



The National Anguilla Club

BULLETIN

THE NATIONAL ANGUILLA CLUB.

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CONTENTS.

Editorial.	A.J.Sutton.	Page 1
Letter to Angling Times.	A.J.Sutton	Page 2
The Whitemere Monster - Exposed.	Mark Davies.	Page 3
My Season So Far	Andy Lister	Page 4
Summer Trip To Emerton Park. 20 - 29th August 1979.. . .	Stephen Enkel	Page 6
Editors Notes.	A.J.Sutton.	Page 11
Map of Emberton Park(reproduced by Steve Enkel)		Page 12.

EDITORIAL.

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In an Editorial sense I have precious little to say this issue so I hope to be forgiven if I fill up my space with little bits and pieces - all relevant and worth their weight in gold, folks.

My thanks go out to those who have put pen to paper and made this issue possible, and also to the many who have written in to me from time to time. I will deal with one common point you all make in a moment or two.

So, as I write the cuckoo prepares to depart these shores, summer turns to something like winter and it is the glorious sixteenth once more. To those who live in Yorkshire the 16th is the start of OUR season, here in the south. What does the season ahead hold, I wish that I could say but of course no one can and perhaps that is just as well. We must all know that 1980 simply HAS to be a year of extended effort by us all. It is a pleasant enough task, and one which I do not mind asking you to perform. All you can do is to go out and try your utmost - and do not be afraid of trying the unusual. Remember that by trying something a little unusual last year I netted some good eels one of which was my second best in over thirty years eel fishing. O.K., so I didn't get a LOT of eels, but I achieved what I set out to do, or something like it, and I felt perfectly satisfied. This season I am trying pastures new to me as I wish to take more eels than I took last year - simply because I wish to try out my new methods with the certain knowledge that I am not wasting my time. One cannot do that when one is seeking just one or two whoppers. Again, if I am taking a fair number of eels I am able to compare new methods with older ones, at one and the same time under similar condition

Whatever you do and whatever method you apply, I wish you on behalf of the Committee the very best of reward for your effort plus a modicum of good luck.

I turn now to the point mentioned above about which so many of you have written outlining your fears. For those who are ignorant of what has been going on, and there cannot be many, the angling press mainly in the form of Coarse Fishermen has embarked on a very one sided campaign against both your Chairman and the Anguilla Club. We all know that the remarks made are both distasteful and unwarranted, the more so because the magazine in question sees fit NOT to publish letters from our members putting the record straight. Freedom of the Press - to do exactly as it likes no matter who is hurt. Those intent on doing us harm in such fashion are friends of the Editor (NOT THIS EDITOR !) so that will explain a great deal. I think that we are both strong and sensible enough to ignore the ramblings of the few, but at the same time we must be seen to be alert to the situation and consequently, as your President and after conferring with other committee members, I sent a letter to the Angling Times.

That particular paper is not directly involved, but I trust that they will be impartial enough to publish my letter. The letter can fairly be said to be very mild and seeks to do no harm to anyone. I am hoping that the letter will be included in our Bulletin so that at least all our members see it. I am intent on following up with a letter in similar vein to the N.A.S.G. for inclusion in their journal and, if the nonsense continues, am prepared to write to the national press. Such ranting cannot be said to do anyone any good at all, and surely there is no need for such abuse.

What Dave Hall chooses to publish in Coarse Fisherman is his prerogative and we cannot control that, neither do we wish to. But there must be limits within which he can exercise that control. I therefore ask you ALL to refrain from taking that particular magazine. I cannot direct you not to, but in the interests of fairness I ask you not to. There are a host of other publications which we can read and enjoy and with whom we have, as yet, no quarrel.

May I remind you to send your reports as early as possible to Brian Crawford for his attention. Of course I do look forward to your letters and will attempt to reply to all. If I did fail to reply to an earlier letter I apologise as I was expecting to enter hospital and my whole world was upset and my outlook dim. Fortunately, all that has changed and yours truly has bounced back to good health and renewed effort.

A.J.Sutton.

Editors Notes.

As you may well know, our secretary Terry Jefferson is extremely busy at this time of year. I think he has already told you that in a recent Newsletter. It did look as though we would have to do without our Bulletin. However, so many of you have queried the non appearance of your Bulletin that I have stepped in to produce the Bulletin and get it sent out to you.

I trust that you will forgive the somewhat scant issue, but as it is I have to forgo a weekends fishing in order that you may read these pages. If you do read them and enjoy them, then my effort has been worthwhile. Of course, we do still want your articles in order for us to produce further issues and of course you should send them to me direct.

If you are one of those fortunate enough to own or be able to use a typewriter, then please do remember to type your piece on A4 paper. Doing it that way may save you truly from having to type the whole lot out again, for I merely have to scan it to produce a stencil and the saving of work is tremendous, given that I am not the worlds best typist. Thankyou.

LETTER TO ANGLING TIMES.(The title is their own)

ANGUILLA NO DEAD DUCK.

Much has been said, of late, in some of the angling press, regarding the Anguilla Club and its officers. Fortunately there remain one or two publications who will not tolerate idle gossip or snide rumours within their pages. Their attitude is commendable and serves to illustrate that common sense can, at times, still prevail.

As President of The National Anguilla Club I have previously chosen to be silent, to remain in the back seat while all kinds of unwarranted remarks have been made. In my position I now feel entitled to have my say.

The first conclusion reached by many anglers is that the Anguilla Club is something of a secret society and very much a 'closed shop'. I do admit that it might appear to be both, for we do not readily jump into print. We prefer, somewhat stubbornly, to leave the search for glory to others. But we have never intended to be secretive and our co-operation with other bodies over a period of many years bears witness to that. Neither are we a closed shop.

We are, however, as careful as possible in our choice of members. No application is turned down out of hand. But were we to admit every single applicant we would today have members whose only aim is to take large numbers of eels to sell to the local vendor. I have had such persons on my doorstep openly admitting such an interest and demanding membership. Such persons have no right to membership of any angling body.

It has been said that the National Anguilla Club is a 'dead duck', suffering from terrible internal turmoil. Nothing could be further from the truth. Of course, we do suffer from domestic upsets from time to time. Nearly always these result in a minority leaving the Club, mainly because they cannot accept the views of the majority. I see little wrong with that, and at all times we endeavour to remain on good terms with those who leave and are always keen to learn how they are faring. They remain fellow anglers, NOT 'the enemy'. With the Club approaching its twentieth year I feel proud to be, and am honoured to be its elected President. I follow in the footsteps of some very good men indeed. I confidently predict that the Club will still be there long after I have hung up my rods. Ever since its foundation I have never known the Club to be in better state. It could be a little more active in my view, but that is a matter for the members.

Latterly, some harsh remarks have been made concerning our Chairman, Brian Crawford. Such remarks are completely without justification and in no way become those who make them. Neither Brian or I are dictators, we both strive to the best of our ability to serve the members of this Club as well as all angling interests. If we fall short of what is desired at times, it is a human failing and not for want of trying to the best of our ability.

Penultimately, I wish to dispel the idea that we are an 'ultra cult' superior breed of angler, way out in front of all others. We are not. Neither have we ever attempted to set ourselves up as such. We are quite ordinary chaps, differing from each other like chalk differs from cheese. If the more serious side of our work is seen by some

to be scientific or 'way out', such criticism serves only to show how little such anglers are prepared to do in the furthering of our knowledge.

Our own common bond is a love of eel angling and a thirst for more knowledge of the eel.

Ultimately, I quote from a letter recently received - "The National Anguilla Club must be feeling rather sick at the formation of another eel Club". Unquote. How small a mind some people do have! We welcome such a Club and wish it every success and hope that we can co-operate to our mutual advantage, to the benefit of eel angling interests generally. Our own efforts continue to be aimed at ALL anglers, as were our efforts at two inquiries relating to close season eel angling. Our critics, who appear to be thoroughly enjoying their close season eel fishing, were, somewhat sadly, missing at these two important events.

My letter is one of explanation, and I have no intention of getting caught up in a slanging match. I wish to publicly express my thanks to the publishers for allowing me to express myself on behalf of the National Anguilla Club.

A.J.Sutton.(President).

The letter above was published by Angling Times within two weeks of being sent to them.

 THE WHITEMERE MONSTER - EXPOSED.

By MARK DAVIES.

Older members and members of more recent vintage who have read any of the old Bulletins, undoubtedly recollect descriptions of 'the thing' that frequented the big wood on the other side of the cowdrink on the southern shore of Whitemere, in years gone by. Alan Hawkins vivid account of his experiences, in his classic article "Whitemere revisited" was, I believe, the first authentic account of the "thing's" existence, and "it" obviously had a soft spot for NAC members as it kept one or two of them company on various dark and erie nights. It was in September of last year that I was chosen for the treatment, and the following is an outline of how it occurred.

It was a usual Friday during the summer, a hectic morning session earning my bread and butter in the Magistrates Court (if only they knew what I was doing during the hours of darkness when they were watching the goggle box), a mad dash the fifteen miles back to Knutsford, all my gear stowed into my estate car in about two minutes flat and the final lap of 40 miles to Whitemere. The weather on the hour long journey was dull but on reaching Whitemere the sun came out from among the clouds to reveal the hoped for blue skies and everything pointed to a good nights eel fishing.

On this occasion I had decided to wander on to pastures new and to fish in the large wood past the pumphouse. I pride myself on being able to carry all that I want for a nights eel fishing on my back although I am sure it was an amusing sight watching me clamber over a fence. I managed to reach my chosen swim with little mishap and sat on my bedchair for a moment to cool down and to catch my breath. The setting was perfect. The sun piercing the branches of the huge old oaks and beeches that comprise most of this wood. This beautiful unspoilt part of the Shropshire countryside is well worth a visit for this reason alone, and the fishing is but a bonus. I digress.

Without going into unnecessary details I set up four rods, put up the bivouac and generally put my camp in order and sat down to cook my tea. It was my speciality, a beef Vindaloo. This was not the cause of the tale I am to tell. It was 9.30 pm and the sun was setting over the mere that was perfectly still, with only the sound of wildfowl breaking the silence. The entrance to my bivvy faced out across the lake and as the night drew near the darkness of the wood enveloped me. The last birds gave a song before going to roost and on the high ground in the woods behind me the vixens call resounded around her territory. Small mammals scuffled in the undergrowth and the silhouette of a rabbit could be made out against the skyline in a small clearing to my left. The eels were not co-operating and the AJS's had not let out their unnatural din. Because of the inactivity I decided to get my head down for an hour or two. I walked round the bivvy to make sure that all was secure and before stepping underneath I turned round to look back to the blackness of the wood. An owl hooted reassuringly nearby, but unusually, I was not at ease. I felt as though I was being watched. I could not put my finger on it but I had great difficulty in getting to sleep and awoke at frequent intervals, attempting to reassure myself that all was well. Why should I be nervous, for I had been spending nights fishing since I was twelve and during that

time had met up with every type of thing, man or beast that could be met at night.

Then I remembered, hadn't I read in an article in an old NAC Bulletin Alan Hawkins accounts of strange happenings in a wood by the side of a mere - the very mere, the very wood, perhaps the very swim to which Alan had referred! I clambered up from my chair and leant against the side of the bivvy, my eyes straining to pierce the darkness behind me. Then I heard it - a strange noise coming from the other side of the wood. I heard the snapping of twigs and the breaking of substantial branches. I tried to convince myself that this was a fox or a badger, but these animals were silent in their movements and they make every attempt to avoid man. The sounds got louder and now I was quite sure that whatever was making them was coming directly towards me. Should I go out into the black wood to satisfy myself as to what was making the noise. Somehow, I could not move. My ears tried to catch a sound whereby I could identify the thing in the wood. It was now definitely within fifty yards of me to my right just where the ground began to rise.. I could hear the undergrowth being moved, twigs continually being broken. This thing was not merely passing through the wood, it was moving in on me. (Anyone sweating, Ed) Could it smell the increased adrenaline flowing through my veins.

Quite suddenly the wood was silent again, but the noise commenced a few seconds later to my left. I gained the impression that the thing was trying to come at me from behind. I was now certain that it was no more than five yards from me in a patch of brambles between a holly bush and a fallen oak tree. I then made up my mind, I must go out and meet the cause of my fear. With my right hand I withdrew the razor sharp filleting knife from my belt. At last the constant searching of the blackness with my eyes was able to make out a low squat shadow. Sweat poured from my forehead. Alan Hawkins gave no advice on how to deal with the Whitemere monster, for surely this was it. No wild garlic was to hand, I had left my crucifix at home and there was not sufficient time to sharpen a wooden stake. The hairs on the back of my neck stood on end as the thing moved positively towards me. I could now see all of it clearly. It was the most gruesome and most horrible creation I had ever witnessed. The lower half of its body was covered in thick hair. It resembled a gorilla but it could have been Shropshires answer to the abominable snowman of the Himalayas, the Big Foot of the American rockies. It then took a definite stride towards me and I could see the prehensile features of its face. Its mouth opened and it seemed to mumble something which resembled human speech. Was this a wild man who had been living undiscovered for years in the wood? Was it trying to make contact with a human being? Questions flooded through my mind but no answers followed. It again shuffled towards me. Was I going to discover the cause of this living hell?

As I pondered my fate I realised that the thing had a vaguely familiar appearance. Had I not seen something like it on the front cover of an old NAC Bulletin?

It was Dave Holman in his shorts - a most horrible sight. "Hello Mark, any chance of a brew"?

Phew! Fairly had me going, that. But apart from the ghoulies and ghosties I do like the description of the natural surroundings and can echo Marks sentiments regarding a visit to that most delightful of places. Thankyou Mark, and well done. ED.

MY SEASON SO FAR.

By Andy LISTER.

At the A.G.M. since I was one of the majority who volunteered to despatch an article to Arthur within two weeks, here it is, albeit a little overdue.

My first session of the season began on the evening of April 7th. Venue, well it just had to be Luckystone Lake No1. Arriving just after dusk, I headed for about the same swim which produced last years big fish. Last year I didn't, or couldn't, fish the place until the beginning of the coarse fishing season. This year things are different. The bareness of the banks was immediately noticeable and judging from the surface of the water along the margins there was little or no weed.

Until dawn at about 5 am I sat there full of expectation, but except for a spot of excitement when a water vole swam into my line the night was not only rather cool but uneventful too. The weather forecast for the following day did not sound at all promising so I decided to cut my losses and head for home. However, while heading home the thought of an evening in front of the box seemed such a waste so after consulting an O.S. map a quick detour was made to a stretch of canal. By the time I had set up my gear it was around 11 pm. Again no action came to the three rods and at 2am I decided to have a quick walk along the towpath to try to warm a pair of very cold feet. I had walked but a few yards when I realised that the grass was crunching 'neath my feet. The car windscreen confirmed it, and by - and by 2.05 am I had packed!

Session No 3 came a week later back at Luckystone. Again nothing. Even though it was reasonably warm I began to think that maybe early April was too early at this venue. The following week I decided to spend two nights on the water. Arriving again at dusk I set up two rods with lobworms. I had planned on using dead bait on at least one rod, but due to the non co-operation of the gudgeon in my local canal this idea had to be abandoned. A couple of Terry Eustace T 24s were set up, coupled with Mitchell 410 reels, 10lb Maxima, 1½oz bombs on an 18" link and a 13½lb Platil trace holding a size 2 Goldstrike baited with three lobworms. Strangely enough I never had any trouble from nuisance fish last year at this venue, but on this particular night I had three or four bites from what I think were roach. Everything seemed perfect - the warmest night I had been out on so far and a very light Westerly wind. Shortly after midnight the wind dropped altogether. It just could not have been a better night. By just after 1am I began to think that another blank was on the way and so slowly sank back into my bedchair. I had nearly dropped off when the not so familiar sound of line rushing through silver foil came to my ears. The blanket I had pulled over my legs was hastily cast aside as I jumped to the side of the rod which was only 2 - 3 feet away to my left

A quick strike was met with a solid resistance some 50 to 60 yards out. Last year fishing along this stretch of bank meant a quick strike and pulling like hell to get the eel out of the dense weed, but at this time with no weed about I was at an advantage. After several arm aching minutes the eel surfaced about 20 yards out and continued to fight it out on the surface. Shortly it came within reach of the net and here I must admit to making the biggest cock-up ever, over netting a fish, that I'm ever likely to make in my life. Twice I had it half in the net only to see it flop out again as I attempted to lift the net out onto the bank. The problem was caused mainly by me being on top of a 3½foot bank trying to sink the net in only 4 to 6 inches of water. Very difficult. Eventually however, with a little luck, the eel was finally successfully landed. After unhooking, I dropped him (or rather her, probably) into the weighing net and carefully read the dial - allowing 6oz for the net the weight was 4lb 9oz - what a start! That was the only run of the night.

Around 3.30 am I noticed a pair of car headlamps coming down the road behind me. They stopped in the vicinity of my car and then I could see lights shining into and around my car. At first I thought that someone was contemplating becoming the owner of an ageing Austin Maxi, then I heard the sound of voices on a two way radio. Quietly, I walked over to them and sticking my head over the hedge I asked what the problem was. I never knew that the men in blue were so nervous - he must have jumped three feet in the air! Anyway, after explaining what I was doing, and showing them the relevant licences they left, still with a look of disbelief on their faces. I am sure they thought I was crackers.

The following night up until about midnight I felt fairly confident but unfortunately it turned very cold and a thick mist came down. As dawn approached I could barely feel my feet so I decided to pack up. As I folded my landing net droplets of ice fell from it. Obviously, I was not surprised to blank. Since starting to write this piece I have had one more session at Luckystone. I could only fish until 2.00 am due to the inconvenience of work in the morning. A cold North wind prevented any fish from feeding, so roll on next week. Incidentally, the 4lb 9oz eel was 41 inches in length with a girth of 7½". Was I robbed of another 5lb + ? I have generally reckoned that an eel of 40 x 8 should go at least 4lb 12oz. Including last season, I think I have now had twelve sessions at Luckystone taking three eels. 4lb 4½oz, 4lb 9oz and 5lb 6oz. plus one other run resulting in a good fish lost. Hopefully, a SIX is just around the corner.

After that extremely good picture of Andy's start to the season, on now to what must rank as the very best ever report of a trip by Anguilla Club members. Ed.

SUMMER TRIP TO EMBERTON PARK. 20 - 29th August 1979.

By Steve Enkel.

The Emberton Park trip will always bring back happy memories as it was the first time I had the good fortune to meet up with members of the NAC. It was a privilege to fish with such an open and friendly group of people, so much so that I decided to try and join your ranks there and then. I have since been accepted as a provisional member.

I actually decided to go on the trip with Bob Leyland the night before he was due to go, when we met up in the pub. I scrounged twenty quid off him, staggered home as fast as my reeling head would allow and threw my gear in a heap in readiness for the "off" in the morning. I did not quite manage to get to bed that night and was stiff and uncomfortable in my armchair clutching a reel of trace wire. There at the window was a body jumping up and down in a tank suit with an Arsenal bobble hat perched on his head. Bob was shouting obscenities at the top of his voice, yelling something to the effect that we were late and he needed to get my money from the bank.

We piled my gear into the willy wagon and set off. After an eventful journey trying to find or obtain a rabbit for that evening's meal we arrived at Emberton Park and were struck with the problem of choosing suitable swims. The park is a fisherman's paradise and offers around 80 acres of water to fish in. We chose a small area on a promontory of land that poked out into the gravel pit known as Snipe. This swim is located on the footpath that runs between gravel pits Grebe and Snipe.

Details of SWIM FISHED.
SNIPE.

Gravel pit of approximately 20 acres surrounded by other gravel pits and has 25 to 75% of the bankside covered in trees and shrubs. Average depth 5 - 20 feet, with source of access 25yds. The bottom is somewhat flat. Total eels taken, TWO. Largest at 3lb 4oz and smallest at approx 1 lb. Bank fished, East. Distance cast 10 - 20 yds. Depth fished 2 - 5 ft, weed growth sparse, flat bottom of sand and gravel. Water clear. Bait used 2" roach, additive used for the largest eel, this being pilchard oil. Baits were fished on the bottom with no prebaiting or groundbaiting.

I think that the swim fished badly. The fish Bob caught was encouraging at 3lb 4 but the water is only shallow and by the second night the rain that had poured down all night on the first day gave way to a cloudless sky with a subsequent drop in water temperature and all feeding activity ceased. Given the right conditions I think this swim should produce. It is a natural fry holding area and large shoals of perch patrol the margins. Good fun can be had with a small Mepps or a livebait. Bait species abound in all of the pits, but in Snipe there are hoards of 1½ to 2 inch roach and rudd. These fish are very hungry as about 70% of them contain large quantities of tapeworm and when caught they have distended stomachs. When opening them up you will find up to ten worms of about 5" in length inhabiting the gut cavity. This may have caused large mortalities by now, as I cannot see them getting rid of such a large infestation. Whether this complaint is localised to this area or spread over the whole lake I do not know. This condition will be found in all of the lakes, but not to the extent it occurs in Snipe. It can be very off putting, cutting up thirty or forty of these fish for a prebaiting session and having to eat your grub afterwards.

Bob checked up with a Doctor when he got home. The Doctor said that it is very unlikely that the tapeworms could use the human body as a host. Which is a great relief. My not being the cleanest of individuals when fishing. (Probably the dirtiest).

After a joint decision between Bob and myself we moved to OTTER gravel pit and fished along the footpath at the Eastern end. This water has no tree cover along the banks and the bank that runs parallel with HERON pit is also treeless. The bank which runs parallel to the river has dense tree cover and looks the better bank to fish. That night we both blanked and after three nights with only a small eel to my credit desperation began to set in. There was a total lack of cloud cover with a moderate South East wind blowing. The days were spent in obtaining bait - gudgeon, small chub and dace from the river. These were very obliging and any angler with the inclination

could probably wangle a reasonable specimen from this stretch of the Great Ouse. All thoughts of continuing the trip in an endless binge dispersed as the evening of the 23rd waned into an absolutely incredible thunderstorm, with 100% cloud cover and the most delightful torrential rain.

It was on this night that I paid the penalty for getting my gear ready for the trip so speedily. I had three rods set up, two with what I considered normal eel rigs and one with my experimental eel rig on. Bob had told me of Arthur Suttons belief in baits suspended from the surface, so on had gone a bubble float with just enough water inside to suspend a 3" dace two feet below the surface in about 12 feet of water. I honestly remember feeling that I had nothing to lose. I cast it out over the fringe of the nearest weedbed and put the rod in the rests. I did the same to my conventional rods. All the while it had been p'ing down with rain and by the time I got back to my biv I was soaked through and my bedchair resembled a leaky waterbed. I started getting twitches straight away, on my bottom fished baits. I didn't go out to tend my indicator because of the rain. Also I neglected to look at the third rod further down the bank without an electronic alarm attached, so engrossed was I in this new lease of life my indicators had found after being dormant for the past three nights. There is nothing I like to see more than one of those dear little creatures come out of hibernation and go scrambling hell for leather up the rod to perch in the butt ring.

When I did glance at the third rod I could not see the silver foil beast. Cursing that I would have to go out in the rain and retrieve him, I noticed him hanging from the butt ring. Jumping out of my biv I ran to the rod and struck into something which was well and truly on. There was a bucking at the other end of the tackle and a grinding sensation along the line then all went slack. Reeling in I found the line to have been broken so placing the rod back on the rest I returned to the biv leaving behind a trail of air that had a delicate shade of blue. I was twice as wet as before, uncomfortable and very depressed. Then my alarms decided to have a bout of water on the head and no matter how hard I yanked on the leads from the confines of my biv they would not stop sounding. Throwing caution to the wind and my buzzer box out of the door I unplugged them. Feeling extremely cold and wet I could just picture the coroners report in the morning - "Death from severe hypothermia". I struggled into my sleeping bag.

Just as I was getting something like comfortable another silver foil indicator lurched forward to lodge in the butt ring. Crawling out I struck and snapped on the strike, then hurried back into the biv. That rod flew like a javelin into the nearest bush and I lapsed into a fitful sleep. When I awake I looked at the last surviving rod and saw the line was tight. The rain had abated somewhat so I once again set out. I struck into a large weedbed. The line I was using was 8lb Maxima and usually in these circumstances there is a good chance that the eel is still on the other end and I was quite confident that I could pump it out, but the line never stood the pressure imparted to it. It was now light so I tested the line on my scales and found it to break consistently at 3½lb. If I had been in less of a rush to get ready for the trip I would have found the line to be faulty and would have replaced it. I lost three good fish that night due to my own carelessness. I bought some new 12lb line that morning and was reasonably confident that nothing would break it.

AUGUST 23 - 24.

I fished the same swim again that night, the conditions looking promising with total cloud cover and a light S.E. wind. But by twelve that night the cloud had dispersed leaving a clear sky. It stayed that way until morning when the wind turned to the N.W bringing back the cloud. I had no bites at all. Bob had moved to the tree lined bank, but he too had no bites at all. It seemed to me that the night following a storm the eels went of feeding.

August 24 - 25.

I looked forward to meeting some of the NAC members today as Bob said they would start arriving that evening for the weekends fishing.

Brian Crawford was the first to arrive and set up pitch along the same bank that Bob moved to, while I decided to fish a swim on the river Ouse itself. This swim did not look anywhere near as good as those which Brian and Bob were fishing and the only reason I chose to fish there was because the bailiff had told me that a FOUR and several THREES had been caught there recently. The swim I chose to fish was just up

the bank from the concrete weir, directly opposite the small back stream which bypasses the weir to join the main river again some way downstream of the weir. This back stream, I was told, used to be the site of the old eel traps which were in use commercially in bygone years.

Arthur Sutton was the next to arrive, and I believe the first words he spoke to me were "Fancy a nice cup of tea?" That I believe is something of a sacred ritual used by NAC members when meeting at the waterside. I spent quite some time talking to Arthur and hearing first hand about fishing with sub surface baits. This was a thing I had heard little of as a method of catching eels. Just talking to Arthur sparked off in me my enthusiasm which had previously fallen to a low ebb.

That night I was better prepared. I had groundbaited my swim with chopped up roach and was using two small dace as baits. Bob, unfortunately, had fallen ill and was feeling very sorry for himself - just muttering to himself which, for Bob, is so very unusual as he will normally talk all night to anything which appears to listen. His illness was due to the pork pie he had eaten, and not to the beverage which he, Brian and myself had consumed that lunchtime. That night however had turned fine again with no wind or cloud cover, the air temperature at 2030 was 60°F with the water at a similar temperature. A slight mist hung over the water and the lack of wind made the quarter hourly chimes from a nearby church almost unbearable (witness Alan Mitchell, Ed) I cast my baits to be slightly downstream of the groundbaited area and into the mouth of the backstream, using 12lb line with a 1oz link assembly, single strand Eleasticum and a size two hook.

The night continued dead calm and the surface of the water was like gloss. By midnight I hadn't had a bite, but I had that certain feeling which I occasionally get and which usually means a bite. At 12.30 (00.30 Ed) the rod nearest the groundbait registered a bite and the staccato bleeps from my buzzer told me it was a fast run. I struck immediately on picking up the rod and the rod arched over. I cannot do justice in words to the fight which that fish put up and I honestly thought that I would tire before the fish did. The fish slid into the net at the third attempt. I marched straight over to Bob and thrust the fish into his biv and asked "How big?" "Small three" was his reply, I knew it was bigger than that but the mood he was in made me not press the matter. After putting the fish into my keepnet I retired to bed, having no further bites that night. That fish weighed 4lb 12oz and was the largest eel I had ever taken. The eel had been lip hooked and I retained it at Brian's request to show the other members. Unfortunately, the eel died, I think from the strain I had imposed on it during the fight. I would have given my eye teeth to put it back alive, but occasionally these things happen through little fault of our own.

August 25 - 26.

Alan Mitchell, Ernie Orme and son, and Arthur Smith arrived today. Alan fished between Arthur Sutton and Brian on OTTER while Ernie and Arthur Smith fished the river upstream from myself. We settled down to fish that night with no cloud cover and a slight Northerly wind. The night was very cold, but at 0400 hrs I caught an eel of 3lb 8oz again on a very small whole fish bait, this time a small chub. Everyone else blanked although Arthur Smith was plagued by small chub while using worm as bait.

August 26 - 27.

The afternoon of the 26th saw the arrival of a very dubious character in a Bait '78 van. This turned out to be David Walker who started to hand out free maggots and other assorted paraphernalia, so replenishing our ammunition we set about tackling the local eel population in a frenzy of activity. Brian had moved on to HERON lake where he proceeded to remove literally tons of weed in order to make his swim more fishable, while I went back to my bedchair to sleep with renewed vigour. That night the whole lot of us blanked and that was about it for the last summer trip. Bob, myself, Ernie, Arthur and Brian departed on the 27th. Arthur Sutton stayed on to the 28th while Alan and David went home on the 29th. No more eels were taken, but hopefully we will do better this year with Emberton Park once again as the venue. Bob and myself will be going for the whole week and I sincerely hope to see you there.

ANALYSIS OF SUMMER TRIP, 1979.

List of waters fished, and who fished them.

DATE	Location	Member fishing.
August 20 - 21	SNIPE	Stephen Enkel Bob Leyland.
August 21 - 22	SNIPE	As above
August 22 - 23	OTTER	As above
23 - 24	OTTER	As Above
24 - 25	River Ouse	Stephen Enkel
"	OTTER	Bob Leyland
"	OTTER	Brian Crawford
"	OTTER	Arthur Sutton
25 - 26	River Ouse	Stephen Enkel
"	River Ouse	Arthur Smith.
"	River Ouse	Ernie Orme.
"	OTTER	Arthur Sutton
"	OTTER	Brian Crawford
"	OTTER	Bob Leyland
"	OTTER	Alan Mitchell
26 - 27	River Ouse	Stephen Enkel
"	River Ouse	Arthur Smith
"	River Ouse	Ernie Orme
"	OTTER	Arthur Sutton
"	OTTER	Alan Mitchell
"	HERON	Brian Crawford.
"	River Ouse	Bob Leyland
"	River Ouse	Dave Walker
27 - 28	River Ouse	Arthur Sutton
"	River Ouse	Alan Mitchell
"	River Ouse	Dave Walker
28 - 29	River Ouse	Dave Walker
"	River Ouse	Alan Mitchell

ROD HOURS FOR NIGHT AND DAY, AND BAITS USED.

WATER FISHED	ROD HOURS				ROD HOURS		
	DAY DB	NIGHT DB	DAY WORM	NIGHT WORM	DAY	NIGHT	TOTAL
SNIPE	31½	68	1½	-	33½	68	101½
OTTER	124½	428½	3½	9½	128	438	566
OUSE	35	127	-	22	35	149	184
HERON	10	16	-	-	10	16	26
TOTAL	201½	639½	5½	31½	206½	639½	877½

EELS CAUGHT

SIZE	WATER	MEMBER	BAIT	TIME	FATE
3lb 4oz	SNIPE	Bob Leyland	Roach(inj)	0430	Returned
1lb 4oz	SNIPE	Steve Enkel	Roach	0130	"
2lb 4oz	OTTER	Bob Leyland	Dace	2230	"
3lb 8oz	OUSE	Steve Enkel	Chub	0400	"
4lb 12oz	Ouse	Steve Enkel	Dace	0130	Died.

The total rod hours was 877½ and the returns low, only five eels from 8 members
The average weight of the eels taken was 3lb, which is reasonable.

COMMENT.

The number of RH fished per eel was 175.5

This number tends to give the wrong impression as it takes into account the total rod hours fished with all four methods.

1/ Day fished dead bait	201½ RH
2/ Day fished worm	5½ RH
3/ Night fished dead bait	639½ RH
4/ Night fished worm	31½ RH

But as only one method produced results you can only draw conclusions for the night fished dead bait. The other methods cannot be elaborated on .

The number of RH/ EEL when fishing DB at night was 127.9

I was very surprised by the number of rod hours fished with worm at night, and this method accounted for only a small fraction of the total RH fished.

We all know that worms produce bites at a quicker rate than dead baits, and account for smaller eels, but the average weight of these eels was 3lb, so the more bites you can induce from an eel population with an average weight of 3lb the more 3lb eels you will catch. (See Editors note at end)

I know that you will all say balls, or words to that effect, but I for one will certainly give worms more of a try on the gravel pits, but not on the river as I do not want to be plagued with small chub.

Another small point that I have gleaned from the report for the trip was the lack of pre-baiting or groundbaiting(non existent in most cases). The fact that the two largest fish came from a well baited swim could be a significant point and should not be overlooked on the next trip.

BREAKDOWN OF INDIVIDUAL WATERS FISHED.

I will not elaborate on two of the waters - Grebe as no member fished that one and Snipe as I have given the facts earlier.

OTTER.

Gravel pit of five to ten acres surrounded by other pits and bordered on one side by the river Great Ouse. Surrounded by trees and shrubs covering 25 - 75% of the bank. Overall depth of 5 to 20 feet. Bottom is fairly flat. Source of access is the river Ouse 300 yds away. Total eels taken - ONE. Weight 2lb 4oz. Details of swim the fish was taken from - Bank fished NE, Depth 5 - 10feet, distance cast 20 - 50 yds. Weed dense. Bottom of sand and gravel with very clear water. BAIT details - 3" dace fished on bottom with no additive, prebaiting or groundbaiting.

RIVER OUSE.

Lowland river surrounded by residential and agricultural areas. Average depth 5 to 20 feet with an irregular bottom. Total eels taken TWO. Largest 4.12 smallest 3.8. Details of swim fish came from. Bank fished SE. Depth 10 to 15 feet. Distance cast 20 to 30 yds. Weed sparse. Bottom mud silt. Water fairly cloudy . BAIT DETAILS. Smallest baits obtainable - Chub and dace 1½" in length. There was no prebaiting but thirty small roach were cut up and used as groundbait. No additives used.

HERON WATER.

Gravel pit of 5 - 10 acres. Bankside cover 0 - 25 % . Average depth 5 - 20. Source of access about 1000 yds away. Bottom flat. Eels taken - none. Bank fished NE. Depth 12 feet with dense weed growth. Bottom of mud/silt and very clear water.

For details of site amenities and charges, Tony Hollerbach wrote two articles in back issues of the Bulletin. I do not know which issues as I was not a member at that time. I have, however, reproduced his map of the park for this article.

Steve Enkel.

Very well done, Steve. I know that most members will enjoy reading your piece and digesting the details therein. Ed.

Editors note.

There is but one point I will take Steve up on. He refers to the average size of eels taken on DB as being three pounds. That is correct. He also says that bites will come faster on worm than on DB. That again is generally correct. His one mistake is in assuming that because bites come faster on worm, the greater will be the number of 3lb eels taken. I refer to previously published material and in particular Dr Coulsons work in the Report 1970. This shows that although the rate of catch on worm is faster than the rate of catch of fish baits(whether dead or alive), the average weight of eels taken on worm is always lower than that on fish baits - for a given water.

This was one of the excersises elaborately gone into earlier in the history of the Club It is a common enough mistake, and does not detract from Steves article which is excellent in every sense. I hope that we can follow Steves pattern again for our trip this year, and what better than a few photographs to illustrate such an article ? Camera owners please note !

I do wholeheartedly agree that those members present at Emberton had a whale of a time and although there were few eels taken, the trip was a resounding success in a social sense. Please do try and come along this year - and do return your slip to Terry as early as you can(or even earlier). It is possible that we will have to let the park authorities know how many of our members are expected., so do let us know soon.

We are now registered with the Thames Water Authority as an Angling Club within their area of control. What this means exactly is that we will get prior notification of anything the Authority wishes to do concerned with fishing (and in our case, eel fishing) and we will get the early opportunity to put forward our point of view.

If you should find out that other water authorities are doing something similar, please do not hesitate to let us know, and we will take it up.

You may not have realised, but your President is far from retirement in more senses than one. Following an urgent telephone conversation with our secretary, Terry told me that he was so very busy as to be unable to get the Bulletin prepared in any way. I offered to step in and do the neccessary work and this I have done, otherwise you would not have this issue. So if you have any complaint about this issue, then blame it on AJS folks, and not on poor old Terry. I am hoping that in this way, helping out when the going gets tough, we will retain the services of our present secretary who might otherwise have thought about packing the job in.

I sincerely hope that you get as much enjoyment from reading this Bulletin as I did in preparing it. I have not used all of our stock of articles, mainly because of the rush to get this issue ready, but that is not to say that you should stop sending your articles. Please do send anything you have to me directly, and thankyou.

The back page is the map Steve referred to in his article.