



Sussex Branch Newsletter



MAY 2020



Unpublished studies in the USA found that the majority of damage to migratory fish was caused by trapping, counting and electro-fishing by biologists.

As always to get plant and materials to site requires a temporary access. In this case hired aluminium panels linked together did the job, which was OK but just after they were laid they were stolen overnight by metal thieves. This required the use of a lorry and hyab which the on site landowner said he did not hear – or did he collude with the thieves? Fortunately the temporary road was covered by insurance; they were not best pleased.

At this site a bridge was required to cross the small stream above to facilitate construction and allow the landowner to cross with his mowing machine.

Chairman's Chat

This is the River Windrush, a tributary of the Thames. So what is this all about? The Client wanted to encourage coarse fish to enter a side stream to spawn; to do this a medium velocity jet (say 0.30 m/s) is required. So we had to reduce the width of the stream to produce the design velocity. Hand driven poles did the job. After driving the poles were straightened up with top walling and struts.



Stream Restrictor

It is not for me to question the Client's motive but it seems a lot of money to be spent on increasing coarse fish stocks. My jaundiced view of conservation is that the best way to enhance wildlife is to leave it alone.



Access Bridge

So what is so special about this structure? The Client specified that the bridge should be built from recycled materials. You cannot get recycled girders, which have to be the exact size, weight and form (obviously not damaged), so new ones were adopted. The deck was to be ex railway sleeper but they must not have been dipped in creosote i.e. used on a railway line! So brand new "railway sleepers" that had not been near a railway were adopted. I will not mention the concrete.

The downstream attraction jet would be expected to attract brown trout, and maybe sea trout and the odd salmon. Once trapped in the stream these fish would become the target of poachers. So the intake to the stream from the

River Windrush would require a secure fish pass.



Bottom Baffle Fish Pass and Overflow Weir

So what is so special about this ? Unfortunately the Client had a change of staff at the end of the contract and their representative turned out to be a young lady who wished to stamp her authority on the job. This always pleases me. Anyway she demanded to know why we were building an unnecessary fish pass – I had to point out that the Client's Brief called for a pass and if we did not build an overflow structure the river bank would breach and the River Windrush would change course and flood the adjacent land and drain the downstream water mill.

My wife's vulnerable condition due to cancer treatment means that I am also in lock down for twelve weeks, which leaves me with sufficient time on my hands to write this long meandering Chat.

Tony W

The Chairman's covering e-mail:

Di and I are in 12 week lock down due to Di's cancer treatment, including removal of her spleen. I planned to tie lots of flies but Di found lots of "little" jobs for me and of course I have to get rid of all the business paraphernalia. The I of W job is finished at last but the Expert Witness job in Scotland has raised its ugly head again causing me more grief.

Regards

Tony

(Moribund Chairman)

I think that I am packing up at just the right time. A number of large Consultants are getting into the game (I will be in Court against one in Edinburgh soon); another problem is that fish passes are not essential like for instance, petrol or food – so when the EA is under financial pressure, capital schemes are cut - anyway I had a good 30 years in the game, some say I started it.

Tony

NEW TROPHIES



In our list of trophies won last month, I omitted to include the two fine cups generously donated by Peter Winder for best bag and best fish at the Christmas Outing. The 2019 winners were:

Branch Christmas Outing 2019

Best fish

Peter Winder	4 lb 7 oz
John Plowman	3 lb 2 oz

Best bag

Peter Winder	11 lb 5oz
Cliff Brown	7 lb 12 oz

JOHN PLOWMAN

A wooden priest – a lesson in woodworking

For the past week I have been making a priest and photographing and explaining each stage. The finished document runs to 4 pages and includes 19 photos (*and is now included in this Newsletter – Ed.*)

We are both well but because Merrill's drug regime suppresses her immune system she is on the very high risk list. This means she is totally house bound for at least 12 weeks and I have to take very special precautions. Separate bedrooms and bathrooms. Door and cupboard handles wiped down with ethanol or bleach, a box outside the front door for all letters and small packages. The good news is that I am allowed to visit my allotment one day a week. All shopping has to be done on line. Hence the need for lots of woodwork! Do you need any more trophies made?

MAKING A WOODEN PRIEST by John Plowman

Now that all fishing outings are banned and I am locked in for 12 weeks (as no doubt some of you) I hope that following will entertain you. I will leave fly dressing instruction to those who are much better than me for I can claim to be a better than average woodworker.

The aim is to make a wooden priest that is both decorative and functional. The handle must be light, strong, non-slip and attractive. The head must be shock resistant and heavy. All of it must be waterproof.

The woods I have chosen are English yew for the handle, mahogany for the head and one collar and box for second collar.

The first picture shows them all. The steel rule is six inches long so you can see the scale.



1.



2.

The second photo. shows the roughing gouge ready to take the bark off the yew handle.



3.



4.

Picture 3 shows all pieces prepared: top-yew, mid-mahogany, lower-box.

The next stage is to hold the mahogany head in the lathe jaws and drill a 15mm dia. hole using a forstner bit. (photo. 4)

Before the head is removed from the lathe a 6mm thick slice is cut off to make a collar. The same thing is done with the second box collar. Photo.5 shows them both.



5.



6.

Photo. 6 show the two collars placed next to the head and a depth gauge inserted to measure the depth of the 15mm hole.



7.



8.

The handle is now returned to the lathe and a 15mm dia. spigot is turned using a spindle gouge. The length of the spigot is 12mm less than the depth of the hole to allow space for a lump of lead to be inserted in the head. Photos 8 and 8a show the pieces loosely assembled. Next step is to cut a 12mm wide strip of lead and roll it Swiss Roll style to be a tight fit inside the mahogany priest. (You can see the two collars in the background of the photo.9)



9.



10.

The lead is inserted and the two collars and head are assembled to check dimensions before glueing. If all is OK then everything is glued and returned to the lathe to be clamped until the glue has set (photo.11)



11.

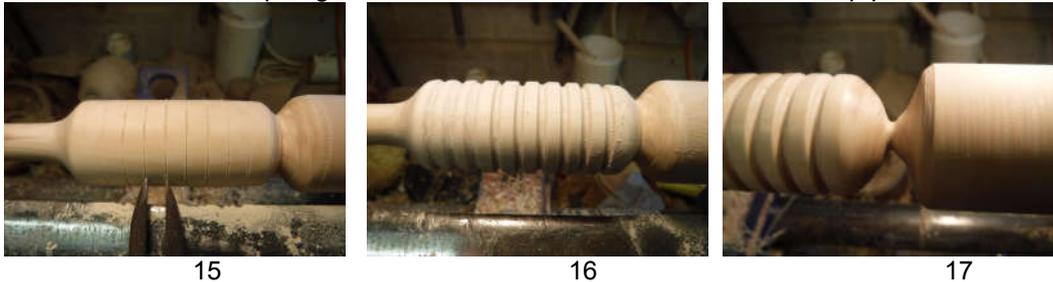
The final stage is shaping the assembly into the final priest. There are three sections to this:

(a) the head (b) the central shaft and (c) the handle with its grips.

Next comes the shaping of the priest. First the head:12 (note the scrap piece at the left end). Next the shaft:13. The knots add a feature but make the turning tricky. Finally the handle:14 (again note the scrap piece at the right end)



We are almost complete. Photo 15 shows a pair of dividers marking the position of the grip grooves in the handle. After the first two grooves are scratched the divider points are moved on to give equal spacing then a shallow "U" shaped groove is cut at each mark. Photo 16. The scrap piece is reduced. Photo 17.



The lathe is set to high speed and the dust extractor is turned on and working with five grades of abrasives from coarse to very fine the final finish is done and ready for its first coat of wood oil 18.



Photo 19 shows the finished priest with the ends trimmed, two more coats of oil and a brass ring fitted. When we next meet I intend to auction this for Sussex FDG members only when, if required, I will burn the initials of the successful buyer into the shaft. All proceeds to Sussex FDG funds. (provided committee agrees)
John Plowman (April 2020)

WELLSY'S FISHING QUIZ

As we have some rather nice stuff collected for the Brass Monkeys languishing in my garage (includes Armagnac , Prosecco, wine and beer – I will probably have eaten the chocolate) we thought it might be nice to use them as prizes in a series of quizzes over the next few months newsletters.

If you send your answers to me at wellsywells@btinternet.com (or by post-see booking forms for address) I will draw the winner each month from the correct entries and we will give out prizes when we eventually meet for the

Rod Raffle / Prize Giving, ,hopefully in the autumn.

It would be nice to think that people would dredge answers from their capacious brains rather than use the tinterweb.

Good Luck.

Alan

I will publish the answers and the name of the winning entrant in next month's newsletter

SO HERE'S THE FIRST SET OF QUESTIONS:

1. *Oncorhynchus Clarkii* is the scientific name for which trout species?

2. Who is this and what organisation does she run in Yorkshire?



3. Why was the 31 lb 12 oz rod caught brown trout from Loch Awe not recognised by BRFC as a British record?

4. Which river was the record Grayling caught in?

5. What is the name of the salmon fly below?



Ray's Ramblings

What an interesting piece in the March Newsletter by David Constable about the books he has been reading. His isolation is due to waiting for surgery following a heart attack. Many of us are now in a similar isolation situation due to the Coronavirus outbreak and I always thought that my collection of books would come in handy one day. Two of the books that he writes about, both of which I've got in my collection, are by the American George Daniel. He fished for the United States team in the World Championships from 2006 to 2010 and was placed fifth in the 2006 event.

The first book "Dynamic Nymphing" is as David says an extremely in depth treatise detailing tackle, tight line and suspension nymphing, different casting techniques and listing tyings for sixty two flies. The second book "Nymph Fishing" discusses tactics and tips that he learned in the six years since his previous book and lists another one hundred and twenty five fly patterns - thanks for that George! I think that David is right in that the hook sizes for the patterns are generally smaller and a lot of them are perfect for Grayling which because of the fishing pressure and predation that I mentioned in the February Newsletter are now more effective in the smaller sizes. Another book that I have by an American angler is "Tactical Fly Fishing" by Devin Olsen. He also fished for the United States team in World Championships and gained both individual and team medals, but the sub title of the book "Lessons Learned from Competition for All Anglers" is very appropriate because even if you are not interested in competitions you can still take advantage of the developments in tackle and tactics that have occurred in recent years. The latter half of the book describes how he fishes various types of water - Riffles, Runs, Pools, Glides etc and ends with the listing of just nineteen fly patterns, for which I am extremely grateful. In fact he was mentioned in Daniel's Dynamic Nymphing together with a photograph - he was the one using powder scales to weigh his nymphs. I got hold of a set and it's proved very interesting - I know it's a bit sad but when I'm not fishing, apart from reading and tying more flies, what else is there to do at my age. Other books by foreign authors are "Czech Nymphing and Other Related (sic) Methods" by Karel Krivanec who also wrote "Fishing in Grayling Paradise" and who is mentioned in Olsen's book and "Fly Fishing and Fly Tying" by Jaromir Karafiat and Miroslav Machacek, which is also comes with a DVD. I'm sure we all wish David all the best with his surgery and hope that we can all get out and go fishing again soon.

RB

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