

Members' Newsletter – Spring 2016

Fishing reports - In between the floods **Grayling** fishing on the river has been very good so far this winter with plenty of 1lb 8oz to 2lb sized fish landed by both fly and bait anglers. See our website news section for a few recent photos. Very good catches of Grayling and out-of-season Trout since the big floods prove that most of the fish were unaffected by them. Note that the current Grayling season ends on 14th March.

We have decided to award an annual '**Grayling Cup**' for the largest Grayling caught on our River Wharfe stretch each season. This year it will run for fish caught from 16th June to 30th November, so that the trophy can be awarded at our AGM on 8th December. All fish must be returned alive. All you need to do is to take a photo of the fish (laid on soft grass or a landing net) next to a tape measure or your rod. Measure the fish (inches or cm - tip of nose to fork of tail) and email (or post) me the photo with your measurement. If you did weigh the fish then also let me know the weight but only the measurement is needed to enter the competition. There is a similar competition for the **largest Brown Trout – the Helliwell Trophy**. This competition runs for fish caught from 25th March to 30th September – the Trout fishing season.

Prospects for the Trout season – Right from the start of the season on 25th March look out for hatches of Large Dark Olives around the middle of the day. Consistent fly hatches of assorted mayflies (especially Large Brook Duns) and Grannom start around mid-April, peaking through May and June. To get the best catches on our stretch pick your day to fish. A falling river after a spate is best – with the river not too high and not too low. Don't bother to go fishing if the river is low and the weather is cold and/or very bright. Ideally fish on warmer cloudy days. And in the summer don't bother to fish on bright hot sunny afternoons, although on such days if you fish early in the morning or in the evening very good sport can often be had. To try for a particularly big Trout try a sculpin (Bullhead) or minnow imitation fly.

Extra waters to fish - We have continued the arrangements we set up just over a year ago for Ilkley AA members to be able to fish the waters of the Knaresborough Piscatorials and Bingley angling clubs. Last year you were sent details of how to get your permits and the rules for their use. These rules have not changed but if you want to be re-sent a copy then let me know.

Guests - Each member is allowed to apply (to the Membership Secretary) for a maximum of 3 guest tickets at a cost of £3 each. These are for use on our river stretch at Ilkley (not on the Knaresborough or Bingley waters). Guest tickets are not required if you are taking guests to our ponds at Ben Rhydding.

Working parties – these are very enjoyable social events, usually run on a Saturday morning from around 10.15am until 1pm. The first one of the year took place on 30th January with 7 people attending. Our two ponds were cleared of accumulated rubbish and now look spotless. Thank you.

The following working parties are scheduled: Ponds improvements – **27th February**, River habitat improvement works – **12th March**, River bank litter pick – **9th April**. If you plan to attend one then please let Steve Fairbourn or I know and then he or I can let you know the meeting point and time and if the working party has been cancelled due to poor weather or a high river level.

Wild Trout Trust – This year we are working with the WTT to try to enable better spawning access for Trout to Backstone Beck and a short case study of Ilkley AA was recently posted on the WTT website.

David Martin, Secretary

24th February, 2016