



Members' Newsletter – November 2014

Annual General Meeting

The 2014 AGM of the club will take place on **Thursday 11th December** at the Ilkley Bowling Club (just off Bolton Bridge Road, entrance near Morrison's) starting at 7.30pm. There will be a presentation of trophies; a Pie & Peas (plus Veggie option) supper will be served and there will be a **prize raffle** (do you have something that you could donate as a prize?). The AGM is a great opportunity for you to meet the club officials and other club members. **Please do try to come along.** There is a vacancy for a new Committee member so if you'd like to be considered please put your name forward at the AGM.

Fishing reports

The mild weather last winter meant that good **trout fishing** was had by members on the **River Wharfe at Ilkley** right from the start of the season on 25th March. It was an excellent spring for fly fishers with regular small spates but no big floods. **Trout** to over 3lbs were caught, with many in the 1lb to 2lb size range. Summer kicked in in June and this was the start of a long, very warm and dry spell. The river dropped quickly to a low level and conditions for daytime fly fishing were poor. However, fly fishers out on the river in the evenings had some good sport. The autumn brought a return to good river conditions and it was unseasonably mild well into November. The **grayling** have bred very successfully at Ilkley over the past couple of years. The river is now full of 4oz-6oz fish but some big ones up to just over 2lbs have also been caught. One lucky fly fisher fishing recently in the Bath Street run caught a 2lb grayling and saw an otter.

As well as the excellent trout and grayling fishing there have been some surprising coarse fish catches on our river stretch this last year. As well as the usual big chub some roach, gudgeon, perch and eels have also been reported. There is a shoal of **roach**, a species not previously seen at Ilkley, resident next to Beanlands Island. These appear to be wild fish, born in the river.

The fishing on our two ponds has been challenging. Large shoals of roach and perch were usually to be seen near the surface in the **Roadside Lagoon** but catching them was not easy. Some pike were caught by members lure fishing. A number of working parties took place on both ponds over the winter and also in the summer and following the removal of large quantities lily roots there are now some much more easily fished swims in the **Members' Pond**. The club stocked 200 mixed bream, tench and carp into the Members' Pond in February, at a cost of £1000. So far they have proved hard to catch, although members have seen some of these fish, plus some resident bream up to around 4lbs. We are expecting the Environment Agency to deliver 500 mixed tench and bream in December at zero cost to the club. The addition of these new fish and successful spawning by the residents (tench were witnessed spawning in both ponds in June) should boost fish stocks in the Members' Pond and we are hoping for much better fishing next summer.

Club finances

There will be a small loss reported at the AGM for the last club financial year but this would have been a profit had we not invested £1000 in stock fish for the Members' Pond. Although revenue from annual memberships is a little down, day ticket sales have been excellent, particularly though our new outlet at the Riverside Hotel. No changes will take place for the 2015/16 season in **annual subscription rates** or day ticket prices, although it is planned to drop the entry fee as an incentive for more day ticket fishers to join.

Hot News!

We are hoping to very shortly be able to announce that we have gained access for Ilkley AA members to long stretches of the **River Nidd**. This is excellent trout and grayling water for our fly fisher members and our coarse fishing members should be excited by the prospect of going fishing in the River Nidd for barbel, chub, roach, dace, perch, bream and pike - and this will not cost the club or you anything.

Watch this space!

Environment Agency survey at Ilkley

In August the EA did an electro fishing survey on our river stretch from the sewerage works outfall downstream to the stepping stones. They reported a very healthy number of wild trout and grayling and commented that the habitat at Ilkley was excellent. They also caught some 'surprise' species including gudgeon, dace and brook lamprey.

River fly life monitoring

As part of the **Riverfly Partnership** initiative – see www.riverflies.org - monitoring of aquatic insect populations continued throughout the year. The levels of invertebrates recorded continue to be very good. An explanatory article is available on the website and we plan to upload data on a monthly basis in the future, or as often as river conditions allow sampling to occur.

Ilkley fly fishing clinic

On 16th January a very successful evening for fly fishers was run at the Ilkley Bowling Club. Around twenty members attended, of all ages and all skill levels – novices to experts. We are considering running a similar evening before the start of the next trout season. Please let the Secretary David Martin know by email, phone or in person if you are interested in attending such an event.

Working parties

A number of working parties took place on our two ponds, as previously mentioned, but it is currently not planned to run any more there until further notice. We ran two successful working parties on the river. On 16th March we had a habitat improvement and bank tidying working party on the club-owned part of the river upstream of the stepping stones. Large numbers of willow stakes were planted and most of these have since taken root and should, in time, provide excellent additional habitat for the trout. On 4th October we ran a riverbank clean up working party. This was aimed at clearing the accumulated litter from those parts of the river bank and river bed not being cleared by the Bradford Met. staff. The working party was well attended; large amounts of litter were removed; and we received thanks from passers-by for our good work. We plan to run further similar working parties on the river in the coming year. Please do try to attend one or two. Working parties are great fun and an ideal way to meet other members and to find out where the fishing is currently best.

Match fishing

We continue to support our match fishing members. As well as the regular series of winter matches on the river on Sunday mornings a number of 'away' matches were also run through the summer on the Farview, Oakes and Sunrise lakes. Catches of up to 64lbs were made. The committee has recently committed to continue to run these matches in 2015. See our website for details or contact our Match Secretary Trevor Smith on 01943 430336 or by email to tamsatsunset@gmail.com.

Ilkley AA website

We are always in need of new material to ensure that the club's website is interesting and informative. Please send photos, new items and articles to Roy Johnson, our webmaster, for inclusion. The email address for contact is info@ilkleyanglingassociation.co.uk. The URL of the website is www.ilkleyanglingassociation.co.uk/