



SALMON & TROUT ASSOCIATION

Game anglers for fish, people, the environment

EAST SUSSEX BRANCH

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NEWSLETTER 2012

Dear Member,

Branch Matters:

First of all, some important requests to every Member: Please would you let us have your e-mail address? We want to improve communication with Members and it is not possible to do this using the postal system, because of the costs. We have a good system in place with the majority of the syndicate members and periodically send an electronic newsletter. We would like to extend this to all Branch Members. Please send us contact e-mail address?

Is your S&TA membership subscription Gift Aided? It is estimated that if every member gift aided their subscription this could be worth an additional £40,000 per year to the Association. You must be a UK tax payer. It only takes a minute to do it online. Just log on to the S&TA website (<http://www.salmon-trout.org/index.asp>), click on the "Gift Aid" box in the top right hand corner. Fill in your details and click "Send". Alternatively, it can be done by post or you can phone Debbie Creasy in the Administration Office.

Shows: Similar to last year, we attended the South of England Show at Ardingly, The Game and Country Fair at Michelham Priory and the Autumn Show and Game Fair at Ardingly. All of these were successful with good numbers of adults and juniors trying Fly Casting and there was a lot of interest in our Courses. Several existing anglers were interested in joining the S&TA and the Syndicate. We plan to attend the same shows in 2012.

Courses: We are indebted to Alan Purnell and Clive Sparke who organised the adult and junior courses during the year, ably assisted by some stalwart helpers. We hope to run a similar number of courses this year.

Match with the Fly Dressers Guild: Thanks are due to Geoff Taylor who arranged the annual match with the Fly Dresser's Guild at Duncton Mill in 2011. It was an enjoyable day with good catches in the morning. Fishing resumed after an excellent lunch but proved more difficult and, I'm grieved to say, the Fly Dresser's triumphed once again. They are hosting the 2012 match, which, I believe is also to be at Duncton Mill in May. Could this be our year?

Monthly Newsletter: Clive Sparke, our Communications Officer, has been producing a superb periodic Newsletter and we are anxious to extend the circulation to as many Branch Members as we can (e-mail addresses please so that we can keep in touch?).

Amendment of the Reservoir Act: Although this was passed by Parliament in the last days of the previous Government there has been no sign of it being applied so far. No doubt the present Government has a great many other matters to occupy it and, hopefully, this situation will prevail for sometime.

Pitdown Landraise: Having received a large number of representations regarding the proposed Landraise sites, including our own, East Sussex County Council published a Draft Waste and Minerals Plan in October 2011 from which it would appear that they do not now propose to consider any new sites for Landraise in the Low Weald. This is a Draft Plan and we should continue to be vigilant.

AGM: Attendance at the AGM in 2011 was better than it has been for several years and March seems a more popular time to hold it. Please put the date in your diary and come along and have your say.

Water Resources Report:

Like an old fashioned gramophone with the needle stuck in the groove, much of this report is no different from last year. Low rainfall coupled with increasing demand for abstracted water has had the usual impact on our rivers and lakes. However, this year has arguably been worse than 2010, as the lack of precipitation has extended into late autumn.

In common with many small still water fisheries, our syndicate waters provided very little sport from July to November. The supplying springs dried up and towards the end of the season the water levels in the lakes were falling. The situation would have been even worse if it had been a hot summer.

Trout, whether they be rainbows or browns are essentially river fish, but they can thrive in very large and deep lakes provided there is sufficient top up from rainfall and the temperature of the water does not get too high. Small still water fisheries will only be consistently successful where there is a constant and robust spring feeding them.

These factors combined with climate change do not bode well for the future and I think we must accept that good sport will be restricted to a springtime window on our syndicate waters. Looking at the wider picture, we can be cautiously optimistic about the future of our Sussex Rivers, as a lot of work is being undertaken by the Environment Agency and the Rivers Trusts to improve their ecological status. It remains to be seen if sufficient

control of pollution and abstraction can be put in place to make these efforts worthwhile.

Sam.St.Pierre – Water Resources Officer

CINDER HILL TROUTING SYNDICATE:

The season started well but ended dismally in 2011. The warm weather started in April and, although, summer temperatures were not as high as in some previous years, rainfall was very low. The feeder streams to Cinder Hill and Piplye diminished to nothing and the water levels in the lakes were many inches below the outflows. Consequently, the water became stale and catches plummeted. We believe that the majority of our last stocking probably perished and even the Cormorants stayed away. Ultimately, we cannot do anything to overcome the weather but, if anyone has any ideas, please let us have them.

After many years, we have decided to change the padlock numbers when the new season opens. Syndicate members will be informed of the new padlock number with their new badges.

Periodically some of the padlocks on the gates and huts cause problems and are difficult to open. This causes difficulties if members are seen to be fishing but have not signed in. There is also a safety issue in that if someone has an accident but has not signed in, no one will know that they are there. Before the next season we will look at all of the padlocks and ensure that they are lubricated and working reliably.

Driving beyond the hut at Cinder Hill or beyond the car park at Piplye is expressly against the wishes of our Landlords and is not permitted. In some exceptional cases permits have been issued to a small number of members, which allow them to drive down to the middle lake at Cinder Hill. The permit must be displayed otherwise the car must not be taken beyond the hut.

River Teise: Have you tried fishing the Teise? If not you should try it. It offers a different challenge to lake fishing. Contact Robert Nathan for a day Permit and map (tel. 0189 - 277 0903 or e-mail r.nathan@btinternet.com).

Stocking Report For 2011:

The release plan for this year was based on spreading just over 3,000 fish between the lakes from late February to mid-October. As in previous years, July and August were planned as rest months from the schedule to allow for that unusual thing called summer. How plans change.

By mid-June the total release figure had reach 1,726, or just over halfway, and with some flexibility left in both the budget and the delivery schedules, there was the promise of some good fishing to come.

At this point, no further release was scheduled for Grubbero due to impending draining and cleaning works, so the balance of fish would be spread over 5 lakes rather than 6. Each year McArthurs Pool at Cinder Hill closes on 30th September, leaving 2 lakes at Cinder Hill to 31st October and 2 at Piplye to 30th November.

By late August it was clear we were in trouble with water flows. Hurstwood (at Cinder Hill) developed a nasty colour with an oily scummy surface and a release of fish in mid-September had real difficulty in adjusting from the near perfect conditions at Duncton to our tired lakes.

Our feeder streams stopped completely in October and the decision was taken to cancel all further deliveries and so a total release of 2,366 was achieved. There is no indication of fish survival and we have had more than our usual attention from cormorants, so all in all it was a good start but an awful finish. Except of course for one member who went to fish at Piplye towards the end of November and landed a 4 lb. 8oz rainbow from the bottom lake – in his words “A cracking fish” – don’t tell me there are no fish to be caught!

Here’s to next year!

Peter Neave

Catch Data: Our thanks are due again to Eddie Rich who has produced the monthly catch data for Cinder Hill and Piplye speedily and accurately throughout the season.

Dredging: Grubbero, the top lake at Piplye, was drained and dredged this summer, a new jetty was created and a silt trap constructed at the inlet. We hope this will now provide good fishing for many years to come.

Weed: Once again, we suffered heavy weed growth in the top lake at Cinder Hill and both the top and middle lakes at Piplye this year. Working parties took out large amounts of weed at both sites but it seems evident that this is going to be a recurring problem and we may have go to the expense of using a contractor.

Working Parties: Mike Richardson has taken over organisation of lake maintenance from George Martin who carried out this role for several years. Our thanks are due to George for the time and work that he put into this. Please try to volunteer for one or more of the Work Party dates before the new season. The more of us there are the more we can do and the less time it will take to get things ready. Please return the slip with the membership renewal form or contact Mike Richardson (tel. 01435 812854 or e-mail mike.horam@virgin.net).

Thanks: Sincere thanks are due to everyone who helped us at our various events throughout the year. Without these volunteers, who gave up their valuable time and energy, the Branch and Syndicate would not be able to continue. My particular thanks must also go to the members of the Branch Committee, for their help and support throughout this year. Let’s hope that 2012 will be better than 2011. Tight lines and best wishes.

Rod. Yuill - Branch Chairman.