



November 2017



Verulam Trout Committee and Co-opts: Roles and Responsibilities

Bob Ring * (Chairman) Contact: tel: 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 (VACTrout1@outlook.com) **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

In an effort to improve the fishing at Bellows Mill committee member Mal Shaw anchored the aerator in the middle of Ford Lake powered by a generator on the bank. Did it have any effect? Read on!

2017 Bellows Mill Autumn Season

I should have known better! Just when you think its all going well the fickle fin(ger) of fishing confounds you. The cooler summer weather had me thinking that the Autumn Season at Bellows Mill would be off to a great start. It was for some. (well technically one) As I wrote last month VAC Secretary, Mark Jones, picked up a fly rod for the first time in twenty years and was one of the first fishing at Bellows Mill when the season opened this autumn. By 10 o'clock Mark was leaving with his limit. It was the only limit. During the following two weeks even the most successful anglers in previous seasons struggled to catch with just the odd fish being caught. The returns made dismal reading and if I'm honest a wave of panic passed through me if not the rest of the committee. The water temperature was around 12.5 centigrade so this shouldn't have been the problem and although we weren't able to check the oxygen content at this time it has not been a problem in the past. The only consolation is that other similar waters are suffering from same problem.



The Khaki Sky and Ophelia Sun Over Bellows Mill

Several on-line discussions took place by the committee and Mal Shaw tried a water pump a few times and then installed the aerator shown on the cover.

The Gods were clearly not happy as the same day the sky turned a strange khaki colour and the sun turned deep orange. To appease the angling Gods your chairman was sacrificed, his remains minced and fed to the fish (actually I just made that bit up and the odd sky and sun was down to ex-hurricane Ophelia picking up Saharan dust and smoke from Portuguese forest fires. But it makes you wonder)

Over the next week the aerator was run at intervals but the problem is that it needs someone in attendance resulting in several members of the committee spending time "baby sitting" it. During this time Mark Jones again worked some magic and caught the only fish of the week; again well done to Mark but a bit of a disaster for the rest.

The oxygen levels have been checked at several points in the lake with the lowest reading showing 90% so that's not the problem. However something must have had an effect as at the end of week four Bob Ring paid a visit and was rewarded with a limit, two of which were well over 2lbs, and the next day Les Roberts and Rae Borrás both had limits. Rae had his in an hour and Les in an hour and a half with two of his fish weighing 5lbs 4ozs and 4lbs respectively. Because so few fish were coming out we had reduced the last stocking with no larger fish, so these fish were from an earlier stocking.

My personal view is that its down to temperature. Although the water temperature is hovering around the twelve to thirteen degrees, which is in theory fine, the difference is that in the spring the fish have spent some months in very cold water and are probably much healthier and fitter. As the spring seasons, both at Bellows and Riverside, progress the fish have always become harder to catch. We, or at least I, have always put this down to the fish learning to avoid our artificial offerings and becoming a bit more "street cred." (have I got the modern parlance right?) Because we stop fishing at Riverside in May we don't really know how it would fish to flies later in the year. (Bare in mind that we are talking about very shallow waters, not lakes twenty, thirty or more feet deep with cool water deep down.) We do know that rainbows suffer and cannot feed as the temperature rises. I think we have assumed that when the water cools the fish will be OK within a few days. I'm beginning to think that they are a bit more like someone who has suffered a serious illness and needs a considerable time in the right conditions to recover. This may take a couple of months if the water is still relatively warm, as it is in the autumn. Pumping and aeration helps but what we really need is some frosts to cool the water and some rain to top up the levels.

Lets hope we get both in November.

Dates For Your Diary

Festive Fun - 27th December

Our instant traditional post-Christmas get together at Bellows Mill for Festive Fun takes place on Wednesday 27th December (the day after Boxing Day). For those of you who are new or who haven't attended before its not a very serious affair and has always been enjoyable.

We usually meet at Ford Lake around 9.30 and draw a number corresponding to a platform. If there are more fishing than there are platforms we add "virtual platforms" away from the water. We start fishing at 10 o'clock and about ten minutes later, at the whistle, we all move one platform to the left. This is repeated every ten minutes until a circuit of all the platforms is completed. Our normal fly fishing rules apply and if you catch a fish you stop fishing until the next move. At the end a prize is awarded for the biggest fish and a prize for the heaviest bag of fish. Father Christmas has been known to put in an appearance (he's won it before now) and mulled wine, mince pies and other seasonal food is served.

In order to allow for numbers please **contact Bob Ring tel: 07747795334 (bobring@btinternet.com)** if you're interested. Do come; its fun.

Verulam Trout Annual Meeting – 16th January 2018

We have the Annual Meeting of Verulam Trout to be held at 8.00pm on Tuesday 16th January 2018 at New Greens Residents Association Hall High Oaks, St Albans, AL3 6DL

This is the meeting where we announce the season dates and permit prices for the coming year and any other changes that the committee have in mind. Its also your chance to have a say or air your thoughts about Verulam Trout. In previous years we have held a raffle and had a tackle sale from about 7.00 pm but the full agenda will be sent to you next month.

River Itchen Trip 2017 - Bob Ring reports

*I was the only brave soul from the committee that went to the Itchen. Somewhat windy, to say the least. The forecast was for storm Brian with promised winds of 70mph! Luckily it was not quite that bad but still very windy with rain showers one of which was the worst I have ever been in, the rain was literally horizontal, I know we all say that but this actually was!
Most of the fly anglers did catch grayling and trout (apart from me) in the morning and Ted Brown took this photo of John Halstead with a lovely grayling he caught.*



A few hardy souls carried on fly fishing in the afternoon but the majority went downstream and joined the coarse fishermen and caught numerous grayling, chub and trout using maggots and sweet-corn.

Thanks Bob; and thanks Ted and John for providing us with a picture of a fish this month - I'd forgotten what they looked like.