



August 2016



Verulam Trout Committee and Co-Opts: Roles and Responsibilities

Bob Ring * (Chairman) Contact: tel: 01582.764442 or 07747795334 (bobring@btinternet.com) - Chairing Verulam Trout Committee Meetings and the VT Annual Meeting. Overall responsibility to ensure the smooth running of VT Representative of VT at the VAC General Committee. VAC Open Day co-coordinator for the VT. Fun Day organizer. Fish purchases. PLUS Assistant Fisheries Manager at Bellows Mill

Barry Evans (Secretary) Contact: tel: 01923.682388 (trout@verulam-angling.co.uk) **Season Ticket Sales** (and liaising with Chris Jennings on ticket preparation etc). Accounts. Agendas and Minutes of Committee and Annual Meetings. Maintenance of the Membership database used for communication and survey

Clive Butcher Contact (jcbutcher@gmail.com) - VT Webpage on VAC website. Fly Casting tuition/Introduction to fly fishing/fly tying. Newsletter (for communication to VT interested members)

Neil Roberts VAC FORUM – Trout discussions moderator

Chris Jennings * Contact: tel: 01442.265866 (early evening) (chrisjennings@btinternet.com) - Day and Guest Ticket Sales at Riverside Road and Bellows Mill

Richard Russell * Contact: tel: 01727.838178 (richardrussell_9@sky.com) - Support for Day and Guest Ticket Sales. Away Day organization. VAC Training Coach

Mal Shaw - Social Secretary

Peter Phillips - General Duties - Ford Lake, Bellows Mill bank maintenance

* **Fly Fishing Day and Guest permit seller**

On the Cover

Corixa - (Water Boatman)

We have a small pond in our garden and I often sit and have a coffee watching the insect life. The heron put paid to the fish long ago so now all we have are dragon and damsel flies plus the odd diving beetle and, until this year, pond skaters. (I suppose there's always a few minute "buzzers") This year we've had a sudden "bloom" of corixa and the pond skaters have mostly disappeared. The one or two remaining seem to hide on the surface above some weed and avoid the open water where the corixas literally "hang out". Now I believe that they are both carnivorous but do the corixa feed on the pond skaters?

Anyway, I've watched about a dozen corixa grow from about three millimeters long (I probably couldn't see them any smaller) until they're now about a centimeter long with a "wingspan" of about two centimeters. I know old Isaac (Walton) said "study to be quiet" and quite right he was piscatorially but I didn't realise just how sensitive the insect life is until I put my coffee cup down on the patio by the pond. Admittedly it was a bit harder that I should normally have done but the effect on the corixa was electric. One second there were eight boatmen on the surface, clunk went the coffee cup and they'd gone. A few second later they floated back so I repeated the clunk and poof, they'd gone again. After three or four taps the entertainment value of the exercise begins to fade and probably doesn't do much for the corixas heart-rate either but it did demonstrate just how tiny shock-waves affect their watery world.



There are many imitations for corixa and the one on the left is by Fulling Mill from Sportfish. This one clearly shows the two paddles but like all of the other dressings I've seen using hackles, they're swept back. The picture on the cover that I took shows that, at rest, the paddles are held forward, presumably ready for a quick getaway when some clumsy oaf clonks his coffee cup down. Apart from the colour variation the other obvious appendage are the eyes. Small beads perhaps. On a floating line it should make it sink in a realistic manner until you twitch it back to the surface.

Anyone fancy tying some?

Is This The Cheapest Fly Rod?

Back in June I mentioned the latest material, graphene, that a new salmon fly rod is made of. At £1000 each they're one of the more expensive rods available, apart from one off presentation specials. This month I discovered what must be the cheapest new fly rod available in the UK. Now it may not be "cutting edge" technology and as a 9 foot two piece it may not be very convenient travel wise but it appears to have all that's necessary. I confess that all I did was wave it about a bit in the shop (as you do) and this proves very little but apart from feeling a bit stiff for a rod designated as wt 6/7, I thought it would throw a reasonable line. Its marketed under the Ron Thompson brand and is available from Go Outdoors at £9.99. That's less than one of our winter day tickets and they're cheap. Just think, we could buy 100 of these (one for each of us and some over) for less than the graphene rod. I was tempted to get one just to see what it was like but I already have a cupboard full of rods that I never use; anyone else fancy a punt?

Riverside Road

Those of you who fished the final few weeks of the Riverside Road season this year will have been aware of the extensive bank working on the Sopwell Mill side of the fishery. This is a continuation of work carried out in previous years caused by crayfish severely undermining the banks to the point of collapse and potential danger to anglers. In order to regrade the bank the shrubs and trees had to be removed. Sadly this coincided with the council/EA at last carrying out long overdue maintenance work to the banks of the River Ver to prevent a recurrence of the flooding caused by fallen trees. This was directly opposite our works and the result gave the appearance of a scorched earth policy, allowing a clear line of sight across to the old gas works, to the distress of many members.

The good news is that, as can be seen by the recovery of the earlier work carried out, the scars should fade in a season or two and new trees will grow. The bad news is that the invasion of the crayfish will necessitate similar work to make the banks safe around the fishery for the next few years on and off. "Keep calm and carry on".

On the subject of building work some of you will also be aware that there is considerable redevelopment work being carried out to the buildings at Riverside. Our old trout hut (Tara) has been removed (refurbished and relocated to Frogmore) and a new meeting room complete with kitchen and toilets will be built over the next few months. The old meeting room is being redesigned, one half to become a store and the other half to be used by us as a shelter and to house our fly fishing paraphernalia (log sheets etc). This work will be complete in time for next spring season.

Brian Clarke - "On Fishing"

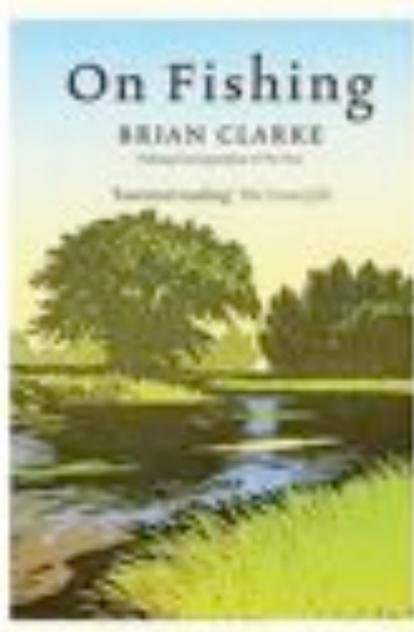
A few weeks ago Chris Jennings emailed me an interesting clip of one of Brian Clarke's monthly articles in "The Times" regarding the current lack of aquatic fly life and its effect on fly fishing. It reminded me of what a good entertaining and informative writer Brian Clarke is. His book "The Pursuit of Still Water Trout" is I believe in our little library in the Bellows Mill Lodge and, if you haven't already, I recommend you read it sometime. Although written in 1975 its still relevant, especially if you want to improve your catch by recognising tell tail rise forms. My only criticism is that when faced with the problem of his poor catch rate on large reservoirs he switched to smaller "commercial" fisheries with a higher fish density, which I felt was cheating a bit. Never-the-less as a means to an end it worked and he could then spot how trout were behaving and adopt an appropriate method to succeed. He went on to write (sometimes with others) several "classic" fly fishing books all of which are well worth a read.

Anyway, as usual I digress.

"On Fishing" is a collection of seventy one articles by Brian Clarke on (surprise surprise) fishing. Although his angling interests are quite broadly based, like most of us his main interest is fly fishing and these articles reflect that. There's nothing new here so you won't learn any magical method of a guaranteed limit. The magic is his style of writing and philosophy he brings to the page. There are items

about the early days of Grafham and the pioneering fishery work of Alex Behrendt at Two Lakes (now I learned sadly gone) About angling greats like Dick Walker, John Goddard, Fred Buller and others. Sometimes amusing, always thoughtful. Sometimes a potted biography of angling "celebrities", sometimes a bit controversial and I felt some of the items could have been written specifically for and about Verulam Trout. (Getting Stocking Levels Right?) There's even a piece about how Fred Buller and Hugh Fulkus carried out some experimental "archaeology" while researching some facts about *The Boke of St Albans* (c1388), the River Ver and angling, virtually opposite our fishery at Riverside Road. It must have been written for us.

On Fishing is available in printed form but I downloaded it on Kindle. ISBN: 978-0-007-36112-0



BELLOWS MILL AUTUMN SEASON 2016

Thursday 15th Sept to Wednesday 14th December 2016

A reminder that applications* for Autumn season permits at Bellows Mill can be made to the Verulam Trout Secretary from **1st August 2016 until 31st August** to ensure receipt before the start of the season. Applications for season permits after the 31st August cannot be guaranteed for receipt before the start of the season. The cost of a season ticket remains at £85 for 8 visits over the season. There are no half season permits.

Also available are Day Tickets @ £16 for VAC members and Guest Tickets for non-VAC members @ £24 adults.

There will be a working party** for more general tidying up on **11th September** before the start of the Autumn Season.

* An application form for the Autumn Season was sent with last months Verulam Trout News; please contact Barry Evans tel: 01923.682388 (trout@verulam-angling.co.uk) with any queries.

** Please notify Bob Ring tel: 01582.764442 or 07747795334 (bobring@btinternet.com) to book a place so that jobs can be planned.