



President:
Membership Secretary:

Neil Smith, 14 Carolside Ave, Clarkston, Glasgow, G76 7AE Tel: 0141-644 2934
Aird Wallace, 14 Hillend Road, Clarkston, Glasgow, G76 7TQ, Tel: 0141 644 2238

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PILMUIR RESERVOIR

Like many anglers I like to vary the waters where I fish as much as my budget and free time will allow but there's a limit to the number of clubs that one can be a member of so choosing the best of them is important to my overall fishing experience. Choosing the best, however, is not always that easy as there are so many things to consider and each fishery has its own good and bad points.

The Pilmuir Reservoir is, as you all know, now managed by Walton Angling Club and is offered to all Walton Club members at a price of £70 for a full season in addition to the £35 already paid to fish the White Cart and Earn waters. This represents great value for money which is unlikely to be matched in the local area by other angling clubs. But it's not all about money is it? It's the overall angling experience that counts. So, what will you get for your money on the Pilmuir?

Well, the Pilmuir is approximately 15 acres overall which is a good size for a small still water. It enjoys a sheltered location within the grounds of East Renfrewshire Golf Course. The reservoir can be accessed directly by car via a gated, single track, road with parking for two cars right beside the water. Additional parking is provided at the Green Keeper's huts at the far end of the reservoir and in a lay-by at the entrance gate, a short walk to the dam wall.

The average water depth is around eight to ten feet which ensures that fish can be found all over the reservoir. The bottom is mostly shingle and many of the banks are gently sloping making it ideal for safe wading. The water is crystal clear and is home to a large breeding population of wild brown trout ranging in size from three inches to well over twelve inches long. This water has not been artificially stocked for many years and there are no plans to do so in the foreseeable future. The trout breed very successfully in the two main feeder burns that serve the reservoir. This is one of the only true wild brown trout waters around.

There are two good boats available for members to use and these are kept secured in a small boat house at the far end of the dam wall. The boats can easily be launched on bogeys down a purpose built slipway with the aid of a manual winch, however, there's a bit of a knack to getting the boats back on the bogey at the end of the fishing session so don't leave it till it's pitch black.

The latest catch return statistics show that 121 trout have been caught on the Pilmuir since the start of the season, nineteen of which were over 12 inches long with a further thirty seven between 10 and 12 inches long. It should be

noted that the 121 trout were caught by 10 anglers over 54 visits which is a good catch rate of 2.2 fish per visit.

So that, I believe, is a good honest description of the Pilmuir reservoir but seeing it for yourself is the best way to make up your mind so I would definitely recommend paying it a visit. Members of the committee can be found there most Tuesday evenings so why not pop up and have a chat with us and who knows we may even let you have a cast or two.

OUTING TO HARELAW DAM

The first outing of the season was a great success with everyone agreeing that Harelaw fishery was one of the best venues we've fished recently.

From the outset fishery owner Alex Cairnie was the perfect host advising our members where the best fishing areas were and which flies to use. Before starting out he announced that although we had purchased a 3 fish limit ticket he would be happy to increase that to 4 fish for our competition.

The evening started out well with a number of fish being caught early on. However, the last hour and a half proved very difficult as several hatches of Caenis, (the anglers curse), took place and virtually no one had a fish after that.

Nevertheless there were 8 fish caught for a total weight of 19lb 2oz. Top rod went to Malcolm Brown who, despite being an eejit by dropping the biggest of his three fish into the loch by mistake, clinched the title with two fish for 5lb 4oz with Ian Waddle a close second with two for 5lb 0oz.

Malcolm also won the prize for the biggest fish at 2lb 12oz and together with his partner John Kimble, won best boat with their combined total of three fish. Runner up boat was manned by Ian Waddle and Aird Wallace who had two fish between them.

At the end of the session fishery owner Alex surprised everyone by presenting Malcolm with an engraved plaque from the fishery to mark his success as top rod and then provided an added bonus of hot steak pies for everyone. A perfect end to a very enjoyable evening.

FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME

Some of you will have noticed that the Hydro-break dam above Kirkland Bridge is almost complete and all the on site portacabins have gone.

Work is still being carried out at various locations from the Dam to Mains Farm, therefore, the area is still classed as a construction site and will remain so until the official hand over.

The Dam construction and associated biodiversity improvements have considerably changed the landscape from Kirkland Bridge to Mains Farm.

The Dam itself is a huge construction and has had the biggest impact on a part of the river that was a favourite with many of our members. The area is unrecognisable to what it was before construction began. However, this doesn't mean that it will be devoid of fish. Far from it! The outlet from the dam empties into a wide pool that's over three feet deep in places and already trout have been seen rising along its length. Once there's a good cover of bank vegetation in place it could be an interesting spot to fish.

Moving upstream beyond the Dam you will see that an access road has been constructed all the way up to the farm and miles of brand new stock proof fencing has been erected to enclose the whole construction site. The fencing will stop any cattle getting into the conservation area and will also protect the river banks.

Within the conservation area itself the green fields have been replaced with bare soil with hollows and depressions built into them. When completed they will be filled with water to create wetlands for wading birds and other wildlife. The bare soil will eventually be planted with various plants and grasses from locally collected seed. Trees will also be planted at selected locations.

As you follow the river upstream you will reach the junction pool which the site contractor has kindly deepened for us. Take care around the pool as no one knows how deep it is. Further up you will come across a newly built meander which was constructed to improve the long straight stretch down river from Mains Farm. At the moment it looks pretty horrible and clinical but with time, some new vegetation and a little help from the beavers it should improve.

Moving to the left away from the river you will come across the first completed 'scrape' which has been filled with water and is already attracting Oyster Catchers and Heron. Along side the pool an artificial nesting site for Sand Martins has been constructed with plenty of birds already in residence.

It will be interesting to see how the area develops in the months and years to come but once the contractors have gone and the river settles down I have a feeling it will be better than it was before construction began.

BEAVERS

The beavers have been working even harder this year to look after both the rivers and the Pilmuir. A lot of work was needed on the Pilmuir at the beginning of the season to refurbish the boats, paint the boat house and trim the vegetation on the dam wall.

The loch is prone to summer algae blooms and in order to combat this the beavers purchased a roundel of barley straw which, over several weeks, was prepared and partly submerged at various locations round the loch. Barley straw is a well proven, natural, method of algae control. It releases a chemical that kills the algae and prevents it from forming.

The next task will be to remove some of the weed growing in the loch with our special purpose weed cutter.

On the river a number of things have been achieved. Overhanging trees have been trimmed back below Kirkland Bridge to improve access. New groynes have been constructed at the newly deepened junction pool and groynes on the little Cart have been repaired.

Jobs still to be done include repairs to a number of stiles, more tree pruning and more groyne repairs below Kirkland Bridge.

We've been a bit short of helpers this year so if anyone would like to help us on a Tuesday evening we would be very grateful for your support. We normally post the details of where we'll be on the club web site message board but you can also contact the President or Secretary who will pass on the details.

We look forward to seeing some new faces.

OUTING/COMPETITION - 2nd LEG

The second outing of the season will be held at Arran View Fishery near Moscow on Saturday 4th September. This is a day session from 9.00am until 5.00pm and will include lunch. The cost will be £25 per person and should be paid as soon as possible but no later than 1st August.

Arran View is situated on the A719 between Moscow and Waterside. For those with a sat-nav the postcode is KA3 6HZ.

The fish stock comprises of rainbows, blues & browns. The fisher has two ponds both of which are stocked twice weekly, usually Mondays and Fridays and the average size of the fish is about 3-4 lbs in weight.

Application for places must include a cheque to cover the full amount and should be sent to the Membership Secretary whose address is at the top of this newsletter.

CLUB BARBEQUE

The club is holding its annual barbeque on Saturday 24 July at 7.30pm up at the Pilmuir. It will be held either at the boat house or at the green keepers huts. Each member attending will be asked for a donation of £5 towards the cost of the food and beverages. This is a perfect opportunity for those not familiar with the Pilmuir to have a look and talk to those who regularly fish it.