

BEWL WATER FISHING REPORT
For week ending Friday 18/8/2023
by Ray French.

This past week has seen a marked improvement on the fishing with fish now showing regularly, especially on cloudy days or when large clouds pass over the sun.

The fish are still spread out and not easy to catch, but nevertheless they are there. This month, the peak of summer holidays, is traditionally a quiet time for boat fishing nationwide and Bewl is no exception, so it is not always easy to give a comprehensive report. However, I go down every week and fish alongside the regulars, both Any Method and Fly, and chat with the Rangers so I am able to give personal experience and a broad picture.

I was out again this week on Wednesday with John T. and once again the sun was bright and the sky blue but this time, there was not a breath of wind! There had been fish caught at the weekend, mostly to any method rods using bait, and mostly in the main bowl and the beginning of the two main arms, Hook Straight and Bewl Straight. A few fish to the fly but it was windy and pretty much everyone was anchored.

Bank angling at Bewl is almost non-existent in high Summer with the vast majority of fish moving out to deeper, cooler water, but Ferry Point and the Dam would be worth a try early morning. Anyway, back to Wednesday... Not a lot happened early doors but gradually clouds started to build and with them a slight ripple. Fish began to jump vertically here and there, suggesting they were coming from depth. We had played around with different lines exploring the depths, especially early in the flat calm, where we could get deep and inch the flies back up to the boat. But apart from John getting a 'double up' of beautifully conditioned Perch from about 15ft down on a DI5 we had nothing to show.

With the cloud building I went back on the floating line. I had started on it with Buzzers and nymphs and fished straight through in the calm but changed to a DI8 to try deeper. Now I was back on it, this time with a small Booby on the point. John changed to a Med Sink with Blob, Nymph and Booby on point. It was late morning when I had my first fish courtesy of a large dark cloud and a breath of wind that ruffled the ripple. It hit the white Booby that was fishing almost static. I fish a lot of flies' static at Bewl, especially the Booby in summer, and it takes the majority of my fish. It sits almost stationary in the water being drawn slowly down with the weight of the other flies. I can then imagine a fish slowly swimming up to the Booby, getting inquisitive and thrashing its tail in excitement which makes the light and buoyant fly dance about...irresistible!! Well, it certainly was this time and after a brief struggle I had a nice Rainbow in the net. We were about 300m off the Dam on another long and slow drift down the middle of the Bowl. As the cloud increased so did the ripple and drift speed, although a drogue was not necessary.

There were still the occasional fish jumping but now they were jumping horizontally, arching over and across the water, suggesting they were high and on the move. My fish took the fly no more than a foot down. We carried on in anticipation, but these fish were difficult. They just didn't want to play. I had a couple more enquiries but nothing positive...until I changed lines.

I put on a slow Intermediate (Hover), still fishing the same four fly leader, but changed the top dropper fly to another white Booby making one at each end. I then changed the middle Nymphs to small Hoppers. A slow figure of 8 with this line and the two Boobies kept the flies in the surface film and I thought the Trout would take a small Hopper. But it didn't. It took the Booby again, this time the one I had added on the top dropper. It also took within 30 seconds of the flies hitting the water and again with a cloud covering the sun!

All too soon it was 2.30pm, our usual time for packing up these days. The cloud cover had come and almost gone, and the blue sky dominated once again. I had a couple of follows and an enquiry before the end and John had a couple of taps that didn't develop.

SUMMARY

- The water visibility, although having a green tinge, is good in the majority of places especially away from the banks where the wind has stirred it up.
- The fish are definitely high in the water with cloud, and even in sun at a depth where they can see surface activity.
- There were not many boats out on Wednesday, but I saw three other boats catch in the main Bowl.
- The wind this week has been moving round all the time. It was Northerly on Wednesday but will be SW over the weekend.
- The Trout I have been catching to date are in excellent condition and no sign of disease, gill problems or Cormorant damage. They are not as big as the early season stock but fight really well.

Tight lines, have a good week.

Ray French