

The Flydressers Guild Sussex Branch



Newsletter December 2022

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Flydressers Guild

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Annual General Meeting

A reminder that the AGM will take place on **Thursday 8th December at 1930 at Clayton Village Hall**. We need to vote in a new Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

Keith Verrall will also be doing the draw for the rod raffle

A27 Roadworks

Our thanks to Phillip Ellis for this information about roadworks on the A27.

The A23 junction at Patcham will be closed from December 5th through to January from 8pm. There will be a diversion route through Hove.

In Search of the Ladies – Part 1

Due to a lull in the project I am leading at work at the end of October, I had the opportunity to do a bit of grayling fishing. My plans soon changed from a single day on the River Test to considerably more than that. This is the story of 10 days in October in 2 parts

Day 1 - Upper River Test – Wherwell (Friday)

I arranged to fish with someone I know from Balcombe Fly Fishers who being relatively new to fly fishing had not caught a Grayling before, despite being a very capable and proficient multi-species fisher. The forecast up to this Friday had indicated there would be a few bright spots, a possibility of rain and 5 mph breeze for the Stockbridge area of Hampshire. We set off from near Haywards Heath in good weather, a bit of sun and a slight breeze. By the time we got out of the car at Wherwell the weather was shocking; heavy driving rain and wind that would've kept us at home were we not already there. Not the best welcome to his first time on the famed chalk streams for Andy. The river itself was still very clear with little debris, following at a decent rate and not swollen at all. Wherwell it is mostly double bank throughout the length of the fishery and the first stretch you come too from the car park contains a couple of decent pools, good

holding areas for fish before the river further splits across control sluices and a weir. This is Beat 10. We started here.



I had rigged up two rods for the day; 9ft #4 with a Klink 'n' Dink set up of 3 flies, all no larger than size 14. I had a size 16 hotspot PTN on the dropper and size 20 green tag on the point. 6lb leader tapering via surgeon knots to 7x 2.4 lb tippet. The weight of the fly and how it deals with the flow of the river is important for Grayling, I therefore elected to fish a 2.8mm tungsten bead on the dropper and a 2.4 on the point, in theory it allows the point fly to dance a bit more naturally. The other rod was my 10'6" #3 Euronymphing outfit.

Andy had his own rod and once we'd had a chat and a few casts to fish he was happy working it out for himself. I was quite a thrill for him to catch his first ever Grayling, and despite the conditions I am sure if served to boost confidence for the rest of the day. It wasn't long before I gave up on the Euronymphing rod. I had a fish with it but it is always better suited to wading waters, Wherwell is non-wading now, and that combined with the high winds made it all most impossible to flick the flies onto the water. I persevered however with the other

rod. Through the morning we worked our way upstream to the top Beat 10 each taking a few Grayling, none of notable size.

5 days fishing
4 Rivers
25 fish to the net
938 miles travelled

I also landed a decent size spotted Grayling (Out of Season Brown). Lunch was a sodden affair, with both of us grateful to get out of the lashing rain and gusting wind, weather of biblical proportions.

We continued after lunch, again starting with Car Park pool where I was disappointed to pull out two large (for a river) rainbow trout. Whilst the fight on 7x tippet was good fun, no one wants to catch stocked rainbows in the river!! Ignoring all the downstream beats, we moved up to the top end of Beat 11 (upstream from the car park) and enjoyed a very productive few hours on two decent holding areas. So, despite getting the wettest I've been without actually taking a dunking (and that is a common occurrence) and having put up with winds gusting to 45mph (according to the Met Office app) we had a fabulous day, I caught more fish than on any river outing in the last couple of years. The key was finding the right depth, as well as finding the fish. It may have cost me a few dozen meters of tippet and a dozen or so flies lost to trees, but it was worth it. A great day.

Day 2 - Lower River Test – Broadlands (Tuesday)

I'd been invited by Ian Hopper formerly of Dunton Mill, to fish the Broadlands fishery with the Paper Industry Charitable Trust (PICT) last year, but due to work commitments I wasn't able to make it, so when they invited me again this year, I wasn't going to say. I don't need much of an excuse to fish a river, particularly one of such renowned. The drive there in the

morning was interesting, lovely clear day following a few



days of the worst weather any of us had seen for a few months, only to see the damage the tornado that wrought havoc at the southern end of the M3 had caused the day before.

It was clear to see it was to be a tough day. The river was running very fast and high, it was also more coloured than I'd ever seen a chalk stream. No sight fishing today. Confidence was low.

There was a good dozen or more fishers, but Broadlands is a huge fishery, we had more than enough space to roam and keep moving without hinderance to each other.

I was however asked to help a chap who'd never fished a river before and was unprepared for it, particularly reading the flow and depth, which translated into leader, tippet and weight of flies.

I was able to leave him to it and continued alone moving downstream as I went. I only had

my 9' #4 set up with a single fly below the Klinkhammer – I had to change tippet (diameter and length) and fly (pattern and size/weight) until I started to get a feel for the bottom.

The fishing was tough with most of the other fishers blanking, not surprising considering that 977 were caught a few days before in the Broadlands Grayling Classic. Apparently, it was okay because they returned them all (after measuring and recording each one).



I had three fish, inc. one spotty, all on the Duracell jig, all on the point fly.

If anyone would like to accompany me of a day's Grayling fishing before the end of the season (end of Jan), whether experienced or not, please let me know. I can be reached at 07766 823 203 or gary@g7talent.com

Days 3, 4 and 5 to follow in Part 2 next month

Gary Franklin – Nov 2022

Meon Springs Trout Fishery: On the Lakes

The past week or so we've seen a decent drop in the temperature, which has been well overdue, considering how mild it has been. This can put a few "fair weather fisherman" off

of their days fishing. However, although it can feel slightly fresh on the ends of you're fingers and can be numbing on you're nose. The fish don't care, if anything they prefer these colder conditions.

The fishing throughout the day is consistent, with a lot of people reporting back the amount of takes that they're having no matter what time of the day.

They're not overly fussy with what you place in front of them, you will get success with Damsels right the way down to more natural flies like the Hares Ears and various Buzzers. Also a few instances of fish coming out on the occasional dry fly such as Klinkhammers. So make sure you are stocked up with a good selection in the box.

Where we haven't had much rain the past week, it has allowed the lakes to clear up. The gin clear water has its upsides but also its downsides. It allows you to single fish out and make cast to individuals. But on the other hand, where you can see the fish as clear as day, its that much more frustrating when they veer away from you're well presented fly.

**A very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year
to everyone**

