

# Lower Ouse & Fenland Fisheries Consultative Association

9 April 2018

## East Anglia West Fisheries Update

The following document provides LOFFCA members and anglers with up to date area fisheries information together with details of our recent activities.

### Fisheries monitoring programme:

- It's been a slow start to the programme due to staff moves and persistent rainfall which has coloured rivers.
- It's unlikely the entire 2018 programme will be completed this year. Update on sites likely to be dropped at next consultative meeting.
- Ely Ouse hydro-acoustic survey is currently scheduled in for week commencing 14 May 2018 and will take three nights to complete.
- Relief Channel hydro-acoustics is currently scheduled in for week commencing 9 July 2018 and will take two nights to complete.
- See the LOFFCA Facebook page for the latest fish photos, please click [here](#).

### Fisheries enforcement:

- Across the Great Ouse Catchment in 2018, 398 rod licences were checked between January and March.
- Of these 398 checks, 382 were 'new checks'.
- In total 5 offence reports were issued.
- On the 10 March 2018 the fisheries enforcement team undertook a joint patrol with Wildlife Crime Officers from Norfolk Police and during this operation they observed the Police's new drone. The drone was used in a live job at Three Holes (confluence of the Sixteen Foot Drain, Popham's Eau & Middle Level Main Drain) following a report earlier in the day of a number of anglers fishing at this location. The drone was launched and observed the anglers from up high and two were found to be fishing without licences and none of the anglers knew they were being filmed!
- The bailiffs are more than happy to carry out rod licence checks at fisheries with club officials, if you keen to accompany the bailiff please get in contact ([chris.middleton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:chris.middleton@environment-agency.gov.uk) or 07881 512038) and I'll provide the bailiffs contact details.
- Any suspected illegal fishing activity should be reported to the Environment Agency's Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

### Fish passage update:

- A new fish and eel pass has recently opened at Houghton Mill (National Trust property) in Cambridgeshire. We plan to install the ARIS imaging sonar to monitoring fish movements through the pass and then create a new video for social media.

customer service line  
03708 506 506

incident hotline  
0800 80 70 60

floodline  
03459 88 11 88

- ITV Anglia and BBC Look East have both shown interest in recording a feature about the fish pass and our sonar equipment and how we use this for fisheries monitoring and enforcement so watch this space.

## Fisheries improvement programme (FIP):

- Please keep the potential habitat enhancement/fish passage projects coming through, click [here](#) for further information or contact me directly on [chris.middleton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:chris.middleton@environment-agency.gov.uk)
- Projects we've submitted for FIP 2018/19 approval include:
  - £5000 (over two quarters) River Ivel restoration project
  - £5000 Fenland bank repairs & habitat creation
  - £8000 (over three quarters) options appraisal and implementation of barbel conservation
  - £4500 Soft revetment restoration at a conservation/angling coaching pond near Ampthill
- The Upper Ouse Fisheries Consultative Association (UOFCA) have a strategy for barbel conservation, hence the FIP funding. We'd really like to see one from LOFFCA this could be for:
- Floating pennywort management
- Habitat enhancement projects for crucian conservation
- We're open to other potential ideas, so please have a think.

## Fisheries incident response:

- On Saturday 17 February we attended our first fisheries incident of the year. A fishery near Hockwold in Suffolk had lost half a dozen bream all around 2lb in weight and a dozen small juvenile fish, predominantly roach. The lake was covered entirely by ice for several days and nights, which may have contributed to the mortality as water quality and algal analysis was fine.
- Sunday 11 March the Fisheries Duty Officer was called back to the same fishery near Hockwold following reports of a further 50 fish deaths, this time all species being impacted. Water quality was good however, the water sample analysis showed harmful levels of diatoms (microalgae) in the form of synedra – spiky diatoms.
- Friday 6 April a health sample was collected from a fishery near Huntingdon after the owner reported a number of fish deaths. On site water quality analysis was good, the fish sample is currently being analysed at the labs in Brampton.
- The planned fish removal on the river Lark in Bury St Edmunds through the Abbey Gardens is currently on hold due to due current river levels following the prolonged wet weather period. The operation isn't off the cards, just on hold for now.
- We've just acquired x6 2" portable venturi aeration systems which angling clubs/fishery owners can borrow from us during a low dissolved oxygen incident. Anyone wishing to borrow the aeration kit will need to sign a disclaimer form, hire in your own generator and provide the fuel and be in a position to collect/return the kit.
- If you see dead or distressed fish anglers are reminded to phone the incident hotline number immediately on 0800 807060.

## 2017/18 winter work programme:

- We carried out a winter stock assessment at Rookery Waters near Pidley on the 29 January 2018. Small juvenile fish, predominantly roach and rudd but also perch, were removed from Rook Lake and re-stocked into a stretch of the North Level Main Drain fished by Tydd Gote Angling Club.
- To view the video on the EA Facebook page please click [here](#).

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- To view the video on our Twitter page please click [here](#).

## 2018/19 FCRM maintenance programme:

- The 2018/19 routine maintenance programme is now available to view on the GOV.UK website, please click [here](#)
- This is your opportunity to provide any comments regarding this essential flood defence programme, so please feed comments back to the generic FBG email address: [angcentral.frb@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:angcentral.frb@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Submerged plant control:

- We've just acquired the following mechanical equipment which angling clubs/fishery owners can borrow for submerged weed control;
  - X1 5ft 12v boat operated weed cutter
  - X3 hand operated weed razors, for cutting submerged plants
  - X3 hand operated weed rakes, for collecting cut material
- Angling clubs will need to sign a disclaimer form for borrowing the equipment, provide a boat and battery for the 12v weed cutter and be in a position to collect/return the kit.

## Floating pennywort update:

- The removal went well, tonnes of plant material was removed and it was really hit hard this winter following the cold spell. The work was carried out by FCRM however, a club in the affected reach on the Cam contacted Fish Legal as they weren't impressed by the large deposits of pennywort along the left bank of the Cam. It took two weeks to draft a response, the work was carried out by FCRM who weren't obliged too.

## Ouse Washes sondes:

- All of the sondes have now been deployed. For up to date water quality information from the Old Bedford Counter Drain & Delph please click [here](#)

## 2018 events:

- Ely Eel Day - 5 May (Jubilee Gardens Ely)
- Heritage of the Gaywood – 12 & 13 May (Kings Lynn)
- Cambourne AC Coaching Day – 10 June (Lake Ewart Cambourne)
- Parklife 2018 – 1 July (Milton Country Park)
- Bedford River Festival – 14 & 15 July (The Embankment Bedford)
- CFPAS Coaching Day – 22 July (Burwell Brick Pits)
- CFPAS Coaching Day – 5 August (Milton Country Park)
- CFPAS Coaching Day – 14 August (Burwell Brick Pits)
- Cambourne AC Coaching Day 19 August (Lake Ewart Cambourne)
- Autumn Festival 2018 – 23 September (Milton Country Park)

### **Social media/staff update:**

- Our area Twitter account has had a name change following James Hooker's departure from the area, it's now @OuseFishEA
- Alex Malcolm has moved from S&C to FBG as a Biodiversity Technical Officer.
- Lewis Thomas has moved from S&C to FBG in Thames area.