

NWWAC - Stillwater Report April 2018

Water Level.

On 1 April the Rutland water level was 9 inches below top which equates to approximately 92% capacity. Following persistent heavy rain at the end of March and early April, the water level is gradually rising due to input from surrounding land and recent pumping from source rivers.

Water Temp.

On opening day, March 9th, water temperature in the margins was 2.5° C. This is the lowest recorded since 1986. However, this did not appear to impact fishing which got off to a good start.

(Eye Brook reservoir suffered some of very large input of coloured surface water which rendered fishing almost impossible due to suspended solids.)

Fishing – Rutland Water

The rod average on opening day was 4 fish per rod..

A number of over-wintered Browns have shown up. Season ticket holder Mick Connor returned a superb 7lb 12oz fish off the shoreline. Rob Keeber returned good quality 5lb plus fish.

Toff Crowther braved a biting east wind last Monday and took the biggest rainbow of the season so far at 5lb 5oz from the bank at Sykes Lane.

Despite the cold water, the stock fish been well within range of the bank angler and have been grazing on shrimp and chironomid in the rock armour.

Since this was installed, even in quite a strong wind, the water remained clear in the margins which has helped prevent blanketing of the lake bed within range of the angler.

Considerable discolouration of the water at the head of both arms has limited boat fishing in these areas which are normally very productive. With the remarkable survival of the 2017 stock, prospects look good for the 2018 season.

Rutland Brown Trout.

These continue to be of world quality. However, with such depressed water temperatures they have not shown up in any numbers this early in the season.

Ergasilus.

Unfortunately, many of the overwintered stock fish are exhibiting signs of this pest. It would appear that last year's stock fish have survived the winter remarkably well. They have gained little weight but are showing signs of feeding on two species of shrimp-Hemimysis anomala ("Pink" shrimp) and Ergasilus Haemobaphes ("Demon" shrimp) and chironomid species (bloodworms).



In order to offset the impact of this pest, 25% more stock fish have introduced into the existing cold water while the organism is non-productive.

In order to reduce the impact of ergasilus on the fishery it is proposed to keep stocking to a minimum when the water temperature reaches 18° C: this being the peak of Ergasilus activity.

The Senior Ranger suggested that, in order to curtail it's spread, badly infested fish should be killed.

It was however, a little worrying that a recently caught overwintered Brown trout had been found to be infested. This is the only recorded example of this at Rutland: but the situation will be monitored.

Stocking.

The stock fish introduced for the 2018 season are of excellent quality and sizes ranged up to 1.5 kg.

The projected total number of fish is 76,000 with a proportion of these in the 1.5 kg (3lb) category.

C&R.

It is pleasing to note that Anglian Water in their recent of edition of hooked magazine outlined the procedure for safe catch and release RWFF activities. The introduction of more stock fish this season has led to an increase in the number of anglers catching and returning large numbers of fish up to 50 in a session. I have entered into correspondence with Anglian Water regarding this and requesting that a limit be imposed under the title “eight fish and move” and that robust enforcement of the barbless hook rule be implemented. AW said that this would be hard to enforce but promised to improve communication with anglers re. this.

AW have suggested that implementation of reservoir rules could be more effective with the proposed new voluntary bailiffs.

We will be requesting that AW suspend C&R in the warmer months.

E.g. July and August.

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Drones.

These are prohibited on all AW sites.

Rock Armour access points.

Ten structures in place in Stocky Bay. These have not yet been tested in strong winds. The impact of this will be reviewed and adjustments made in their construction at other sites.

The Boils – Aerators

Following repairs to the pipeline these are now active and should inhibit stratification during the summer months.

Cessation of Trout Fishing.

Anglian Water Anglian Water vehemently refuted nay possibility of this and said that they were not considering - as is the case at some other UK trout fisheries - ceasing trout fishing at any other of their waters.

They added that considerable amount had been spent on renovation works with the view to maintaining the current status quo.

Eight Fish Day Tickets.

Price to remain unchanged.

Age limits in boats.

At present seven-year-olds are allowed out in boats accompanied by responsible adults. AW to investigate the possibility of reducing this age limit.

Retail Price Match.

AW retail are prepared to match lower prices available on the Internet. The Anglian Water shops are hoping to engage in online retail. Neil Atkins – retail team leader - indicated that it wasn't possible to retain a large stock against that available on the Internet.

The 30% discount in the Christmas and Boxing Day sales was very well received. Consideration could be given to discount on tackle at Rutland Water Fly Fishers open weekends.

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Getting into Fly-fishing –

Under sixteens can fish on a ticket holder's permit, free of charge and share the respective limit. It was thought the price wasn't the real issue but catchability was the problem.

There has been some discussion on the benefit of getting foreigners and ladies into fly-fishing.

It was felt that the fishing at Anglian Water offered a very good value for money.

Bring a friend fishing.

This could help to introduce them into the sport with a limited number of visits. AW have agreed to look into this. It was noted that grandparents were quite happy to be involved in introducing their grandchildren into the sport.

Rutland Water - New Restaurant

This has had a makeover, is a great improvement and now caters for anglers and the general public.

Restaurant Annex.

This will be used for meetings and courses etc. It was hoped that RWFF could use this facility to attract custom and give the public some idea what fly-fishing was about.

P.R. Budget.

It was felt by some anglers that Anglian Water do not sell themselves well enough. AW agreed to consider engaging PR companies to advise on this. A calendar might be produced to inform the public exactly what fly-fishing is about. RW FF thought it would be very useful to publish their own & Anglian Water's courses in the local press.

Waterside Purchasing of Fish at Fishing Lodges –

Notices to be erected prohibiting this, due to hostile demands for fish from some members of the public.

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Grafham

The Rangers have extended their thanks to GWFFA members Harley Smith, Phil Caress, Brian Calvert, John Vincent, Chris Maggs, Stuart Stenning-White and his son Eliot for helping with bank clearance. They spent three good days clearing willows and blackthorn from the banks at Plummer's.

The Rangers have also been clearing willows from the Seat to make casting and access easier: so check out these locations.

Some anglers have been landing some fantastic over-wintered rainbows and brownies, though one fish really stands out from the crowd! Mr Liam Johnson, fishing on the dam, managed to tempt a colossal Brown trout on an intermediate line and black and green lure. The fish was estimated at around the 11lb mark though it was most probably even larger than that.