

Cressbrook & Litton Flyfishers

Fishing Report

15 September 2016



At the end of August the rain fell relentlessly and soon the river was high and dirty. Despite the terrible conditions, Carl Brumby enjoyed a wonderful day fishing every beat on his birthday, of which more will be told in the end of season Newsletter. This is proof of my contention that the Wye is never really unfishable. As the levels fined down, the weather improved and I was tempted to venture out on several evenings for the last hour or so. My experience is that the Wye is at its best when the EA gauge is at 0.25m in Buxton and around 0.35m at the Bobbin Mill. The river just seems to have more energy at these levels and the fish seem invigorated by the faster flow.

The first session was below the Locked Bridge, on the roadside pool. The evening was still and overcast and fish were rising all the way up the run. I was spoilt for choice - not only were there fish everywhere but the air was full of Olives, Caddis and Stoneflies. I started with a Parachute Adams and brought up fish steadily in the seam on the edge of the faster current. I finished with 10, all browns, best about a pound and a half. A few evenings later I did the same again, this time starting out from Duffers after fish & chips from the Corner Chippy in Tidza. It was hard work at first, particularly in Lenzini's and the pool above. The fish were there but they weren't taking enthusiastically. I should add that Keith Burtonwood, Don Stazicker and Bill Thomas had been fishing hereabouts earlier, which might account for the poor showing. By the

way, Keith has posted a lovely video, Summer on the Wye, on his website www.clickonthewildside.com.

Further into Sandyford and the fishing improved. I had a lovely rainbow from an achingly beautiful jade green run on a Parachute Spinner. When I reached the Highland Stream I switched to a Caddis Green Klink and brought up fish after fish in the pots, which had been enhanced by the additional water.

The light was failing so I got out and hurried on to Slitherford. I was keen to get to the Steps Pool before the light went because at this height I knew it would fish well. I got in below the run and immediately saw several fish moving. I laid siege with a s18 Parachute Spinner. The fish were fooled time after time until the light went and then all was quiet. I walked warily back to Duffers in the dark, only to bump into a group of about 30 bat-fanciers huddled around the base of the viaduct. Each to their own!

The third and final evening I will recount started with another fish supper with the President, this time they were from Elliott's, also of Tideswell. They were equally good as those of the Corner Chippy but I think there might have been a better class of Derbyshire Tup banter in Elliott's. Club business disposed of, I was in Signposts by 7.00 and, as it would be dark by 8.15, there was no time for faffing about. The river looked perfect. On went a P. Adams which was flicked a rod's length into a run under an overhanging tree. A brownie came up and swam off with it. Good start, pound and a half. Mist started to rise from the river, which some say puts the fish off but to be honest, that's never been my experience. There were loads of BWO Spinners and Duns about and fish continued to rise in all the likely places. I stuck with the same fly, giving it a dose of dun Dry Shake (now available in all good fishing Huts!). A fish rose close by and took the fly on the next run down. Then another, closer still, and I'd yet to move an inch. I proceeded to take fish all the way up to the viaduct, until it was too dark to see. Another perfect evening but tempered by the realisation that the nights were drawing in and opportunities for evening fishing would soon be limited.

Thanks to Andrew Coombe, I was able to reacquaint myself with an old friend, Jason Wright, with whom I'd lost contact. I invited him down for a day's fishing and a catch up. It was a perfect September day, overcast but mild, with a southerly breeze. I'd been itching to get up into Cheedale, so I gave him strict instructions that we weren't to get distracted if we were to get up into the Dale in good time. Of course we did get distracted but I was pleased when he opened his account with a lovely rainbow almost straight away. We pressed on, pausing to cast to rising fish but keeping up a good pace.

As we negotiated Chee Tor, we were transfixed by half a dozen good fish rising steadily down below us in the gorge, to my mind quite safe from any angler, other than perhaps John Fraser, who likes nothing better than to test his wading skills here - to the limit. I was not allowing for the resourcefulness of my guest however. He is a recently retired Army Officer to whom negotiating a forty foot drop without a rope is all part of a morning's fishing! I bravely elected to stay up top to spot for him, while he scabbled down the cliff onto a platform of very shaky looking Large Woody Debris. Of course the fish stopped rising for a while but I could still see most of them on station, including a large brownie only a few feet from the edge. It was a tricky cast for a right hander and unsurprisingly the first cast became tangled in an overhanging branch. The fly was retrieved, thankfully without disturbing the fish, and the next cast fell just right. I watched the fish come up to inspect the John Storey (Jason is a member on the Yorkshire Rye where this famous fly was invented by the eponymous keeper) and agonisingly drop down with it. Then he made his mind up and sucked it in. We were both whooping like small boys as it was netted. Like all good soldiers, Jason had planned his retreat and somehow he managed to get back up the cliff unscathed. I told him there was another gorge a little way up the Dale and he couldn't wait to get in there.

Later that afternoon, fishing on Beat 5, we came across a very good fish rising consistently to something tiny, close into the bank. I was able to hide behind a bush while Jason returned the morning's favour and spotted for me. To cut it short, I tried dries both small and miniscule, tiny nymphs, you name

it, but it ignored everything. I hadn't put it down however, so Jason had a go from further downstream. Still no result. I suspect micro drag was pulling the fly off line. Either that or the fish has seen every fly in the box. I shall be returning with my Tenkara rod!

Mention of fly boxes reminds me that I came across a box of flies floating in a back eddy below Netherdale Farm. If you are the owner give me a call on 07885 116638 and I will return it to you.

There is a distinct autumnal feel now on the river bank, with Large Dark and Medium Olives starting to make a reappearance. Stoneflies are everywhere at the moment and I read somewhere that this has been a perfect summer for Crane Flies. I saw a Heather Fly the other day, always worth a try when the heather is in bloom.

Tight lines!
David Marriott



A stonefly fooled into laying its egg-ball on top of my car.

Dark cars emit the same type of light wave as the water surface, tricking the egg laying females into thinking they are above the river. The car roof was so hot that both fly and egg-ball were instantly fried!