

S & D A C Newsletter

Summer 2024



SDAC NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2024

EDITORS RAMBLINGS

This time I am going to open the newsletter with a plea to those that can get onto the forum where important updates are posted without having the extra work to copy out newsletters or deal with those who claim to be unaware. It is a mine of information on fishing and fisheries. [See page 40 in yearbook for details.](#) It saves Andreas the pressure and the team time on the phone to repeat information already out there as they have things like saving our rivers and bureaucrats to deal with. The cost of batteries for Andreas heart and blood pressure units don't come cheap either. I know we are a secretive bunch and do not want to let on how we did but at least sign up, read it so any information is imparted, questions asked and confusions ironed out.

Year on year we have breaches of rules and etiquette, these are usually minor but shouldn't occur and is a frustration to the club and bailiffs. The first thing is to read the rule book and if you are in doubt, ask. Things like nymphing or wading where anglers shouldn't, New Zealand style set ups and double nymph have been found on fisheries where they clearly aren't supposed to be, a fresh indicator and nymph was found in a tree at a beat where dry fly only applies. A member signed into a beat on a day we aren't allowed to fish and there has been a shambles when busy at the Stapleford fishery where anglers didn't sign in and out correctly with anglers wandering off their preferred beat. We have to remember that some of our landowners allow us on their water because we have a good relationship but a few seem to want to jeopardise the relations we have. Also there seems to be more anglers who do not have their photos in the book. We are asked if it has to be a passport photo, well they never look like us so any photo that fits the box that is you will do. A bailiff reported that a member had a picture of a chap in ski gear – it looked like him so was fine.

The QR code has had a slow start, we expected this but it shows what is being caught and where so others can instantly access the information. We know there are those that won't embrace technology but it can save time in getting stats together. Perhaps another reason is the same reason few put any reports on the forum, we don't want others to know what we have caught, good or bad as the signing in book has to be read on arrival. Give it a try please.

Well it has been a funny start to the season hasn't it. Floods have impacted the usual start by closing some fisheries and causing problems to the banks. Fortunately we have a great team that have gone the extra soggy mile to get the waters open and made safe for access. It is frustrating but your safety is our concern as we don't want errant waders ending up at Christchurch milling about with the slob trout, or doing a Vicar of Dibley disappearing down an innocuous looking puddle.

The weed cutting went well with the team and volunteers taking up where the EA left off doing a remarkable job.

The rivers suffered a bit from brown algae and a particularly wet spring kept water levels up but fishing began on the Game and Coarse fisheries so the fun started.

As always our wonderful British weather has done its usual with a particularly long cold spell at the start of the season. We have had floods in years past and also a cold Easterly in April but this was one of the longer ones chilling the nads well into May. Despite that the grannom made an appearance for the dry fly to be applied successfully, although you had to be in the right place at the right time to get in on the action. It rained on St Swithins day so I put my order in at Dover for a cheap used inflatable and engine but the next day summer arrived and it probably won't rain for forty days and nights, anyone want a boat and engine?

The mayfly season has been strange to say the least. I couldn't get down for most of April but when I did the mayfly were still 'aving it. Gone is Duffers fortnight as the mayfly season is getting longer, coming off from early April until, well who knows. The earlier higher levels may have made the trout go for the nymph as depth meant they had to go further up for a meal so got fat near the river bed. From reports there were some good days in May where a lot of good catches and hatches coincided but it was a short window but they still kept coming as sporadic hatches were still evident at the start of July. Now the nymphomaniacs are able to 'get down with da fins' some nice fish have been recorded and to get to the deeper feeding fish.

This club has done much to improve fisheries and been involved with external agencies that have an influence on our fishing and habitat. These days there seems to be many more who have funding to deliver such as rewilding, free swimming and now beavers. There seems to be a bit of a tidal wave of these groups and sometimes the club may

miss one. A lot of these groups have to have a consultancy stage to engage with those that may be affected by plans. They tend to find sympathetic groups and miss those such as ours as they don't want 'moany old anglers', especially those like us armed with data that may have them reflect on their plans. Should you see any project in the media that may have an effect please forward details to the club.

We are all members of a great club which faces a lot of issues that could affect our fishing. There are asks for volunteers to help out, please consider volunteering as your work will help keep the fees as reasonable as they are which is the ethos of the club. Reporting poaching, pollution or issues at fisheries is really necessary so we get action. They say it is only a few that catch most of the fish and it is also true that the few do most of the volunteering, only a couple of hours could make a difference.

All for one and all that....

MENTORING

The club has set up training days at the Cartshed for groups of new and improving anglers to hone their skills and knowledge which get over subscribed. There was a discussion on the forum about mentoring as some clubs do this. I know that this idea has been kicked around before but this time a few names came forward to volunteer and mentor.

It is aimed at new or improving members who may like a few tips on fishing, have a chat about rules, the waters and methodology. The volunteers are members who are prepared to meet up at a fishery, they are not instructors or accredited with diplomas nor endorsed by a brand, just ordinary experienced anglers prepared to give back something for the benefit of others. No payment is required, hence a 'no money back' policy but should you feel you have benefitted then it's good to pass it on in the form of a donation to the small fry club. The mentors will only be available by arrangement with the chosen one to fit in with their diaries. They cannot give the 'full monty' that the training days offer, just some nice pointers to help you out.

The committee have endorsed the idea so now there is a thread on the forum where you can view the names and read about the mentor and then contact details. To encourage more usage of the forum that is where it will be and we will see how it goes.

So now we are into the alleged 'Dog days of Summer' whatever that means these days. I am sure there will be fish to catch but maybe an early start or late finish may get one to the net.

Unfortunately I am a fly rod so no comments on the coarse fishing but that's where Ben will fill you in. I did loads of coarse fishing back in the day and still have that hankering to have been there at dawn on June 16th on a misty lake. Feed a few gentles in a ball of crumb, maybe try a par boiled potato on the hook and watch a float sit by some lilies awaiting the tell tale bubbles as a Tench inspects my offerings. Perhaps I would get out my pole, with its magnificent whale bone tip, fish with hemp in hopes of a fine roach. Do you coarse guys have mentors. I may need one.

Have a great summers fishing and don't forget the sunscreen or umbrella.

BASHING THE BALSAM

Those on the forum may have read about Andy Staffords balsam cutting at Lower Eastleigh. This weed is a problem on the lower Eastleigh beat although walking the banks you may not see it. This weed was introduced by Victorian explorers as it looks nice in flower and showed Billy or Betty big bananas had travelled. However, like the Rhododendron grows quickly and soon blankets vast areas of ground killing off native species and take over banks. There are vast amounts at Eastleigh and if left the seeds will get into the river and it will spread quickly downstream. Andy has been at it with one or two volunteers and it wasn't until I joined him the sheer magnitude of the problem was realised. The plant needs to be pulled before it seeds. The roots are shallow so easy to pull. Neil used a scythe to take them down at ground level just to clear areas quickly but they need to be checked to see if they start to grow again. We cleared a hell of a lot but there is more to do and needs volunteers. Why not volunteer and have a bit of fishing after. Yes it is a bit of exertion but if you do what you can it will make a difference. If you see it on any fishery pull it up and report it as it may have been missed. The maintenance team are very busy and do allocate time but if they put all their time into this other fishery maintenance will suffer and the grumbles will come in.



The picture shows about a third of area we cleared in a few hours.

IT IS A JOB THAT NEEDS ACTION SOONER AS IF IT SEEDS THE PROBLEM WILL SPREAD – There will be more work parties in August please help. Contact Andy, andy.g4vpn@ntworld.com or Neil Owens, neil_owens@hotmail.com and they will guide you in. Please consider a few hours please. Volunteers were a great help when the weed cutting was done, it really makes a difference.

SADAC Game Section summer news.

The season started as we had anticipated in the spring newsletter with widespread flooding of all our waters. Many areas had been under water all winter so damage to the banks was extensive, and a lot had changed in the channels with many previous features washed away.

We reopened our traffic light system to give some guidance as to what fishing was available and to record any particular hazards as some of our fisheries were so wet that it was some weeks before they could be reopened. Normal maintenance becomes impossible in these conditions so it was a matter of doing whatever we could with whatever machine could be got onto the banks. Thanks to the keepers, casual support and volunteers for battling through we got there in the end. Members were keen to get out and took advantage of the available water perhaps not always the fishery they would have chosen in a normal year. Mixed reports of catches with those skilled with the nymph reporting good fishing on the waters where permitted. Many reported few rises and the dry fly user needed to look carefully for any signs of moving fish and tempt them up wherever they could. Stocked waters received their usual number of fish but a little later to avoid them being washed away.

For those who have recently joined we stock 2000 one to two pound brown trout into water that is both heavily fished and/or is a lesser trout habitat. Stocking takes place at Durnford, West Amesbury, Abbey, Countess/Ratfyn and Stapleford. As we have improved our rivers over the years we have reduced our stocking to this level without impact on our catch returns. We try to time our stocking to coincide with busy times usually there are four batches in the season.

Please see the write up by our committee member and EA fishery scientist Dom Longley regarding the work we have started this year to try to identify more clearly the fate of our stockies.

We opened our new beat at Lower Eastleigh on the Wylfe and it has proved very popular. These upper Wylfe waters are all wild fishing, the owner shares our approach to supporting wild fishing wherever possible. We fish the beats three days a week to make sure the fish are protected and there are some very good fish to be had there. We encourage members to respect the no wading rules and to take the greatest care of the fish, we don't have a rule against taking wild fish but we strongly encourage those who want a fish for the table to take the stockies from the relevant waters. We have some very capable rods amongst our membership, and it is a concern that we should all respect the wild waters perhaps knowing when we have had enough

and stopping at a modest number caught to preserve these waters for all.

The fishery at Barford St Martin changed hands this year. We did consider making an offer but couldn't match the vendors assessment of its worth in our own valuation. The new owner had various issues to resolve and so it took some time for the property to change hands. We have secured an arrangement with the new owner who is a keen fisherman himself and were able to start fishing again in June. There are plans to improve the fishery with a fenced buffer strip and some selective tree planting.

Our open day at Amesbury Abbey enjoyed beautiful weather with many of our new members attending. The usual format worked well for us once again with casting tuition, entomology, informal discussions and fly tying plus the raffle and of course Sheelagh's excellent lunch. We thank the Abbey particularly those residents and staff who were able to join us and all the tutors and everyone who contributed to the day.

Members are aware from keeper Paul's presentation at the last game meeting that weed extraction now falls to the club's and owners under the umbrella of the Wilshire Fisheries Association after the EA pulled the plug on their extraction activity at Harnham and Chilhampton last season. We have been involved in seeking permission to run a new arrangement at Durnford beat 3 and 13 led by Paul. Permission arrived late and only after much pressure from owners along the valley. We need to make the case that the trout fishing on the Upper Avon and tributaries is a long standing and important part of the valley scene contributing significantly to the local economy, as legitimate as a user of the river and valley landscape as the farming, the military, the large estates or any other. Of course we recognise the protected status of our rivers and do all we can to preserve and enhance this but decisions about things like the weed cutting need to acknowledge our place in the landscape and its long history. The Salisbury Club alone turns over £500,000 each year, supports 4 full time jobs, some casual workers, pays rents to owners along the valley, buys all the equipment and materials it can from local businesses and our members spend their money on fishing equipment, campsites, bed and breakfast, pasties, beer, fuel and whatever else. We are by no means the biggest business of our kind in the valley but do have a contribution.

Once permission was through our extraction gates were installed and the weed cut, and removal ran smoothly. Thanks to all who played their part. A more detailed report will be given at the game meeting.

Welcome to our new members in 2024, associate members may have waited three years or so on our list and full members one year. Our waiting list is a strong indicator of the success of the club's offering to the game angler where we claim no better value chalk stream fishing is available anywhere else. It has always been the policy of the Salisbury Club to offer the best value and at a price that most can afford. We have approximately 1,450 game fishing members but 30 miles or so of riverbank and two game lakes. The members living further away often only fish a few days a year and still find their membership good value. This means that most of the time the waters are quiet, at least outside of the mayfly period!

John Stoddart,
Vice Chair Game.

ONLINE RETURNS TRIAL. QR codes and Web Links

A big THANK YOU to all those that have taken the time to participate in the Online Returns trial at Abbey, Queensberry, West Amesbury and Durnford but as said on the Forum the take up is very disappointing, then had to reflect on some negativity and reasons why there was this low take up.

Some reasons have been;-

"I was unaware of the trial and what the QR images on the returns book meant."

This despite the whole process being explained in some detail in the Spring Newsletter. It beggars the question, how many read it and digest the information.

"I don't like spending any more time on my phone or P.C"

It takes little more time to do the QR as filling in the book, in fact less on many occasions.

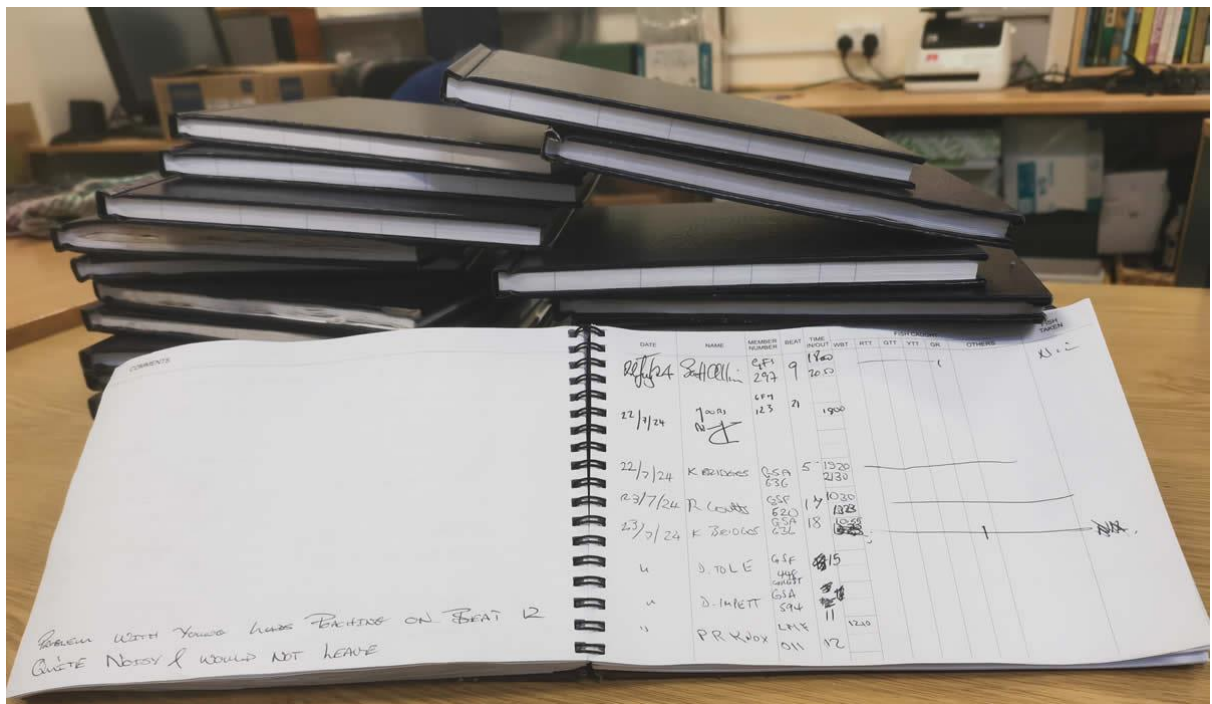
"My phone does not support scanning QR codes."

Again, it is understood that not everyone possesses a smart phone but you can use the web links and submit returns at any time from home or office. The vast majority of members must have access to the internet in one form or another as our online membership renewal numbers show.

"My phone is company provided and I am not allowed to download Apps."

To be clear the online returns form and results are NOT Apps. No software will be download to your device.

Every game fishery has a return book and some of the popular fisheries might have more than one during the season. That is 24 books, each book has 80 pages and there are probably around 10 to 12 entries per page. At the end of the season these books are collected up and each entry is painstakingly recorded onto a spread sheet one by one to give us the figures that are presented to the Game meeting and give management a picture of how each fishery is performing. Last year this process took one man 10 days to complete! What a staggering amount of time and effort. When for the sake of spending a few seconds completing the online return form all these results could be obtained at the push of a button and at any time during the season.



A great deal of time and effort by your committee and officers goes into producing the newsletters and they are a primary means of communication with the membership. We send out notifications of our newsletter by email. The email delivery system we use tracks opens and click throughs on the links within the emails. There is a great deal of information available from the data collected. Unfortunately, it does not have the power to see who actually reads the content but it does tell us that a substantial proportion of emails do not get opened or if they do then the links leading to either the newsletter online version or the downloadable version do not get click throughs.

Strangely low open rate does not apply to the renewal email that is sent

out shortly after the AGM. This is also a timely reminder to those that change their emails addresses, please notify the office.

Using our online forms over hard copy pen and paper offers significant benefits, particularly in data analysis and time saved in that analysis. Online forms streamline data collection, ensuring faster and more accurate input, which reduces human error. They offer real-time data entry, allowing instant access and processing. Our forms are easily modifiable, adaptable, and environmentally friendly, cutting down on paper waste. For example, we now have included an EA Tag Number Field. For data analysis, online forms integrate seamlessly with various software tools, enabling automated data aggregation, sorting, and analysis. This integration allows for advanced analytics, real-time reporting, and improved decision-making in the management of the Club.

Members benefit by having immediate access to up to date information on fishery catches. It offers convenience allowing access from anywhere at anytime.

A new associate member has suggested having an online system to check in and out of a fishery. This is a reasonable thought and something to consider in the future as we have to have a system that recognises the angler at the fishery and not at home or elsewhere. But if you are thinking of putting the miles in you can look and check to see how many are booked in. We want to get members used to the QR codes as a first step.

This system will be investigated and could save a great deal of time and frustration for all members as well as being good for the environment creating a smaller carbon footprint with less travel.

So, I urge you to use the codes in line with filling in the book. I welcome any comments and questions you have.

Change will happen and the Club will take full advantage of any technology which helps with the administrative running of the club, reduces costs and benefits members.

QR code below to Spring Newsletter for those that might have missed it.



Bill Latham.

COARSE UPDATE

Well, the river season is in full swing, and we are just about starting to catch up with the damage on the banks across the mixed fisheries. It has been difficult as the banks have not been drying out as quickly as we would like, but hopefully this spell of 'warmer' weather may allow us into some of the damper areas.

The solar aeration has been installed on Kingfisher Lake and this is now helping to maintain the water quality in that lake. Petersfinger has been recovering from the flooding well, although Mike and Steve have been working full time with branches falling across the fence.

Catch reports have been thin on the ground, although there are reports of nice chub coming from White Horse fishery. One angler had 50 to over 6lb on opening day!!

Tench, roach, rudd, eels and perch have been showing well from Petersfinger with some good match weights from all over the fishery, some skimmers have also been reported in these matches, which is nice to see. We received a stocking of small crucians over the winter into Hands, if you catch any please let the club know.

Steeple Langford has been fishing well for roach and rudd again with respectable match weights across both lakes.

Anyway, just a quick update this month, please send us catch reports on Facebook or email, especially if you want to get a mention in this newsletter.

Ben Bentley
Coarse Angling

SADAC / EA tagged trout project, 2024:

ATTENTION ALL SADAC ANGLERS: Coarse, game or sea anglers. THIS CRUCIAL PROJECT NEEDS YOU.

This season, SADAC is working with several other prestigious chalkstream angling clubs & the EA on an important, large-scale trout tagging project on the Avon, Wylfe & Test. It's designed to shed light on the fate and behaviour of stocked trout – *How many are recaptured? How many of those are kept and how many re-released by anglers? How many leave the fishery they were stocked into? How can clubs maximise the cost-benefits of their stocking and minimise their losses?* Some forward-thinking clubs, including SADAC, have been addressing these questions for some years already through their own in-house tagging and record-keeping but it's essential for these efforts to be brought together in one co-ordinated study, which is where we are now. This year, the vast majority of trout stocked by SADAC on the Avon and several other project-partner clubs on the Wylfe and Test, have been tagged with a small, grey plastic "Floy" tags – each one is a thin cylinder, about an inch and a half long, located next to the dorsal fin; each has the **EA text number** AND a **unique fish ID number** on opposite sides of it.



PLEASE REPORT EVERY SINGLE TAGGED TROUT!

For every grey-tagged trout caught, please send us the following essential FOUR pieces of information:

1. **WHERE** did you catch it? (*fishery & beat*)
2. **WHEN** did you catch it? (*date*)
3. **WHAT** was its unique fish ID number? (*four-figure number on side of tag*)
4. **DID YOU** release or keep it? (*IMPORTANT: do whatever you'd normally do, regardless of the project*)

How should I report a tagged fish?

There are three ways of doing this (it's OK to use more than one, we will sort out the results):

- **TEXT** the four pieces of information to the EA number on the tag: **07442 676565**
- **WRITE** the information in the fishery signing-in book .

- **LOG ONTO to the online catch return system using the QR code at the fishery: make sure to record the four answers in full.**

ATTENTION COARSE & SEA ANGLERS!

ALL anglers play a vital role in this project: stocked trout are known to drift a considerable distance downstream into the lower river reaches and even into the estuary – they may also persist for several seasons – WE NEED RECORDS OF ALL CAPTURES, REGARDLESS OF WHERE & WHEN!

FINALLY: KEEP ON REPORTING INTO 2025 & BEYOND: *Records of tagged fish caught by anyone, anywhere, anytime are critically important – please keep reporting & make others aware of this.*

Dom Longley

Committee Member and EA Fishery scientist.

Reporting Poaching

On June 23rd I received a phone call from a member who was at Stratford Bridge, by beats 3/13 of our Durnford fishery. He said he had witnessed a youth fishing in beat 13 and that he had taken 3 trout, including a couple of large ones. There was a possible sighting of one or more adults further upstream, possibly on beat 3. He had reported it to the Police via 101 and it seemed likely there would be a response. He provided a vehicle registration number as well.

PC Pete Simmonds wrote:

After the call came in, officers went to look for the males and the vehicle. They were not present when the officers arrived. As police had been provided information such as the vehicle registration and descriptions, I picked this investigation up. Once having established exactly what had been seen by the reporting person I knew what offences I was looking at. Ultimately, my enquiries hit a dead end and I was unable to identify who these males were. However, the fact that the reporting person had made the call to Police, provided as much detail as they could and described what they had seen was perfect. It is another vehicle registration we can highlight as of interest, it is a report for that area which begins to highlight problem areas and I did as much as I could to identify who the persons were. I hope this shows that when the correct process is followed, investigations will take place to identify and where evidence is available look to prosecute offenders.

In the West of England, Op Leviathan is the operation name given for fish poaching offences so be assured that Police Forces will and do take it seriously. I strongly encourage reporting incidents of these kinds to Police at the time, it may well be an officer is close by anyway but also provides information for hotspots for us to target with patrols. Without reports, our attention must go elsewhere.

Andreas, the General Manager, and I met with PC Simmonds a week later and he described the report made as the “gold standard” for this kind of occurrence. The more information and intelligence the Police receive, the more likelihood there is that resources can be assigned. Members, including bailiffs, are urged to report such events either via 999 if a crime in progress, 101 or online if non-emergency/retrospective reporting at <https://www.wiltshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>. Information to provide is **date, time, where** (you can find the location on a map), **your contact details** and **any additional evidence** including **vehicle registration number(s)** and anything that may have been left behind. As noted above, mentioning “**Operation Leviathan**” will mean the right people get to see the report. The day after the above event happened, another member found a fishing “camp” on another part of beat 13, with chairs, fishing tackle and rubbish left. We were just contemplating confiscating it when a man turned up and said it was his sons’ gear. We let him take it away after advising him that it was private fishing.

It's important to take great care when confronted with situations like this. If you feel uncomfortable, then don't confront people. If you feel safe then politely ask the offender(s) to leave. If you can gather evidence safely then please do so, an image on your phone from a safe distance for example. If you feel threatened or receive abuse then call 999.

My phone number is in the yearbook on page 43, under Incident Reporting. Feel free to call me if you see an issue but, if it involves poaching, let the police know first.

Andy Stafford

WATER QUALITY

Water quality update

Only time will tell the future of the water industry. Judging by the press coverage it feels that we are closer to potential renationalisation of Thames Water. The key issue remains lack on investment in

infrastructure which customers have been historically paying through their bills, only to find out that contributions ended up as high dividends for the water company shareholders and lucrative salaries with bonuses for the company executives.

The truth is that the pressure on water companies has been steadily increasing and now they are pushed to clean up their act.

Locally, the Wiltshire Fishery Association (WFA) water quality team (Dave Holroyd and Patrick Heaton –Armstrong) continues to be very active. Below is a summary of the main actions.

- Monthly invertebrate monitoring on 30+ locations by dedicated volunteer river fly monitors.
- Biannual invertebrate benchmark collection and analysis, together with “WildFish” organisation through “Smart Rivers” programme and use of data to drive actions on water quality improvements.
- Positive recent meeting with the Environment Agency. Their central team is exploring sharing of “Smart rivers” data and standardising invertebrate sampling protocols so that EA monitors and citizen science volunteers join forces to improve monitoring and reduce costs.
- EA work on fish farm inspections continues.
- Ongoing project with Portsmouth University to monitor the types of chemicals in our rivers and identify harmful chemicals which may enter the water via SWT plants, agriculture and other sources. “Chemcatcher” devices have been installed on SADAC waters at Stonehenge, Countess Ratfyn, Abbey, Queensberry Bridge and West Amesbury. Analysis of chemicals found on these locations will be reviewed alongside the Smart Rivers data to identify important pollutants and their impact on invertebrate life and river water quality. The programme is aiming to expand on the river Wylve with additional chemcatchers deployed.
- Lobbied for the Avon Catchment in Wessex Water’s Asset Management Plan 2025/2030 which will see all STWs in the Avon Catchment Area having to reduce their phosphate discharge levels down from 1mg/l to 0.25mg/l.
- Discussions continue with the EA to illustrate the failure of the current Water Framework Directive to protect special rivers like

the Avon. The Avon catchment is a SSSI and SAC, the highest environmental classifications requiring protection nationally and internationally. We are presently pressing the Environment Agency to use our data and 5 year trend analysis of the Avon as a case study to illustrate the need to change or replace the Water Framework Directive.

- In late 2023 there was a landmark ruling by the High Court which found DEFRA's river basin management planning to be unlawful. The High Court upheld a claim for judicial review brought by a Yorkshire angling club, Pickering Fishing Association – working with "Fish Legal" – against the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Environment Agency regarding its defective approach to review, public consultation and updating of river basin management plans under the Water Framework Directive Regulations. This case will go to the Court of Appeals.

The secretary of Pickering Fishing Association shared with our club the following message from Penelope Gane, Head of Practice, Fish Legal.

I wanted touch base with you regarding publicity in the lead up to the Court of Appeal case. Over the next few months, we are going to be building a campaign to raise awareness about the purpose of the legal action and its wider implications.

*The campaign will be called the **Every River Counts Appeal**, because that sums up the fact that the Government (and the Environment Agency) needs to come up with specific measures for every single water body that will help them achieve good status by 2027. There will be a dedicated campaign website, content to share and engage supporters on social media and printed material to promote the campaign in due course.*

To kick things off – and to start leading the way on talking about what this Government needs to do to clean up rivers - we're launching a Change.Org petition: <https://www.change.org/EveryRiverCounts>

Could I ask two things of you:

- 1. I would be grateful if you could sign and share the petition to your membership and ask them to support it <https://www.change.org/EveryRiverCounts>*
- 2. There is an opportunity to gradually add content and build the petition over the duration of the campaign. It would be great to have a short video (recorded on your mobile) about why this is important. Do you think that would be possible? I'm happy to have a call to explain a bit more about the campaign generally and how we can promote you and your club's role in it.*

We'll start to promote this and sharing it widely starting this week.

*Thanks,
Penny*

We definitely encourage our members to support this petition.

Andreas Topintzis
WFA Water Quality Chairman

SMALL FRY UPDATE

I am delighted to say that the first few events have gone really well. These have all been at Petersfinger and plenty of fish were caught including some bonus tench and perch. The youngsters have also enjoyed the excitement of several pike strikes which was fun.

This success is entirely down to the commitment and hard work of the Small Fry team which is now up to eight. Special personal thanks to our three new volunteers, Ian Heydon, Chris Harvey and Nick Jones who are making a massive difference and hopefully enjoying the experience. Nick has actually written a heartfelt description of his thoughts that is below.

The Junior and Small Fry membership continues to increase and our main goal has to be to turn their initial fun experience into a lifetime of great adventures. The provision of the ongoing tuition remains our biggest challenge but we're getting there. Please let us know if you can help in any way either practical or through a donation.

Thanks, Nigel on behalf of the Small Fry team.

The Small Fry fishing group-A personal message from a SDAC Member

Not too long ago I was sitting up in bed in Southampton University Hospital having just undergone a 10 hour second major heart operation and realised it would be an exceptionally long time until I could be by the water again fishing. Indeed, it has been almost 2 years since I cast a line, but this time gave me an opportunity to think in a different dimension. Now at 73 I have started to become part of a team of angling mentors for the small fry organisation of SDAC and attend our coarse fishing mentoring sessions for youngsters wanting to learn to fish.

The team consists of a small group of eight anglers under the leadership of Nigel and we help cub scout groups, local schools, and those children of parents who attend with their kids on evening sessions between 6pm and 8pm sometimes going on to 9pm. There are also some day sessions running between 9 and 3pm for the school groups.

If you thought you had enjoyed great fishing through your life and especially value for money fishing in SDAC then let me tell you my own experience in helping the small fry group has given me much joy and made me smile again when I honestly thought I would have to just sit and remember all those glorious red letter fishing days I had encountered over a full lifetime. Seeing the smile and enthusiasm on youngsters' faces has been a life changing event for me. Collaborating with a wonderful team of likeminded guys in our club has also made me feel valued and come to realise there is so much more to achieve in angling other than catching more big fish myself.

It is just so much of a positive step both for my own mental health and well being but more importantly making sure that some of these youngsters might just think that fishing could be fun and looking towards the new fishers of tomorrow.

The comments from parents and leaders of organisations we help in starting kids to find out what fishing is all about have been mind-blowing and I can say very emotional.

What would really help is if we could find some more helpers prepared to give up their time for a few hours in the months of July and August to join Nigel and his current team to make this even more successful. You do not have to be an expert, but you do need some commitment and patience and to know how to fish based on your own experience. Training will be provided but enthusiasm is definitely compulsory. Tackle and bait are

provided by the club, but the main requirement is your time and cheerful outlook in wanting to see our great club provide even more to society and getting kids into fishing because without that there will be little future or any clubs survival in the long term.

Thank you for your support.

Nick Jones-SDAC member since 1999

Thank you for that Nick, a heartfelt appreciation of what fishing can do for the mind and soul.

So there we have it, the summer newsletter. If you have any comments or questions the forums the place to ask them. Replies maybe slow in coming as the contributors may be out fishing and if addressed to Andreas he is probably busy on the phone talking to the Samaritans after someone mentioned beavers while his blood pressure is boiling...

Until the next newsletter enjoy your fishing.