

## Cressbrook & Litton Flyfishers

### Fishing Report

16 September 2014

Recent weeks have had a beautiful late summer/early autumn feel to them, still and warm, with low water conditions making fishing a pleasant challenge. There have been occasional showers though and our fifth annual Tenkara Day fell on such a day. There was very little wind and the rain felt like it was set in for the day. When I arrived at Duffers the river was steaming but still low and clear. Disappointingly, only Brian had bothered to show up and he had brought his fly rod! He was however keen to see Tenkara in practice, so we set off together. There were a few fish rising in the quiet water to something tiny but I couldn't interest them in the size 20 IOBO Humpty I had on from a previous visit. I decided to concentrate on faster water and changed to a Tan Klinkhamer. This brought several expressions of interest but I failed to connect. By the time I'd reached the Highland Stream all I'd had for my trouble was a brace of 10 inch brownies and a slightly better rainbow. Chagrin therefore on my part when Brian overtook me saying he'd had 5 with the fly rod! By this time I was feeling distinctly down, not to mention wet, so I returned to the Hut with my mind set on a coffee. Sod the Tenkara Day! Here I found Hilary & Steve and the EHK who provided the much needed coffee and solace. I didn't need much persuading to retire to the Cock & Pullet for lunch.

The following Friday I was back on the river in the Indian Summer weather we've been enjoying. The President had been hoping to host several guests but in the event only one could make it and he didn't arrive until later, having gone to the wrong Hut. I put him on Quaker Pool and left

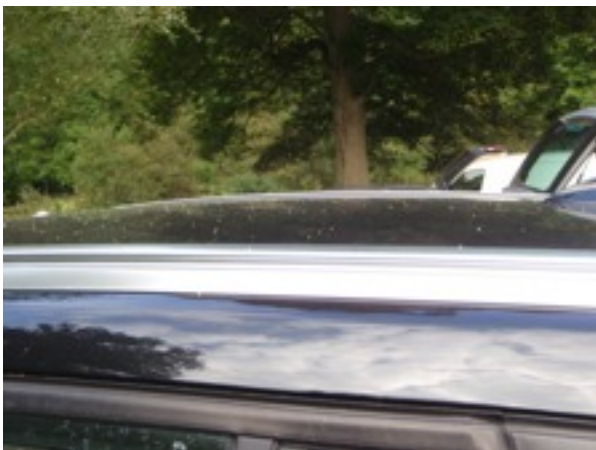
him to it. I went up into the Dale and spent 10 minutes watching a nice run.

Immediately it was apparent that the predominant fly was the Willow Fly, the egg laying females dive-bombing the surface. There were olives hatching but they were tiny, and weren't hanging about on the surface. I put on an IOBO Humpty and covered a riser I'd seen on my side of the run. He was on to it straight away, a brownie of 12 inches or so. After much huffing & puffing and applications of Frog's Fanny, I sent the fly back on its way to cover a fish I'd seen tip up in the quiet water under my bank. The fish came up to meet the fly, took it and returned to its lie. For once I didn't strike too soon and it zoomed off the shallows like a bonefish and then very kindly played itself out for me in the main current. It was a very tidy brownie of 18 inches or so. Another of similar size followed, then it was time to head back to the Hut for lunch.

I had to be back home mid-afternoon, so after a quick bite I headed downstream to a fast run that I have a liking for. For some reason I always feel more comfortable fishing a nymph in this pool. The fishable water is quite short but it always seems to hold good fish. I rigged up a new tippet of 2.3 kilo Stroft and put on a size 18 Copper Squirrel Olive Nymph, thinking of the tiny olives that had been coming off all day. I attached a pinch of pink Float Dough about 5 feet from the fly and, taking careful note of the overhanging branches surrounding me, commenced operations in the run-out. First cast brought a fish up to the indicator but fortunately he let go. I then had a couple of near misses in the fast water, the first when I became aware of the shadow of a big fish tracking the fly downstream. I lost sight of it momentarily, saw the indicator hesitate, by which time I'd run out of arm to strike effectively. The next run down gave me a full side-on glimpse of probably the

same fish turning near the fly. Again, the strike produced nothing. I thought I could still be in with a chance because I hadn't felt the fish on either occasion. By way of giving the fish a rest, and to assuage a nagging doubt that the fly might be a bit too big, I changed to a size 22 version of the same pattern. I shortened the length of the tippet below the indicator thinking that the fish probably wasn't lying very deep, using the fast water as cover. I plopped in the tiny nymph on the same track as before and this time the little pink ball had hardly gone a foot before it shot away upstream. I lifted into that solid thumping resistance that indicates a good fish. It proved to be a very nice brownie somewhere north of 2 and a half pounds. A very satisfying end to the day!

Back at the car, as I was packing up, I noticed that the roof of the Presidential limousine was covered in hundreds of tiny yellow balls about the size of the balls of pollen you can see on a bee's knees. I didn't have long to wait to find out where they had come from. Several Willow Flies were swooping down on the roof and depositing



their egg-balls on the shiny black surface. They are apparently attracted to the horizontal polarized light reflected from the black surface, which must be at the same frequency as the light emitted from the surface of the river. (I'm indebted to Stuart

Crofts for this explanation). Now each ball contains hundreds of eggs, so this one vehicle has caused an ecological disaster for the local stoneflies. It was noticeable that only the black car was attracting the flies, so I'm asking our President, on behalf of the stonefly community, to do the decent thing and change his vehicle for something less black.

John Shirtcliffe rang me the other day on his way to the river. He hasn't fished for two years and he'd forgotten the padlock code. Unfortunately, he'd been stung on the hand by a wasp and was doubtful if he would be able to handle his rod.

I'm sorry to say that I rather jumped the gun when I announced recently that we would be stocking the New Zealand Strike Indicators in the Huts. They have been in the country for several weeks but are stuck in Customs, presumably while the Officials are making tea. I'm finding this very frustrating as I desperately want to try them out.

In return for a small favour, Clew Hughes sent me a copy of a rather wonderful book that had somehow escaped my notice. It is "At the Loch of the Green Corrie" by Andrew Greig. A wonderfully evocative read which should chime with those of us who love to fish the wild places. The fishing is incidental as Greig seeks to fulfill the last request of the dying poet, Norman Maccaig, to find and fish his favourite lochan in the far North West of Scotland. It reminded me of Patrick Leigh-Firmor's "A time of Gifts". It is available via iBooks at £4.95.

Only three weeks of the season left!

Tight lines,  
David

