

## NWWAC

### Stillwater Report - October 21<sup>st</sup> 2017

#### Rutland Water

##### Ergasilus sieboldi (Gill Maggot)

Since the beginning of the 2017 season in March, e.sieboldi has been present, mainly in the overwintered rainbows, which have had maximum exposure. This may well account for the minimal number of larger Rainbows captured since May. Early stock fish have gradually been infected. One of the main results of this infestation, is that, according to the report produced by Stirling University in 2008, it tends to cause a loss of appetite. This may well account the absence of feeding fish in the margins which, with a few exceptions, has characterised the bank fishing over the last four months. Nature has shown that it is safer for the fish to remain in the centre of the lake and relatively safe from predators in their debilitated condition. Recent stock fish have shown an inclination to become infected but, as the Tildesley thesis suggests, to a lesser degree than the overwintered fish due to the reduced exposure.

It has been shown that e.sieboldi can overwinter given mild conditions.

This absence of fish in the margins has led to a considerable loss of footfall on the banks with the consequent reduced income from day tickets for Anglian Water.

With the fish remaining offshore, the boat fishing has been good which has helped boost income and provided good match returns. This has mainly been with attractor lures in various bright colours with the same approach as would be offered to migratory fish not normally feeding in freshwater.

The Brown Trout appear to be ok and feeding normally.

The previous survey by Stirling University in 2008 showed a decline in e.sieboldi over a period of about 20 months.

Anglian Water are investigating ways of dealing with this problem.

For further information, the hyperlink is given below.

<https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwjW3Nn9ysDWAhXhKcAKHdPfDq8QFggmMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fdspace.stir.ac.uk%2Fbitstream%2F1893%2F1261%2F1%2FTildesley%2520Thesis%2520complete.pdf&usg=AFQjCNH5wXUo3lrzk2MIHP2qYbnOACwJ1A>

### Aerators (“Boils”)

During the period covered by this report, the diffusers have been off. This has allowed the fish to spread out. However, fish were seen to congregate around the pumping inlet in the centre of the South arm. Fortunately, there were no prolonged periods of hot weather which could have led to stratification problems.

### Water level

This winter, the water may well remain at a reduced level while work is carried out on the existing pumping regime and refurbishment of the pipe work serving the reservoir. This lower water level will offer a “beach” below the rock armour which should benefit anglers during the winter period.

### Rock Armour - Fishing Access

The abovementioned reduction in the water level should enable work to be carried out on improving access down the rock armour for fishing.

The proposal is to carry out some test runs in Stocky Bay next to Sykes Lane. This will enable the contractors and Anglian Water to calculate how much material is likely to be needed to carry out work at the other proposed 50 access points. It is hoped to commence operations on this prior to the land becoming saturated by rainfall and possibly inhibiting access to the water edge.

### Weed beds.

Unfortunately, this season *Elodea Canadensis* has been absent from the margins as it would appear to be at the end of its five-year cycle. Next season the new growth will hopefully recommence and will reach a peak probably in 2021. This absence of *E. Canadensis* is unfortunate for bank anglers as this is what attracts the fish to feed on small fry including sticklebacks and roach fry and corixa which depend on these weed beds for cover. The only vegetation available is *Cladophora* (blanket weed) which harbours corixa and snails.

### *Dikerogammarus Haemobaphes* (Demon shrimp).

This flourished briefly in early June and featured in the trout’s diet at the time.

Water Aid.

Rutland Water Fly Fishers again provided volunteer boatmen for this event, which unfortunately, was not so well supported as in previous years. Despite this, £5000 was raised from the event taking the total to well over £200,000. John Wadham RWFF President, has been invited to discuss the matter at the head office of Anglian Water Services in Peterborough to offer suggestions for the future management of the event.

“Big” Dave’s Open Week End August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> 2017

This was a spectacularly successful event being the brainchild of Dave Porter one of the Rutland Water Fly Fishers committee members. It attracted anglers and families interested fishing from all walks of life and all ages. Thanks are due to Anglian Water for providing fishing boats free of charge. We were overwhelmed this year. So, this event will be planned on a rather larger scale 2018 and RWFF hope to attract even more members of the public. This will increase the need for volunteer boatmen. Details will be published in the Anglian Water’s “Hooked” magazine.

Rutland Water Fly Fishers - Monthly Bank Meets.

These have also proved very popular in getting a lot of young people and, just as importantly, whole families including mums and dads into the sport. They are open to all and fishing is available at no cost. Again, thanks to Anglian Water for their support.

Winter Bank Fishing Restrictions.

There have been numerous requests from anglers for access to the considerably large sections of the bank at Rutland Water. These are at present closed from November and March inclusive. Correspondence has been entered into with Anglian Water staff and a meeting is proposed to discuss the matter further with a representative from Natural England.

### **Grafham Water.**

This reservoir has remained at top level throughout the season. This has one advantage in that the stony banks don't become too coloured during strong winds. It also has one disadvantage, in that a lot of the bank, now tree-lined, is not accessible due to bankside growth: thus considerably limiting fishing areas except by wading.

Mid-season bank fishing was quite slow, particularly in June: but the boat fishing has been of high quality throughout.

Bank angling has been tough at times with winds blowing algal blooms into the bays and against the dam.

However, recently, with the reactivation of the shrimp population, the bank angling has picked up. The majority of shore caught fish are feeding on them. Good shrimp areas have been around any weed beds, rocky areas and the dam.

Boat angling is still producing plenty of fish with long drifts through open water being more successful than anchoring.

### **Predator fishing**

There have been a few predators showing recently, particularly around Savages and amongst the weed beds. A 17lb Zander has been taken on a tube fly. This specimen was in very good condition and was quite an achievement to have taken a fish like this on a fly rod. Good numbers of Zander are about, with a lot of small specimens, although a number in the 7-8lb bracket have been reported and there have been Perch over 2lb.

Grafham Zander appear to be in a league of their own and are potential record breakers.

Pike have been reported to 21lb. Paul Gardner took a fish just over the 20lb mark.

### **Bio-security.**

Anglian Water continue to enforce the biosecurity measures under the "Check, Clean & Dry" policy.