

Summer on the Fly

With the whole world currently on lock down due to the coronavirus our last fishing trip now seems nothing more than a distant memory. However, with summer just around the corner and a possibility that lockdown restrictions may start to be eased off we may finally be able to get out fishing after all. I love fishing in the summer and for me the hotter the better, as my hands get cold in the winter!

Fishing in the summer can bring its challenges though and catching trout, for me anyway, can become difficult from late July and throughout August. So during these months I tend to turn my attention to catching course fish on the fly. So I divide my time between a club lake at Tingrith, near Toddington, Beds and wandering the banks of my local river Ivel in Biggleswade.

The lake is small, shallow and silty and has a lot of carp up to about 10lb, although they mainly average 3-4 lbs in weight. I use a 6wt rod with a 6-8lb leader and its great fun trying to tempt them on flies made from deer hair clipped to imitate a floating dog biscuit. By feeding a few free offerings the carp soon come on the feed, but it's not as easy as it sounds, as these fish become wary after being caught and released many times before. It's amazing as they always manage to pick of all the freebies you have thrown in and leave your fly, which was sat in the middle of the free offerings, all alone. When they do make a mistake and you hook one they put up a great fight on fly gear and it's a battle to keep them out of the lily pads as they motor out to the middle of the shallow lake.

My plan usually starts by fishing floating pellet imitations and then I change to more natural looking flies. Foam backed beetles and klinkhammers have proved to be successful. My nephew, Luke, never lets me forget about the biggest fish he has caught there. That was on a foam backed beetle and at 9lb plus it was a lovely fish and a lot bigger than my largest at 5lb.



Luke with a carp taken on Foam backed beetle



Dace caught on a Griffith's gnat

With certain areas of your local river offering free fishing it's always worth a go. I tend to target dace and chub and for this I use my 3wt 8ft rod. For dace I use a 2lb tippet with a size 18 drennan super specialist barbless hook and smaller dry flies. These are usually Griffith's knat or green fly imitations. With the record dace only weighing 11b 5 oz, the average size of dace

caught being only a few ounces, however, occasionally a few monster 8oz specimens do turn up. Dace can usually be found in the shallow gravel runs of the river and give themselves

away by coming up and taking insects off the surface. With small mouths and lighting quick bites a few hours of fun can be had trying to tempt these fish on a dry fly.



Chub taken on bushy dry fly

By upping the size of your tippet to 4lb, chub can be targeted on a fly. Although I have caught them on small black lures and gold bead hairs ear nymphs, it's more fun to catch them on a dry. This method has proved to be successful and last year while fishing a free stretch of water at Broom, at the back of Jordan's mill. I tied on a mayfly imitation and by casting to some overhanging vegetation on the far bank I was able to tempt a nice 2lb Chub to come up and take my fly. After a spirited fight, where it tried to find all the snags, I soon had it in the net.

So, if the trout fishing gets tough this summer, why not try something different and who knows you may end up catching a lovely specimen dace.



The Flies

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