

Newsletter of the Southdown Angling Association

January 2019

IMPORTANT NOTICES

AGM

Our 22nd Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 7th February 2019 at the Fishermen's Club, Royal Parade, Eastbourne, commencing at 8.00pm. We will be downstairs in the ballroom. Please come along and support those that manage the club on your behalf. The AGM is also your chance to hear about what happens behind the scenes of our club and to voice ideas for the club to consider, your views count! The AGM agenda is attached.

As you would expect the AGM is when we elect / reselect the officers of SAA and in this respect we do have a burning need a new Club Secretary. The position has been vacant for a year now and an extra pair of hands would be greatly welcome. If you have experience of this sort of job, perhaps in a work role or other organisation please get in touch you will be made very welcome. It obviously requires a commitment of your time and energy. Ideally it is suited to a retired person, or someone with sufficient spare time to carry out some of the necessary club duties without which SAA cannot properly function. Typical duties would include:

- Arranging and attending committee meetings;
- Assist with the preparation and production of club literature;
- Liaising with members and landowners as required; and
- Managing Exchange Permits with other clubs.

If you are interested and want to find out more, please contact the Treasurer.

Communications

We obviously need to contact you from time to time, sometimes quite urgently should we need to close waters for example. Going forwards, we are not going to be sending out letters or newsletters etc. by post (except by exception) as it is too time consuming and costly. Instead we are going to make greater use of our website and hopefully other media as follows:

1. Our newsletters and other notices will be posted on
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our website. Please make an effort to check-in from time to time at our website www.southdownaa.co.uk;

2. We are going to sign-up to an on-line membership website that will manage member contact details and automatically issue newsletters and other communications. This may also be developed to collect membership subscriptions in the same way as on-line purchases are made. You will be asked to register and check/update your details in due course; and
3. We are going to use social media to alert you to important messages on our website. Details to follow. You will need to subscribe in the usual way.

These are quite a few important changes that need to happen to minimise the effort and cost of administering club matters. Please support these initiatives when asked.

OTHER STUFF – STILL IMPORTANT!

Water Sharing – River Cuckmere at Shermans Bridge

Beginning from the start of the new river fishing season in June 2019, we will be sharing this water with both the Seaford Angling Club and PACES. We have shared this water previously with Seaford. You may therefore see some unfamiliar faces on the water next year. Please make our water share partners welcome.

Floating Pennywort in the Cuckmere at Michelham Priory

We are indebted to Edward Randle for bringing this to our attention. Back in October Ed contacted us to say that he made the first sighting of "Floating Pennywort" at Michelham on the River Cuckmere. He had contacted the Environment Agency, who have known about the plant in the priory for some months. Apparently EA said that they were making a decision on what to do about it. We know from instances on the Pevensey Marshes that it isn't an easy fix.

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Floating pennywort forms dense mats that can affect oxygen levels in the water, crowd and kill off native wildlife, and damage habitat. It can become so prolific that anglers and others can't use the waterway, and it even clogs sluices, weirs and drains, potentially increasing flood risk.

The plant is notoriously difficult to control – it can grow up to 25cm a day in the right conditions and even a small fragment can re-grow into a new plant.

Obviously, if it is allowed to spread, it will get everywhere downstream from the priory that would be disastrous. So, if you see any of it on the Cuckmere, please report it to the Environment Agency and SAA. The following guidance is taken from www.gov.uk and includes top tips on preventing the spread of floating pennywort:

- Learn what to look out for, this is a picture of it at the priory provided by Ed (centre to right);



- Check yourself, your clothing, and any equipment that has been on or in the water, including nets;

- Thoroughly clean and remove any suspected specimens, leaving them at the site where they came from – preferably out of the water and on the banks;
- Report sightings to the Environment Agency's 24/7 hotline: 0800 80 70 60; and
- Dry your equipment thoroughly and well before using it again.

Please be vigilant.

Angling Trust Riverfest and our Pat Newman

Some of his real friends say that long standing member Pat Newman is an unlucky bloke when it comes to fishing. Other people think he's lucky full stop. The Editor of this Newsletter knows he is a very good wily angler who knows his stuff. Anyway, everyone would have to agree he was unlucky when he competed in the Riverfest qualifying match on the River Thames in September.

Unbelievably, Pat caught 145lbs of netbusting big bream but only came second and didn't qualify for the final! That's tough. Well done Pat anyway and we hope you go one better next time.

News reaches us that when Monkey (see July 2018 newsletter) heard about this, he had tears streaming from both eyes☺☺☺

Club Match Corner – Review of 2018 by Chris Copeland

During the dark days of Winter it's good to reflect on the gorgeous summer we enjoyed which lasted all the way into September. Although temperatures were roasting with very little in the way of rainfall resulting in low water levels, the fishing was surprisingly good.

Memorable moments in the match calendar including an impressive Evening Cup match in June at Pevensey Haven. The two and a half hour match being won by Steve Hills with a super mixed bag of roach, rudd and skimmers for a weight of 11lbs 2oz all caught using a pole with big maggot bait.

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In July, Chris Copeland won the Roger Weston Memorial cup match on the Wallers Haven at Middle Bridge. Chris used a waggler with maggot on the hook to land 20lbs 3oz of bream and skimmers, see picture below.



The good weights continued into August. The Roy Andrews Memorial Cup was won by Steve Izzard at Marle Green, using a method feeder and alternating between meat and corn as bait. Steve caught 5 carp for a winning weight of 21lbs 1oz.

Meanwhile on the Raylands stretch in the Cuckmere Cup

first round Rod Brown romped home with 11lbs 15oz consisting of a bream plus some quality roach caught using a pole and maggot.

In September Rod's brother Tony Brown (known affectionately as "the Machine") showed everyone the way home in a match against Isfield, Lewes, Hassocks, Haywards Heath and Horsted Keynes. The match being held both upstream and downstream at Ironbridge. Tony's winning weight of skimmers and roach was 8lbs 15oz.

Sadly however once the good summer weather slipped over the horizon it seems the quality match fishing disappeared too!

Into October November and December even the upstream section of the Wallers Haven at Ironbridge has disappointed with some recent matches won with just ounces.

It would seem the main reason being no consistency in the weather, very cold for several days then heavy rain for a day or two. Let's hope for more settled conditions in to 2019.

It's pleasing to say that the regular number of Southdown match anglers has been increased with the recent arrivals of Wayne Hart, Phil Tichbon and John Ash. All have done well in recent matches fished and it's great to have you guys fishing our competitions.

If you would like to join in with our Southdown matches you'd be made most welcome. We hold them on almost every Sunday throughout the year and also have 7 Monday evening matches in the height of summer.

Full match details can be found on the website or in your club card. Results are put up on our website too www.southdownaa.co.uk.

Hope to see you soon!

Chris

Water Maintenance

Firstly an apology. The plan to clear more swims on the Cuckmere downstream from Raylands (west bank) is currently on hold. We are still trying to arrange a meeting with the land owner and tenant farmer (provisionally arranged for the Spring when the weather is warmer) to both establish the extent of our water and to seek co-operation in leaving a field margin to help with access. We are striving to get this resolved before the start of the new season and please view the website for developments.

The hot, dry summer did us a favour restricting weed growth and most of our waters have been in pretty good shape. We are aware that floating pennywort is making more of a presence on the Pevensey Haven and will monitor this closely, see separate item on the Cuckmere too.

A big Thank You from the water maintenance officers to all those who attended the various working parties; your help is very much appreciated. We do have provisional dates for 2019 working parties which comprise the following: -

April 14th Curls Farm

April 28th Marle Green

May 12th Wallers Iron Bridge

May 26th Pevensey Haven

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A usual start time of 9.00am and finish around lunchtime will apply and confirmation of these working parties will be provided nearer the time on the website.

Big Fish Angling

We are indebted to Clive Copeland for providing this piece that illustrates how our waters hold some remarkably large fish. Thanks Clive.

As usual, most association rivers have produced good numbers of Tench this season. Early morning sessions generally being the most productive which was probably to be expected, given the high temperatures and low water levels experienced throughout most of this summer.

A 6lb Tench caught at Middle Bridge on June 16th.



By all accounts the Pike Fishing has been rather challenging this winter, especially on the Wallers Haven although fish are being caught by both lure anglers and on dead baits, when river conditions permit.

Members are reminded that fish welfare is paramount when pike fishing and are asked to ensure that appropriate forceps, unhooking mat and landing net are carried when fishing for these large and delicate fish.



Interestingly, these traditionally summer fish can be caught all year round on association waters.

On mild winter days Tench do show on Wallers Haven with some being caught in competitions, and to association members willing to put the time in to target them.

The picture below is of a 4lb 12oz Tench caught on New Years Eve at Iron Bridge, on a 10 mm boilie.



A low double from Middle Bridge.

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JOLLY STUFF – JUST FOR A LAUGH

Monkey goes fishing again

Following negative feedback on the 'Ask Monkey' feature in our last newsletter we decided to send Monkey to some of the club competitions to do some proper investigative journalism. After meeting up with several Reverend James in the May Garland, he posted this frank piece.....



- That Steve Izzard catches a load of fish. He only uses a bait called a chocolate orange "woofter" (I think you mean waffer, Ed). Monkey was not sure whether to sniff it, eat it or cook with it. Judging by his results it's working so keep woofing Steve ☺;
- Monkey was startled by the sound of canon fire on the Pevensy Marshes. He thought it was the Royal Gun Salute. It turns out it was Pete Stradwick balling it in!; (ouch Ed);
- Mrs Brown's boys (Florence and the "Machine") have been at it again, showing the way on the Cuckmere at Raylands. Heard they were fishing the same swim but from opposite banks – cheeky monkeys!; and

CAPTION COMPETITION

Before we close on this newsletter, we thought we would offer members the chance to win an exciting prize in our caption competition! Strictly open to SAA members only, this photo shows two of our finest committee members in full male "model" pose and Drennan regalia. Taken just before the draw for the first round of the Xmas Competition on the Pevensy Haven, these guys are in deep tactical discussion, or are they? Send your entries to our webmaster at captioncomp.saa@onlykidding.com:

The best suggestions, judged by a panel of leading industry experts, will receive beer tokens for the Bull's Head at Boreham Street. Suggestions received so far are:

Does my bum look big in this?

Well Freddie, what time have you got to be at Lilo Lils?
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- At one of his rare visits to club matches Michael Wood was heard to shout "fish on" at 3.00 pm followed by "fish off" at 2 minutes past. Elusive fish these Tench. Apparently everyone laughed afterwards....except for Michael☺☺ Monkey says Michael should get out more.

More from Monkey another time. He is thinking of launching his own weekly podcast. Someone needs to tell him its nothing to do with feeder fishing.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

If you have some newsworthy items, photos, funny or serious stories etc. please send them to adminforsaa@btinternet.com and we will consider them for the next issue. We are particularly pleased to receive your photographs.

STOP PRESS – CURL'S FARM RIPE

This is a very popular water for people who like fishing for carp. It has changed ownership recently and this more or less coincided with the end of our current agreement for the fishing rights that the new owner honoured. We are pleased to announce that we have agreed headline terms for a new 10-year agreement for the fishing rights. This is great news for the Association.



Is there a chip shop nearby Peter (left), coz I smell batter (who got battered??, Ed);

Does Peter Drennan know his sponsorship programme is out of control?

Well Michael (right), I think it's going to be a tench day. If you get one, don't let it go (that's well below the belt Ed)

Bye for now, SAA