

The Flydressers Guild Sussex Branch



Newsletter February 2023

Published by the Sussex Branch of the
Flydressers Guild

Chair: Peter Winder 07732024857

Acting Secretary: Alan Wells 07795523608

Treasurer: Bill Black 01323 763807

Membership: Andy Wood 07445274967

Visit our web site
Sussexflydresserguild.org.uk

or on Facebook @
Sussex Flydressers Guild

or on Youtube
Sussex Flydressers Guild

Is your rod/s in need of TLC

With the winter upon us and little opportunity to get out with a fly rod now is the time to check your tackle and if like me you wait just before the season starts. Check your rods for wear and damage, starting with the cork handle in good order no large holes. Small holes can be filled with wood filler and sanded down combined with cleaning to look like new. Look at this web page for more information. Replace if the holes are too large. [How To Clean A Fly Rod | Fly Fishing Guide \(thehuntimesguide.com\)](http://thehuntimesguide.com)

Look for damage on each rod section as the worst culprit are gold heads that bruise the carbon fibre and may eventually cause the section to break. Finally wash the rod with soapy water using a small brush to

clean round the rings. You may even want to go as far as polishing the blank. Are the rings worn or whipping coming loose? Snake guides do get worn with two grooves on each guide close to the blank by the fly line that then are like knives wearing through fly line, sharp enough to cut your finger. Rods fitted with ceramic rings now rarely seen, ceramic can fall out and then the metal ring cuts into the fly line. If you want to replace rings yourself the following site for advice and where to purchase parts.

<https://www.guidesnoblanks.com/>

There are a number of people that build and repair rods in the area and build new rods from blanks of your choice and you may even get a Sage rod built for much less than a US built version or a British made blank to match your requirements.

Steve Batten: 07877873881

www.stevebattenflyfishing.net email
steve.batten@homecall.co.uk

Graham Dadswell: 01444 250930, 0752 7318576 contact@grahamdadswell.com

Chris Ward <https://www.rodcraftsman.com/>
02392 598714.

Last year I won a quality fly rod in a magazine quiz and within a couple of months the top section snapped in half after working the rod hard. Although the section was replaced by the manufacturer, I took the opportunity to get the broken section repaired by Steve Batten as an experiment. There are several ways of repairing sections and in this case, Steve used a tip section from a whip coarse rod inside the blank. On collection it looked perfect and I asked colleagues at a Game Anglers Instructors Association workshop to test and all agreed, cast with little difference compared with replacement section.



AT Level 2 Licence No 652
GAIA single handed Trout

The Chairmans Event

This event due to take place on Sunday 15th January 2023 was cancelled at short notice due to flooding at Moorhen Trout Fishery. No doubt the event will take place on another date.

Book Report No 4

Here we are again with another book report and now a torn tendon almost off my arm in my shoulder, an operation and not being able to drive for six weeks rather curtailed my activities, however, only another five months of physio and I will be back again.

It was great to meet several old friends at the Brick farm Christmas bash and have a catch up and a very enjoyable meal, well worth the attendance even though I was unable to fish. "You Should Have Been Here Last Thursday" The Life, Thoughts and Meanderings of a Chalk Stream Riverkeeper.

Author:- Ron Holloway

Retailer:- Coch-Y-Bonddu Books

Basically, it is his life history and both learning and putting into practice how best to put into practise looking after a beat on The River Itchen. Initially you could say not a book for me as I want to fish not look after a river, well I almost did not buy this book due to the same thought process, however, My wife and Me were in the House of Bruar on the A9 in Scotland on our way to visit some friends, this book was on top of Ron's fly cabinet and a quick look in the cabinet and look at the book convinced me to purchase said book. from It helps the fisher to understand what goes on behind the scenes, why environments are needed and the whole life of a river, some of which can be transposed onto a small lake or reservoir. Clearly Ron also was in demand worldwide for his water knowledge, and again it is something we should all be thinking off to help maintain our hobby going forward.

As an aside on our way to Scotland Grace had to measure a very large house for one of her designer friends just outside of Alnwick the home of Hardy. Well while she was measuring off, I went to the Hardy Museum and shop.

What a treat and if you're ever that way worth popping in, Tim the shop manager and fisherman is a great guy, the museum and shop is also exceedingly interesting, and it took longer for me to look around than Grace to measure a ten bedroomed house!!!

Illuminated by Water Nature, Memory and the Delights of a Fishing Life

Author:- Malachy Tallack

Retailer:- Waterstone Book shop

This is a book of fishing anecdotes from small rivers to lochs and foreign climes, being at one

with nature and an element of understanding the water, stocking or not to stock and the effects. How nature can repair itself if left alone, and points that make you the reader consider the way forward regarding how we and companies take water supply for granted. Yes, it's about fishing and how we are not all the perceived patient people some of us are indeed very impatient, but fishing is a great leveller, and we are regularly there not only to fish but be at one with nature. Most of the time I do carry a pair of small field glasses to see nature close up. He explains the frustration we have of feeling were in the wrong place on the water and what if we try somewhere else. Some of it is exhilarating, philosophical and a profound sympathy for the natural world. This is a book that you will come back to regularly and read all or parts again and again, it will make you consider both the environment and your approach to fishing.

The Gospel of the Eels

A Father, A Son and the World's Most Enigmatic Fish

Author:- Patrik Svensson

Retailer:- Waterstone Book shop

I must be honest the young girl in Waterstone's recommended this book whilst I was buying the book above as she had read it and found it fascinating. I have to say I can completely agree with her, no it is not about Trout, but it is about a natural fish, it is about natural science many references to scientists and their methods and how they researched the eel. Its breeding ground, how the glass eels are carried from the Sargasso Sea to inlets though out the world, how they become yellow eels and once they have made a home in a river it maybe 10 -20 or even 30 years before they return to the Sargasso Sea to breed. They only return there once they are ready to breed, and it appears that an eel when first bred is female and it is only when they are ready to breed again, they develop male attributes and breeding takes place (never seen by man) an eel at this time is both male and female.

Woven though it is the story of a Father and Son relationship which is astounding and gives the full meaning of happiness, learning and sorrow. Not expensive at £9.99 but a jolly good read.

The Feather Mechanic

A Fly-tying philosophy

Author:- Gordon Van Der Spuy & Tim Wedge

Retailer:- Coch-Y-Bundu Books

Back to Fly-tying this is a book with a difference and is suggesting you consider what you are tying and different ways of approach. Gordon was sitting in a History of Art class when the lecturer came out with these words "FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION" consider these three words for a time and then consider how you tie a fly.

In his early days his fly's were very scruffy, but they caught fish and as he got more proficient at tying, he caught less fish because they were so neat!!! You've guessed it scruffiness was incorporated into his flies. Gordon is South African and most rivers he mentions are from his homeland, however, that should not put you off.

Throughout the book not only does he give you the fly and dressing he tells you how to fish it, and at the same time gives snippets of information that make you think. For instance, rather than weight a fly uses a heavier line to take the fly lower. Glass beads for fishing higher in the water column, tungsten for lower or on the bottom.

In tying he is not frightened of experimenting with different materials to achieve different outcomes, like catch more fish, CDC for legs and to help with life likeness and scruffiness. He likes more than one hotspot and considers them a must. Sparsely dressed fly's rather than heavily dressed fly's as they appear more natural to the fish. He likes to consider how the fly will swim on the end of the line and alter the materials or tying accordingly, on some patterns he like to use Spanflex for legs as they can move the water more realistically.

His tying instructions are drawings with many tips within a sequence of drawings to help you avoid certain pitfalls. At the beginning he goes through various tools and their uses and is a great believer in it is better to spend a little extra and get better quality tools and materials to aid the tyer. He shows how to mark a thread covered hook into segments so you can stop and start different parts of the tying of a fly and allow yourself enough room for the next stage. The importance of spinning the thread to assist it to lay flat on the hook. The importance of translucency of a fly often using white thread underneath the body, Just as J.W.Dunne painted his hooks white before tying in the 20's to create the same effect.

I admit to reading the book start to finish and some parts of course it is like teaching one to suck eggs, however, there are many good tips for me to go back and incorporate several of the ideas into fly's I tie. For instance, a ring of CDC underneath hackles on posts to give the illusion of translucency.

Tight lines
David Constable

In Search of the Ladies – Part 2

Last time I wrote I described the first 2 days in the hunt for ladies on the Test at Wherwell and then again downstream of the Broadlands Estate in late October 2022. The Oct '22 adventure continues with Day 3 on the Itchen, the Thursday of that same week.



Day 3 - River Itchen – Itchen Abbas (Thursday)

With no wind and bright sun, I set up an 8'6" #3 fast-action rod with duo set up, no dry up top but with a coloured leader. I fished the morning like this, with only a few light tugs on the line, admittedly I wasn't on form and seemed to spend much of my time untangling knots, bird's nests or getting stuck in the trees on the back cast. I even managed the sort of tumble that Bob Mortimer would've been proud of. Thankfully (surprisingly) I didn't get wet on this occasion, nor was it caught on camera.

A frustrating morning.

Even my fishing partner, Gilly, only managed a couple of grayling with almost exactly the same set up, although she was

using a 10'6" #3 rod, which may have made the difference, i.e., keeping the fly line high and off the water, less drag perhaps. There was an occasional hatch and despite a series of quick fly changes and presenting a variety of dries, neither of us could move a fish or get a rise.

After a lovely lunch in the sunshine, I decided to go back to the Klink 'n' Dink, used with success on the previous two outings, with a #12 Klinkhammer on the top and #16 Duracell jig fly with a 3.2 mm tungsten bead head approx. 5 feet below. There was one fabulous pool about 400 meters downstream of the cars, you could see a dozen or more large fish holding station in the fast right to left flow, both trout and grayling. The trouble was that the grayling were on the bottom, well-guarded by the trout holding in mid-water. Any fly drifting to them was immediately challenged by the trout, before it could get down to the grayling. A few weeks earlier and in-season this would have been fabulous fun, but not today.



I decided to head back upstream and target a few fish I'd noticed holding on a patch of gravel not far from the far bank, earlier in the day. First cast brought a fish up to the Klinkhammer, a decent brown. I had mixed feelings about this fish, it was the largest wild brown I'd caught to date, (since bettered), yet it wasn't a Grayling! No ladies for me today.

Day 4 River Wye – Caudwell's Mill Beat, Derbyshire (Saturday)

I'd signed up for a 2-day event fishing for grayling on the Rivers Wye and/or Derwent on the Peacock Club waters of

the Hadden Estate, hosted by the Mallon & Green shop, in support of the UK charity Tackling Minds,

The weekend commenced with a reception at the store in the centre of Bakewell on the Friday evening. After a Friday afternoon journey of nearly six hours (nightmare) I arrived at Bakewell just after 19:15, in the pouring rain. It didn't matter I was there, dropped into

Mallon & Green and soon had a glass of wine in hand.

Saturday dawned dry the rain having finally stopped. After a briefing of the rules and waters by Jan the estate Riverkeeper, off we all went. The forecast was for sunny spells, mild temps, no rain, most importantly almost no breeze.

I elected to fish the Caudwell's Mill beat on the River Wye. This is the last beat of the river before it joins the Derwent. The River Wye is non-wading throughout the Hadden Estate and has had a rule of upstream dry fly only for years, although Jan has relaxed this in the last two seasons to allow for more productive grayling fishing. It is also worth mentioning that the Wye from just upstream of the Bakewell bridge, downstream to the Derwent, has not been stocked since the mid-80s. It claims an abundance of wild browns, grayling and is apparently the only river in the UK to boast a sustainable head of wild Rainbow trout.

In my previous visits to the Wye, I hadn't had any luck, but my confidence was high today. Despite the recent downpours the river wasn't too coloured but was still running very low. It was also difficult to spot the fish until a little after 10:00 when there was a decent hatch of small olives coming off the water, rises followed. Without anything to hinder a back cast, accurate gentle casting was possible. Although there was little to no breeze, I decided to use my 9' #4 mid-action rod as my primary nymph outfit. It gave me a bit more flexibility to cast a heavier team if I wanted to. Initially I matched it with a Klink n Dink team again, an #18 Duracell jig with 2.8mm tungsten head on the point to get the fly down fast. As a compromise I also set up on 8'6" #3 rod with a #16 Griffith's

gnat as a single fly just in case I want to follow the rises on the top.

Just after the fish started to rise, I had my first grayling to the net using the Klink n Dink set up. I was delighted, my first fish on the Wye.

I fished the entire stretch twice, once before and once after lunch, changing flies regularly and switching between nymph and dry rods. I ended the day with four grayling, and two browns and a first wild UK rainbow. Small flies seemed to be the winner for the day.



Day 5 River Derwent – Bayden Powell Fishing Hut (Sunday)

With the weather back to full rain and storms forecast I chose to fish the River Derwent, parking at the Bayden Powell fishing hut about 2 miles downstream from the Peacock Hotel. My logic was if the weather did turn nasty, I'd at least be able to have a sheltered break in the hut with a cuppa.

The River Derwent is an entirely different proposition to the Wye, it is wide, deep with steep-sided banks, and treacherous deep pools throughout its course. Thankfully they are quite easy to spot. With the recent rain the river wasn't very clear and was running fast. This was going to be full wading so decided to carry only one rod; 9' #4 rod with an indicator rig. This was a 12' 3x tapered leader onto which I attached the indicator, from that I had approx. 5 feet of 4x tippet. Using surgeon knots to attach my lines together

and make my droppers, I left two tags for droppers approx. 12" apart and above the point, although I would only fish 2 flies at a time. I fished my heaviest fly on the mid dropper tag and the lightest on the point. The theory is that the point fly would then be able to play more naturally in the flow, slightly above the riverbed. My heavy fly was a heavy shrimp pattern in sizes between #10 and #14, with the other fly being a #16 Duracell jig with a 2.4mm tungsten head. I was able to keep moving the indicator up and down the leader so the depth the heavy fly varied between around 5 feet to 10 feet below the indicator. If I needed to fish a really shallow run, then all I had to do was remove the point fly.

By the time I'd climbed down the steps into the river it had started to rain again, thankfully no wind.....yet.

With my first cast I had the first fish, a decent sized grayling which took the shrimp pattern. I was wading roughly thigh deep at this point and feeling the river push on the legs. I think I had fished for a couple of hours with another two fish, both grayling before the wind really picked up, blowing straight down the valley, which meant casting into it. Not an issue but I had to change from the indicator rig, it was simply too unwieldy for the wind. A quick change of tapered leader, a short 9' leader 4x leader to a #12 Klinkhammer, then 5x tippet to a lighter shrimp pattern on the point and a climb out of the water to seek out shallower runs.

I was then that the heavens opened; thunder, lightning, hail, the lot. I don't think I've moved so fast in waders, dashing back to the car keeping the rod low, tucking it under the car before taking shelter in the hut. Time for an early lunch. It took an hour or so for the storm to pass, so I set off again and found a nice run upstream of where I'd fished in the morning. A nice pool, then a gravel bar to fish into faster shallower water. The wind was a nightmare, I wasn't having so much fun at this point. The storm and the wind had knocked what felt like all of the leaves in Derbyshire into the river, every time I lifted off the water, I picked up one or two

leaves. It was so frustrating. Despite that, I also picked up another fish. Just as I turned to make my way back to the bank and call it a day, my foot found a hole and I went straight under, totally submerged, completely under. Just what I needed having stayed dry all day, even in the rain. Having extricated myself without getting too wet it was now definitely time for the drive home.

Thanks for reading and if anyone wants company on a grayling session through the winter, please let me know. I can fish weekdays and some weekends. Feel free to drop me a note at gary@g7talent.com or text me on 07766 823 203.

Gary Franklin

Lakedown Trout Fishery Update

THROUGH JAN AND FEB, LAKEDOWN WILL ONLY BE OPEN ON FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 8am - 4pm
LESS STOCKING WILL BE REFLECTED IN LOWER TICKET PRICES

PLEASE BOOK ONLINE OR BY EMAIL / TELEPHONE IN ADVANCE OF ARRIVING AT FISHERY.

07502 257428 /01435 883449
email.lakedowntroutfishery@gmail.com

Meon Springs Trout Fishery

Pricing update

For the first time since 2017, we are needing to put our prices up a little. From 1st February our fish price will increase from £11.50 to £12.50. This will bring the cost of a 2-fish ticket from £38 to £40.

Everything else on the day fishing side will stay the same; the visit fee price will stay the same; we will still be offering fish credits for fish uncaught, and our loyalty card scheme will still be in effect.

Hassocks and Keymer TALK ABOUT

Tony Kaatze has been to the 'Hassocks and Keymer TALK ABOUT' and arranged for us to have an entry in the what's on section. This will be in the February, March and April editions and will then start again in September. As we are non profit making there is no charge for this, The entry is:-

Sussex Fly Dressers Guild
Clayton Village Hall
Thursdays 7.00pm-9.00pm
Beginners to Advanced
Sussexflydressersguild.org.uk

This is a free publication delivered to all houses in Hassocks , Hurstpierpoint , Keymer and Ditchling.

Bodle Angling, Burgess Hill

In the January 2023 issue of the Freshwater Informer magazine, I spotted an add for Bodle Angling. This company is based on Cuckfield Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8RE. I had a look on their Facebook page and it appears to be basically a warehouse selling equestrian, pet food and numerous other products. If anyone wants to visit this establishment please let me have your feedback so I can update the information.