

PAXMAN'S ANGLING CLUB

Founded 1950



CHAIRMANS REPORT

In the 20 or so years I have been a member of Paxmans, I have to say the outgoing season has to be one of the most productive as a club I can recall. Steve will cover it in more detail in the Treasurers report, but we have seen unprecedented levels of investment into the clubs future under the guidance of the current committee. We have purchased a storage container which is situated centrally at Home Farm, to allow ease of access to our tools and equipment by committee members and willing volunteers from the membership, our own nets for our ongoing in-house fishery management work, a specialist fish transport tank with oxygen delivery equipment, emergency aeration equipment as a peace of mind measure, and a full set of grass cutting equipment and small storage shed for the Wix complex.

On top of that, we have purchased/ordered a multiple batches of fish, for our waters to support the ongoing diversification of the club. We've built a good team of bailiffs and a have dedicated hard-working committee, so to all those club officials, and all the willing volunteers from our membership, I'd like to say thank you for your hard work and dedication to the club and its future over the past season.

FISHERIES OFFICERS REPORT

Home Farm

Our Microchip system is still operational for the Wels Catfish, a total of 47 captures were reported through our website, which equated to 30 different microchipped fish being caught ranging from 3lbs to over 100lbs. At the latest count we have 5 fish, microchipped over 70lbs, with one of those being over 80, and two-tails over 101lbs. We saw a number of large bream caught up to around 11lbs, and some decent catches of Carp, with 3 different upper 20 Mirrors, and a common of 34lbs being reported. The water level as you know, did go to a level lower than has been seen in recent years, and we did have to close for a short time due to some Blue/Green algae being present. The water did also suffer a couple of very heavy algal blooms but dissolved oxygen levels were monitored closely and did not cause any major concern, though our aeration equipment was prepared and on stand-by.

Wix Complex

Our Microchip system is still operational for the Wels Catfish, a total of 30 captures were reported through our website, which equated to 16 different microchipped fish being caught ranging from 14lbs to over 50lbs. At the latest count we have 2 fish, microchipped over 40lbs, 3 over 30lbs, 7 over 20lbs. Carp catches were a bit hit and miss, with the low water level not helping matters, nether the less the known 30 was caught a few times, with a few other 20lb fish. As you may already be aware mid-February we stocked 6x C6 Carp purchased from Chilston Fish Farm, all of these were between 20 and 22lbs, and we are operating a feeding program into the spring to help this fish grow on, with the very really prospect of all 6 fish being around 30lb by next spring. After much discussion at committee, the decision has been made to focus Wix 2 as a Specimen Carp water, to make the most of the significant investment in the otter fence last year. This means that we have ongoing plans to remove some of the silver fish to St.Osyth Rectangle, and to also thin out the Catfish to allow the Carp the grow. We did net Wix 2 earlier this year, but struggled due to the ice, and didn't get what we had hoped. Holding pens are in place, any Catfish caught should be placed in there, and myself notified via the emergency mobile number. Catfish have been removed so far. The application of the dye to control the weed has started this month and will continue

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through the summer. Wix 1 also suffered from low water levels during the summer months, though those that did fish it, generally saw the same decent catches of small sized Carp as we have seen for many years. Some plastic pallets were installed into swims along two banks early in 2022 to improve access to the water.

Alresford

Alresford has most recently seen some Pike captures to over 18lbs which it hasn't done for some quite years now, with a few captures of other mid-double fish also being reported showing that the Pike stock is doing well. The Carp fishing was much the same as recent years, hit and miss, but with plenty of 20lb fish coming to those willing to put in the time and effort. There were a couple of reports of Carp just over the 30lbs barrier also. Most recently Mark Ost the owner has decided to introduce some more fish into the water, in the form of young Carp, between 2lbs and 16lbs, with a total of around 50 fish being added. His intention being to support the club in future proofing the aging Carp stock. To counteract the introduction of these new fish and allow them some space to grow we are working in partnership with him, to thin out some of the Bream and Silver stock over the next season or two, the populations of both species having grown significantly in recent years. The work party planned for this season, will focus on the steps at the bungalow end which are in desperate need of repair along with general tree cutting and bankside maintenance.

St.Osyth

St.Osyth is seeing perhaps the biggest change in terms of fish stock. We have removed around 50 Carp from the Rectangle, introduced with the kind support of the Environment Agency in excess of 500 Crucian Carp and Tench, and we have added a further 12,000 mixed silvers. In addition, the Clacton Casters are supporting us by planning to hold some Carp matches, to allow us to further thin the Carp stock and focus the Rectangle as a true silver fish water. At this time there are ropes across the water to help keep the cormorants off, and we continue to work with Natural England on the licensing terms to protect not just the Rectangle but all of our Fisheries. Approx. 80 Carp have been removed in 2023. The Triangle was closed for a period of time due to very low water levels, the depth of silt caught both us and the farm off guard, and there was a lot less water than we thought. The farm supported us with the use of their irrigation pumps for aeration throughout the warmer months, and dissolved oxygen levels were monitored very closely, with our emergency aeration on standby. We will work closely with the farm this coming summer to balance irrigation and fish welfare carefully, whilst looking to improve the set-up of the farm irrigation pump to allow us to aerate more effectively.

Decoy Pond

Last but not least, Decoy Pond. After a few years of some uncertainty 2022 closed with some positivity regarding the future of Decoy Pond. Myself, Steve and Sarah met with two council officials and have discussed in detail how we can work together in the future, as the pond is set to become property of the council sometime in 2023. The future is bright as the council are fully committed to allowing the club to continue to hold this fishing rights to the pond on terms which seem to be fair to both parties. They intend to employ a part-time park ranger, who will be able to liaise with our bailiff team, and vice versa, to ensure any poaching or illegal fishing is challenged effectively, whilst the EA also maintain a close relationship with us on this matter. The council will take greater responsibility for the surrounding area and offer us support with the issues that arise from the pond being public access such as litter and anti-social behaviour. As arrangements are finalised, and the pond becomes more recognised and appreciated by the locals, I suspect the EA will be keener than ever to support future fishery management plans and the stocking of native species such as Tench, Roach, Rudd and Crucians. Once the ownership of the pond finally moves to the council, I feel that we will be part of a genuine partnership

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with them along with the other relevant authorities to improve the pond for not just anglers, but all of those that enjoy it and its surrounding. This is a great opportunity for the club, and the angling community in general to engage with the wider public in a positive light.

Best wishes for the 2023/24 season,

Jack Davison

Chairman & Fisheries Officer