



Verulam Trout News

September 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

A sight that few of us will have the pleasure to see - a large arctic char in the landing net.

Read on!

Five Go To Iceland - by Bob Ring

You will all no doubt remember the exciting exploits of Four Old Geysers In Iceland, well this is the sequel. This year we (Bob Ring, Nick Ring, Mal Shaw and Alan Bailey) decided to let Gerard Panting come along. Well, none of us are getting any younger and we thought it might be advantageous to have a doctor with us (Gerard used to be a GP in a previous life). We did suggest to Gerard that he hold a daily 'evening surgery' between 6.00pm and 7.00pm so that we could all consult him, but for some reason the idea didn't go down with him at all well!



L - R Bob Ring, Mal Shaw, Alan Bailey, Gerard Panting, Nick Ring

If last year was about large fish, this year was all about numbers of fish. If you recall, our contact, Steve Cooper informed us that he and his friends went every year and usually caught literally hundreds of fish between them. Last year I think we managed about forty between the four of us, albeit six of them were very large fish but the weather had been cold before we went, the fish weren't ready. This year we were a few weeks later so we couldn't fail?

As you may know I have often been heard to say "I can't be doing with droppers" but Steve was adamant that to catch lots of Arctic Char I needed a Beadio (his creation) on the point and a red arsed buzzer on a dropper or for Brown Trout a Dunkeld or Butcher on the point, a Bibio on the top dropper and a Red Arsed Buzzer below. I was determined to persevere this year and I had a dropper tying master class before I went from my good friend Hugh Smith. Boy did it pay off. I must have caught 95% of my fish on that Red Arsed Buzzer!

This year we avoided the first day excitement of fishing until past midnight and getting to bed at 3.00am (having got up at 3.15am to get the early flight from Luton airport that day) as we did last year and settled for a gentle afternoons sport at the 'School Lake'. Fish were rising and we managed fifteen small Char between us.



The Beautiful Arctic Char

Next day the serious fishing started. We were off to the lake where previously three of us had caught a couple of very large Brown Trout. It wasn't easy but Gerard showed us how with three fish.



One of Gerard's Trout

Strangely, some large Icelandic fish favour 'old fashioned' flies. We had done well with Dunkelds the year before. Mal was fishing with a Kingfisher Butcher (he liked the blue colour) and hooked one of the lake's monsters. It thought it was a Marlin and executed numerous leaps. After about 30 minutes we were fed up with giving him advice of how to land the thing and some started fishing again. After forty minutes Skulli decided to wander back to our vehicle to get his 'big net'. He was gone for a good ten minutes. After fifty five minutes the fish was finally in the net!! The rest of us blanked that day.



Mal's Big Brown at last

Off to the mountains next day. Because there were five of us we had hired a car as we needed extra transport. At meal times we had met a lone angler who was also staying at the guesthouse. A Welshman called Di would you believe. He had fished the mountain lake we were going to a couple of days earlier and was returning to try and beat his total of sixty eight fish!! We were excited. He was aghast that some of us were planning to drive there in anything other than a massive 4x4 due to the state of the roads. Our guide Skulli didn't seem to think it would be a problem but we drew straws and Alan went with Di and his guide. Good job he did, I think we would have returned with a couple of bits of chassis and a steering wheel if we had attempted those roads (and rivers!)

The scenery was spectacular and the lake stuffed with fish. Now we understood how Steve Cooper and his gang managed to catch so many Char. We landed two hundred and seventy three between the five of us!! Size wise they were about three quarters of a pound with several much larger. Numerous double hook-ups added to the fun. As for Di, he beat his record by one but couldn't manage his target of seventy fish.

The next two days were difficult (I blanked both days). The others managed seven fish between the four of them. But little did I know that the following day would be one of those rare fishing days that one remembers. A true 'red letter day'.

For our last two days we were off to Rudie, the Swiss billionaires place. We hadn't fished there before but had been told of its magic by Ed Catton-Orr and his mates, our friends at the Fly Dressers Guild, who stayed there last year. They didn't exaggerate. The lake and scenery were magnificent. I was fishing Steve's recommended rig of a Beadio on the point and a Red Arsed Buzzer on a single dropper. We were quickly into Char and they were beautiful and much bigger than the high mountain lake fish. My second fish took off for the horizon along with my fly line and a considerable length of backing. "That's no Char" said Skulli and he was right, it turned out to be a magnificent Sea Trout of about 8lb. It had taken the Red Arsed Buzzer. I couldn't go wrong after that and ended up with twelve more Char before we trudged back to our hut for our evening meal.



Bob's Big Sea Trout

You may remember that it is light twenty four hours in Iceland at that time of year and so three of us decided to hike back to the lake for an evening session. A magical experience. We returned after midnight and I had another nine fish to my name. What a day. It wasn't just me, we ended up with fifty fish between us that day.

I was really looking forward to our final day, I couldn't go wrong. How many fish did I catch? One! Still as they say "that's fishing". The other lads showed me up with eighteen fish between them.



Mal's Favourite - The Kingfisher Butcher

All in all we had a good trip, 367 fish in total between the five of us. I am not sure we will go back to Iceland again next year. There has been wild talk of a trip to Florida to fly fish for Tarpon or a more realistic trip to the Isle of Man to include some fly fishing for Sea Bass. Who knows? Watch this space.

Bob Ring

Sounds fantastic Bob; how about stocking Bellows Mill with char (we'd need to refrigerate the water of course)

To see more of Bob's pictures click on the link below (it may take a few seconds to open)

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/270gpuwbpssh4gq/Iceland 2016-HD %28720p%29.m4v?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/270gpuwbpssh4gq/Iceland%202016-HD%28720p%29.m4v?dl=0) - Iceland 2016

Wensum Trout

Perhaps not quite so far as Iceland or the fish as big but Andy King recently cast a fly on the River Wensum at Fakenham, Norfolk. (Free fishing??)



The River Wensum

In his own words *"This is the first time I had done proper dry fly fishing on a river, but got a bite a cast on a small brownish fly & a black ant fly (fished separately). I must have had 30 takes in a 2hr session but only connected with 3 fish, they bit so fast. They were a dace, a roach and eventually the wild brownie I most wanted. All the fish were small, but the river was full of fish. I've seen wild brown trout before, but never with red edged fins"*

Neither have I Andy (so its not only Iceland that have "pretty" fish; see picture below)

Anyone else seen the like?

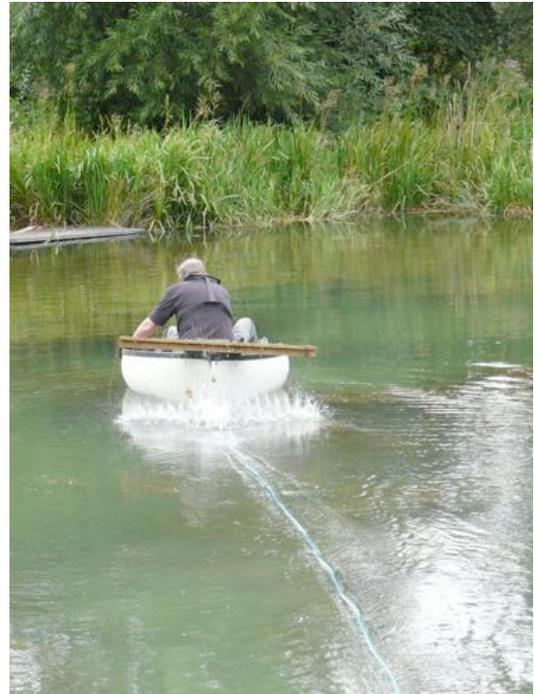


Andy's "Red Edged" Trout

Bellows Mill Summer Break

The weed growth in Ford Lake at Bellows Mill was given a trim on the evening of 18th August when members of the committee experimented with ways of getting the large rake into the middle of the water.

After some discussion and banter about the boat's sharp end or blunt end first we settled on a plank clamped to the bows of our work boat and the rake balanced on it. The boat was then reversed across the lake to the "drop zone" under the direction of a "spotter" from high on the bank when the rake was pulled off and dragged back by the shore crew.



Bows First

...or Stern First?

As can be seen below an effective method was developed which resulted in a considerable amount of vegetation being removed, providing channels of clear water between areas of weed. Our picture shows (L to R) "Captain" Bob Ring, Chris Jennings, Richard Russell and Barry Evans with one of the hauls. Needless to say our secondary objective was to see how wet we could get Bob during the operation; in this we failed.



After a short "sandwich, chips and beer" break the work continued till dark.

Whilst the "heavy brigade" explored new ways, Nick Ring (provider of chips) slogged away from another platform using the "throw it and pull" system to great, if a little more modest, effect.



Peter Philips meanwhile continued to trim behind the platforms keeping the back-cast areas free from obstructions.

One of the disappointing discoveries was the total lack of any stage of fly life found in the weed. Even the one leech we saw was only about 5mm long at full stretch. Something we need to investigate.

A week later and the hard work was hardly noticeable and it appears that a much more vigorous approach needs to be taken. The summer growth around the banks has been phenomenal with the "pollarded" willow by the car park now looking like a giant bush. This, along with more weed to cut and other jungle like growth will be tackled on the **working party on 11th September**. We need as many bodies as possible to help so if you can attend this please **contact Bob Ring tel: 01582.764442 or 07747795334 (bobring@btinternet.com)** to confirm your place. Attendance will count as your working party stamp if required.

Barbless?

Those of you that receive VAC eNews electronically will have seen the reminder about barbless hooks and for those who haven't another reminder that the club rules state that only barbless or de-barbed hooks should be used. Apparently the bailiffs will be checking. I know that we kill the trout we catch so its a debateable point (was that a pun?) but remember that we don't land all of the trout we hook and some coarse fish are caught so for the avoidance of confusion its best to flatted the barbs on flies. The resultant "bump" is enough to act as a barb anyway.

"New" Fly Floatant?



There are many ways to keep your dry flies floating but Davie McPhail's use of Nikwax clothing water-proofer is new to me. As part of a video showing how to dye feathers Davie finishes off the process by spraying the feathers with Spray On Nikwax TX Direct. It certainly seems to make the feathers water-proof. Why not try it on your finished dry flies too? At around £5 for a trigger operated 300ml spray bottle there's probably enough to waterproof a fly as big as a small car.

To see the full video click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uINSzYcw7NE> - Feather Dying

Bellows Mill Autumn Season Tickets

A reminder that there are still some 2016 Autumn Season Permits to fish Ford Lake at Bellows Mill and, although we cannot guarantee it now that the August 31st deadline has passed, you should be able to get your permit with plenty of time to get your eight visits in after the season starts on 15th September if you apply immediately.

Perhaps I should also remind you that to fish any VAC water you should have renewed your VAC membership for the 2016/7 season before applying for a fly fishing permit; be it a season or a day permit. You must be in possession of your current VAC membership card when on Club waters; the bailiffs will be checking.