Grafham Water Fly Fishers Association
November 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to our November Newsletter

There was no fish of the month for September, but wow has October changed that. It's been a month of some great fish with the eventual winner being a beautiful Rainbow of 7lb 5oz caught by Dayood Sheik. Also, there were some other great fish. Neil Walker had a cracking 6lb 3oz Rainbow on a dry black daddy longlegs, Alex Green a great 6lb 6oz Rainbow on a Fab off the bank, and a second over 6lb on a Gimp, and a good number over 5lb all at G Buoy. Andy Linwood caught a couple of 5lb plus fish off DWP. And I am sure others have caught great fish too; it's certainly been some of the best fishing off the banks in recent years. If you have not ventured out on the banks yet do give it a go as now is the time to pick up a real specimen.

Captains Report

September and October have been busy months with a number of club matches and social days.

The final Boat match of the year, supported by SelectaFly, was held on the 8th September and 16 rods fished. 56 fish were caught at a rod average of 3.5. Top boat was Christopher Faulkner, 9 fish (top rod) and Simon Charter 7 fish who found the method and fished Rectory Bay all day - a coral booby and red diawl bach being the best flies. The lovely box of flies from SelectaFly was won by Norman Rushton.

The 2nd Bank Match was held on 29th September when 11 rods fished and 65 fish were caught – all from the north shore. It proved a very productive days fishing with mostly stockies being caught but Frank Daley, the match winner took a different approach at Pylon Point fishing minkies and has a fantastic bag of 17lb 4oz with a 3lb 11oz fish being the best fish of the day. A booby prize was also awarded on the day to Johan Dreyer as the only rod who failed to catch the 6 fish limit!! The day was supported by Craig Barr and Flash Attack Flies with some members receiving some useful items and Colin Best winning a great box of flies.

Finally, we held the final social day of the year on the 8th October with 16 rods fishing. The conditions were cold and bright in the morning and in the afternoon flat calm, the fishing surprisingly quiet given how well it had been fishing. Stuart came good in the afternoon landing 6 and losing twice that many. Stuart anchored up off G Bouy once the bank angler left and had fish rising all round them! Terry Green got off to a good start with 4 in the morning but only 1 in the afternoon. Neil Walker had a cracking 6lb 03 oz Rainbow on a dry black daddy longlegs.

Overall, it's been a great season so far for matches and social days with excellent turn outs and the weather being kind ensuring good fishing on all days - very different from the windy days of 2023. Thank you for all the positive feedback and to all of you who have attended the events.

Christopher

GWFFA 3rd Boat Match 8th September

3rd Boat Match – getting ready for the off

GWFFA 2nd Bank Match 29th September

Johan, Steve & Top Rod Frank Daley with Bag of 17lb 4oz

GWFFA Social Boat Day

13th October and Neil Walker's fantastic 6lb 03oz Rainbow.

GWFFA - GAIA Hosted Day 21st September 2024

On the 21st September GWFFA hosted a days fishing with GAIA, The Game Anglers Instructors Association, with the aim of providing some professional development to the country's leading fly fishing instructors association. 7 GWFFA members shared a boat with 7 GAIA members following a breakfast Bap and an introduction to Loch Style fishing given by Chri Bobby. The day was a great day for fishing with cloud cover and a light breeze and we were rewarded with every rod catching fish with a couple over 5lbs to cap the day.

The attached article was published in the autumn "Leader" the GAIA quarterly publication.

We plan to repeat the event next year and hope to grow it as we also benefitted with some getting much appreciated tips and coaching on our casting.

"Giddy with anticipation we gathered by the gritty shoreline."

I found myself visited by the muse on the drive home.

The A14 has that effect on me-anything to provide distraction from its tedium. It seemed a good idea at the time.

"The gods had granted us a gift: a day afloat on Grafham; good cloud cover, generous hosts, gregarious GWFFA guys partnering up with garrulous GAIA geezers, the promise of a good-humoured day.

Giddy with anticipation we gathered by the gritty shoreline, we cast aside geriatric niggles. Our generous hosts graciously gave of their time and guile, offering guidance and germane advice in a genial, gentlemanly manner. A great day out beckoned.

The gamesome gang got aboard, gliding over the griseous waters, gadding about searching for fish, G-Buoy glistening in the distance.

Graceful arcs were drawn, flies were guzzled, gut-wrenching moments followed as glittering fish threw gleaming droplets of spray, graphic moments etched on memory.

The morning guttered to a close: stomachs growled, pairs of anglers gyred toward the Lodge, grateful for a for a gustatory interlude.

Gourmands groaned as Greene King, Old Golden Hen, and Maldon Gold beers were glugged, washing down giant pork pie with gooseberry chutney garnish.

And then we go again, back out on the water until the gloaming and marina light beckons us in at the end of a gratifying, often gruelling, but grand day out."

It's ultimately satisfying how the germ of an idea can develop and bear fruit. Christopher Faulkner (with both his GAIA and GWFFA Captain's hats on) and I had pushed this idea around back in January at the Easter Region pike fishing social (it's still 'fishing' from my point of view, three iterations and only two tentative pulls to show for my efforts to date).

Grafham Water Fly Fishers' Association hosts 'social' sessions for anglers who want to get to grips with the somewhat daunting expanse of these 1500 acres. Putting GAIA and GWFFA members in one boat was an opportunity too good to miss. After comparing various diaries and lists of commitments we settled on 21 September, a usually productive time as you enter that shrimp and fry-bashing time of the season.

We had coffee and bacon rolls to lay a foundation for the day. Then an excellent informative briefing from Christopher and Chris Bobby (manager and team coach of the England Ladies Fly Fishing team) covering likely tactics, flies and tackle set up. We had a wealth of knowledge to draw on and prepare us for the day ahead. Our party

GAIA

presented an interestingly mixed bag of novice and more the experienced: Christopher and I had put some thought into the pairings before the event so that there was a good match of needs and resources. Everyone caught fish: the biggest two fell to Steve Cracknell (4lb 9oz), my GWFFA partner for the day and to GAIA member Paul Hughes (5lb 5oz), both cracking grown-on fully-finned specimens.

The day unfolded along the (admittedly, dreadfully prolix) lines above: the weather cooperated by sending a thunderstorm round us to the south and providing a good breeze. This was a thoroughly enjoyable, informative and productive day that was appreciated by all. Everyday can be an opportunity to learn, whether through novelty or a more focussed examination of technique, and today ticked a number of boxes on the CPD list.

My thanks to the Christophers F and B and all of the GWFFA team who helped on the day and made it the success it was.

We'll be discussing it again at or before the next January outing (maybe I'll catch a pike this time?) and certainly we will aim do it again next year.

GWFFA Launches a New Fly-Tying Competition

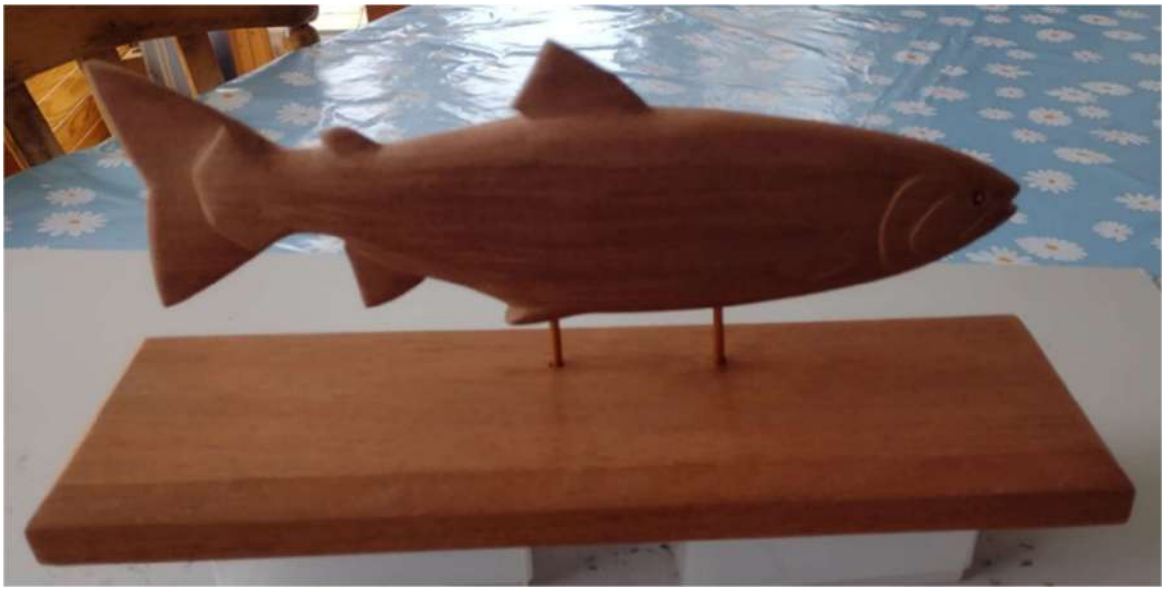
As we draw the 2024 year to a close, we are launching a new competition for members. The Robertson Trophy for the club's best fly tier. The trophy has been donated by member Alan Robertson who so kindly donated all his boxes and boxes of fly-tying equipment to the club earlier in 2024 and from the money raised we have commissioned Stuart Stenning-White to create a trophy to be awarded annually.

There will be two classes - Beginner, for those who have been tying flies for less than 3 years and Open for anyone. The Trophy will be for the Open Class. The competition will be launched at the end of November and the judging will be undertaken in February 2025 with the decision announced at the end of February – exact dates and details to follow. It will be 3 examples of 3 flies, nominated by our head judge, Roger Hurren.

We hope that as many members as possible will enter this new event and we look forward to seeing the entries and announcing our first GWFFA Robertson Trophy Winner as well as our top beginner.

Christopher

The Robertson Fly Tying Trophy in preparation by the very skilled Stuart Stenning White



Winter Programme

We kick off the winter programme this year on Tuesday 12th November with a fly tying and social evening. A great way to catch up with and meet members plus pick up a few tips on the fly's that have been working well.

On Tuesday 26th November we are delighted to welcome Gareth Jones of Airflo who will come and talk to us about some of the key products and developments.

The evenings are held at the fishing lodge, doors open for 07.30pm for a prompt start at 8pm. Cost to members is £3.00 on the door which includes chips at half time and a free entry to the raffle. Non-members are welcome but at a higher entrance fee of £5.00.

Up and Coming Events

GWFFA Activities 2024				
DATE	DAY	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER/SUBJECT
12-Nov-24	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	Fly Tying & Social Evening
26-Nov-24	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	Gareth Jones - Airflo
01-Dec-24	Sunday	Winter Plate	Grafham	C Faulkner
10-Dec-24	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	TBC
14-Jan-25	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	TBC
28-Jan-25	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	TBC
11-Feb-25	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	TBC
25-Feb-25	Tuesday	Winter Evening	Harbour View Restaurant	Anglian Water Review & Fly Tying

Bank Clearance

We made an earlier than usual start this year with the bank clearance, given the growing conditions it has been just as well as there has been plenty to do and still is a lot to clear. The water levels which started to drop now seem to be back on the rise again, so it becomes even more important to keep on top of the banks. If left the self-set willows in no time become large and then trees and another section of bank is lost.

We are working our way round the reservoir. So far we have cleared Pylon Point and bank, Deep Water Point, The Willows, G Marker and we are half way through clearing the Lodge Bank.

We also have work underway which has not yet been completed. The car park for the Seat has been cleared and all the materials to surface the car park have been purchased by Anglian Water, the site now needs to be levelled with a JCB before the matting can be laid.

Anglian Water have replaced the bridge at Wyndham's Way. This leads from Plummer car park round to Sludge Point and the Seat. It is very overgrown though and will require a fair bit of work to clear it. We are for the moment prioritising our work to more popular fishing areas.

If you have not yet joined us for one of the working parties, please do give it a try. We work every other Monday. Meet by 09.30am and wrap up for 1pm. Apart from a bit of light exercise it is also a great way of meeting fellow members and getting to know the fishery better. You can even bring a rod with you and have a fish before or afterwards. There is also FOC boat voucher for every 4 sessions completed plus a bacon sandwich and cup of coffee for lunch.

Some picture of our recent efforts.

A well-earned Sit down after the morning's efforts clearing the Lodge bank

Next Bank Clearance Sessions

Mon 18th Nov	Mon 2nd Dec	Mon 16th Dec	Mon 6th Jan	Mon 20th Jan	Mon 3rd Feb	Mon 17th Feb	Mon 24th Feb

Newsletter Articles

We are always interested to have member contributions to the Newsletter. If you have tips to share or would like to see certain topics covered in the newsletter, please let me know. All contributions gratefully received.

Mark Brinkman

Editor.

The GWFFA Committee

Below contact details and committee roles.

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