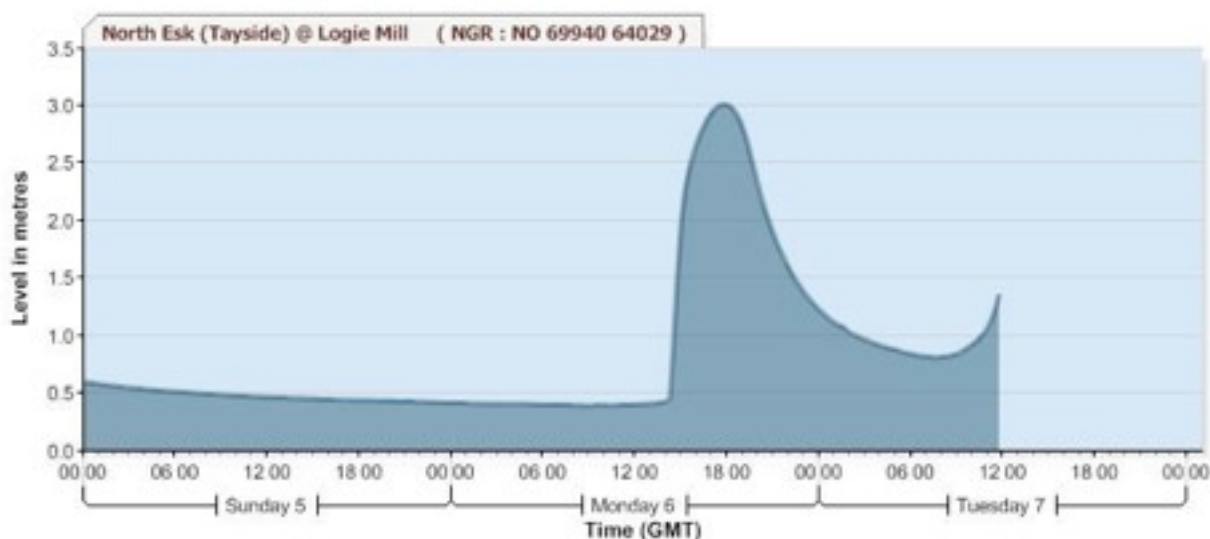




NEWSLETTER

FLOOD ALERT!



Salmon fishers are always praying for rain and Steve Langan was no exception when he went up to fish the North Esk recently with a group of friends. The same rods go up each year at the beginning of October to fish at Marykirk.

You can, however, have too much of a good thing and on Monday 6th October the river

came up over 10 feet in a matter an hour or so, stranding Steve on a small island, from where he had to be rescued by the emergency services. The incident made headline news in the local media and Steve tells the full story on Page 2, although he is not saying what Mrs Langan thought of the escapade!

THE SEASON IN RETROSPECT

It hasn't been the best of seasons and, despite very high rainfall during the winter, the early weeks suffered with low water. The floods had well and truly scoured out the river so weed cover was absent early on, making fish very wary and difficult to approach. The general view was that the Large Dark hatches were pretty much over by the start of the season. Medium Olives and Olive Uprights were as reliable as ever but there were few reports of Iron Blues, although these tiny flies are easy to miss. Black Gnats and Hawthorns were good, as was the Mayfly, which this year was a little earlier

than usual, frustrating those who had booked off the first week of June! The Blue Winged Olives were excellent and some of the evening spinner falls were spectacular, with the whole river coming alive with rising fish. Caddis were present in awesome numbers from May onwards, as were stoneflies, particularly the Yellow Sally. The season ended with very low water, September having only 15.6 mm of rain, the lowest on record.

Total fish caught (excluding the Day Ticket) was 13,072 (2013 15,337) with a fish per visit average of 7.75 (2013 8.66).



A SALUTARY LESSON

by Steve Langan

For the past 15 years it has been my custom to travel up to Scotland in pursuit of a salmon or two. Initially this took place on the River Deveron, but more recently we have followed this week with a second on the North Esk. This year was no exception and the first week proceeded uneventfully with a moderate degree of success.

On the Sunday, driving to the North Esk, we were happy to see that it was raining, the hope being that some fresh water might tempt some fish into the river. So Monday morning saw five eager anglers arriving on the beat with high anticipation.

However, conditions were less than ideal. The rain had persisted overnight and there was a very high wind, making fly fishing almost impossible. The river itself appeared to be in good order but there were few fish to be seen. Undeterred, we began to fish but by lunchtime some of the initial optimism had started to fade.

In the afternoon, my fishing companion, Mark Lee, and I were rostered to fish the Island Pool towards the top of the beat. The Island is approximately 100 yards long and separated from the main bank by a gully which is about 10 yards wide. We waded across the gully at 2.15pm at which time the water was barely ankle-deep. I walked up to the top end of the Island whilst Mark remained at the lower end, close to where we had waded across. The fishing proved to be fairly dire, with lots of leaves in the water making life difficult, so I happily agreed when Mark came to suggest that we might as well

pack up as the river was starting to rise. Gathering up our fishing gear, we crossed to the back of the Island in order to make our way back to the bank but were alarmed to find that the ankle-deep gully was now a raging chocolate brown torrent.

Mark, who is much bigger and stronger than me managed to get across but unfortunately I was unable to do so and it quickly became apparent that I was going to need some assistance. Mark proceeded to phone the emergency services who arrived within minutes.

They assessed the situation rapidly and after several abortive attempts to get a boom across the river decided to send for the Water Rescue Team. They informed me of this, which made me feel a little better, but failed to mention that it would have to come from Dundee, some 30 miles away! By this time it was apparent that the river was rising rapidly and small rivulets of water began to cross the Island from one side to the other. I headed for the highest piece of ground I could find, hidden amidst the trees while the firemen continued with their efforts to get the boom across the river. After another 15 minutes or so I was greatly cheered when told they had summoned a helicopter as by this time the dry land had almost disappeared and water was over my ankles!

I was becoming more anxious as the river continued to rise with little sign of activity. Then sirens announced the arrival of the Water Rescue Team, who appeared on the opposite bank with a rescue device that looked like a shallow raft. Two of the firemen launched this into the

torrent and by dint of vigorous paddling managed to reach the trees on my side of the bank. I was delighted to see them - an island in the middle of a rising river is a very lonely place! I was even more pleased to see that they had brought a substantial life vest!

Eventually we all managed to kneel on the raft and we launched ourselves back into the torrent. By the time I had reopened my eyes we were on the opposite bank and I was relieved to be back on solid ground. By the time we left, the water had been up to my knees.

Thus we were able to cancel the helicopter, which was immediately deployed to rescue three anglers trapped on a smaller island downstream. Without this intervention they would almost certainly have been swept away.

I cannot praise the rescue services too highly. Without their skill and bravery I might not have been here to tell the tale. You can see from the chart on page 1 how quickly the river rose, indeed the ghillie from the lower beat told me that it had come up 3 feet in 15 minutes, and I can well believe him. The eventual rise went off the scale but is thought to have been over 10 feet.

Lessons learned:

- Always fish with a friend (preferably a good one!)
- Wear a life jacket if at all possible
- If fishing from an island, keep a constant eye on your exit
- Carry a mobile phone

PETER LAPSLEY'S FLY TYING KIT



The late Peter Lapsley was a lovely man and an enthusiastic member of our Club. It is typical of his thoughtfulness that he took the trouble to bequeath his fly tying paraphernalia to the Wild Trout Trust for auction. It was on display at our recent 50th Anniversary Dinner and it will be on show at the BFFI at Stafford on 8 February 2015.

One's fly tying kit is a particularly personal thing and it seemed to me slightly voyeuristic, poking around in Peter's stuff to see if he might have been secret Booby addict!

It also goes to show that if you end up leaving cabinets full of the stuff, justifying fly tying on money saving grounds alone is futile. If you're like me, you've probably still got some packets of

fluff with price stickers in old money.

It seems that Peter was no different to the rest of us and just couldn't resist the latest wonder material. And of course he didn't need to justify his addiction - it was simply another engrossing hobby, like photography, which he had come to love through fly fishing.

I very much hope that when the WTT Auction goes live next April, you will be joining me in the bidding.

You can read more about the kit and view more photos on the WTT website www.wildtrout.org

TIED & TESTED - BY STUART CROFTS

Hook: Partridge SUD size 14-18 cranked 20 degrees across the shank about a quarter of the way down

Tails: two strands of Organza fibre well spread



Wing: Gold Organza fibres

Hackle: Good quality genetic cock, colour to suit naturals

Body: Wapsi Super-fine dubbing, shade to suit the natural

This is my latest version of a pattern inspired by an article in the American magazine "Fly Fisherman"; the article was by Kelly Galloup in 1999. He had noted that many spent and dying spinners appeared "bent" and lay on their sides as they drifted down river. He felt this was an important trigger point so he added it to his pattern. Now firmly my number one and only spinner pattern (large mayflies excepted), just change the size and colour to imitate any of our surface egg laying spinners. Before use, gink the hackle, wing and tails (never the body or hook), allowing it to sit nicely in the surface film. (See page 7 for a photo of a natural in this posture)

LESSONS OF 2014

DAVID MARRIOTT

Mention of Peter Lapsley reminded me that he used to do a very useful piece each year in FF & FT in which he would recount things he had learned in the past season. I'm sure he wouldn't mind if I borrowed his format.

Back in the Spring my visit to the Aude in the South West of France was a great learning experience, thanks to my guide Yannick Riviere. He really put me through it on some very challenging water. The stream was very fast



flowing and I was well outside my comfort zone, fishing weighted nymphs on my Tenkara rod. I'm not a nymph fisher by inclination but he showed me how to fish more effectively by leading the rod tip downstream slightly ahead of the flies, thus keeping a constant tension on the line so that takes registered more clearly. And so many takes! I missed loads of offers by my slow reactions, not helped by Yannick's "Oup!" every time the line hesitated. As a strike indicator he used some sticky fluorescent gunk called Bristle Grease that he smeared on the junction of the casting line and the leader. The object was to keep this just on the surface and strike at the merest indication of a take. This stuff is apparently used by pole fishermen on their tiny floats and you can find it in most coarse fishing tackle shops.

What else did I learn from him? Don't hesitate to add to or subtract weight from the leader as you work up a pool to ensure that the flies are near the bottom at all depths. Fish the sunny side of the stream in the mornings as the fish tend to start feeding here first (although it's the opposite in high Summer). I also realized that my casting wasn't as good as I thought it was and it prompted me to get

some lessons from Steve Yeomans when back home, something I would recommend to anyone. My accuracy for the rest of the season certainly improved dramatically as a result, particularly in tight spots.

Talking of indicators (for those like me whose eyesight is not what it was) I'm a convert to the New Zealand Strike Indicator system. It enables the indicator to be fixed in place on the leader without damaging the line, and it easily slides up or down to alter the depth. I've ordered a stock of these for the Huts as I'm sure they will be in demand.

Another find from the world of pole fishing is a new mono called Sagitar. It is significantly thinner for its breaking strain than other monofilaments and has a very high knot strength. It is used by the pole guys for carp fishing. Oliver Edwards and Stuart Crofts put me onto it and those of you who know these canny Yorkshiremen will know that it must be good if it has usurped the place of Bayer Perlon! You can get it in 50m spools from Bill at www.italiafishing.com.

There's another clever little gadget also involving a trip to a coarse fishing establishment to purchase some No. 4 pole elastic. Cut off an 8 inch length, tie a loop in each end and fasten one end to



a D ring on your fishing waistcoat. Take your slimed up CDC fly, rinse it thoroughly in the stream and hook it onto the free loop. Holding the leader, pull everything tight and twang it three or four times. The vibrations will remove all the moisture from the

CDC and the fly shouldn't need any more treatment before being sent on its way again. I'm indebted to Stuart Crofts and Steve Donohue for this idea.

So there you are, some things I learned in 2014. Tight lines!



DUFFER'S DELIGHT 2

by John Frazer

I started fly fishing around 20 years ago while working in the oil business in Aberdeen. The team I was working with had a number of fly fishers, most of whom hailed from Ayrshire mining villages and whose mothers would probably describe them as "rough diamonds". The local constabulary probably had a different opinion. The hotel we were staying in, the Grant Arms at Monymusk, had 8 or so salmon beats on the Don. They were invariably free in the evening, so the proprietor allowed us to fish for free. I was supplied with all the gear and basic instruction. The Jocks were mainly salmon and sea trout fishers and would kill everything they caught. No wonder the catch returns on the Nith have plummeted. For trout they would normally swing 3 or 4 wet flies downstream because they said they caught the most fish that way. That is true to a certain extent, as a rod on the Chatsworth Derwent "Billy 2 Rivers", once said to me. "I used to catch more fish before I could fish!" I had a similar experience on the river Irwell at Summerseat last week. I caught 12 small trout in 4 hours fishing a duo, most taking the PTN. Then 6 mostly larger trout in 20 minutes swinging a size 12 Damsel in two fast runs on the way back to the car. All free fishing and full of wild trout if you're in the neighbourhood.

The Jocks all loved fly fishing and were very competitive. They would use whatever method they considered best for the conditions and allowed by the rules and the river level - the "mark" as they called it, fly, spinner or worm. I fished many stillwaters with them, and the Nith and Upper Clyde, catching salmon to 12 lbs spinning and sea trout to 6 lbs worming on the Nith, thanks to their 3 generations of local river knowledge.

I started fishing stillwaters at home, mainly Arnfield Reservoir,

with advice from Tony Plant at Stockport Flyfishing, who by chance had opened his shop just 5 minutes walk from my house. I decided to try some river fishing and booked a day on the Day Ticket section of the Wye, as suggested by Tony. I didn't really know what to do when I saw the Wye which was very different from the Don, Nith & Clyde I was used to., especially as wading was not allowed. But I managed 2 fish on nymphs during the day and another 2 in the last hour with a dry sedge and missed many more. As a result, I booked another day and hired Peter Arfield to show me the ropes, money well spent. Shortly after, while working for an oil company in Surrey, I was invited to fish at a charity day at Dever Springs and bought a day on "Vince Gwilym's" beat on the Chatsworth Derwent. I had a great day with Vince and ended up getting a rod on the Chatsworth Derwent in 1998, where I was among friends swinging nymphs and wets downstream.

I hatched a master plan for the half term break that year to maximise my fishing and keep the marital peace. I booked a cottage for my family at Bole Hill Farm near Bakewell. Alas, the weather did not cooperate and the Derwent was a raging brown unfishable torrent. Ken Tetsill, then head keeper, was aware of my predicament and suggested I use one of my guest tickets to fish the Wye, which he had heard was fishable.

At 13.00 on 3rd June 1998 I turned up at the Locked Bridge to receive the warm welcome for which Tom Richardson was famous. "Who are you? You should've phoned. You can't park there. I hope he doesn't send any more rods down here." I should at this point emphasise that I had only caught about 20 fish on a dry fly in my life and some of them hooked themselves as I had a cup of tea on still waters. I crossed the Locked Bridge and walked upstream and down to the river just past the wide

farm gate is now. The river was high and the colour of dark tea and there were fish rising everywhere. Mayfly were emerging and there were dozens of duns in the back eddies on either side. I could not believe it, no matter how bad the cast the fish just didn't mind. As "Don the Dentist" would say, mayfly fishing suited my casting style. I was even rising fish as I lifted off to re-cast. I couldn't find a fly the fish would not take. I quote from my diary:

"Wye, 3/6/98, 13.00 to 18.00, parked at the Locked Bridge and walked half way to Monsal Dale. Dull, overcast and light rain, river dark tea coloured and high after a wet week and a torrential downpour the previous day. 20+ assorted fish caught with around 10 different flies including Gray Wulff, Olive Comparadun, Parachute Adams, Hopper and ginked Mayfly Nymph."

I returned the following day and walked the whole section.

"Wye 4/6/98, 11.00 to 18.30 Marie dropped me off at the Marble Works and picked me up at Monsal Dale road bridge. Sunny and calm, river cleared but was still tea coloured. 30+ assorted fish mostly on Parachute Adams but also Parachute Olive, Olive Comparadun and even a black Bob's Bits. Not as easy as previous day, could probably have caught more but kept moving rather than fishing out pools to make sure I got to Monsal Dale on time. Stuck with the Adams as it seemed to work as well as anything."

What a couple of days for a novice river fisher, especially as it was a section of river I had no experience of and no mentor telling me what to do! Like a heroin addict, I will probably never again experience the feeling of my first Wye fix. It wasn't just the fishing, it was the whole experience and the good fortune that had placed me there at the right time. When I returned to Stockport Tony Plant explained that the two weeks around the end of May/beginning of June were known as "Duffer's Fortnight." I didn't care. I'd had the time of my life and intend to walk the Wye 'til the day I die!



FISHING THE USA

By Kevin Gowen

Ron Mazuran and I spent three weeks fishing in the USA during July. A visit to St Peter's Fly Shop in Fort Collins resulted in us spending at least \$150 on some great gear. Fly fishing outfitters in the US have stock to die for and at prices that are hard to resist. We were to fish in Utah, Montana and Idaho and if time permitted, Wyoming too. After R&R in Fort Collins to get over our long trip, we headed West to meet with fishing friends in Utah.

The Green River near Dutch John runs out of Flaming George Dam, which is located just west of the Colorado border and south of the Wyoming border. The river, being tailwater, runs fast and clear with an estimated 23,000 fish per mile. This doesn't make them easy to catch though. Rainbows, browns and cutthroat trout are the dominant species. Ron & I, along with friends Don & Pat Barz, fished for two days, all of us catching some beautiful, hard fighting fish. A dry with a nymph dropper was the preferred rig and either of the two did the job. My most memorable fish was a 55 cm rainbow from a slow-running but crystal clear backwater. After several casts with my standard flies (generally a Yellow Sally dry) and getting no response other than a cursory glance, I put on a tiny size 20 black bug that I had tied. Action was immediate and the fish danced about 40 metres up the pool before I was able to get it under control. Next was a lovely 50 cm brown which took a Stimulator with a nymph dropper. So what's memorable about that, you say. Well another brown, just as big, followed the hooked fish and took the nymph. Unfortunately, I could only land the first fish, the other breaking off the dropper.

After leaving Dutch John, Ron & I drove north into Wyoming, crossing the Green River several times. We overnighted in the small town of Pinedale before driving through the Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks. We had a two night stay in West Yellowstone, Montana, fishing the nearby Madison River. Unfortunately we were about two



weeks late for the Salmonfly hatch, regarded as the premier time on this river. I hit it right a few years ago when the takes to these huge stoneflies were spectacular. A large dry such as a Stimulator with a Yellow Sally nymph always seemed to work. Just before dark was a really exciting time, with fish rising everywhere.

Ron and I met with a group from the Goulburn Valley Fly Fishing Centre in Driggs, Idaho, where we stayed for the next two weeks. About 5 minutes drive from Driggs is the Teton, a large spring creek. The Goulburn Valley organisers had arranged for five drift boat trips (including a two-day drift with an overnight camp). We fished all the iconic streams, many of them part of the huge Snake River. The Henry's Fork, South Fork and Box Canyon are all part of the Snake River complex. The Teton River eventually joins the Snake River much further north. There are many drop-in and drop-out points. Guides

drive their vehicles and boats to a launching ramp on a section of the river, from where we would drift for 15km or so to a pull-out point. The guides arrange for their cars and trailers to be "shuttled" from the launch ramp to the pull-out through a company that specializes in this operation. It works like a well oiled machine.

The rivers vary from rapids in Box Canyon to slow meandering streams at Last Chance, Idaho. In Box Canyon there is little chance of finesse - just haul the fish in with the line twanging in protest. You tend to lose a few fish in the very fast water.

The South Fork is more forgiving and the scenery is spectacular. Fishing very close to the bank means accurate casting and fast strikes mean instant response or the fish is gone. Often we fished gravel bars and drop-offs where fish would congregate in slower water or where the current forced food into a "bubble line". We both enjoyed good fishing, catching browns, rainbows, cutthroats and cuttbows (a rainbow/cutthroat hybrid).

On the days we didn't drift, we explored other streams. Robinson's Creek and Warm River both flow into the Henry's Fork. Both gave us some interesting fishing. Our best stream though, was a much smaller water called Bitch Creek. The sign for this river keeps being stolen, so unless you know it's there it's easy to miss. Wadeable for most of its length, Bitch Creek always gave us a great return for effort. Not big fish (my best was a 43cm hybrid) but generally about 35cm. My best day saw at least 50 fish, including brook trout, in the net and not one other fisher seen all day.

It was a great trip and Ron and I enjoyed each other's company.



LAST CAST

**Grayling at the Bobbin Mill**

OK, the booking in system via Google Calendar has not been a success! We

are thinking about replacing it with a members only page on our website similar to the Day Ticket system. Meanwhile, Chris is more than happy to take a booking over the phone.

Crayfish

We have been following the debate about crayfish - to trap or not to trap - and we have come to the conclusion that we just cannot sit back and do nothing. We are fortunate in that so far they have not yet invaded our water, although they are infesting the upper reaches of Buxton Fly Fishers water. With their agreement, we hope to start trapping next Spring to create a buffer zone, using fine mesh traps that will not allow any escapees. Many of the traps currently available permit the juvenile crayfish to escape. These new traps are being trialled by Warren Slaney on the Haddon Estates Derwent fishery with some success. The Derwent Clubs have been trapping extensively this year and have been removing literally thousands of them every week. The bigger ones are the size of small lobsters!

Himalayan Balsam

For the third year running we have been unable to find any plants on our water, although a few persist at the Council Tip in Buxton.

Winter Work

During the summer, Chris marked out several trees below the Bobbin Mill with a view to coppicing them. The vast majority are alder trees showing signs of disease. Past experience has shown that coppicing in the early stages of the disease can lead to recovery. Some of the timber won will be pinned in the river to provide cover for fish and create flow deflection. Bank repair work will be undertaken (weather permitting) on the Day Ticket, Duffers and Monsal Dale.

Fencing Work

The fence lines below the Bobbin Mill are once again going to need attention, many posts having been broken by those pesky buffalo. They are not entirely to blame though; sub standard posts used in the first place (before our tenure) are now well & truly rotten. Chris has also identified areas on Beat 5 and the Day Ticket which will benefit from proper fencing to keep out the stock.

Poaching

We have been targeted again this summer but the incidents have generally been small scale. A team effort involving all the keepers, including the EHK and Tom Richardson, not to mention Lizzie and her husband from Netherdale Farm, resulted in the arrest of 5 Poles, who are now being prosecuted by the Club and the EA.

Fly Sales

The flies and accessories on sale in the Huts have been very popular and we are adding to the range through the good offices of Colin Dimond, who is tying non-standard patterns for us. If you would like to make a request for a particular pattern, please get in touch or leave a note in the books in the Huts.

Subscriptions for 2015

The Treasurer announced at the End of Season Meeting on 4th November that he was not minded to seek an increase for 2015, thanks to savings we have been able to make this year. Consequently, the Subscription will remain at £930 and subscription invoices will be posted to members in early December. Payment is due on 1st January 2015.

Events in 2015

Member events had not been formalized at the time of writing but we will certainly be running the popular fly tying days with Stuart Crofts, including a beginners day. Stuart will also be hosting his Bugs & Burgers evening later in the season. We will continue to run the Rivercraft Day in the Summer and we will also be welcoming back Oliver Edwards, who has agreed to run another one of his popular Streamside Days for us. In a departure from tradition, we will be holding a Hog Roast at Cressbrook Hall instead of our usual mid season Dinner. Wives, partners and guests will be most welcome. We have one or two other ideas and a full programme will be sent out in the New Year.