

Make time to go fishing



Lincs and Northants Fisheries Update April 2019

Introduction

The winter period has been pretty quiet in terms of fisheries operations however fisheries staff have been very busy preparing for the 2019/20 season and undertaking routine duties as well as reviewing lessons learnt from 2018/19 prolonged dry weather.

Jake Reeds has been busy developing the Nene Fisheries Monitoring Report for the 2018 survey work, this will be available and circulated very soon. Jake will present some of this work at the consultative meeting to be held in October 2019. Jake is also preparing and organising the fish population survey field work for the Lincs and Northants Fenland Drain system, to be started very soon. A report from this work will be available in the New Year 2020.

Hugh and Darren have been undertaking normal business routine supporting our angling customers with fish movement and equipment permits while also undertaking fishery advisory visits. We have also been supporting our Flood & Coastal Risk Management Team with a review of fish and eel passes and ensuring these are cleaned and maintained in good time for the start of the peak migration periods starting in April.

James Hooker our Fisheries Technical Specialist has also been very busy supporting permitting colleagues with complex applications for Hydropower Schemes on the River Nene.

Visit to our National Fisheries Service Fisheries Lab

We now have a firm date for our visit to the National Fish Lab at Brampton. The visit is planned for **Thursday 27th June 2019**, in the evening and invitations are open for members of the consultative. If you are interested in attending please can you give your details to David Hawley who will coordinate the visit with myself. This will be a brilliant opportunity to meet and talk to the specialist fisheries staff and have a tour of the laboratory facilities.

The work carried out at Brampton is essential in keeping our UK freshwater fisheries free from devastating fish disease. Local area fisheries staff work closely, supporting the lab all year round however peak periods are usually during a rise in water temperatures during the spring and summer. We expect this year to be a very busy period for all staff.

I highly recommend this opportunity as one not to miss.

Further details will be forthcoming soon however the post code for the Brampton Office is Bromholm Lane, Brampton, PE284NE.

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2018 Dry Weather Incident Debrief – Incident Response Performance

We have been reviewing our performance in Fisheries Incident Response in 2018 with a focus on the large scale and multiple fish mortality events with a case study from the Thrapston Lakes Mortality. A number of improvements have been identified and implemented. This includes additional equipment & resources to be located at Nene House, improved training support and better integration into the Area Incident Room. We also plan additional inter team training exercises across the area as well as undertaking some training with our Area Incident Room staff.

Fisheries Resilience Scheme (FIP Funding Availability)

Our National Fisheries Colleagues have made available a Fund to support fisheries resilience in the Lincs and Northants area. This fund is designed for purchase of equipment to ensure that your club can be proactive in its management during times of environmental stress such as too much or too little rain. By having equipment directly at your disposal this will enable you to keep a close eye on the water quality, manage your fishery in a sustainable manner and respond promptly when required.

Further details about this scheme are:

- The maximum bid available is £1000.
- The monies must be spent on aeration equipment (pumps, aerators, dissolved oxygen meters)
- Any unspent monies must be returned to the Environment Agency.
- The equipment's sole use is to assist with the enhancement and resilience of your clubs' fisheries.
- The scheme is only available for this year and bids need to be received by Monday 30th July 2018.
- Receipts for the equipment purchased must be available for review by the Environment Agency up until two years after purchase.
- We reserve the right to visit your site to ensure that the equipment is being used as intended.

If you are interested in bidding into this scheme, please send a completed application form to Liz Sroga, Environment Agency, Ceres House, Searby Road, Lincoln, LN2 4DW or Liz.sroga@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Liz Sroga will liaise with area Fisheries officers. If you would like to understand more about the scheme before sending in your application please do not hesitate to contact your local fisheries officers Hugh Bunker and Darren Randall.

Although we encourage all fishery managers to be prepared and resourced to protect fisheries we are also keen that fishery managers continue to report any fish mortality incidents to us. If you are concerned about your fish stocks or witness an increase in distressed or dying fish please call our **National Incident Line 0800 807060**. Your call will be taken by a duty officer and passed to the on-call fisheries officer. The 2019 Fisheries Duty Rota has started and will run throughout the year usually ending in October or November. Fisheries staff are available throughout the year.

Non Native Fish Species Update

During late February Fisheries Enforcement Officers carried out a routine audit on a lake netting operation near Lincoln. The lakes were suspected to contain Silver Carp, a non-native fish species which cannot be kept in UK fisheries. During the operation 13 silver carp were found and it became apparent that additional fish were able to escape the net (typical of this species). Working with the owners we seized the 13 fish that had been captured and removed them to the National Fisheries Service Laboratory at Brampton. During the initial netting operation it became clear that not all fish had been captured. The owner instructed a contractor to undertake additional net hauls and 4 additional specimens were removed from site.

Non-native fish species can only reside in still waters with a relevant fishery site permit. These fisheries must prevent escape into the wild and therefore these waters cannot be linked to rivers or within a floodplain. However, some species such as the Silver Carp are not permitted to be kept at all and must be removed and disposed of humanely. If you'd like to know more about fishery site permits please speak to your local fisheries officers, Hugh Bunker in Welland & Nene catchments and Darren Randall in Witham & Ancholme. Alternatively please visit our webpages on the link below.

These fish were examined by staff at our National Fisheries Service Laboratory at Brampton. No notifiable parasites or pathogens were found. Silver carp were aged up to 15 years old. It appears that there were 3 year classes present within the water, from 2004, 2007 and 2009. First year growth was quite limited in all fish, but they all grew steadily throughout their lives. No real disturbances in growth were observed. The growth rate of these fish could not be compared to a standard as no standard growth data is available for silver carp in England. (Lab Report, G. Davies, 03/04/2019)



Fig1. Silver Carp under Investigation



Fig 2. Image Showing Silver Carp Seizure 2018



Fig 3. View Showing Silver Carp Profile

Annual Fisheries Report

This is now complete and will be published very soon. The report provides a huge amount of information including funding allocations, fisheries regulation and enforcement work, fisheries monitoring and the health of our fisheries, and much more.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/permission-to-move-live-fish-to-or-from-a-fishery>

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