judgement. I gained a little more confidence from catching at Meon Springs where the water is of a similar clarity and was intrigued by the methods used by Tony Harrison, Ray Burt and Martyn Gray around the margins at Duncton during Trophy Day. So come August when the fishing on many stillwaters struggles, I decided that, unable to attend the second Falkenvil day, I would try again at Chalk Springs, where theoretically the consistent cool temperatures of the water allows fishing to be more productive during the "dog days".

However, this time I thought I would tap the skills of regular Chalk Springs devotee Tony Harrison to give me a better chance. So what were Tony's top tips?

1. **Choose your day.** Avoid windy days - unlike other waters where a ripple gives fish more confidence, at Chalk Springs it makes it more difficult to locate the fish, judge the depth at which they are holding and watch their reaction to your flies - all key parts of the method here.
2. **Choose your flies carefully** - pulled lures will not be chased very often, if at all, during the summer months, so small weighted flies, nymphs and sometimes dries are the order of the day. Colourful flies can also be useful - as much for increasing the ability to spot takes as attracting the fish. To this end setting up

two rods – one for sinking flies and one for dries may be worthwhile to facilitate quick changes.

3. **Fish "on the drop"** - small flies delicately dropped in front of moving (or sometimes stationary) fish will work but it may take a while to hit on the pattern wanted. Also it can be worth tracking the patrol route of fish and laying a fly on the lake bed to be pulled up as the trout approaches.
4. **Use floating lines** - these work better with the above approach and sinking lines tend to spook the fish in the clear water. Occasionally a midge tip can work to get your fly to the taking depth quickly. Six pound tippet should be enough to cope with big fish whilst allowing a more subtle presentation.
5. **Move around** - it is rarely worth prospecting for unseen fish here, so you need to find your fish and **good polarising sunglasses are vital** for this. Also the trout can become quickly fed up with your patterns - so move on and come back later.

Armed with this information, first I changed my date from Friday 16th to Monday 19th August as the Friday looked too windy. I arrived at 8.00 am, wanting to get first pick of the water before the sun got too high and not knowing how busy it would become. Still being a bit reticent, I had decide between a 3 or 4 fish ticket and Darren suggested the former, as the venue had been fished quite hard at the weekend. I set myself up carefully with my two 5/6 weight rods, one with a #14 lead Stalking Bug and the other with a small Klinkhammer both on 6lb fluoro. I thought I would try the very first water - North Pool - as there seemed to be some activity here. After a brief tussle with a fish near the margin I noticed a couple of fish quite close in, in deep water. Dropping the lead bug down in front of the larger of the two fish, it swam on and the tell tale white of its open mouth prompted a gentle lift and I was into my first fish within 10 minutes, a rainbow of just over 2lb.

So the relaxation coming from breaking the blank encouraged me to wander around the lakes experimenting with flies and looking for larger fish. Tony had advised that it was possible to try to single out better fish and pull the fly away or allow smaller fish to spit it out, to be bit more selective. However, the largest fish, estimated to be around 8 or 9 lb, was a "cruiser"- moving up and down the East Lake, studiously ignoring everyone's flies – indeed, actually making detours around them on occasions! After

20 minutes or so trying for this one and a few other fish which made some feints but didn't take, I decided to have a quick coffee and move onto South Lake. Here the fish were moving about a little and there seemed to be some consistent holding spots toward the southern end near the weed beds. Using the stalking bug again, I had some interest and then something happened which Tony had warned me about . Whilst trying to tempt a bigger fish of about 4lb + a smaller trout shot out from the weed cover for about 5 metres and hammered my fly. Despite allowing it a little loose line the fish would not come off so within an hour I had 2 of my 3 fish, this second again 2lb plus.

So for the next hour or so I tried to tempt fish to take a dry but to no avail, other than one swirl. So I returned to the North Pool where, having lost my lead bug in a tree, I tried a small tungsten beaded blob on the drop and took my third fish from almost exactly the same place as the first. It was now decision time – after a pleasant chat with some regulars, including SFDG member Steve Chow, I had an early lunch at 11.30 and decided to pay for one more fish. I tried to be more selective with my fishing in the afternoon but it became a little harder and I finally figured that the fish had been pushed into the far side of the South Lake by casting pressure. Here there was little room, but by roll casting into deep water close to the bank, I took my final fish of the day on the orange blob again. To summarise, Tony's advice had paid dividends on a day when some others seemed to be struggling to get takes and my Chalk Springs bogie seems to be well and truly broken on a very pleasant day - so thanks very much, Mr Harrison!

Alan Wells

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Sorry to be so repetitive, but the subscriptions for both the Guild and Branch were due on 1st September, so **please** let Roy Gurney have them ASAP. It is not necessary to complete a form if your details have not changed – just let him have the money or cheque - £32 for Guild and Branch, £12 if you pay the Guild direct.

Charity Pairs Cancelled Yet Again

Although entries were down again, which may well have been rectified nearer the date, it was unfortunate that our chosen alternative venue, Powdermill, was unable to offer us sufficient boats to hold this event. This is a long-standing competition, open to neighbouring Branches and clubs. It may be that our long-standing venue, Bewl Water, is no longer in favour with our "regulars" or perhaps a clash of events.

Chairman's Chat

Once again we have gone international (that's a bit of an exaggeration !), fortunately with no fear of problems with Brexit (although we are also locked in legal combat with the government of Germany, which could well result in further difficulties with Brexit).

We have been appointed to design a fish pass, mainly for sea trout, to ascend a river on the Isle of Wight. We were surprised how quickly we could get on to the Island; about one and a half hours by car and hovercraft – I was also surprised that the hovercraft is still in service.

As you can see from the photograph, the problem is straightforward, i.e. place a prefabricated Alaskan Steepass by the bridge pier, in the background, on the right side of the photo, and a lowered, aluminium lined notch in the weir in the foreground.



River on the I of W

I was very interested to discover that our Client had plans to re-introduce sea eagles to the island. They are very large birds of prey (raptors ?) with wing spans of up to 8 ft; they will take out golden eagles, and farmers in the highlands say they take lambs. Conservationists say they take dead or weak ones only - they would say that wouldn't they, as somebody once said.



Sea Eagle

I assumed that a couple of pairs would be released as an experiment; I was surprised to hear that 60 are to set free – many will no doubt head for the mainland, so watch out !!

Tony W

Ray's Ramblings

I have now been writing something for you to read for a year and thought that Roy would say that is enough but in the August Newsletter he was asking for more contributions and as he does such a good job I feel I can't let him down.

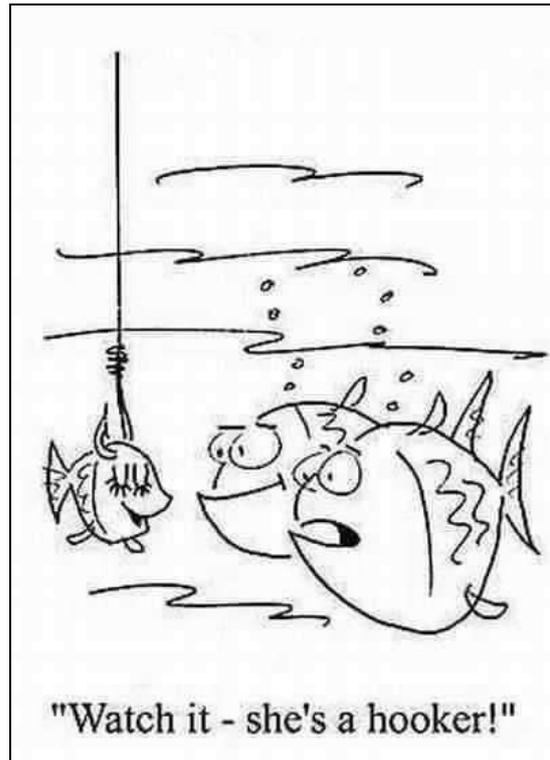
As I said in the last newsletter at this time of the year my fishing is mainly for Grayling. I enjoy Grayling fishing because it is fishing for a wild fish, we don't have to kill them and there is no limit to the number we can catch. The only concern I have is that I sometimes feel guilty as the fish is only trying to feed to stay alive and I am fooling them into thinking that my artificial is actually food. I console myself with the thought that perhaps my action has taught them a lesson and that they'll be more careful in the future.

In fact judging by recent seasons this certainly seems the case as they are getting more difficult to tempt each year. They seem to get more spooky and that is most likely due to the number of people now fishing for them so that smaller flies and lighter tippets are now required. Another factor has been that winters recently have seen less rain, so the water stays lower and clearer and the fish on the Chalkstreams more difficult to approach. The thing I hate most about Grayling fishing is that each outing to the Test, Itchen or Avon involves a round trip of over two hundred miles so that I spend each day driving as much as fishing.

It's a shame that the Grayling trip to Wherwell has had to be cancelled but to an extent it is understandable when the cost has increased so much. I usually book a couple of trips each November for the Tunbridge Wells Flyfishing Society to the Lower Itchen Fishery which is not only nearer but also works out cheaper, as I can sometimes cheek Lindsay Farmiloe into giving us a discount, which is easier the more people go. This year the dates that I have are Wednesday 6th November and Saturday 23rd November and if you are interested in coming along let Roy or Andy Wood know and they'll let you have my contact details.

Talking about Grayling fishing has made me get some of my books on the subject out. The first is "The Lady of the Stream" which is a collection of articles by various authors compiled by Paul Morgan of Coch-Y-Bonddu Books and the other is "Fishing in Grayling Paradise" by Karel Krivanec about the fishing in the Vltava river in the Czech Republic. At one time I did think of going on one of the organised trips there but never made it and lately some friends in the Grayling Society have been giving me glowing reports on their trip to Bosnia but most likely I won't be going there either cos I can fish a lot of times in this country for the cost of a trip there.

Ray Burt



FORTHCOMING OUTINGS

Get your bookings in NOW for these outings:

CHARITY PAIRS – Sunday 6th October

CANCELLED

WHERWELL – Sunday 20th October

CANCELLED

TROPHY DAY

DUNCTON MILL – Sunday 27th October

This is our premier event when a multitude of trophies are up for grabs. Get your entry in now to Peter Winder: phone 01273 973499 or e-mail peter.winder@btinternet.com

CHRISTMAS OUTING

and lunch

BRICK FARM - Sunday 1st December

Bring your wives and family for a pleasant day in the fine lodge – and fishing too! Contact Peter Winder: e-mail peter.winder@btinternet.com or phone 01273 973499

Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild

Chairman:	Tony Woolnough	01273 483833
Secretary:	Paul Bond	01273 420410
Treasurer:	Bill Black	01323 763807
Membership:	Roy Gurney	01273 581519

Editor: ROY GURNEY

29 Capel Avenue, PEACEHAVEN, BN10 8NB

E-MAIL: fdgsussex@gmail.com

Visit our web site

Sussexflydressers.org.uk