

BEWL WATER FISHING REPORT
Week ending Friday 15th April 2022 - by Ray French

I am pleased to report a very good week with plenty of fish to the nets, not a fish a chuck perhaps but nevertheless some very good sport for all. We are of course still in early Spring, with yet not all the leaves on the trees and Jack Frost still making a regular appearance.

FISHING

I have been out in the boat a couple of times this week and after the big and variable winds reported last week it was a pleasure to have a period of settled weather. Probably best if I describes my day on Wednesday as it was typical of the week and not a lot has changed nor is it likely to over the weekend.

So at 8.30am with boat partner John Turner on the engine, we crept from the jetty and motored just fifty yards out to drift along the bank that runs down to the Aqua Swim complex towards the dam. The sky was mostly clear with a bright warm sun and scattered cloud. What little wind was evident by the lightest of ripples coming up Hook Straight and struggling to reach the dam.

This drift, which includes the 'Playground' has about 8 -12ft of water at fifty yards and popular with both bank and boat rods and always worth a look for it can be very productive on occasions.

John was using a slow intermediate with 3 flies, a Blob on top dropper, Nymph in the middle and small Booby on point. Because it was bright, with little drift and no visible evidence of fish, I decided to check for fish lying on the bottom so put on my searching rig of fast sinking line with a short leader and two Cat Boobies. This combo has caught me a lot of fish so far this season in the boat and has always been the go-to method from the bank when the fish are down and grazing. Anyway, it didn't work on this occasion even though the drift was slow and comprehensive neither of us had a touch of a fish. Next call the dam.

We bounced almost the length of dam by drifting in from 80 yds, motoring out again, moving along 100 yds and repeating the whole process. The wind had picked up a bit and although we had deployed the drogue we were in deeper water and it was too fast for me to fish the bottom as I wanted. So, I changed to a Di3 with Blob on top dropper, two Nymphs on the hang and Booby on the Point. Although there were now a few fluffy clouds it was still very bright and I still thought the fish were down, maybe 5 - 8 ft. Anyway John was covering any fish high in the water, his Booby would hold his flies up to sink very slowly.

Oh yes, and what I haven't mentioned is how clear the water was this week, with visibility at approx. 10ft. Again, we didn't get a touch. However, at the end of the dam in Chingley corner one of the Any Method boys in a boat, anchored about 50yds off the dam and the wood, was netting a fish! I had noticed the net go out previously when we were half way along so twice is encouragement indeed. I watched his partner unhook the fish and despatch it and could see the telltale weight on a short leader. Ledgering on the bottom. The AM boys have three methods here at Bewl, all fished from a static boat. Spinning with a lure, baited hooks with various baits or paste on a float, or ledgered direct on the bottom. Here I believe they were employing the latter or similar.

Just to check I motored over and asked the couple. One could speak a modicum of English and so could I so with a couple of thumbs down I soon established the fish were indeed hard on the bottom. A big smile and a colourul jar held out in a clenched fist confirmed the successful fly needed to be a 'Daglow' florescent Lime Green pattern
Helpful chap!!

There were a few boats anchored along this section to Chingley Point as well as some out in the open water along with fly rods, indeed for Club members with keen memories they included the legendary Dave 'Bushy' Withers (with Ghillie) who was making yet another of his rare appearances.

With a few more clouds in evidence and with them a growing ripple, we motored up past Chingley Point and into Bewl Strait for about 100yds turned and began a drift. With the evidence of the AM angler showing the fish to be on the bottom I was a tad peeved I had changed lines from my original choice and moved so soon but we did give it a go and the fish were obviously not there. Halfway into the drift to Chingley I had a 'pluck' on the Di3 followed by a tug that didn't stick. Nothing more on that drift but on a repeat of the drift John had a good tug high in the water. What on he wasn't sure, it didn't hang on. And then right at the end of the drift almost on the stones I had a fish on and lost it close to the boat. The thing is though I had seen the fish for a moment, in a whisp of cloud cover, take the Booby. Repeating the drifts in this area I kept getting light takes but no lock ups.

It was now mid-morning; an element of cloud and the fish had obviously come up albeit they were very shy and not prepared to attack the flies even when pulled

I was also pretty sure the few enquiries I had were not to the Nymphs but to the Blob or Booby.

So, on went the floater and a 20ft leader with just two flies, a small Fab (Foam Arse Blob) on the point and a small blob as a dropper at 10ft.

This time we drifted nearer Chingley Point, a steady slow drift with the drogue out a good cast with two long pulls to straighten the leader and/or surprise a fish into taking the fly and then just keep the flies static, not retrieving, just keeping it all tight and in touch.

The contact came about halfway back, just the slightest tightening of the leader, lift the rod and fish on. It moved slowly away and then came to life. These Bewl fish certainly go this season and although each batch has an element of small fish to increase overall numbers the majority are a good 2lb and over with the odd fish to 3lb+.

We spent the next couple of hours drifting between the middle of Bewl Straight to the Dam and it was noticeable that takes were mostly as a result of a cloud passing over the sun. I caught steadily continuing to fish basically on the drop allowing fish to find my flies rather than me find or entice the fish. John continued to fish with his set up throughout and although he had fish it was on this occasion nowhere near as successful as mine. The wind continued to increase and by mid-afternoon the main bowl had bright sun and with it a stiff breeze. Always difficult fishing and this was no exception. Just off the wind was better but eventually the takes stopped for us and the fish disappeared. I did change lines again and manage to catch one deeper on a D15 sinker but we decided to give it best.

SUMMARY

The day was very much the style for the week, slow early with little wind and the fish down. With increasing wind, ripple and cloud the fish came up and played until the wind and sun strengthened, the hatch stopped, and I assume the fish then went down again.

On Wednesday I had chat with 'Bushy' after play and his day concurred very much with mine, he caught well although he was using a Sink tip line, with I believe a small Lure, Nymph and Blob most of the time, whatever! It did show that often how we each catch can vary considerably. In technique, speed, flies, lures, or bait. But what is common to all for success whatever your fishing genre is depth. So keep constantly aware of the water and others around you for evidence of technique and/or change by others or signs of fish.

I did notice that during the time we were catching, those boats that were Spinning were catching as well, like us they weren't earlier.

FISH FORCAST

The weather for the next week looks good. Any cloud will be a bonus and bring those fish up quickly for both bank and boat. In constant sun just fish deeper especially on the bank with Boobies or if you prefer heavy Buzzers. Remember, as reported earlier in the week we had an estimated 10 lb Rainbow caught at Ferry Point from the bank on the fly.

Just to remind you there is a good stocking programme this season and it is continuing on a regular basis. The fish are well spread out and are turning up sometimes in the most obscure places. However, it is no secret that there are always fish in the main bowl and surrounding area.

Tight lines this week, enjoy your fishing!

Ray F.