

Anguilla



The Official National Anguilla Club Magazine!

Volume 46
Issue 1

The National Anguilla Club - The Eel Specialists - Established 1962

Inside This Issue Of Anguilla...

Eeling Basics - Kevin Huish
Odds and Ends - Rod Hillyer
A Tale of Two Sixes - Mark Salt
Short Session Eeling - Janssen Bostock
The Brummie Beer Monster - Barry McConnell
The Nickolls Experience - Nick Duffy

Contents

Editorial	The Bulletin Team
The Presidents Page	Steve Richardson
Eeling Basics Part 1	Kevin Huish
The Secretaries Report	Mark Salt
The Chairman's' Column	Mike Brettle
Anguilla Odds and Ends	Rod Hillyer
Member Profile	Matt Johnson
A Tale of Two Sixes	Mark Salt
Social Officers Report 2007/8	Barry McConnell
Short Session Eeling	Janssen Bostock
The Records Officers Report	Mike Brettle
2008 Events	
Winter Fish-In Report	Barry McConnell
North Yorks Fish-In Report	Dave Smith
Northampton Fish-In Update	Kevin Huish
NAC/PAC Joint Event	Peter Waterfield
Member Profile	Nick Duffy
Brummie Beer Monster	Barry McConnell
The Nickolls Experience	Nick Duffy
NAC Back on the Web	Dave Smith
Gunge	<i>The Mole!</i>
Products Page	Nick Rose
Eric The Eel	Jason Morgan



Cover Photograph Courtesy Of Mr. Darren George

Contact Details

President: Steve Richardson	president@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	07896 858126
Chairman: Mike Brettle	chairman@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	01793 435038
General Secretary: Mark Salt	secretary@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	01920 487508
Treasurer: Pat Huish	treasurer@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	01443 757140
Membership Secretary: Nick Rose	membership@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	0121 373 6082
Records Officer: Mike Brettle	recordsofficer@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	01793 435038
Social Officer: Kevin Huish	socialofficer@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	01443 757140
Environmental Officer: Mark Salt	environmentalofficer@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	01920 487508
Products Officer: Nick Rose	productsofficer@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	0121 373 6082
Internet Officer: Dave Smith	Webmaster@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk	07962 031375

Bulletin Team: Nick Rose, Steve Richardson, Dave Smith
bulletin@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk 0121 373 6082

Editorial

Nick Rose

Well here we are with yet another club mag and I hope you enjoy it. Firstly I would like thank Steve Richardson for proof reading and making this stuff readable. Secondly I would also like thank Dave Smith our IT man, he put together the website which can be found www.nationalanguillaclub.co.uk So I thought now there's a clever bloke just the man to help out with the layout of the mag and so he has. In fact he has almost bullied us into things so well done Dave.

As for me, well I get sent the articles send them to Steve; back to me and on to Dave for putting into some sort of order and then the best job to me. Sitting watching the printer knock out page after page of the same stuff time after time. I have to watch coz if the printer picks up one too many pages it all goes to cock. Then collate them, staple them, fold them, put them into envelopes and then label the envelopes. Mind bogglingly boring but it has to be done.

I have used up all the material we have for this mag so it's all down to you now lads. A big thank you to all the members who have contributed and can you do it all again please. Seriously we don't have much to come in, Nick Duffy has promised a few pages on canal eeling his style, Steve Cotton has also promised something and Jason Morgan some of his drawings (maybe an article as well Jason). That's all so the next mag is looking a little thin. All the new members must have something new to say or maybe fill out your own profile as has been done in this edition and the older lads could tell us about some of your experiences over the years. Send us in your photos as well as we can put them in the mag and then they are put into the club album and on the notice board.

Don't be surprised to find me on the phone begging for an article or photos for the next bulletin. Anyway that's enough moaning just keep it mind lads. I hope you enjoy the Bulletin and look forward to hearing from you all soon or even seeing you on the next fish-in 🐟

Nick Rose

***On The Back Of One Of Steve's Photo's Is The Word "Magic" What An Understatement!
Steve Pitts with a 7.09 and 5.10***



The Presidents Page

Steve Richardson

Well, President of the NAC. Proud is an understatement. The NAC seems to be in very capable hands with your present committee in place....which I think is quite lucky given the fact that the AGM turn out was very poor.

Nick Rose is the rock that this club is being supported by, covering Membership Secretary and Magazine editor and Products man....all he needs is a red cape and he'll be the NAC superman. Mark Salt is driving the club forward as a very good General Secretary should and he is a very good General Secretary.

We now have Kevin 'Taffy' Huish covering the Social Officers role...and it's good to see him back on board the committee.

Dave Smith is building the NAC web-site as you read this and he is doing a brilliant job of it I might add. My thanks go to Dave for his time and patience in getting things sorted.

Patricia Huish continues to hold the NAC purse strings and that brings about reassurance that all things financial will be monitored as it always has been.....perfectly.

We have a Chairman serving in lands far from these shores and I'm sure that you'll all wish Mike safe passage in his duties on our behalf.

The club is going through changes....but survives as it always has.

Our founder member, Arthur J. Sutton is not a well man at present and it would be nice if a few of you wrote him a letter offering your best wishes and perhaps entertaining him with tales of your eeling sessions thus far.

I have yet to go fishing this season.....but have a water ear-marked for when I eventually get into fishing again.

I hope that you all enjoy your eel sessions this season and to those who have already achieved catches that dreams are made of, well done to you all. I hope to emulate you one day soon.

I hope that you enjoy your stay in the NAC.....I might catch up with some of you on a fish-in later this year.....if not, perhaps at the Winter Social

Eeling Basics - Part I

Kevin Huish

Since I have been involved with the committee of the National Anguilla Club, I have received quite a few requested for information on how to fish for eels. Perhaps if I tell you about my own experiences whilst fishing for eels, then readers can pick out which they might find useful.

Baits for Eels

One of the first questions I get asked is what is the best bait to use? This is a very hard question to answer as it will be easier to list what an eels will not eat because there is not much that it won't. Eels have been caught on all forms of fishing baits, from lures for Pike to flies for Trout. To understand this you must really appreciate that the eel is a real predator and scavenger in every sense of the word.

To simplify the above there are two baits which the eel angler uses, which will catch eels, from bootlace to monster and they are worms and fish bait. The worm, be it lobworm or a brandling, is probably the most successful bait and accounts for the capture of most fish. It has accounted for more eels in the NASA top 50 list than any other bait.

Fish are the second favoured bait used by the eel angler. Any species of freshwater fish will do, Roach, Dace and Chub being my favourites. The size I like to use are in the 2in. to 4in. bracket. I will then fish these in sections i.e. Head or Tails. During the autumn months sea baits tend to become more productive than the freshwater species, particularly Sprats, Mackerel strips, half mackerel, sardines and sandeels. A new bait which I have caught a number of eels on is whitebait. I buy this bait from the fishmongers in frozen 1lb packs. Sessions using this bait have produced instant runs, so maybe this might work for you. Other baits that have caught eels at various times of the month and are worth a try are cockles, liver, squid, luncheon meat and of course the humble maggot or caster.

One of the venues which I fished was Barry Reservoir (sadly now filled in). This venue held a good stock of Carp and the Carp anglers were complaining that the eels were taking over their boilies, which were meant for better fish. (How blind some anglers can be).

My next session on Barry, I baited up with Butter cream Boilies. The rig I used was the J.S. rig with a wire trace. A large size 2, which the boilie was impaled onto the hook, side hooked fashion, I think they call it. The next five sessions produced, yes you've guessed it CARP! CARP! CARP! The carp anglers were amazed. I did eventually catch an eel. A proper fish if you excuse the pun, weighing 3lb 12oz. Don't be put off from trying them on some waters they really do work and eels are

quite large as in the Scott Doves 9lb 2oz fish from Chase Water. It might be a good idea to prebait so the eels get used to them and no doubt, they will be worth a try.

To present the baits I will now put forward the methods I found to be the most successful. Starting with the worm, these are best presented with either their tails broken off or the worm pulled in two before hooking the worm. Presented in halves or with their tails broken off, more body juices are released into the water making it easy for the eels to come home in. This will also help to stop the worms burying themselves in any silt or mud at the bottom of your swim. The rig I now use is the Helicopter Rig but adapted for eel fishing devised by Maurice Steeles. For freshwater deadbaits it is more productive if the bait is fished in sections either a head or tail section, again more body juices being released into the water. Eels fed mainly by, I believe 99% smell so to fish with sections of baits must increase your chances.

In some eel angler's circles, freshly killed bait is the best one to use and on some waters this may be the case. I prefer to use "Ice Pops", that is I try to catch some fresh bait but after the end of my session, I will despatch some selected from the catch, return the rest from the water where I had caught them and put the ones that I had chosen straight into the deep freeze as soon as I get home (please don't tell the wife). On my next session, I would have either used up my supply or I will re-freeze my original stock plus some freshly caught ones. I will point out that the baits which have been re-frozen have still caught eels even though fresh baits may have been cast out alongside the other, so keep an open mind and don't get blinkered with the idea that you must use fresh bait every time. As an added thought, the ideal bait is the one that you, the angler, has the most confidence in.

Members of the National Anguilla Club are having some success in using livebaits. My experiences of using livebaits amounts to the information you can write on a postage stamp second class.

Learn to walk first.

For the readers who are new to eel fishing, may I offer some advice? You may have just received the latest issue of your favourite magazine and you read about the writers latest successes. Faced with a barrage of reports about other anglers successes you can quickly lose confidence and may be attempted to abandon fishing for eels after a short time. This is often due to anglers wanting to run before they can walk. I was guilty of this before I first started. As members of the National Anguilla Club were reporting their catches, I was often reduced to tears when all I was catching was boots. This season has been a total blank. My mistake was to set my sights too high. I wanted to catch fours and fives, but in reality my target was to just to catch eels first. Learn about the fish and its habitat, what it feeds on etc my advice is to purchase a good book. Sadly there are only 2 books that have been printed by eel anglers and they are by Brian Crawford Fishing for Big Eels which sadly is now out of print, but you may pick up a copy from specialist book sellers, and the other book is by the late John Sidley. This book is still available from Beekay. Once you have read as much as possible about the eel, then the next stage is to

put it into practice what you've learned onto your local water. Hopefully, you may be successful and catch a few eels and you are now on the road to becoming an eel angler.

The next stage to think about is the amount of time you are willing to put into your eel fishing. The time factor. It is a distinct advantage to be able to spend long periods on the bank. True, you could get lucky straight away and catch the fish of your dreams. But eels are not like other fish i.e. carp. Carp tend to show themselves or captures are soon reported giving you guidelines on what water you should be fishing. Eel captures tend to either be kept quiet because of the fear of the dreaded EEL NETTERS or the angler who caught it does not want to be associated with the fact that he had the misfortune of catching an eel. It is a real sad angling world that we eel anglers have to put up with.

So once you have located a water which contains eels, fish it as many times as your commitments allow. The path you take in the pursuit of the eel is governed by personal circumstances; each angler must balance his desire to catch fish with other factors, such as finances, time, family responsibilities etc. I will write about what tackle and other eeling thoughts which I have in my head in the next magazine. That is if you have not already pinched the space with an article of your own. I hope to read it soon.



May I wish you the best of luck and may all your eels be big ones 🍀

The Secretaries Report

When I started out as general secretary, a priority was to establish a new NAC website. Not having the ability to create one myself, and not knowing any one who could do it at a reasonable cost (nothing!), it gave me a few anxious moments. As it turned out, it was the easiest of tasks, but had little to do with my efforts. I came across Dave Smith on the eelfishing.co.uk site, and he very kindly offered to help us set up a site. The speed with which his offer was accepted probably took his breath away! In fact, he has single handedly constructed a first class website, and has very capably “managed” us (your committee) to provide articles etc. to make it work. He has been appointed NAC Internet Officer, and deserves a huge thank you and well done from us all. If you don't have internet access it's worth getting it: there's some good tips and banter on the site and the forum, and we can always do with more articles and pics for the gallery. The website has brought in new members, as has our mentions in the angling “comics” and internet forums. I'll leave Nick to fill in the membership details.

Thanks also to Eelfishing.co.uk for allowing us to link to their forum. It seemed pointless to create a second eel fishing forum on our own site, and Kevin and Thomas have kindly allowed us to link to theirs for this facility.

We also received some useful, but regrettable, publicity in the Anglers Mail and the Telegraph. This followed Gordon Ramsay's F Word TV programme in June in which he lamented the demise of the eel and elver runs, and then proceeded to fry a pan full up and eat them! The Anglers Mail printed my comments in full, and the Telegraph printed some of it, which can be seen here if you are interested:

www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/main.jhtml?xml=/earth/2008/06/10/earamsay110.xml. What made it more annoying was that he did the same with Bluefin Tuna last year, another endangered species, and was publicly condemned for that too.

We have arranged to take a stall to the PAC conference in September, and I hope to see some of you there.

I have represented the NAC at two meetings this year, and I have reported back on these below

The Yorkshire Eel Summit

14/05/2008

The aim of the meeting was to generate eel-based Partnership Projects within the Yorkshire Environment Agency area that can be submitted for rod licence funding next year, with the main focus being on Eel Management Plans (EMPs). Every EU Member State has to have a draft eel management plan prepared by December of this year. The delegates were a mixed group comprising fishery scientists (some from the EA, some from DEFRA/CEFAS), EA employees who are involved in both planning and implementing Eel

Management Plans (EMPs), representatives of various wildlife trusts and organizations, and others involved in fish pass manufacture and the like.

Topics for the talks included Eel Management Plans and UK / European legislation. In the afternoon we had a series of short (10 minute) talks about a variety of topics, including the stocking programme, eels and Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species and building eel passes.

I was asked to make a short presentation on recreational eel fishing during the afternoon session. I gave an outline of the purpose and background of the NAC, explained in general terms how and why we fish for eels, and emphasized the work that the NAC has carried out over the years to conserve eel stocks, highlighting the excellent past work of messrs Jolley, Dennison, etc, and also making a strong point that we return all eels after capture. I made much of our commitment to educate non eel anglers in the safe handling of eels, and finished by stating that, in my opinion, recreational eel anglers have no negative impact on eel stocks, and are more likely to have positively influenced eel survival following capture through a process of education aimed at all anglers. I believe that this message is particularly important, bearing in mind this bullet point from below "A need to reduce the impact of any fishery – recreational or commercial". During the meeting the impact of commercial fishing was discussed, but there was no mention of limiting recreational fishing for eels.

As with the SAA meeting, I was generally impressed with the commitment shown by those present, and the desire to conserve eel stocks, but, as ever, the effectiveness of the initiatives will depend on enough cash and resources being made available once the EMPs are in place.

I was please to see that the EA are already stocking elvers into river systems and wetlands as a separate initiative to EMPs, and this is to continue, with monitoring over the medium to long term. These efforts will be greatly enhanced if the ultimate objective of using 60% of commercially caught elvers for restocking is achieved (see summary below). Some interesting discussions were had regarding the robustness of commercial catch returns, with one delegate offering that returns were under estimated by between 3 – 15 times! However, a good point was made: if commercial fisheries are only allowed to keep 40% of their catch, then it is to their advantage to report more accurately. We'll see.

Due to the size and value of the larger commercial fisheries, there seems to be little chance of any "buy out" of nets as has happened with salmon. UK Glass Eels are the largest concern in the UK, and I seem to recall that turnover is around £3 million a year. I met an Irish fishery scientist whilst fishing Corrib in June, and apparently the Lough Neagh (N. Ireland) operation is far bigger, and any buy out is not on the cards. He also commented that the commercial value of eels is the main reason that efforts are being made to reverse the decline. Take away the commercial interest and you take away the funding and the political desire to do anything about it. He is probably right.

It is clear that there is no one cause for the decline in elvers returning to our rivers. Over fishing, barriers to passage, loss of wetland, pollutants, predation, climate change, disease/parasite: the list makes depressing reading. If EMPs address some of these successfully the eel may still be around in years to come. Finally, the effectiveness of the plans will not become apparent for around 40 years. As a raving optimist, (and, not coincidentally, an eel angler), I think it will make a difference, and hopefully enough of one to save the eel.

I have tried to summarise the outline proposals for the plans below. This is the Yorkshire outline, but I believe that they all have the same guidelines. If any member wants more information, I will be pleased to assist. E mail or call me and I will try to fill in any gaps.

The core of the proposal is that each Member State (MS) develops a tailor-made eel management plan (EMP) and submits the draft plan for approval by 31st December 2008

This will allow each member state flexibility and allows anthropogenic, physical and political differences to be taken into account.

BUT: Must take into account:

A need to designate "eel river basins" – based on RBDs.

A need to reduce the impact of any fishery – recreational or commercial

Consider anthropogenic factors: e.g. free passage

Consider Stocking

Consider Predators

Goal of EMP: 40% of silver eel biomass must be allowed to escape to the sea

Recognised as being a long-term objective – at least 2-3 eel generations

Failure to submit an adequate EMP on time → 50% reduction in fishing effort. i.e. commercial fishing reduced by this amount.

EMP's may contain, but aren't limited to:

- fishing effort reduction (commercial and recreational)
- restocking measures
- structural measures / river continuity
- combating predators

Plans must include measures other than reduction in exploitation unless these aren't necessary to attain 40% esc. Target

EMP's must indicate timescale for reaching the target and measures to be taken in the 1st year of application

MS sharing a river basin are to jointly prepare plans (For the EA we share the Solway but as the UK is a member state, we need to include the other 2 Scottish and 3 Northern Ireland plans)

60% of eel <12cm long are to be used in restocking, aiming to increase escapement of silver eel to the sea. (Start at 35% in 2010, reach 60% by 2013).

EMP's will be subject to modification / improvement in view of new scientific info/data and changes in stock status.

MS must report to the COM every 3 years on:

The % of biomass of silver eel escaping to the sea

The level of fishing effort and reductions thereof

The mortality caused by non-fisheries factors and the reductions thereof

The amount of glass eel caught and the % of these used for different purposes (consumption, aquaculture, restocking etc.)

The COM will report (after 4-5 years) to EP and Council on the outcome of the implementation of EMP's, up to that date.

First report due 30th June 2012

EA: Control & Enforcement

In Inland Waters: MS may establish their own control system, adapted to their situation and legal framework already in place.

Current byelaws inadequate – reviewing existing

Pursuing new powers

This will include the traceability of Elvers

MS will establish lists of:

Vessels flying their flag, fishing for eel in Community maritime waters – N/A

Authorisations or licenses to fish for eel in inland waters

We can already do this – just needs some tweaking

CITES

In March 2009 eel will be on Annex 2 CITES. This will put it on Annex B of the EU Fisheries Regulation. JNCC – Authoritative body in the UK

This means that there may be restrictions on the export of eel outside the EU. Annex B means that there will NOT be a need to licence between the community countries.

There will be a need to provide documentation that the eels were caught legally.

CITES meeting in May (27th) – to discuss “non-detriment finding”

Do nothing

Limit exports of eels (and their parts and derivatives) through quotas set variably by each Member State depending on the status of national or river basin ‘sub-populations’ and on progress towards recovery targets.

Set export quotas at zero for eels and their parts and derivatives.

Further discussion on UK position with Defra & JNCC - May 15th.

We now have the confirmed regulation and guidance.

We will discuss the plans (Cefas), agree a final format and apply to all 11 EMPs.

We need to confirm what Regulation / Bill each strand of eel protection will come from and schedule in work plans accordingly

We will formally submit our final plans to Defra BEFORE the deadline

SAA Meeting

11/05/2008

I attended my first SAA meeting on Sunday, and was most impressed with commitment of the members and committee, who all showed a real passion for getting things done. Several single species groups were represented, as well as ECHO (English Carp Heritage Organisation). Eels were not on the agenda at this meeting, but were discussed at the previous meeting when the current state of the EMPs (Eel Management Plans) that have to be submitted to the European Commission by 31/12/2008 were highlighted. I am attending the Yorkshire Eel Summit in Leeds on Wednesday, and will report back in more detail as to how these plans will work. It would appear that the EMPs are the main initiative for dealing with the disastrous levels of elvers returning to our shores, and I will attempt to feed as much information back via the Anguilla Club publications and our website as is useful to our members.

Another major topic was the unification of angling organizations. This appears to be progressing, with the SAA very ably represented by Mike Heylin at the negotiating table. We all need to be aware of what is happening here, as the future of our sport can only be assured if we are represented capably and strongly in what is a very political arena.

Finally, thank you to all members who have helped me attempt to get to grips with the job. If there's anything that you feel I am not doing, or could do better, please tell me 😊

Tight Lines
Mark

The Chairmans' Column

I would like to welcome the old and new membership to a new edition of the 'Anguilla'. As you, all may know already that you have a newish Chairman. This was written for last year's mag but got lost in the great e-mail void. I would like to start with thanking Steve for all the effort he has put in to the club over the past years. I know that Steve has left some very large shoes to fill but with his and other members guidance I will try a do the best job I can. Now, you may be asking yourself who is this new chairman. Well, my name is Michael Brettle and I am 30. I have been fishing for twenty-one years and the last eleven years have been in pursuit of eels. My first eel was caught in June 1999, which weighed in at 3 lb 06 oz. This is also my personal best eel which I have matched only once since. Most of my fishing is done on the local canals and the odd NAC fish-in when work allows. I joined the NAC in 2001 after being introduced to the club by Jason Morgan at the winter social in 2000. After attending a few meeting I thought I would like to get a little more involved with the Club and put myself forward for the position of the record's officer when Jimmy stepped down. This was back in 2002. I still hold that position as well as my new position as chairman. I was a little shocked when, at the AGM, Graham Wilkes put me forward for the position and Steve stepped down. The vote was carried unanimously. I must say that I feel truly honoured that the membership feels that I can do the job after only being a member for seven years. Well that's a brief history of my eeling life.

I will take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the committee and thank the people who have stepped down this year. With out the time and dedication, which these people gave then, there would be no National Anguilla Club. I have heard that Arthur J Sutton, one of the founding members has not been very well over the past few months. Are wishes are sent to him and his family for a quick return to full health. There is only one more thing to say and that is tight lines to you all and hope to see you at a fish-in this year 😊

Odds and Ends

Rod Hillyer

Well, I begin this piece with an apology. I have been a member of the NAC now for two years and this is my first article for their magazine!! Shocking huh??

What with getting married, moving into a new home, starting a new job and obviously trying to fit some fishing in somewhere, there has been little time for sitting down and penning some words for Anguilla. I guess there are a few of you out there in a similar situation but at last things have quietened down slightly and I can take the chance to put a few thoughts on to paper.

This article covers a few topics, rather than focussing on one. It contains ideas and views gathered from nearly 20 years of fishing on and off for big eels. I say "on and off" simply because there have been regular diversions tracking down other species of fish but I seem to always come back to my roots and end up spending hot, clammy summer evenings after the snakes every season.

First off, I want to focus on the NAC itself . The last magazine that Nick Rose kindly put together was one of the better ones since I have been a member. The reason for this was simple. There were a few articles and piccys!! Without material a magazine cannot function. I have been guilty as anyone for not contributing to the NAC but I am making an effort. When I was a British Eel Anglers Club member back in the 80s/90s, I always made an effort to write something for the legendary Micky Bowles and his Eel News magazines. Yes, I was a lot younger, single and living at home, so there was more time but it can still be done.

I must take this chance and thank Mark Salt and Nick Rose for taking the time to take the reigns of the NAC and extend its life; it would be a crying shame to see all the eel clubs vanish and end up the same way.

I met Nick recently at the NEC Go Fishing event and what a top bloke he is, along with the Zandavan boys, Barry McConnell and Pete Drabble. It was superb to meet you both. Your zander and eel DVD's were amazing, too. Some of the footage of those

New Zealand long fin and short fin eels will go down in history, I am sure. Absolutely addictive watching. The wife couldn't get a word out of me all evening !!!

I digress....

The Members Profile pages in the last mag were really good and I always love to read about other anglers and their own views on all aspects of angling. We could all write one of these for Anguilla over the course of 2008, I am sure ??

It was interesting to note that many of our fellow NAC members do not purely fish for eels. I think this is quite refreshing in a way, simply because fishing for a few different species keeps the motivation going and definitely avoids "burn out", which has happened to a lot of anglers along the way. However, I do respect those who choose to specialise in eels all year and have a lot of admiration for them. I personally alternate my eel sessions with stalking massive carp on the Hampshire pits or sight fishing for big barbel and chub in the crystal clear waters of the Hampshire Avon/Dorset Stour. This keeps my enthusiasm brimming the whole summer long. Come the winter I put the eel gear away and focus on chasing big pike, with the odd session after barbel and chub.

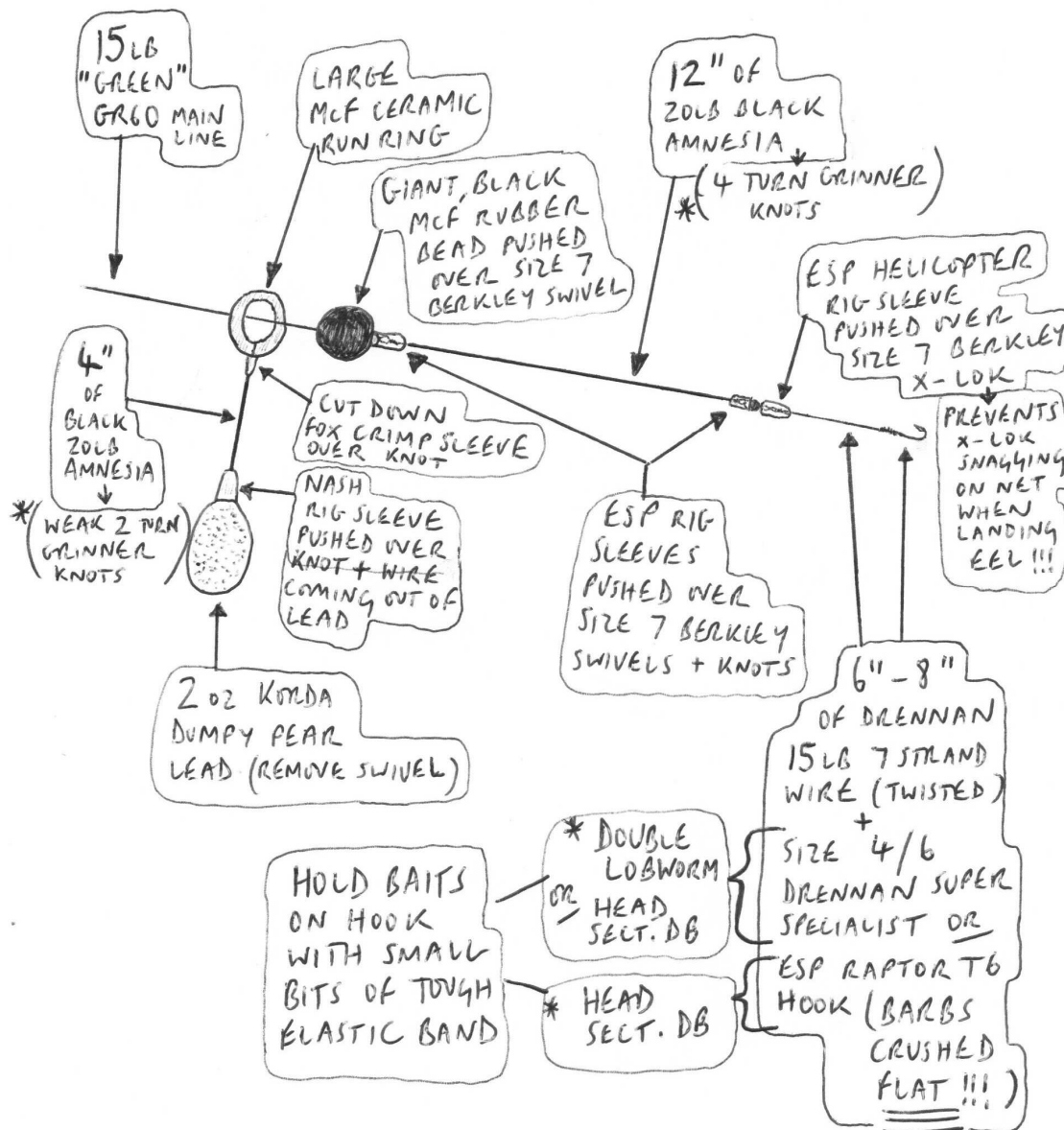
My next bit of this article looks at the rig I am now using for eels. I have tried all manner of eel rigs over the years, off bottom rigs, sub surface rigs etc but always come back to the one I am 100% happy with and that's the old faithful John Sidley rig. However, I have modified it very slightly with the addition of bits and pieces here and there. It is fairly tangle free (still get the odd tangle on a hefty cast..), easy to set up if you have made all the bits up in advance at home and has caught hundreds of massive eels over the last 30 odd years for a lot of famous names.

I keep the Amnesia mid-links in a Gardner stiff rig wallet, so they remain dead straight

and my wire traces in a Gardner rig bin. My lead links are also made up in advance and kept in plastic, see-through pouches that you find in Fox rig wallets. This keeps them

separated and prevents them from rolling about and getting kinked. Have a look at the diagram. It's all very self explanatory.....

The John Sidley Eel Rig



Another topic I want to chat about is how much of an influence the spawning times of other fish species have on our own eel fishing results. This is very relevant to us all because over the next 2-3 months (bearing in mind I am writing this in March), if we get some very hot weather, those bream and roach will start moving into the edges of our pits and lakes ready for spawning. Those big, old eels will be there to greet them and stuff themselves stupid on spawn. This can lead to some crazy and mind blowing eel fishing, if you can locate these spawning grounds.

This happens every season on one of my local waters. It is a large 20 acre gravel pit with very coloured water. It is very open and exposed, apart from one large island in the centre and one bank which is lined with dense, snaggy bushes and sunken trees. Under these bushes and trees are huge canopies of tree roots that extend out from the near bank drop off. Come the first hot spell, usually around the end of April/early May, huge shoals of bream and roach move into this bank to spawn. The water is black with them, no joke.

This activity triggers the eels to go on a feeding binge which lasts until early June. They seem to drop their guard and eat whatever you throw at them, at any time of the day or night. Once the spawning activity ceases the eels vanish and you are lucky to get any runs on this bank for the remainder of the summer. I suspect they head back out to the open expanses of water, where they resume feeding in an unpressured environment.

For the last two years I have been focussing on a small section of this snaggy area and caught some very good eels topped by a new PB of 5lb 13oz.

Incidentally, the larger eels seemed to feed better in the daytime, sometimes in bright sunshine. The feeding spells occurred between 4.30pm-8.30pm and again at 11.30pm-1.30am. However, once the bream and roach finish spawning the daytime feeding spells end and the eels revert back to night feeding, again. I reckon the eels must realise that this golden opportunity of easy pickings is a one-off and so feed like mad outside their usual comfort zone until it's all over.

Actually, talking about feeding times brings me on to my next topic of conversation...

In the last mag, Nick Rose and Jason Morgan both touch on the idea of fishing short, partial nights, in contrast to the traditional "sitting it out all night" approach for big eels.

I think this is a very sensible way of eeling and I have been doing a lot of partial nights

over the last 5 years, i.e. fishing from say a couple of hours before dusk to 2.30am, and then packing up and dashing home to get some kip. I appreciate not all of us have waters on our doorsteps that we can drive home from at 2.30am but if you do, think about it. I also realise I will be missing out on the odd big eel at dawn but if you've got a job to go to the next day or a family to contend with, you are going to be more popular if you get some kip and are able to stay awake at some point !!! I can honestly say my eeling results have not suffered since doing more of these style sessions; on most of the pits and ponds in Dorset/Hants the eels have a definite feeding spree from 11.30pm-1.30am. I have been taking advantage of this and catching just as many big eels as I did when I fished all through the night. The only difference is I do not look like a character from the "Night of The Living Dead" films the next morning.....

Also, fishing shorter sessions means you can travel lighter. I only take a small Fox quiver for a brolly, rods, net and bank sticks with a small Wychwood rover rucksack for reels, tackle box, Delkims etc including some sandwiches/small flask of drink and a small Nashy Lo-chair with shoulder strap.

I accept that by fishing this way I am never going to be in the league of the late, great John Sidley for sheer numbers of huge eels but you'll still be in with the chance of a big eel at some point, if you persevere.



My PB eel of 5lb 13oz, caught at 8.30pm, June 07 on double lob

Talking about night fishing brings me on to my penultimate bit of this article. Whilst out and about on the bank it's very interesting to observe the different attitudes anglers have when they go night fishing; some set up under a brolly and sit by their rods on a lo-chair and fish up to midnight, some get into a sleeping bag on a bedchair under a profile brolly/oval brolly and others set up a bivvy with all the home comforts and a ton of beer. Each to their own, of course.

I then turn to eel anglers and wonder how we all approach a typical night out on the bank.

I personally, as I've said before, set out as light as possible; if it rains I put up a light weight 50" brolly. Otherwise I sit on a Nashy Lo-chair, right by the rods under the stars. My sarnies and flask are next to me at the ready.

I hear every rustle of the hedgehogs and mice in the bushes behind me, every shrill note of the tawny owl and listen to the foxes calling to one another. I smell the glorious summer night air and gaze at the stars overhead.

For me, this all adds to the incredible atmosphere I experience by sitting up, staying alert and actually fishing; far better than being asleep and stuck inside a dark bivvy. Then, as soon as an eel belts off with my bait I will be straight on the rod to strike INSTANTLY and hook the eel CLEANLY.

Last summer, fishing in this manner, I only deep hooked one eel out of a dozen or so fish.

Now, I know some of the NAC members may fish in a very different manner to me but I beg you all to look at how you fish and how many eels you are currently deep hooking. If you are bivvying up, sleeping in a sleeping bag and dropping off into deep sleeps and still deep hooking eels far too regularly, then please change your approach. If you are fishing in this manner and neat hooking all your fish then tell me your secret because I cannot comprehend how you can wake up, find your way out of a sleeping bag

(zipped/unzipped), stumble out of the bivvy and then strike in time to hook an eel cleanly.....

I have fished alongside fellow eel anglers in the past and been quite astonished to see them set up at the top of steep banks, put up a bivvy, bedchair and sleeping bag with the intention of getting some kip during the night, with the rods still out.

As eel anglers and eel conservationists, we should be doing everything in our powers to avoid deep hooking eels. I know the odd eel can get rid of deeply set hooks but, generally, I think most of them die. I am convinced that by sitting on your rods, staying awake and avoiding drinking copious amounts of alcohol will mean more eels hooked ok.

I know the only way to avoid hurting eels is not to fish for them at all but if, like me, you are addicted to catching big eels then we have to make sure we are fishing as sensibly as possible.

If you do not like staying awake all night, then you should not be eel fishing OR change your style and start doing the partial nights, as I mentioned earlier in the article.

Obviously if you can put up with endless sleepless nights and you're using the bivvy purely as a retreat for some kip the following day (rods wound in...), you're a proper old-school eel angler as far as I'm concerned and I have lots of respect for you. I just wish I could cope doing this all the time !!!

Finally, I would like to address the topic of why some eel waters seem to "blow" and others don't . I have noticed a correlation between tiny ponds/smaller lakes blowing after a whole season, while the big pits and lakes continue to throw up eels for a far longer period. Indeed, one big gravel pit near to my home has been producing big eels every summer for the last 30 odd years. Yet another smaller pit (approx 2 acres) down the road produced a handful of 4s, couple of 5s, a 6 and a real monster that shred the trace at the net,

for two local spessy hunters in their first few sessions, a few years ago. Since these fish it has not produced another eel, inspite of a lot of effort from the same guys. Not even giving the water a 2 year rest has made a difference.

In contrast, the larger water I mentioned (20 acres+) has been producing 3s, 4s, 5s and 6s every year since I have lived in the area. These have been caught by myself and two other anglers. I didn't catch any of the 6s, I hasten to add....typical !!! So, why the different rates of water blow outs ??

Although the larger water is being eel fished regularly, you can hardly call 3 anglers on 20 acres of water a massive amount of pressure. So, does the larger mass of water give the eels a means of "escape" from getting caught so often, hence the continual capture of new fish ??

Meanwhile, the small 2 acre pit having a much reduced water mass gives the eels hardly anywhere to "hide" and so they get caught very quickly and blows instantly. Is it as simple as this ??

I think back to the 80s/early 90s when the British Eel Anglers Club organised regular fish-ins on Ardingly and Weirwood reservoirs in Sussex. Ardingly fished its nuts off in the first couple of summers but declined rapidly afterwards. Ardingly is a huge water but still declined fairly quickly. Whether it has returned to its former glory nowadays, I don't know.

Weirwood, however, being a much harder water with a very small population of huge eels kept throwing up big fish over a period of 5-6 years. I say "kept throwing up".....apart from one monster of 8lb to Micky Bowles and a small 2lb'er to another member, the other fish all slipped the hook at the net; both huge eels and one of these to Bowlesy, again. He was so gutted at losing this monster he packed up eel fishing !!!

I think the main factor here is that Ardingly had a very big eel population for its water mass and so they were caught far more easily, whereas Weirwood had

a ridiculously tiny eel population for its water mass and the eels were caught /hooked every once in a lifetime.

The other question, of course, is what happens to the eels when a water blows ??

Do they avoid the food items they were originally hooked on and so never get caught again, do they leave the water altogether, do they produce a hormone/chemical that tells other eels not to venture into a particular area where they have been caught ?? Some eels may die after capture but I know for a fact that top spessy hunter, Duncan Charman and friends of mine have recaptured specific eels on their waters.

It is all very interesting and I would love to hear off fellow NAC members about similar examples on their waters.

Anyway, I will end there and wish you all the best of luck in your fishing. Take lots of care and tight lines, 😊

Come and See the NAC at Piking 2008!

Graham Slater, Michel Huijgevoort, PA Högberg, Derek Macdonald

THE ANGLERS CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN Est. 1977

pacgb.com

The Annual PAC Convention

Piking 2008

Saturday September 27th

Stoneleigh Warwickshire

A MEGA day out for ALL pike anglers with all the usual attractions; details announced shortly.

Doors open at 10.00am. Adult Member: £12.00 (£10.00 in advance). Adult Non-Member: £14.00. Junior Concessions: FREE Car Parking.

CONTACT Mike Rely for advance tickets: 47 Yew Tree Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN11 0DD. Please arrive 30 mins before the start of the day.

Members Profile - Matt Johnson

N.A.C MEMBERS NAME

Matt Johnson, also known as The Saint

STATUS

married with a beautiful daughter

WHEN DID YOU FIRST START EEL FISHING

roughly 1984 when inspired by the late and great John Sidley, Phil Smith & Jim Gibbinson

REASONS FOR JOINING THE NAC

I have something to offer!

FIRST EEL EVER CAUGHT

My first eel ever caught was actually my first ever fish, weighing approx 2oz and caught on maggots

PERSONAL BEST EEL TO DATE

my wife says size isn't everything, so no comment!

BEST REMEMBERED EEL SESSION

A four fish catch all on half deadbaits during a freezing foggy night late October many moons ago while 'guesting'. It was so cold, so damp and dark while sitting on my lafuma low chair and looking over my shoulder, I thought I would never be able to bend my legs again! My other favourite trip was when after baiting up a swim with chicken guts from the local Jewish butcher, I caught my first 4lb+ eel which tail walked its way to the net. I would also like to include several trips to fish Westwood with John Sidley and landing the 8lb'er for Mick Bowles from Weirwood.

WHICH MONTHS DO YOU FISH FOR EELS

July & August

FAVOURITE VENUE

A large Surrey estate lake

ANY PARTICULAR BAIT PREFERENCES AND REASONS FOR THIS

half deadbaits, head section, just for the look, smell and ease of casting

FAVOURITE ITEM OF TACKLE

a small Gardner Tackle baiting needle which I have owned for near on 15yrs, a set of Shimano twin power rods which I sold, then regretted, so bought them back a year later, and finally a set of roller buzzers which Sir Peter Springate sold me which even have his name on!

OTHER SPECIES THAT YOU FISH FOR

River carp, Barbel and Pike

OF ALL THE SPECIES YOU HAVE CAUGHT, WHICH ONE IS YOUR FAVOURITE AND WHY

It's a toss up between river carp and eels, purely

because you never know what you are going to get when you get that bite.

ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ANY OTHER ANGLING ORGANISATIONS

I am a member of several local angling clubs and work with the NFA in promoting angling at the school I work at.

ANY OTHER INTERESTS OUTSIDE ANGLING

My daughter who I spend most of my time with when not at work, vegetable growing, watching Southampton, Woking and Inter Milan football clubs. I like to see all 3 clubs play each year, so every year visit Italy to watch Inter play at the mighty San Siro stadium along with St Mary's & Kingfield.

DIS-LIKES IN ANGLING

Liars, can't stand them and swim jumpers who jump into your swim after you have done all the hard work, this has happened more times than I care to remember especially when fishing the River Thames for carp

HOW COULD THE NATIONAL ANGUILLA CLUB BE IMPROVED

I am unable to comment yet as I am a new member

AMBITIONS, IN ANGLING TERMS

to carry on enjoying myself while fishing. I do set small targets each season and look to attain them but it's not the end of the world if I don't reach that target, as long as I have enjoyed myself along the way.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ANGLING HEROES OR HAS ANYONE INFLUENCED YOUR CAREER TO DATE

in eel fishing terms, it has to be John Sidley and Phil Smith, but in general fishing terms, then I look no further than Jim Gibbinson who is a superb & dedicated all rounder which is something I aspire to be. On a local scale, the old sage, Dave Ball taught me so much with regards dedication when targeting different species.

DO YOU THINK THAT THE EXISTING RECORD OF 11lb-2oz WILL BE BROKEN IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IF SO, WHAT TYPE OF VENUE DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE AND WILL IT BE TO AN EEL ANGLER OR AN ANGLER FISHING FOR ANOTHER SPECIES

Having personal knowledge of a 13lb & 17lb freshwater eel being returned to a local lake 20yrs ago, but still remaining uncaught, I'm not sure, the lake is 75+ acres though and does not allow night fishing.....legally!!!!

I do believe the record at some stage will be broken from one of the large reservoirs like Rutland water and will either be caught by a pike or carp angler 🐟

A Tale Of Two Sixes!

Mark Salt

My first seasons' eel fishing ranked as one of the most enjoyable of my fishing career.

Having grown increasingly bored with most aspects of the modern big fish scene, particularly the naming of individual fish, it was refreshing to fish for a species that had an air of mystery about it, and was unlikely to have been caught before, at least, not by design. It felt a bit like my early carp fishing expeditions back in 1970, when it seemed we learnt something new on every session. I joined the NAC at the start of 2006, and have found the three fish-ins that I have been to great fun, and very informative. I've met some great anglers and characters, and look forward to the next one. I have also finally discovered, after 45 years as an angler, how to get information from carp and tench anglers – tell them you only fish for eels, and they reveal all!

I ended this first eel season with a 5:04 and two other fish of over 4lbs, and a real desire to catch a monster. Although the waters that I had fished were obviously capable of supporting specimen eels of the size I was looking for, I didn't feel confident that they were of a sufficient age to produce a real whacker, and so, at the beginning of this year, I began to explore the wealth of gravel pits in the Lea Valley in a way that I had not considered in the past. Using a useful website titled "Old Ordnance

Survey Maps" (www.ponies.me.uk) I built a picture of the watercourses through the valley in the 1930s and 40s and identified some of the oldest gravel pits. I tried to establish which were dug first, and also enquired of clubs and individual anglers as to the presence of eels. If they were a nuisance in a particular water, I would cross that off my list, not necessarily as a waste of time, but because I wanted a water where eels were not numerous, and hopefully grew bigger. I ended up with a shortlist of 7 pits, one of which has a closed waiting list of 10 years plus, and as sod's law would have it, is rumoured to have produced an eel of 10lb+ to a carp angler in the past! It's also the oldest pit in the valley. The 6 remaining waters were accessible, either at waiting list stage or immediate membership. 3 of these are Lea Valley Park waters that are easy to join and are not secure. I like to fish without worrying about having my gear or car nicked, and so I chose the pit that I have spent most of this year on. A club limited to 150 members controls it, and the bailiff mows the swims and paths every week, leaving the surrounding banks overgrown and attractive. It is carp fished, but usually I share the 16 acres with only one or two other anglers as I always fish during the week. All my enquiries produced the reply "no eels in 'ere mate" with the exception of the bailiff, who thought that a seven had been caught many

years before. As the pit next door had produced 2 genuine 8s (carp anglers again!) in the previous 10 years, I was confident that this water could be the one. Why not fish the pit next door, I hear you say? Well, it's on my list, but full of crayfish, easy to get a ticket for and not secure, so rather than fish with a motley crew and the chance of trouble at night, I decided to keep it for the future.

Dug in the mid 40s, the chosen pit has an average depth of 12 feet, and unusually, has few bars or features. There is a fair bit of weed and a lot of rushes in the margins, which average 6 feet in depth, and some large weed beds at range (70 yards +). As I prefer to fish tight to the margins whenever practical, this suited me, as I reasoned that there would be plenty of eel type fodder available close in, and good cover in the rushes for them to hole up in during daylight hours. The weed is full of invertebrates, and not too thick to fish over. After an interview with the fishery officer my ticket arrived, and my first night on the water began. With water temperature at 68, good cloud cover and a strong breeze my confidence was only slightly decreased by the fact that it was a full moon. However, I have found that providing it is overcast I can catch eels in these conditions. Worms on two rods, and a roach deadbait on the third were positioned between 6 inches and 6 feet from the rush fringed margins as I started fishing that afternoon. A run on deadbait at 6pm produced a very skinny pike of a few pounds, closely followed by another larger specimen an hour later. At 10.05 I had a fast

run on the roach and struck into thin air. Fortunately, the bait was still intact, and I dropped it back in, in the same position, tight to the rushes. Within a few minutes I was away again, and this time I struck successfully, landing an eel of 4:03. I was, of course, absolutely delighted. My first eel from the water, on the first session, and a 4 at that! No more runs that night, except for another skinny pike of around 8lbs. The strange incident of a missed run, followed by an almost immediate pick up, if a cast to the same spot is made quickly, has now occurred 3 times, on 3 different waters, and on each occasion the eels landed have been sizeable. I used to think that missed runs equated to small eels. Now I'm not so sure!

The following 6 nights produced one more eel of 4:04 and 5 missed runs, all on deadbaits. Worms have not produced on this water. Being a bit thick, it took me a while to realise that a smaller bait might result in less missed runs, as these eels do not appear to have particularly large mouths compared to some. This coincided with me reading an article recommending peeler crab as a good eel bait, so that day found me on my way to Southend to buy some peelers! I peeled and froze 30, and took the remaining 10 live to the water that night, reasoning that if I peeled them as I used them they would be as fresh as possible, and bound to catch. All through the night I could hear the little blighters scuttling around in their seaweed filled bait box.

With the water temperature at 71, a new moon and a strong ripple on the water, conditions looked good. So on went peeler on 2 rods and a small deadbait section on the third. Peeler crab are ideal from a hooking point of view, as they are soft and round, making it difficult for a fish to pick up without having the hook in it's jaws as well as the bait, and easy to strike through. The smell of them is reminiscent of the freshwater mussels that we used to use for tench many years ago, and may explain their effectiveness. The

deadbait section was cut so that it just covered the hook for the same reason. At 10:50 pm I had a slow, twitchy run on a crab, and connected with what was obviously a good fish. As it thrashed on the surface I could see that it was certainly my biggest eel to date, and immediately began to worry about what could go wrong. But it came to the net quickly, and I weighed it immediately and accurately so that even if it escaped in the night I would know how big it was.



6lb 14oz

At 6:14, my biggest eel to date, and a creature of rare and wondrous beauty! I sacked the fish and secured it in the margins and as I began to rebait the successful rod, the centre rod with the small roach section roared

away. Again, on connecting, I knew that this was a good fish, but took no chances due to the vicinity of the rushes and various snags, and steered it to the net quickly. Once again, I weighed the fish immediately, and could

not believe it - 6:03! I estimate that there was a gap of approximately 30 minutes between runs, and for the rest of the night I imagined this pair of magnificent creatures making their way around the margin of the lake until they came across my baits. After sacking the second eel, I finished off the bottle of red wine left over from dinner by way of celebration. I don't think I slept

much after that, and checked that the sack was still there every hour or so. A friend dropped by in the morning to photograph the fish for me, and we watched the pair swim away - a fantastic sight!



6lb 3oz

The burning question now is, are there bigger eels in the lake? I like to think so, and once the water warms to over 50 this coming Spring, I shall go back and attempt to find out, and perhaps catch the monster!

The 14lb eel

A few nights after the 2 sixes, I met a carp angler on the lake, who, on discovering that I was eel fishing, recounted the tale of a 14lb eel that his mate had caught when they were fishing a local pit. Says I “you realise that’s a record ?”. “Really” he says. “Well, we didn’t weigh it, but it was huge, at least 4 feet long”. That night I landed and sacked a 4:09, and was returning it when said carp angler walked past. “That’s about the size of the one my mate had, how big’s that”. I told him, and sheepishly he wandered off! 🤔



An awesome sight two Sixes 6lb 14oz and 6lb 3oz

SOCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT 2007/8

Barry McConnell

We had the usual three regional fish-ins which provide a good social setting where plenty of eel angling talk and social banter can be enjoyed by all. This year we also had a couple of extra fish-ins too.

In **The Midlands region** 11 members descended on Whitemere which is just 3 miles from where I live in Shropshire. This is a water that I have fished for many years. I had been asked to organise a fish-in on the meres that I fish. Every year I send in a catch return to the NAC and use a code name for the meres – difficult mere, usual mere, remote mere, impossible mere and easy mere. Whitemere is called easy mere because it is just that. By far the easiest place I have come across where you can readily catch 3 and 4lb eels and multiple catches of big eels often occur. I thought I could virtually guarantee that members would catch plenty of 3's and a few 4's. Sadly this wasn't the case – that's fishing folks.

Wayne Staddon and Suzy fished out of a makeshift bivvy and blanked.

Graham Nightingale is a local that does most of his eeling on Whitemere but he still blanked.

Mark Taylor loaded his gear into the boat and rowed off towards the horizon to find a swim where I once caught 18 eels in a session. He blanked.

Nick Rose managed to make it for one night despite the fact that he just jetted back from his holidays the day before. He blanked too.

Neil Wilkinson travelled an awful long way to fish here and for all his travel effort he was rewarded with one eel of 1:14.

Pete Drabble has been fishing this mere with me for the last 14 years. He caught one eel of 1:15.

Jansen Bostock was fishing a deep hole next to my peg. He caught one eel of 1lb+.

Roy Piggot caught three eels of 1lb+ while fishing in a deep hole at the end of the wood.

Thomas Huish shared a swim with his father and caught a personal best eel of 1lb 9oz.

Kevin Huish was quite at home on this water which is only a few miles from the borders of his beloved Wales. He was on form and managed to catch 4 or 5 eels with the biggest being a good long eel of exactly 2lb.

I had the usual McConnell luck. I was on a bit of a duff swim – shallow with a hard bottom – so I waded out 15 yards into the water to get past overhanging branches then cast into Jansens' swim – deep with a soft bottom – and managed to catch six eels. Two under 2:00, 2:10, 3:00, 3:02, and 4:00. The next morning I was surprised to find that other members hadn't bagged up like this. Perhaps we should try it again some time.

The Southern region held a fish-in at Papercourt where 7 members arrived and 2 didn't make it.

Steve Dawe was really looking forward to meeting us all again as he had recently rejoined the club after some time out. He had already paid for this event in advance but then developed work problems and couldn't make it.

Peter Drabble set off from Stockport, then suffered vehicle problems when only a few miles from Papercourt. He ended up turning round and going home.

John Davis caught a good eel of 3:11 and it was looking good for the rest of us. BUT no one else caught an eel.

Graham the Jockey Wilkes sat frazzling in the sun while bashing a few pike out. He turned the most amazing shade of Jockey red that I have ever seen.

Nick The eeling hedgehog Rose played with his new toy – a bait boat.

Pete Shefford definitely wasn't depressed this time and seemed to be far more lively than the rest of us.

Dave Jones had a good time here at last years fish-in. He tried all the same tricks this year but blanked.

Roy Piggot didn't seem at all bothered about the lack of eels as he helped John demolish a stack of beer in their happy way.

I caught eels here last year and tried the same approach. I caught nothing this time though.

The Northern region held a fish-in at Pottery Pond near York, which was attended by 5 members. Only one member from the northern region managed to turn out.

Peter Drabble caught the biggest eel of the weekend at 3.10.

Neil Wilkinson – the long distance traveller – caught a small eel weighing less than 1lb.

Nick Rose caught 4 small eels and really enjoyed the rural setting where he said the noises at night reminded him of nights on the fens.

Mark Salt and myself decided that we had caught enough sixes this year and couldn't see the point in catching piddly little eels from a duck pond so we found better things to do.

Mark had some quality wine chilling and I had my girlfriend on the warmer.

The fishery owner was most surprised that we had caught 6 eels which is more than has ever been caught there in one season. He didn't realise that you can selectively specialise and catch eels by design like this. But he had never met the NAC before.

We also had a couple of extra fish-ins this year.

A winter fish-in was held near warm water outflows at Port Talbot Docks in Wales where we all got loads of runs and all caught plenty of eels in the middle of winter. Nothing over 3lb was taken this time but a few good 2's were banked which were really good to see at this time of year.

A one nighter was held at Shelmore Fishery in Staffordshire - fishing on a trout lake that had never been eel fished. 8 members made it to this event and we all caught plenty of eels. The monsters we were hoping for never turned up but plenty of 2's and a few good eels of 3 + were caught.

All the above mentioned fisheries were impressed with our conduct and the way we held the fish-in. Each one has invited us back again. This is what we want. Keep up the good work. My thanks for coming to everyone that attended. Cheers..... Barry 🍷

Record Officer's Report

October 2007 to June 2008

Well the report starts much the same as most years in the fact that no eels have been directly reported to me. I do know that a few eels have been caught through the graph vein. If you do, catch an eel please let me know so will have more to right about and let the other members know. If the Records Officer is not told directly of the capture then it cannot be put in to the lists and trophies for the year. I do not want another situation were an eel has been caught that should of won but was not included as the criteria had not been meet. So, if you are catching eels out there then please let me know. Just send me an e-mail, xanguilla@aol.co.uk or write 6 Liskeard way, Freshbrook, Swindon, SN5 8NL.

Tight lines to you all and hope you have a good season. Mike Brettle

Short Session Eeling

Janssen Bostock

When I first took up eel fishing in 2004 I didn't realise how difficult and time consuming hunting for a specimen eel was having been involved in pike fishing prior to this I thought I had seen enough inactivity and dry landing nets, still if it was easy everyone would be doing it and we don't want that do we lads?

Being a shift worker I had to now start managing my time because as we know the eel generally feeds at night although I have had eels up to 3lb 10oz in the day. So to help me along I went to seek advice and what advice well I am going to have to come clean one of my old work colleagues is Dave Holman (eel fishing legend) yes that's right Dave Holman I have known Dave for many years but never talked about eels or eel fishing and your thinking how could this be well the answer is simple I was into pike and that's all that mattered it sometimes affects you like that when searching for one species , anyhow moving on as I said Dave was an old work colleague and had worked the same shifts as me so he would have a greater understanding of how to maximise your time spent on the bank without becoming worn out, we talked about the obvious the full night sessions and the weekend sessions and then he mentioned the short session this was about doing about 4hrs as apposed to full nights , so by doing a short session I could go into work the next day giving more opportunity to get on the bank when a full night wasn't possible.

I have now been fishing for eels for five seasons and I have now got a into a system regarding short session eeling the first thing to sort out are your waters and the things to consider are;

- What is a realistic distance to travel without making it along evening?
- Do you have to walk far when you get there , canals go on forever.
- Do you have to catch bait when your there is it easy to catch?

Now we have dealt with those small details the next thing is what tackle do I take? I have put together a list of what I generally take on my short sessions remember minimal is the key here.

- 2x chub 12ft power weave rods(these devils are made for eeling)
- 2x shimano 8000re reels, say no more!
- 1x ESP quiver holder
- 1x landing net
- 1x fox stalker rod pod
- 2x fox mmx bite alarms
- 1x chub ultra lite chair
- 1x small holder
- 1x brolly (nothing worse blanking and getting wet?)
- 1x small tackle box
- 1x whip for bait
- 1x head torch(with spare batteries)
- 1x flask(with hot chocolate)
- Very large amount of patience is always recommended

The next question is when do I start fishing , well the weather is key here as spring approaches by mid march there are sudden changes to our plants etc and what I am

looking for is a increase in day time temp mainly looking for that magic warm spell that we sometimes get early spring unfortunately we have been bypassed this year. two seasons ago I was out as early has mid march , I generally have short sessions until early may the reason for this is that it becomes lighter in the evening , so from mid march when you can fish from 7pm until midnight and from April up to may you can



squeeze in four hours until midnight this type of fishing allows me to crow bar more sessions into my already busy life style. So the next question is do you short session fish later in the year ? the answer is of course , the same principle applies that is when the day light starts to get shorter that's when you go! For

me I look around mid August until early October these can be even more productive months I have used this system for the last four seasons and I find that it helps me when I cant get a full night in due to other distractions . so now your going to ask me have you caught many eels using the short session system ? well we all know how hard eel fishing can be at times certainly when your looking for that specimen fish ! and we have encountered endless blanks to get them , but I have had most of my fish before midnight so would a full night really have mattered ? I don't know ,one thing is for sure this way of fishing allows me to put my bait in the water more often and if your bait isn't in then you have know chance!!! 🍀



Barry McConnell Being Awarded The Trophy For The Heaviest Eel Caught On A Club Trip And The Denys Lawrence Memorial Trophy Because The Eel Was Over 4lbs In Weight. The Trophies Where Presented To Barry By Chairman Mike Brettle. And The Eel That Won Barry The Trophies? Barry's 4lb Whitemere Fish.

2008 Events

THE WINTER FISH-IN - PORT TALBOT DOCKS

Barry McConnell

This is the ideal venue for our winter fish-in. The water is warmed by two outflows from the steelworks to ensure that the eels will still feed in the coldest of weather. Temperature recordings taken by Wayne on this trip read a water temperature of 18 degrees centigrade and an air temperature of 6 degrees centigrade. Since this fishery is next to the sea and actually a bit saline, the population of eels is massive. This mix of warm water and big eel population, along with the fact that this water only ever gets night fished by NAC is such that you can guarantee that everyone will get plenty of runs even in the depths of winter. On some fish-ins the members get scattered separately around the lake but here the swims are all together on one arm which helps collect all the members together for a better social gathering – weather permitting.

We had planned to hold this event in the middle of winter but it was held a bit late this year. You would have thought that it is hardly winter in April and that spring would be on the way. But it seemed like winter as good old British weather obliged us by serving up some of its winter goods. This fishery is prone to gale force winds coming straight off the open sea. Today was no exception as gale force

winds drove sheets of rain horizontally straight into my bivvy. The rain turned to hail, then sleet and gathered all its force as though it was determined to test out us NAC members to see how much we could take.

NAC veteran The Eeling Hedgehog - Nick Rose and Roy Piggott were 'hogging' the best swims on the point. This is the most windswept spot but fortunately you can get a car there so they were able to escape the wind by bivvying up behind their vehicles. There was no escape from the rain though. It lashed down and Nick was on his third set of dry clothes by 10.00pm when he sent us all a text saying 'who's silly idea was this then?' It serves him right for getting so many runs while southern members were all snug, dry and fishless. For his efforts he was rewarded by catching more eels than anyone else. Twelve in total which were mostly pounders with the biggest being a couple of scraper 2's.

Roy seemed to have used up all his luck on the first fish-in we had at this venue when he bagged up with lots of eels to 4.11. This time the sport wasn't so prolific for Roy and on the first night as he only caught one small eel. Things picked up

the following night and he landed a few more including the biggest caught on this trip at 2.08.

I was in the nearest swim to the point where I managed to land four small eels on the first wind-lashed night and 3 more the next night to 2.06. Late on the second evening a huge ship came into the dock with its floodlights blazing. It caused quite a spectacle as it turned round in my swim and we all came out of our bivvies to gather on the bank like excited kids

David Evans was next to me on his first NAC fish-in and thought he would survive the night under his open fronted overwrap. The wind was having none of it and directed all its force at him. He tried to escape the wind by moving the bivvy behind a tree but the wind swirled round it and found him. When I last saw him just before it got dark he had both arms above his head holding down the bivvy. The wind picked up after dark it came from all angles and battered our bivvys. Dai must have been airborne all night hanging on to the bivvy. Perhaps we should have an NAC paragliding competition at this venue next year. If we do I know who my money will be on. Dai the Paraglider has fished here before and caught a 4.02 here last year while pike fishing. He caught a couple of smaller eels of about 1lb here this time and also managed to hook a larger one. Unfortunately it bumped off among marginal snags or was it bumped off by the mother of all squalling gusts of wind..

Further along the same bank was Mark Two Sixes Salt. Wind-beaten and weatherworn, he had been there a night longer than the rest of us and had spent the night trying to fish into an un-fishable wind. Lots of small pulls from nuisance bootlaces never makes for relaxing fishing and since all this action was during the buffeting by the wind it left Mark looking pretty exhausted by the time

the rest of us arrived. For his efforts that night he caught just one small eel. By the time the big storm came the following night Mark had gone off the idea of extreme weather eeling and stayed indoors to avoid the weather. Was this because Mark is from the south and southerners are wiser or was it because northerners are more hardy. He did manage to catch a few more small eels when the storm had calmed down.

Mark Taylor was fishing on the shallow side. He lives the nearest to the water but was the last to arrive. Has local knowledge on this home venue which he often fishes yet was the only NAC member to blank. Despite being last and least Mark remained, as always, first with the wit and full cheerful humour. Happy blanker.

Wayne Staddon and his better half Suzy were fishing in the shallows to. Wayne impressed us all by long ranging it to some marker buoys that were out of casting range for mere mortals. I couldn't quite work out how this was to be until Wayne told me he was using very thin diameter braid which is very good for long casting. He managed to catch 2 or 3 eels of 1lb+ from where he had cast to the far horizon. Wayne had forgotten his baiting needle and seemed lost without it. He was prepared to go to tackle shop for one but it was too late. Asked me if I had one but I don't actually use one. Best person to ask is a pike angler - Dai came to his rescue with one of his own needles which had been ingeniously modified. Everyone was impressed with this gadget and Nick was heard to say 'Barry will probably patent that and be knocking them out next year.'

Mark and Dai left after the first night. Mike Brettle arrived and pitched into the swim that Dai had vacated. As we chatted in Nick's swim I mentioned to Mike that he had the biggest excuse not to make it to all these events due to his work posting him off around the world. Nick reckoned

that Mike should always be able to attend due to his work in air traffic control where he should use his influence to get a private jet to NAC events. Mike caught 5 or 6 eels that night and had the second biggest of the trip at 2.06 or was it 2.07

Look forward to meeting there again next winter when the water temperature everywhere else is far too cold for eels and all summer species anglers are hibernating. It would be good if one of us got a 6 during severe frosty conditions. 🍷



North Yorkshire Fish-In - Pottery Pond

Dave Smith

It's a long drive up to North Yorkshire and with the price of diesel now over £1.30 a litre and petrol heading rapidly towards £1.20, quite an expensive trip, and it showed in the attendance with just four Eel anglers in attendance.

Steve Gardner making the 75mile trip from Oldham was first to arrive and settled into a far bank swim after being told by the owner that all the big Eels come from that area. Roy Piggott followed shortly after, driving the 115 miles from Derby and settling in to a swim on a section sticking out into the main body of the lake, I arrived at around 14:30 looking over the pond from the car park I was drawn to the field bank unfortunately only one swim on the field bank was fishable with a bivvy and a carp angler had made that his home for the week end.

Most of the other areas I liked the look of where either taken by carp anglers or where restricted because a carp angler was in a close swim with lines in the water at various angles. Finally I decided on a swim in a bay created by the section sticking out into the lake where Roy was making home on. Quite literally as he was collecting scaffold boards from the car



park and laying decking that Tommy Walsh would have been proud of, Well it was a bit muddy on the point! Driving the 160 miles up from the Midlands was an arduous task especially as a lorry had managed to drop it's load over the M1 and block four lanes...as I erected the bivvy in the rain (always the bloody way it was nice and sunny

until I get the gear out of the car then it starts raining before I get the bivvy up!) Nick Rose was sat in the same traffic that had hindered both Roy and myself. Nick finally arrived at 15:30 and set up fishing into the new part of the lake looking out towards an island and a small reedlined bay.

Once settled in bait we set about catching some bait which didn't prove easy not that it was difficult to catch on the waggler rods but the size was too big as quite a few half pound roach came to our nets, finally a few small perch and skimmers where caught. And sufficient bait for the night was caught.

So who was to catch the first Eel of the fish-in. well Nick had managed to catch a few small rudd, and it was the tail section fished off bottom which was to signal Eel activity first, Nick's Delkim came to life at around 10pm but the run stopped and Nick recast his bait to the same spot, and just a few short minutes later a small Eel was lying on the unhooking mat. My rods where next to signal a take and at 01:30 my first NAC Eel was caught, after seven blank sessions on local waters it was more than welcome. Even if it did prove to be the smallest at only half a pound... small but perfectly formed! No other Eels where caught that first night though Pike and Bream where caught by Roy and Nick.

The second day came and went quite quickly... this was my first NAC fish-in so I didn't really know what to expect... I'd heard the stories of members sleeping with dead rudd, and the legendary beer drinking that went on but none of that happened, at least I hope not I never did check that sleeping bag!

Instead the highlight was watching small toads walking past the front of the bivvy and being broke by a largish Tench while failing miserably to catch bait for the second night. Up until this year I've always fished alone so it made a nice change to fish with others, and Nick makes a nice cup of tea or three as we sat around discussing our plans of attack for the second night.

As darkness fell my confidence was boosted by two missed takes on my worm rod but that was my lot, and a good nights sleep followed. Fortunately Roy and Steve both had their sleep interrupted, Roy by a 1.09 Eel and Steve showing us all how it's done by catching a magnificent 6.04 on a Bream head. And that was it four Eels to four members biggest Steve's 6.04 and smallest my baby at only half a pound. And so we departed having drove 1010 miles between us.



Hopefully more of you can make the Northampton Fish-in in August, you never know you just might catch the Eel of your dreams, but even if you don't spending time in the company of other Eel anglers having a chat over a cup of tea or can of beer and putting the world to rights has got to be better than sitting at home watching Coronation Street..... look forward to seeing you there.. 🍷

August Fish-In - Northampton

Kevin Huish – Social Officer

Date: start – Friday 8th August, finish - Sunday 10th August

Venue: Stanwick Lakes Fisheries, Higham Ferrers, Northants (Mallard Lake).

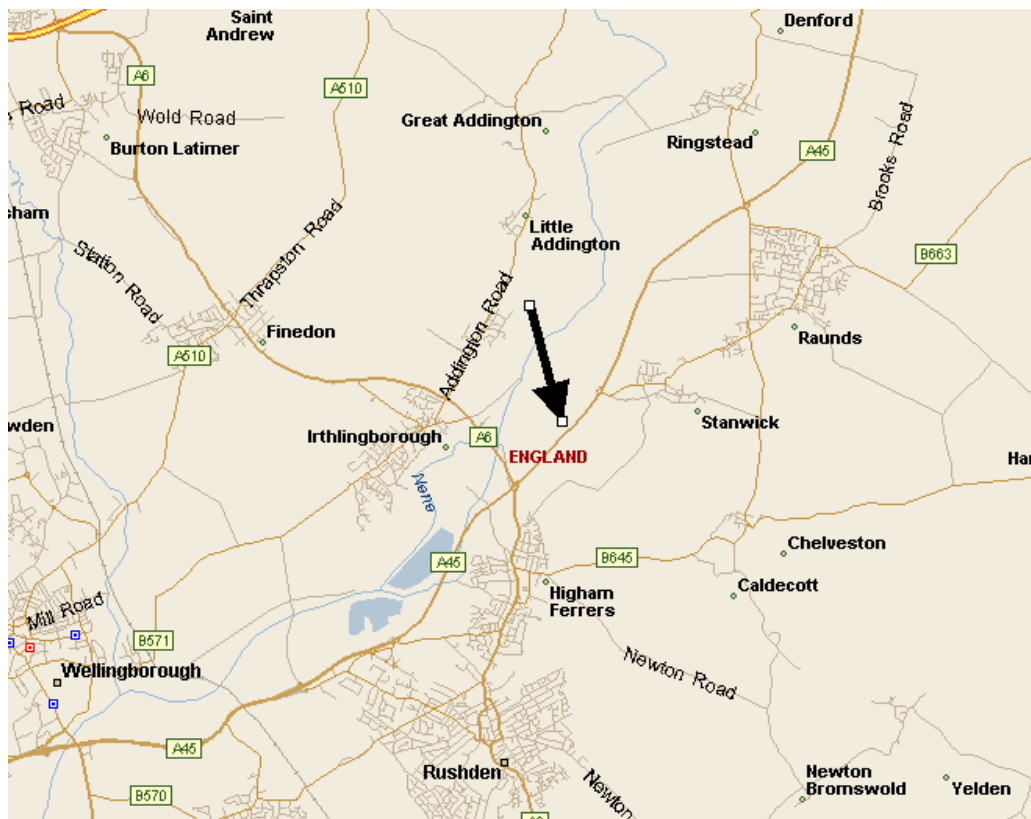
Description: The Complex consists of 6 mature lakes and caters for a variety of anglers from pleasure to serious matchmen and specimen anglers, whether you want to fish for a few hours or all night. The day ticket Specimen Carp Lake is called Elsons, and back in the 80's, was run as the Mid Northants Carp Fishery, one of the premier carp waters in the country, and fished by the top Carp Anglers at the time. Now, 20 years on, it has matured into a beautiful lake, surrounded by large trees. The lake is around six acres in size, with depths ranging from 6-9ft. Surrounded by reeds, the lake features several gravel bars, sunken and overhanging trees, and lily pads.

The NAC Fish-In will take place on Mallard lake, 31 Pegs. Holds a variety of fish, including carp to 25lb, tench to over 9lb, Crucians over 3lb and bream... It has not been fished for Eels, though there have been some accidental captures.

Directions: Stanwick Lakes is situated on the A45 between the towns of Higham Ferrers and Stanwick, East of Wellingborough Northants.

From the North and Midlands, take the A14 from J19 of the M1 (where the M6 begins) from the A14, take the A6 at Burton Latimer, heading towards Rushden at the Island turn left taking the A45 east. Stanwick lakes is adjacent to the lay-by access via the metal gates.

From the South, At J15 of the M1, take the A508 towards Northampton, At the Island take the A45 east continue along the A45, Stanwick lakes is adjacent to the lay-by access via the metal gates. Just after the A6 Island 📍



<p>That the object of the Stanwick Lakes Fisheries shall be to promote the sport of angling and to provide members with suitable waters and the organisation of matches and competitions to be held in true sporting fashion.</p> <p>Members must be in possession of a current EA Rod License.</p> <p>Members are not permitted to fish on a water reserved for a competition and will be ordered to move.</p> <p>Bailiffs have the right to refuse anglers admission to the complex.</p> <p>Anglers must move from a water which has been officially booked.</p> <p>Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult at all times when on Stanwick Lakes Fisheries.</p>	<p>The Stanwick Lakes Fisheries officials have the right during the year to amend any rules where deemed necessary.</p> <p>The rules covering each water must be strictly adhered to.</p> <p>The parking of vehicles must be in parking areas provided. Do not cause obstruction by parking on roadways, pathways or blocking gateways.</p> <p>Any angler found guilty of leaving litter will be banned from the Stanwick Lakes Fisheries water for a minimum of 5 years.</p> <p>Any angler caught taking fish from any water or catching fish for live bait purposes will be banned from the Stanwick Lakes Fisheries for a minimum of 10 years.</p>	<p>Please refer to the rules for each individual water, regarding the rules of carp fishing.</p> <p>All hooks are to be Barbless.</p> <p>Under no circumstances should there be any open fires.</p> <p>There is to be no excessive use of ground bait.</p> <p>No trees to be cut under any circumstances authorized by a bailiff</p> <p>A maximum of 2 rods to be used.</p> <p>No fixed leads.</p> <p>All particles to be prepared properly</p> <p>Unhooking mats must be used</p> <p>No carp to be retained in keepnets</p>
--	---	---

We do have a little movement with a couple of rules. We will be allowed the use of three rods, and we will be allowed to use coarse fish deadbaits... however we can't catch baits from Stanwick they are to be taken to the water frozen. It's very important that we stick to this rule as initially we were only able to use sea baits and worms.

Can You Please Let Me Know If You Are Attending, So That I Can Advise Stanwick Lakes How Many Of Us To Expect. Tel: 01443 757140 E-Mail socialofficer@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk

NAC/PAC Joint Event

Peter Waterfield

The combined fish in was brought about by me being involved with the start of a new region of the PAC in the Wigan area. Some of their members had shown an interest in trying their hand at different species, catfish, eels, even a sea fishing trip for tope.

We met up at the Crawford Arms pub at Red Rock on the Leeds Liverpool canal on Saturday the 21st of June, 12 people attended. Our idea was to spread ourselves over the full length of the canal, trying to fish in pairs.

Three of us caught including Jon Neafcy, the PAC Wigan regional organiser, who had a pike of 6lb and an eel of 2lb 6oz both to roach section. Shaun Devlin, PAC member who also had an eel of 2lb to a fish section. And myself with an eel of 2lbish netted by Mark Smethurst on a roach head.

A very enjoyable night, some of the PAC lads were surprised at the size of the eels caught, they had only ever seen eels in the bait size so a 2lb fish was a bit bigger than they expected.

Lots of interest was shown with the handling of the eels, they seemed to be amazed at the way you can calm an eel down for a photograph.

The Landlady at the Crawford Arms was very helpful and even allowed some of the lads to unlock the gate and drop their tackle off saving quite a substantial walk, also supplying plenty of food and drink.

It was the first of a good trip between both clubs, also a few new members for the NAC.

Myself, Jon Neafcy, Ian Whittaker, Mark Dunbar, Karl Devlin, Shaun Devlin, Keith, Neil Stubbs, Adam, Andy Cooke, Damien Wood, Mark Smethurst attended 🍷

Peter Waterfield

Members Profile - Nick Duffy

N.A.C MEMBERS NAME

Nick Duffy

STATUS

Eeling widow

WHEN DID YOU FIRST START EEL FISHING

About 30 years ago. Have tried other fish but none fight the same plus had a 15.13 Barbel of the river Seven in my 1st year Barbel fishing and thought it was too easy.

REASONS FOR JOINING THE NAC

To meet other nutters, was a BEAC member so it was the next thing.

FIRST EEL EVER CAUGHT

2lb from the river Seven was PB for 6 years.

PERSONAL BEST EEL TO DATE

7lb from the grand union canal caught 1993 at time my PB was 2.08 just a little step up

BEST REMEMBERED EEL SESSION

Could be a few the above as it was my 1st out of the canal and my PB. had a 5.8 on the canal again with the Jockey even though we take the Mick out each other its nice to catch eels with mates. When he had his PB and I didn't believe him and drove home from Milton Keynes .

WHICH MONTHS DO YOU FISH FOR EELS

It gets more and more each year the warmer it gets , but normally April to October.

FAVOURITE VENUE

Canals holds some monster eels and there are loads of canals untouched.

ANY PARTICULAR BAIT PREFERENCES AND REASONS FOR THIS

Live bait its as natural as it gets

FAVOURITE ITEM OF TACKLE

My car and my radio the Jockey recons my tackle is crap but I have caught bigger than him on it.

SPECIES THAT YOU FISH FOR

Barbel , Zander really want a double and live baits

OF ALL THE SPECIES YOU HAVE CAUGHT, WHICH ONE IS YOUR FAVOURITE AND WHY

Eels and Zander as the bait you catch them on don't cost nowt.

ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ANY OTHER ANGLING ORGANISATIONS

No

ANY OTHER INTERESTS OUTSIDE ANGLING

Gigolo , Football ,

DIS-LIKES IN ANGLING

Graham Wilkes , fish chasers

HOW COULD THE NATIONAL ANGUILLA CLUB BE IMPROVED

Combine the socials with the meetings and you might get more people there.

AMBITIONS, IN ANGLING TERMS

Would love to catch a 4lb eel from the river Seven plus a double figure Zander from the Seven.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ANGLING HEROES OR HAS ANYONE INFLUENCED YOUR CAREER TO DATE.

My brother Mark Duffy and John Sidley. Nick Rose, Graham Wilkes, they make me look good when I fish with them.

DO YOU THINK THAT THE EXISTING RECORD OF 11lb-2oz WILL BE BROKEN IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IF SO, WHAT TYPE OF VENUE DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE AND WILL IT BE TO AN EEL ANGLER OR AN ANGLER FISHING FOR ANOTHER SPECIES

Would like to think it would come from a canal I know they are in there but with crayfish getting in there its getting harder and harder, but I would guess it will come to a Carper. 🤪

The Brummy Beer Monster...

Barry McConnell

Two Eel anglers attended a stall at the NEC. All was calm as they quietly chatted to customers.

The Brummy Beer Monster just so happened to be visiting the show to check out rumours about a beer tent. He left his car at home and jumped a train to the NEC with little idea of how or even if he would make it home. All he could think was beer, beer and more beer. He showed little interest in the fishing show attractions until he spotted the two Eel anglers soberly dwelling at their stall.

It just so happens that the Brummy Beer Monster has a second love in his life – Eel fishing. He has been Eel angling twice as long as the two sober bastards put together and by god he was going to show them how to drink. He was gobsmacked when one of them said he didn't drink and the other said not on duty. Unbefuckinleivable. Many droves of donkeys years ago The Monster had manned a stall for the NAC at this very same show and the passing public used to marvel at his drinking skills. He went to check out the beer tent and peace descended on the stall for sober bastards.

An hour later he was back. 'Here, I got you two sober bastards some beers,' he said. The stall was busy and the beer lay on the table untouched. Monster soon finished his own beer and stood in front of the stall blocking it off from the customers. He stood there swaying and actually gurgled a real brummy gurgle as he fixated on the flattening beer. Of course it all got too much for the monster and he soon sank the beers and went off to see if he could find the beer tent. Much to the relief of the sober duo.

An hour later he was back. 'Here, I got you two sober bastards some beers,' he said. The stall was busy and the beer lay on the table untouched. Monster soon finished his own beer and stood in front of the stall blocking it off from the customers. He stood there swaying and actually gurgled a real brummy gurgle as he fixated on the flattening beer. Of course it all got too much for the monster and he soon sank the beers and went off to see if he could find the beer tent. Much to the relief of the sober duo.

An hour later he was back. It was getting like fuckin groundhog day until the two sober bastards followed him on the last lap before the show finished. He was so pissed that he was staggering, still with a half full beer glass in hand, yet he never spilt a drop due to his many years of unremembered drinking experience. By now he was going round telling everyone he was an Eel angler and getting the two sober bastards some bad press so they bundled him into the back of a van and tried to take him home. Little did they realise that this was the monsters plan. And he wasn't ready for home yet either. He directed the van driver to his neighbourhood and got it to park outside his favourite curry house. Knowing that the sober bastards were starving it didn't take long to blag them into buying the curry.

The owner of curry house greeted the monster with 'good evening are you eating or sleeping tonight sir'. It turns out that monster had fallen asleep there on his last three visits. He got the beer in. This was really all a bit odd for him as one of the sober bastards

still wasn't drinking. Still it's more beer for the monster he thought as he downed the weird ones beer.

They eventually made it back to the monsters house where once again he was totally fuckin gobsmacked when the weird one, the sober, holier than thou bastard that won't touch a drop of beer proceeded to drink all his Stella and get more pissed than the monster had been all day. They all got monstered together. God this was amazing the sober bastards are both rockin'. They are the dudes. He got so high on the brotherhood of Eel anglers on the piss up of all piss ups that he didn't realise that he was agreeing to sell four catfish rods and a bivvy for 60 quid. He would agree with anything these guys wanted – they are brothers of the Eel drinking clan, they got slime fever and they drink too, Eels and alcohol rules. He gurgled in Brummieish

The two sober bastards left him with his hang over early the next day. They dropped in at the nearby tackle shop to see the monsters mate. 'You were right Derek,' said the weird one. 'I got the lot for 60 quid. It was easy. Only cost me a curry and I got a shed full of free Stella. And you reckon that the beer will wash away all his memory of having owned this tackle so you can sell it to him again before the France trip next year.' 🍷



The Weird Sober Bastard's Stall At The NEC!

Anguilla 46.2

Anguilla 46.2 will be with you early December, however we need more articles. We have work promised by some members but we're still looking for more. Don't be worried about spelling and grammar we can help with that, if you can get to a computer type it up and e-mail it to the bulletin team at bulletin@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk or handwrite/type it and send it to "The Bulletin Team" 131, Goosemoor Lane, Erdington, Birmingham, B23 5QB.

If you don't want to write an article then please send your photos with a few words to the above address (if you want your photos back please send a suitable SAE.) or fill in a members profile... and don't forget the Mole is always looking for more gunge!!!

Cut Of Date For Submissions Is 1st November 2008.

The Nickolls Experience

Nick Duffy

It's been a long time in coming but this is the first ever article I have ever wrote "I know lazy git" but it's not knowing what to write its how. So I thought I would do something on a week's eeling I had about a month ago now on those who know it Nickolls quarry in Kent were we have had a few fish-in over the years.

So were will I start VENUE again for those who know it well read on for those who don't Nickolls is in my mind is probably one of the best fishing venues in the country but its 200 miles too far to go every weekend. Steve Ricketts was the first to eel fish it of the people I know with great results of massive hauls of fish but he does that on every water he fishes. I think the lake record stands at 9.03 its defiantly a runs water but your next one could be a 1lber or a 9lber. When its fishing you can get about 50 to 60 runs over a 24 hour session on deads and worms with I would say if you caught 5 fish 2 would be 3's but if you speak to most of the Carpers there they have all had 6plus or bigger fish to boilies or pellet and Derrick the bailiff just laugh's at you for weighing what looks 4lb.



Anyway the weeks fish-in - got there on May 31st at about 8ish after missing the junction on M25 "how many times have I been there " Ricketts was already there on the members bank and he had sorted it that I could fish the members bank too, I made my way around to him (another good thing about Nickolls is you never need to carry your stuff far has you can unpack the car most places on the lake) a quick hello and a it was time get set up. Bivvy done and rods all set up by 10

o'clock. Its was time to get some fish bait first put in and a Rudd was caught and cast out on two of my eel rods head on one tail on other and worms on other two rods by the time I had put a maggot on the whip 1 of the worm rods was away quick strike so the first eel of the week to me at about 2lb you get too many of them to sack them all so back it went. Before I could put some more worms on the deadbait rod was away and another 2lber was put back in the lake 10.10 and I had already had two 2's Mr Ricketts though had six fish to about 3and half pounds.

We spent 48 hours on that bank for about 50 eels between use loads of 2's and about 10 3's and can't even imagine how many missed runs but we never had the bigger fish Steve had expected. He had caught two fish over 5lb on his last 24-hour trip on that bank so not to even have a four was a disappointment. One think I forgot to say was we watched a carp angler unhook a 5plus eel in the net and moan about the slime in it while we packed up. So a move it was to the opposite bank, which had produced some off the better fish to

the carp anglers in the past. Again 48 hours was spent there but it was more the same loads off runs and fish to mid 3's but in the space of 10 mins jammy Rickets had a 4lb bream on my whip a good upper double common on his float rod and at last a 5lb eel on worms so at least a good fish was caught! A bit later in the day he also took a 4.10 eel on dead bait.

With Nick Rose arriving the next day we moved again to some more social swims 3 pegs in row and near the shower block as I stank a bit by then. When Nick arrived so did the "Rosie's" it's a new name we have now for eels under 2lb we had not caught many of these in the other two pegs so why did we start now? Had the big predator eels switched off or did Nick bring them with him? 24 hours boot bashing was the order for the next 24 hours we still got the odd better fish to 3lb but no were near what we had been catching. So another move was in order. For those who go on fishing with Nick Rose fish next to him he is a brilliant cook steak and veg on the bank or was it that I was fed up of beans?

The last 24 hours got a bit better still had the boots but with a few more 2's and 3, than the other pegs. We did experiment abit though on the last two nights with pellets and boilies and caught loads off carp to 21pounds to jammy again but did miss some runs that will make me use them again there too many big eels get caught there on these baits to ignore them if u can put with the goldfish.



Overall the weekend was probably the best I have ever had and I will be going back there again and again Steve doesn't believe we don't have a lake like this near my home but I could say that for a lot of us. Over the week between us not including Nick we had 170 plus eels Steve having the 2 biggest at 5lb and 4.10 with about 30 to 40 3's and more 2's than anything else if the NAC ever have a fish-in there again I would get your name down and have the Nickolls Experience for yourself.

Nick "super7" Duffy

Footnote; one last thing I think should add is of the 170 plus eels we caught myself I only lost 3 hooks to deep hooking and I think Steve only had 6 or 7 we fished off the baitrunner's all week and didn't get many runs stop because of it so there's food for thought🤔

Back On The Web...

Nick has asked me to do a piece for the newsletter so here it is.. lets start from the beginning:

July 23rd 1979. the day it all began, my Dad had been given instruction to buy my sister her first birthday present on his way back from work..."no soft toys" my mother shouted as he left for work that morning. Of course my sister got a huge old English sheep dog (soft toy), but he also had something for me. I was just five at the time, and ripping the package open on my Woollies fishing kit I couldn't wait to get out and use it. "3lb line, size 20 hook-to-nylon and a quarter pint of mixed maggots" that was my shopping list to collect from the local hardware store, to collect before the cake was cut. Like many others before and since my first fishing session was on the local canal, and to fit with tradition my first fish was a Perch. It's funny how almost thirty years on and I still remember it as though it was yesterday. Over the coming years I progressed on to larger fish, mostly Carp then Pike, with a few decent Tench and Bream along the way.

And then I quit.... the early 90's saw the introduction of the commercial fishery, and I hated them with a passion. I was probably blinkered in that I expected all fisheries to end up the same. So I gave the gear away, gave all the books away (would be worth hundreds now!) binned the photos and vowed never to fish again. How wrong I was! 2002 saw me back on the bank, by myself initially and then shortly after with my young son. I fished for carp a little and tench and bream a little and Pike a lot. So much so that I decided to concentrate on angling for Predators, this is easy, Pike during the winter, mixed in with a little Perch and Zander fishing. But what do I do during the Summer? Don't mind the odd trip for the cats, but not all summer it's too bloody expensive.

What about Eels? Well my Dad used to fish for Eels a lot back in the 60's but it was not something I'd ever done, sure I'd caught the odd boot when fishing for other species, but I'd never intentionally caught an Eel. Mind made up, Eel fishing it was to be. And a lot of learning is to follow.

As a member of the Specialist Anglers Alliance and the Pike Anglers' Club, I'd heard of the National Anguilla Club, but information on Eel fishing or the club was not easy to find. Thankfully one of my posts asking for a nod in the right direction on an internet forum was answered by Kevin, and I found the old website and forum. Time is always tight when your working, fishing and trying to keep the family happy, so I offered to help out with the site. I'd built a few websites in the past for other people and currently run PredatorAngling.co.uk. unfortunately things didn't work out and the old NAC site was taken down.

An e-mail to Mark Salt, about joining the NAC ended up with me putting some ideas together for a new NAC website. The whole point for me was that if someone wants to explore Eel fishing further, than what could be better than to do it with the oldest single species group the National Anguilla Club? So having spoken to Mark and exchanged loads of e-mails www.nationalanguillaclub.co.uk was launched on the 9th April 2008. It's been an interesting time assembling the info and hopefully putting it all in an easy to use/read format. And I owe a debt of gratitude to all of the committee and members for

their hard work in making the website possible and the warm welcome I've received since joining the club....

www.NationalAnguillaClub.co.uk

Okay so the website is live, but what's it all about?

Essentially the website is our shop window to the outside world, at least the internet using outside world. There are sections on the Eel, Tackle for Eel fishing, rigs, NAC news, Event's including Fish-in's and reports. And a Gallery. Eelfishing.co.uk have kindly allowed us to link into their forum which is great for bouncing ideas off the eel fishing community.

But the websites a fluid thing, If there's anything else that the members would like to see on the site then please let us know. If you have any photo's that you'd like to see in the gallery send them in, likewise if you have any other material that you'd like to send in for possible inclusion then feel free to send it in.

One thing that we would all like to know is what do you think? Your feedback good or bad means a lot to us, so have a look and let me know.

The committee would also appreciate it if you could let others know about the existence of the site, which hopefully will attract a few more members. So If you're a regular on the various forums, please give the site a mention.

I look forward to meeting you all at a fish-in soon.

Dave Smith – Internet Officer.

webmaster@nationalanguillaclub.co.uk. 🍷

The National Anguilla Club
The Eel Specialists

Zandavan.co.uk
Home of the Rollover

• Home • • About • • Contacts • • News • • The Eel • • Articles • • Gallery • • Products •

The NAC
About
Committee
Constitution
Regions
Events
Join
Products

News
Website Updates
NAC News
Regional News

Eel Fishing
The Eel
Handling
Tackle
Rigs & Tips
Baits

Features
Articles
Top 50 List
Gallery
Forum (Eelfishing.co.uk)

To Subscribe To Our Newsletter
Enter Your E-mail

Subscribe to Newsletter

THE GUNGE PAGES

BY

"THE MOLE"



It's been a while but the mole is back with some old gunge and new.

Old news

Sent in by Nick Duffy

Angling Times cutting from the This Week in AT 10 Years Ago feature (dated Tues 31st May 2005). So that's 1995 then.

DEVASTATED angler Jason Morgan spent five hours trying to tame a huge carp, only to lose it at the net. The heartbroken angler, from Little Haywood in Staffs, slumped to the ground after a final lunge from the fish snapped 1lb hook length like cotton. He had started his tussle at 4pm during a session on a local farm. Nick Duffy says Knowing Jason the carp was about 2lb and it's the longest session Jason has ever fished. (5 Hours). The mole says Duffy is treading on dangerous ground as you will see when he sets himself up as an eel angling guide later in the gunge.

Apparently Kevin Huish went to the doctors about a wart on his forehead and had it removed (We think it contained his brain) On leaving he found that (or didn't find) his car was missing along with house keys spare car keys all his works keys plus works paper work that was inside. He rings Pat to ask what to do; she of course is the brains in the household and suggests contacting the police. Bearing in mind he is standing next to the police station. So after further instructions from Pat regarding NOT ringing pop superstar Sting but the local plod they put the incident on the national computer and alerted the whole of Great Britain to our Kev's predicament. Then he left the Ferndale police station and the desolate eel angler walked down the road about 30 yds and got into his car and went home. The twat had forgotten where he parked it. (His Brain was in that wart). Pat was given the job of telling the police it was found, luckily they had only got through half of the paper work. Also lucky for Kev the community work for wasting police time was working in the parks dept. (Kev is the gaffer there).

Anthony Jolley purchased a brand new NAC T Shirt and then did a night with the burglar Damien Wood. Damien had a Cup of coffee from Tony's flask and promptly put it down in a huge dog turd. In the Dark Anthony didn't see this and picked up the flask and nestled it on his stomach for 5 mins before pouring a cup himself. Then spent the night complaining of a shitty smell. Talk about keeping it in the family. Jimmy (if you will pardon the Pun) is shitting himself coz while Tony is giving it large about dog walkers and shit he remembers taking his two terriers down the canal and them depositing a load in the exact same spot. He doesn't know which one is responsible Jessie or Rosey. My guess it is the bugger named after Nick Rose.

Damien is also responsible for another smell orientated story. Apparently he constantly complained to Jimmy that he could smell piss. This is now understandable coz Jimmy spotted him having a slash (Why was he watching???) and pointed out to him that the belt cord on his camos was being saturated by urine and had been for the last few sessions. Good old Damien keeping up tradition and not washing his cloths for months.

Pete Waterfield complained that in the last gunge sent in by Mark Smethurst for a previous mag stated he was having a shit by the side of a canal while fishing and two lads on a canoe came past and spotted him with his kegs down was wrong. Apparently he got his rip cord (remember Damien's urine soaked rope/cord, can't they afford belts) caught in the zip on his bivvy and had to drop his trolley's so he could get to a run on

his rods. Now this is a good excuse and I apologize for defamation of his character re avin a shit. But what the hell was he doing shagging the zip door of his bivvy. These pie eaters have a lot to explain. At the Thorpe park fish-in Adam Pettit was seen modelling a new ultra cult fishing umbrella and Jason Morgan was caught with what he says is a float tube but it looks like a battery powered item from the Ann Summers range and if you look at the pained expression on his face in the photo it looks like he had just taken it out and it hurt.

Getting a bit up to date now and our new Secretary Mark Salt.

Apparently Barry met a guy at the NEC Go Fishing show who knew Mark years ago, he tells a story about our Mark having the usual southern flash car, a Lotus Élan. Nice car but hey it's a cheap Ferrari look alike just for those southern softies to entice Essex girls into bed. Us up north used to manage with dumper trucks and got the same results. Anyway he apparently went the whole flash hog and went for a compete rod (That's no JOINTS) and used to travel around fishing with these 12 foot one piece rods sticking out of his sun roof. Now call me old fashioned but even southern flash gits don't think this is a babe magnet do they. Any way he got stopped by the plod and was asked what he was doing, to which he replied going duck shooting officer? Bless him he showed a little bottle but was grovelling big style after 12 hours in the nick.

Speaking of the NEC show, Barry has sent in a few pages on his weekend (see Brummy Beer Monster article) and an interesting read it is. So I further investigated and I am going to have to come down on the side of reality hear, I know it unusual but the truth is funnier than the lies.

Yes Barry and Pete were at the NEC and yes they stayed at Nicks/Spikes house for free for three nights with food and board over the week/end. That's about it regarding the truth that Barry wrote. They rang and said they were coming after the first day and good Old Nick sorted them out with food and drink. They were well pissed and Barry let it slip that Pete the Anguilla Guerrilla the meanest man in town, the great unwashed, the consumer of illegal substances was on the wagon and "IN LOVE". This was confirmed by the many phone calls he received in the space of 3 hours (5 in fact). This is probably more than he has received all his life from a woman. Spike asked the obvious and said did he get on with her guide dog as well, but no she is of sound mind and not blind.

Anyway Spike proceeded to drink them under the table (Hard Bastard) and all credit to him until he said they were drinking the Stella and he was drinking Carling. Still its only 1% more and he did drink twice as many cans.

The next morning Spike woke them up with a hearty breakfast of tea and toast and after Barry had thrown up he sent them on their way to the NEC.

Spike was now in mega one-upmanship mode and went by local train to the show and found the bar. HmMMMM

Pete was doing as he was told by the lovely Rachel and not drinking and Barry was doing his best to impress the star anglers there to sell his Rollover alarms and DVD's. They both looked like death warmed up and I have got to be honest a real good advert for eel anglers. A few punters asked for Barry and Pete to sign the DVD's and also asked Nick as he was the obvious star of the show, (His words not mine, the twat) he declined of course.

The two sober salesmen were still not drinking but a plan was being hatched to sort the Brummie good n proper. On the way home they dropped into the local tackle shop and ERIC (not Derrick got that wrong Baz) was given the sales pitch with the bite alarms and DVD's. On exiting Eric asked Spike on the quiet, jeez they look haggard and drawn are they on drugs to which Spike replied Na they have been out drinking with me. The curry house loomed and Barry was still not drinking due to his booze induced dickey stomach. Pete had almost reverted back to the Pete of old by now ,as watching Nick enjoy a few beers all day had had its desired effect. He sat pissed, feeding the fish in the aquarium his left over curry, the waiters were not amused.

On getting back to Spikes house Barry had at last livened up a bit and had a tin and then another and while Pete was rolling a very suspicious roll/up, he was called yet again by the lovely Rachel. As he was aware we were both toting up the gunge he went outside and told her he loved her, (the patio door was open). Barry then finished off rolling the fag. He asked Spike did Pete add the Afghanistan weed and Nick said NO with a smirk on his face. So in it went but the trouble was it "had" been added and now it was made with pure black and white smelly animal (Sk--k). At this point they were wide eyed, giggling and falling asleep. Spike had won the battle and they looked like death yet again the next day. They spent another day trying to look fine in front of all the punters.

Did anyone read the Angling times dated 3rd July 2007 that had a double page spread on our very own Barry Mac In it was a description of him and I quote.

"His face has a weathered look The lines that extend from his eyes like rays in a child's sketch of the sun" (How poetic) "are numerous and deep, while his hair streaked grey, hangs randomly from beneath his battered cap. His lips are thin and colourless and his teeth, like his fingers are stained by nicotine". Also he states he only needs 3 to 4 hours sleep. He had just had another Night out with Spike maybe.

As for the sale of tackle, Spike ended up with £400 in his pocket on Sunday. No need to say anymore.

Believe which story you like but I know which one I do. This is fast becoming the Pete Drabble story but it seems that he is a changed man. This the original eel angling guerrilla, un shaven, un washed, drinking, substance using hard core man is no more. Barry says he has gone normal. Rachel has sorted him. Barry reports that on their next trip up to the wilds of Scotland, Pete was whistling Sheila's wheels all the way up and when he un packed his gear he had pink porridge and healthy sweetex instead of his usual 6 sugars in tea, he also found a bar of choc with "Missing You, I Love You" engraved on it. Bad enough you say but he had done the same choc bar for her. In his lovelorn state he forgot the stove so they had to cook on an open fire. He also forgot his phone (That's incredible considering she keeps in constant contact with him on it). So he had to rely on Barry's phone. Best mate Barry had his turned off. Barry just sat watching him squirm waiting for the call. Pete kept looking at his NEW glitzy watch from guess who, he has always hated watches and refused to wear one. Anyway he was pacing up and down waiting for a call on Barry's turned off phone, looking at his new watch and eventually he breaks and asked Barry if he can ring her on Barry's now discreetly turned on phone. On their second trip he makes no mistake and takes his phone, he also takes three rods but no reels Aaaaa. Isn't love Grand. Now up in Scotland where they are, they both have to wear all in one mozy suits coz the mozies and midges are into mass gang warfare. They have to drink and smoke through the mesh and sneak food under the mask very quickly. It is hard to explain how bad they are; even a square inch of bare skin will be hit by thousands of the buggers. Drinking through the veil was helpfully coz it sieved the tea as it was full of them. After 3 days there Pete was desperate to relieve his bowels. By the 5th day he was extending his bank stick to full so he would not have to bend and putting his bait runners on coz he could not bend down to set his indicators.

Mr Duffy has put himself forward as our "new member guardian and fishing guide"; he started off with Dave Smith, promising Dave he'd help him catch his First NAC Eel before the Yorks Fish-In. Now Dave in his short time in the club has become a very important member. He has set up the website and is now a major player in the bulletin team so when Duffy after 7 sessions on a local prolific lake had not been able to help Dave catch his first NAC eel, Spike god bless him offered to come along and show how it was done. He set up on a bank which Duffy had dismissed and knocked out two eels, both Duffy and Dave blanked. The next session together, the fish/in, Nick and Dave caught eels, small but still eels. All eels between 1 and 2lb are now referred to as Rosie's coz it's all he catches...

Duffy texts Spike and made the comment I feel such a knob, I am the worst angling guide ever. I am not going to try and teach or help anyone else. To which Spike replied "To be honest Mr Duffy you are a Knob". And they are mates. Spike says he ain't going on the lake again for fear of embarrassing Duffy.

But is that the reason or is he is mega embarrassed for himself. On arriving at the lake he shot under the barrier at toooo many miles an hour and his ladders on the roof of his van shot off like an Exocet behind him. The bloke following now has a brown driver's seat. The car park not only had Duffy and Dave in it watching but the whole of the Sandwell canoeing and swimming team plus spectators not to mention the local doggers! Spike says that he has been under that barrier hundreds of time without a problem. HmMMMM

Even Duffy's girl thinks he is shit (what at) and when Spike and Dave were on the fish-in he took her with him at her request and was able to fish 8 rods. He of course set up in Spikes swim. He made her fish for Tench though and says he caught a 4lb eel, but we think she did and didn't want ridicule him more so let him claim it.

Steve Gardner turned up at the Pottery pond fish-in and explained why he did little fishing last year. Apparently he snapped his Achilles tendon and was off work and fishing. He did the deed dancing to Madness at a stag do. I wonder if it was "One Step Beyond". What he didn't say was that given the choice of plaster he told the girl who turned out to be a friends daughter you choose, she plumbed for bright pink, He then went down to the Gay festival in Manchester with a pink leg. He would have pulled but his misses jumped in. This Gay Pride thing sounds a bit like the Mark Duffy affair in one of the old mags. (Yes there is another Duffy). He then proceeds to knock out a 6lb 4 oz eel and puts it in a PINK sack. He insists it was brown, but just look at the photo. Spike had a bait with-in 20 foot of his, the other side of an overhanging tree but the Eel chose Steve's bait. Spike is now in mega depression.

Still on the Pink thing Malc Law has had his photo taken with a nice eel of 5lb 9oz and taken well deserved stick on the forum for his pink top. There is a link to all this pink stuff and that is big eels. It started last year, when ordering T-shirts Spike asked Barry what colour he wanted, Barry said any colour so Spike ordered him a pink one. Has this started a trend? Watch out for a biggy from the travelling eel lads Barry and Pete. Spike has been seen on the last few trips trying to break this trend though, he has been wearing bright yellow NAC t/shirts.

Finally that is all the gunge that the mole has so if you want to gunge someone or yourself even please send to Spike/Nick your friendly Bulletin man who will pass it on to the Mole.

The truth is very important but so are lies.

Go for it Lads.

The Mole.



The Pink Ponce's Gallery!



Will Jane ever forgive Tarzan for pinching her new broolly? Or is he field testing the latest in Essex Camo?



Lucky Law modelling a pink top with his 5.09



Jason Morgan with a Float tube from the new Ann Summers catalogue.



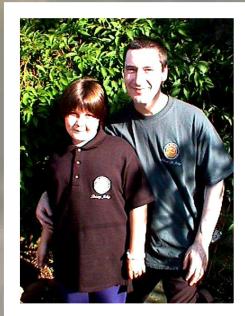
No it's not a duvet cover it's Steve Gardener with his Pink Sack.....

Exclusive N.A.C Product Range

From
The Products Officer

Mr Nick Rose, 131 Goosemoor Lane, Erdington, Birmingham B23 5QG.

Hooded Sweatshirts.....	price £18-50p	Plus postage of £2-20p
Sweatshirts.....	price £17-50p	Plus postage of £2-20p
Polo Shirts.....	price £15-00p	Plus postage of £1-20p
T Shirts.....	price £10-00p	Plus Postage of £1-20p



**Polo Shirt
&
T Shirt**



**Hooded
Sweatshirt**

SIZES ARE.....	MED	LRG	X LRG	XXLRG
CHEST SIZE.....	44	47	50	52

You can even have your name or nick-name embroidered on under the club badge at an extra cost of £3.00

Colours available are, Black, Bottle Green, Grey, Red and Burgundy.
(Or if you want any other colour, just give me a ring on 0121 3736082)

Other products include:-

Woolly Hats.....	price £6.50	Plus Postage of 50p
Cloth Badges.....	price £4.65	Plus Postage of 26p
Car Stickers.....	price £2.00	Plus Postage of 26p
Enamel Club Badge.....	price £3.00	Plus Postage of 26p
Enamel Eel Badge.....	price £3.00	Plus Postage of 26p

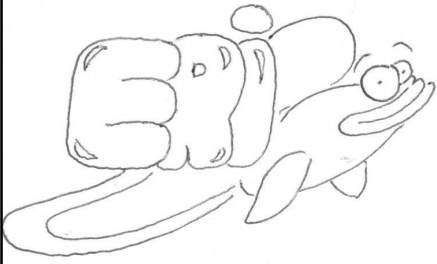


Enamel Club



Enamel Eel Badge

**** When ordering, please state Size, Colour and any Extras on the order you send with a cheque for the **full amount, plus postage**. No order will be processed without written confirmation plus a cheque for the full amount payable (a waiting period may be experienced due to the manufacturer needing a minimum of 6 items to process an order. I shall advise when orders are sent to me as to the time period before processing can commence). Please don't forget, any spelling mistakes on your behalf **CAN NOT** be rectified after the garment as been embroidered , as it can not be un-picked. ****



***The Dyson Rig Is Tangle
Free... But Nobody Told
Eric The Eel!***

