



FRESHWATER

WATFAA Newsletter

From the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of WATFAA's Freshwater magazine for 2016. I am really encouraged by the wide ranging support we have received from Members and the high regard that the magazine has with people who are not Club Members. It is very heartening that people in WATFAA find the information useful and that others retain the view that WATFAA is a real contributor to the health of freshwater fishing in our State.

I'd like to thank the many Club Members who have made contributions to the articles in this edition and encourage others to do likewise. The health of our Club is often reflected by the efforts of Members and their willingness to pass on information or guidance to help others, especially those with similar interests.

Since the last edition, this has had no better reflection than the useful and helpful presentations at WATFAA meetings. If you are reading this and are not a Member, I encourage you to go to the WATFAA website and join. If you are already a Member, make sure you come to the WATFAA meetings listed on the website and share in the experience of other people in the Club.

We have been lucky enough to have talks on: the use of GPS/tracking devices; treatment for snake-bite and removal of hooks from fishermen; alternatives to trout when fishing the South-West; and, a helpful and useful talk on where and how to fish the many rivers and streams of the South-West from some very experienced Club Members, wanting to share their experiences and learnings. Upcoming events will be advertised on the website or by email but thanks to our Events Team, will include: some tips on 4WD use; useful flies; getting onto and using our Facebook page; casting techniques; and more. There is always the opportunity to talk to Members at monthly meetings and seek answers to your questions on freshwater fishing.

I can tell you that it remains our aspiration to produce and publish four editions of Freshwater a year. The emphasis will remain on usefulness to Members, but where appropriate we will seek to encourage the public to get involved in freshwater fishing. We think it is important to keep focus on a high quality publication that supports our core values, which means we will continue to seek plenty of input from Members and try to maintain the usual high quality material and format. To that end, we aim to maintain a suite of stories in each edition that highlight freshwater fishing locally, in Australasia and globally. Our Tech spot will be broadened to include book/DVD reviews. We will also maintain Club history from archives and continue Member profiles, with a series to cover off each your Councillors. One new item on the Contents Page is a page entitled "WATFAA Information", which re-iterates the club's objectives as stated in our Constitution.

Enough from me, enjoy this Autumn 2016 Edition of Freshwater.

Peter Taylor
Editor



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The Freshwater Journal is a seasonal periodical providing articles and other information of interest to club members, including advertisements from our valued sponsors. The journal contains official announcements, reports and information (including policy) from the current Council of WATFAA. The journal also contains a range of articles and opinions from club members and invited contributors. These articles and opinions which appear in the journal are selected (by the editor) because they are considered to be of interest to our members but the views expressed in those articles and opinions do not necessarily represent the policy or view of WATFAA.

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News and Reports

STOCKING REPORT

By Russell Hanley

In this edition of the stocking report we take a look at the recent deliberations of the FFRG at their March 2016 meeting and then provide some information on a WATFAA proposal for potential stocking of Wellington Dam.

FFRG report.

In March the Freshwater Fisheries Reference Group (FFRG) met to discuss and recommend to Department of Fisheries the 2016 stocking locations for yearling rainbows and also excess broodstock fish of both brown and rainbow trout. As stocking is still underway at the time of writing, it is not yet possible to provide the actual numbers of fish that have been stocked into each river and impoundment this year. We can however provide some information on the locations that were recommended for stocking. The recommendations were largely similar to those of last year with the exception of a decision not to stock any yearlings into the Serpentine River in 2016. The reason for this is that in March the river had dried completely at Lowlands despite an increased environmental flow release by DoW. This means that any potential release of yearlings in April/May could be compromised by a lack of suitable water. Now if we get reasonable rainfall this winter then it is likely that fry will be recommended for release in late September as they were last year. I am confident that there are suitable refuges for fish over the summer months and urge anyone catching anything on the Serpentine this year to please let me know.

WATFAA proposal for stocking of Wellington Dam

Some WATFAA Members will be aware that our Club is involved in a proposal to develop a plan for stocking the Wellington Dam with a suitable freshwater species for recreational fishing. This proposal was accepted by Recfishwest as an expression of interest and now has now been selected to move to consideration as a full application for funding under the Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund (RFIF) for 2016. Our proposal was submitted in early May and we expect to hear whether or not we have been successful by end of June. The project would start in August.

If you go back in your Freshwater Editions to Autumn 2015, take a look at the Stocking Report on page 3. The sub-heading is "Proposal for creation of a sustainable fishery in Wellington Dam." This article provides great background information about the Dam and our proposal. The club has been thinking about Wellington Dam for some time and as the peak body for freshwater fishing in WA, our Club objectives are to improve freshwater recreational fishing in WA.

Participation in the RFIF with this proposal has been debated at WATFAA's Council and agreed but relies on the Club working effectively with stakeholders that include Recfishwest, the State Department of Fisheries, locals, researchers and others.

The project proposal is entitled: Trial stocking of Wellington Dam to establish a sustainable public recreational fishery.

The aim is to achieve a self-supporting and self-sustaining freshwater fishery providing opportunities for growth in community recreational activity and regional business development (including enhanced tourism opportunity).

The Proposal sees the Project being delivered over three years with key milestones to be met in each year, as follows:

Year 1. Refinement of concept.

Identify required technical information, including a desktop study to identify the existing relevant information on the ecology, water quality, bathymetry through a series of baseline studies and produce gap analysis for key information.

Design field surveys and obtain permits for field surveys to establish baseline on key components of ecology (fish stocks, invertebrate populations, habitat types, water quality).

Develop technical input for stocking - e.g. ideal trophic structure to support a sustainable fishery; identify potential for self-sustaining populations of target fish species and identify potential enhancements of secondary productivity.

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Our original proposal was entirely focussed on trout but after discussions with RecFishWest, it is clear that the intention of the Board is to explore the potential for a number of recreational species and our submitted proposal affirms our commitment to investigate this potential. A key component of the investigations will involve the use of the Impoundment Stocking Assessment Tool which is currently being developed under a separate RFIF grant.

Year 2. Complete preparations for stocking.

If our year 1 investigations conclude there is a strong potential to establish one or more species of recreational fish species in the reservoir, then we move to the second phase.

Establish stakeholder networks that seek input from stakeholders through workshop formats and identify business (tourism) opportunities.

Complete a stocking plan that:

- a. determines stocking densities, frequencies, age classes, timing and monitoring;
- b. assesses capacity of hatchery to supply the target species (trout or other species);
- c. provides a draft plan to stakeholders for comment/feedback and approval;
- d. obtains all necessary permits for stocking and potential habitat modification; and
- e. undertakes habitat modification/enhancement if feasible.

Year 3. Implementation of the Stocking plan.

Stock fish supplied by hatchery. (trout and/or other species identified as desirable).

Recommend annual stocking requirements.

Identify long term requirements/opportunities (post grant).



Establishment of a self-supporting and self-sustaining freshwater fishery would provide growth in community recreational activity and business development (including tourism opportunities) in regional Western Australia.

If our application is successful the project will be funded externally without risk or burden to WATFAA. The in-kind contribution of WATFAA will be provided by Peter Taylor and Russell Hanley who have agreed to provide their hours on the project without recompense. The Project would be managed by a small Project Implementation Committee (PIC). The PIC would include a number of stakeholders but would be run by Peter Taylor who has extensive project management experience and supported by Russell Hanley who has the required technical knowledge and specialist skills to lead the investigations of the potential for establishment of a sustainable recreational fishery.

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VALE FRANK STURGEON

31 January 1927 – 22 December 2015

by Doug Buchanan

I am not sure when I first met Frank, he just appeared one night at the activities night.

To me Frank had a boyish way about him and he immediately became known as Frankyboy. Frank's hair had an unruly quiff and must have been a constant source of trouble all his life as he tried to manage it.

Sometime later I got to know Frank much better when he attended a streams and river clinic run by the club. During this clinic Frank who was around 80 years old demonstrated a fierce determination to successfully keep up with other much younger participants on the clinic and no obstacle was too big for him.

During the construction of Rose Cottage, Frank was a willing volunteer and attended almost every busy bee. I remember one particular day where Frank spent the morning compacting paving bricks in the pouring rain and in the afternoon he climbed a ladder up the embankment with David Gellatly to plant shrubs and ground cover.

Frank loved to socialise and after a hard day fishing he enjoyed a beer or two capped off with some red wine. Frank's good nature, his ability to tell a good yarn and his quick wit made him very popular at club events. He was certainly popular when he brought out the homemade Anzac biscuits and I particularly remember the lamb stews made by his lovely wife Daphne.

Over the years Frank was a well known figure among Perth's water polo fraternity. He was also well known for his love of growing Gerberas. Frank was also well respected for his skill as a master watchmaker and on one occasion he donated a beautiful gold watch as a fund raiser for the cottage.

Frank passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on the 22 December 2015 after a short illness. While in hospital a number of club members visited him. During the visits Frank would introduce them to his family while telling yarns about the time he spent fishing. WATFAA was well represented at Frank's funeral where many members attended to say farewell to a truly wonderful person and a great supporter of our club.



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THE NEW WATFAA WEBSITE

By Tom Meredith

As most if not all of you will be aware the club website has been changed. Unfortunately the old site that served us fantastically well, was due to be taken down by the provider. The council had to act swiftly to replace the old site and it has been done.

The new website is still located at the old address www.watfaa.org.au

In relation to the direction under which the site has been constructed, I offer the following comments.

The new site was constructed at a fraction of the cost a web designer would charge. This means we can use the costs saved for maintaining our cottage or buying more fish for stocking!

In case the website administrator role were to ever need to be undertaken by someone else, we have chosen a very user friendly platform.

The site has been constructed under the councils direction.

The old site as fantastic as it was, did not have mobile device optimisation (Did not display well on mobile phones/mobile devices). The new site allows you access via your mobile phone.

The cheap and user friendly platforms have constraints from a design point of view but these can be overlooked (The pros out way the cons in my opinion).

As instructed by the council, a members only section has been created providing information not available to the general public.

We have a universal password throughout the members area sections and this can be changed from time to time by the council. We have decided to not go down the path of providing individual user names and passwords. This is largely because it was felt a number of members forgot the login information. A password is a more simple mechanism.

The cottage bookings system has also changed slightly. The website will show how many beds are taken rather than how many are left to book. This facility is still being worked on booking officer, John Goulding.

There is a greater emphasis on pictures on the website and I urge the membership to contribute by emailing them to me.

As it stands, the website is constantly being updated and is very much a work in progress. As you can appreciate, it can be a time consuming exercise but in the coming months, there will be more migration of information from the old site, for example, articles about fly tying.

Home Gallery About Club News Members Area Contact Us Join Now!



The Western Australian Trout & Freshwater Angling Association (WATFAA) is a non for profit recreational fishing club that promotes freshwater angling in Western Australia.

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FACEBOOK PRESENCE

by Tom Meredith

The club has taken the initiative of creating a public facebook profile and a 'members only' facebook group.

The main reasons behind the new presence on social media are two fold.

1. To provide an avenue for prospective new members to investigate/explore while they are discussing fishing on other facebook forums. We can direct them to the Club's public facebook page and website as a call to action to sign up!
2. To provide a replacement for the old forum that existed on the old website.

Now it is early days and not everyone is on facebook but I can assure the membership that the site has been extremely well received In particular, the closed, members only group. There have been some good discussions between our country members and city members. There have also been a few 'where was this picture taken ?' type discussions and the photos contributed generate much interest among members. Some members may also be a part of the flylife forum which is another very good forum that I regularly use. The WATFAA Facebook Group is a good way to service membership needs and I urge everyone to get involved.

It may seem like jumping in the deep end if you have not got a Facebook account but it is well worth the time investment to set up. I am available at Activities nights to set-up Facebook accounts for any members that wish to join in the private member group.



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PERCH BASH 2016

A report from Taffy

I know the Perch Bash is held over the Easter week end each year and that can make it hard for many members to get away, but I do feel the event warrants better support from our Members. I was disappointed with the attendance this year and I believe that this is a real shame, because I can honestly say that those that did attend, had a great time.

The event itself is structured to allow members the opportunity to fish for Perch in dams and rivers but also for Trout if you are willing to put the time in. We all know that Redfin Perch do a lot of damage to other creatures in rivers and dams in the South-West and that we have a role (not only to catch, fillet and eat them) to help reduce their numbers in places where we fish.

Over the weekend, Perch were caught on several types of lures that included hard bodied, soft plastic and various types of spinner. As the rivers were so low, (which was strange as most of the dams had more water than previous years) the majority of the weekend was spent fishing various perch dams. All up, about 80 perch were caught. The number was down on previous years, possibly because the additional water in the dams made it harder to find the fish.

It is important to remember how much of a predatory fish Perch are as several fish had marron in their stomachs, one in particular had two, one about 2 inches long and the other close to 6 inches long. They both still went after a large soft plastic.

As already stated, catch numbers might have been down but overall fish size was definitely up as many of the fish were 2lbs or more, and provided many a good fillet thanks to Mario and Paz. Kiwi Jeff, David Mc Veigh and myself spent the early mornings and evenings fly fishing for Trout and between us we caught eight (the largest being close to 4lbs) and it was great to see fish moving in all but one of the dams that we fished.



As with all events that happen down at the cottage the conversations and the camaraderie is second to none. This weekend was no exception, but I still think that certain people excel in pulling an event together so great thanks must go to Mario, Dave Whitelaw and Pasquale, who between them produced several fantastic meals for all to enjoy.

Who won you may ask? The answer is clear to me that it was all of those who turned up and made it a good week end.

Thanks Guys.



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COMPETITION NEWS, May 2016

by John Abordi

On the weekend of 9-10 April, 8 anglers fished in round one of the WA State Fly Fishing Championships for 2016. For the first time in a long time we returned to Glenn Lynn, a venue for many a State Championship in the early 2000's. The decision to return to Glenn Lynn was made in an attempt to introduce a third competition for the State Championship, to bring us into line with the other States and also because the new owner informed us that he had stocked it with 400 yearlings some 18 months earlier and was catching the occasional fish near 50cm in length. Of course another advantage of visiting Glenn Lynn is of course the fact that you can have a sleep in before still being on the water for first light. The weather for the weekend was pleasant with some cloud cover on the Saturday and a bit of a breeze and sunshine on Sunday. Unfortunately the fishing didn't quite live up to expectations. Whilst 6 fish were caught by 4 anglers in the 1st session, only 1 fish was caught in session 2 and none in the remaining sessions. The final result of this competition saw Marc Anderson come first with 3 fish (43cm,47cm,47cm) John Abordi was second with two fish (48cm,34cm) Stewart 'Taffy' King was third, one fish (43cm) and Tom Watson fourth, one fish (41cm). The fish had obviously grown on well in their 18 months in the dam, it would have been nicer to see a few more. Perhaps the water levels were still too low and the water temperature still a little too warm for the head of fish we'd hoped for to be more active. A few of us are planning to visit again later in the year (August) to see if we can do a little better. The new owner has expressed an interest in keeping the dam well stocked, provided we are able to hold an annual competition there. We may need to do some tweaking with the time of year to improve our success rate. If you do happen to fish Glenn Lynn, and are happy to provide some feedback of your trip please email me at: j_abordi@hotmail.com

Australian Team Representatives

On another note, following our success at the 2015 Nationals in NSW, both Marc Anderson and I have been selected as members of the Oceania Gold and Green teams to take on New Zealand in New Zealand sometime in 2017-18. This is not the first time either of us has been selected to a representative team, both of us have fished in either World, Commonwealth and Oceania competitions in the past, but it is the first time since 2005 that Western Australia has had two anglers selected to represent Australia at an international event. Both of us are very much looking forward to this opportunity to again fish for Australia.



John with grayling in Slovakia



Mark with brown in Wales

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The Serpentine River

by Dave Mc Veigh

Many years ago I visited the Serpentine National Park, after a few days of heavy rain the falls were really pumping and quite a spectacle to see. As I took in the views only 3 metres from where I stood was a large Rainbow Trout around 3lb in mid flow trying to make its way up in to the pool. Below the falls as I watched, more fish were trying to fight the strong current although they were much smaller. I have always wondered where these fish were holding up over the Summer months as I thought the water below the falls was only a small stream - it would take more than 22 years for me to find out.

In 2015 I saw an advertisement somewhere that the Fisheries Department had stocked 1500 Rainbow Trout into the lower Serpentine River. Having a waterway with stocked trout in it and only 20 minutes from where I lived sounded too good to be true. During the closed season I started exploring the river banks of the different stretches of the river from Lowlands Road up to the National Park and during these walks I found trout all over the river system.

The river banks in the lower stretch are very neglected and covered in dead and fallen trees, which makes it very difficult to fish. Speaking to a local farmer he told me that the last time the banks were last cleaned up was after the war when the Government paid soldiers returning from the war in Europe to clean the river banks as there was little work for them to return to. A year later the river flooded - river banks collapsed and a lot of fencing was lost. The land owners blamed this on the clear up. The river flows through farm land and has many small pools and deep holes were farms and properties draw water from. Some have made small dams that fish get trapped in when the water drops in the summer months. By far my favourite stretch is from Rapids Road bridge to Richardson Road bridge (roughly 2kms)



where I have caught many fish. 300 metres up from Rapids Rd bridge the river here is at its widest (12m + and up to 3m deep in places). It is this section that I believe the fish hold up over the summer months. In mid-March I walked this section and found a number of fish in a shaded over grown area. I shall return when the weather is much cooler and have a crack at them.

As I mentioned the river is full of small pools, from Rapids Road to Lowlands Road - there are a lot of pools and quite a few just below Rapids Road bridge and I have caught quite a lot fish from this area. The river below the South West Highway has a few pools and I have caught quite a few from here, although my favourite pool has had a tree fall in to it and is now unfishable. The river above the South West Highway towards the National Park has a few pools and deeper areas. Fifty metres upstream from the petrol station on the corner, three properties draw their water from a nice deep pool. I have seen many fish in there - don't climb over the fence to get to the pool, walk up the river from the bridge

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The Serpentine River...continued

at South West Highway and cross over the river and walk down to the pool - the land owner is okay with this.

Another area is just outside the National Park Gates look out for a water pump shed.

The large pool at the falls is a good spot, I have fished here before the park opens. I just park outside and walk up to the pool. Most of the fish I have caught from this river are small but at least 5 or 6 have been over legal size and their tails and fins in perfect condition - I believe that these fish were from the 2014 stocking.

In late November a lot of fish died because the water from the dam was shut down while work was carried out on the river banks around the bridge at the South West Highway. How many fish died is hard to say - we won't know until the weather is cooler and fish start to show themselves.

Most of the fishing I do is in short two hour sessions and as I only live 20 minutes away I can nip up there after work. While everyone was watching the AFL grand final I fished a short session on a deep pool and caught 11 fish in under an hour fishing a dry fly with a small nymph tied up the leader. Amongst the 11 fish I had two double hook ups. I've had some great fishing – my best flies were Damsel nymph patterns, small woolly buggers, Adams parachute, pheasant tail nymph.

Most of the fishing I have done this season has been on local rivers Serpentine, Murray and Collie and I have caught quite a lot of fish - well over 60 - but I have not seen any club members during my fishing trips. My advice to everyone is to get out there and go fishing.

I do hope they restock the Serpentine, along with the Murray and the Collie, I'm now looking forward to the cooler weather and better fishing days to come.



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Owen River Lodge

By Brian Alexander

This report is the result of an interview by Peter Taylor to understand more about Brian's first trip to the Owen River Lodge. Peter's questions are in bold and the majority of this article is taken from Brian's responses.

What were you looking for? I was really keen to find a place where someone with limited mobility could go and still get high quality fishing, guiding and accommodation. It was also important to me to be able to travel to such a place with some ease and comfort. I was happy to find all of these things in one package that didn't compromise on any of my 'wants' and yet still offered a very high level of health care for me if something did go wrong.

Why did you choose the Owen River Lodge (ORL)? The ORL met my needs and had plenty of good river fishing to choose from. I went there on the recommendation of another WATFAA Member. It is also well advertised in Fly Fishing literature.

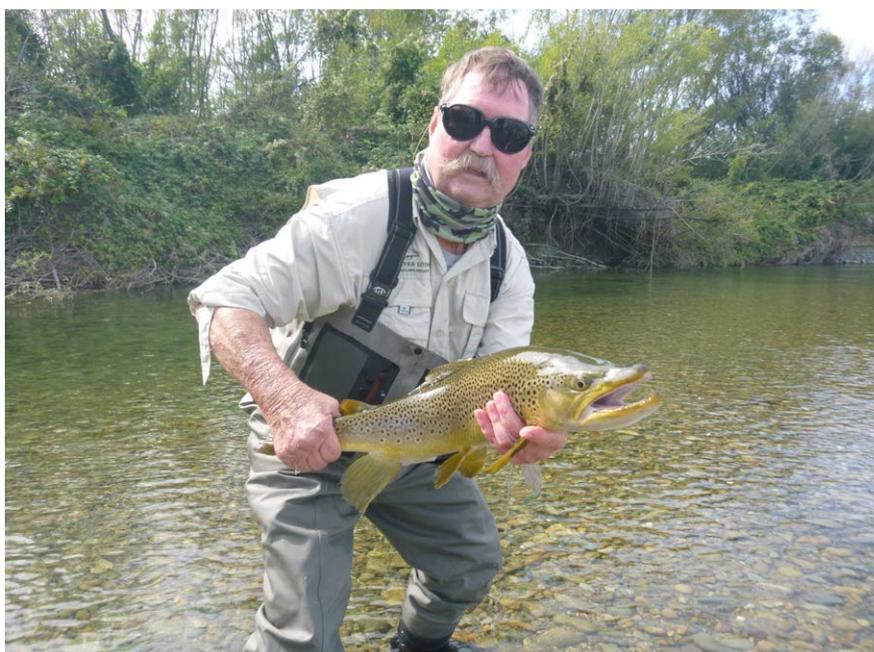
How was your experience? Felix (the owner) runs a great operation. The accommodation was fantastic, as was the food. The guides were knowledgeable, both about the region and the local trout. They were all wonderful people in the way they dealt with customers, making everything easy and special for a client. I learnt a lot, but was also able to share some of the special experiences and skills you learn from fishing our South-West. The other fisher-people were great too, as it was an important part of the whole thing to meet and mix with other people that had similar interests, but widely different experiences from all over the world.

What was the best thing from your trip? The best thing about this was that it is a complete package. They coordinated everything you could think of except my flights but even they were easy with a direct flight from Perth to Auckland and a short domestic hop to follow. I learnt a lot from this fishing (especially the benefit of using a 'soft touch') and look forward to trying it out around Pemberton.

What were the draw-backs on this trip? The worst things were related to the length of the flight and if you didn't get a direct flight to Auckland, having to stop-over in one of the eastern Australian capitals. Even though it is worth every cent, it could be seen as expensive for some Members.

Would you go again or recommend it to another WATFAA Member? Yes to both. I have already done two trips this season and booked two for next. While I can still manage it, I want to get the best experience possible. Other people have asked me: Why not go somewhere else? and, Why pay extra for a guide? My answer is that I have been lucky enough to find a place as good as this where I can do everything I want and still get a great experience with wonderful memories. If you don't get a great guide, you risk having spent our money on the travel and accommodation you might want and end up with no fish or a lesser experience.

If you want to break the trip into components, Felix is a great operator, the guides are fantastic (especially if you take the time to talk to them and listen) and it is a whole package that doesn't leave anything to chance.



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River Dove in England

By Geoff Barrett

Viator's Bridge is a narrow 'packhorse bridge' spanning the River Dove in the Peak District National Park in central England. Constructed in medieval times to carry silks and flax, today this ancient monument provides safe passage for bush walkers and anglers visiting the pretty hamlet of Milldale.



Milldale on the River Dove in the Peak District National Park (photo by Ian Taylor)



Grayling, very fast, a silver flash among the weeds

A fishing license is a must and was easily purchased over the internet prior to my trip (£10 for an eight day period). There are a couple of local bailiffs who check that you have permission to fish this catch and release stretch of the river, and that you are using barbless hooks. Not surprisingly, almost all of these water fronts are privately owned and access is negotiated through fishing clubs that pay an annual rental fee. Flanked by a busy walking trail there was plenty of interest in fly fishing, so it was nice to have my guide, John Machin (info@flyfishflorida.co.uk) there, standing on the river bank to chat with the walkers, allowing me to fish undisturbed.

John had picked me up that morning from the hotel in Lichfield, where I was staying with my family and after a quick stop for sandwiches, we were driving through

If there is a sacred site for fly fishers, we are getting pretty close to it in this wooded ravine, where Izaak Walton's horse staggered and slid on the rocky slopes as he later recorded in his 1653 classic book, 'The Compleat Angler' (sic). A pre-industrial England, glimpsed through sunny meadows and gurgling river banks where for five days, this 'Brother of the Angle', speaks with fellow travellers of bird song, religion, favourite recipes and the finer points of fly fishing – a cheerful distraction no doubt in a land torn by civil war.

Fast forward to 2015, where my dream of fishing for trout in the leafy English countryside became reality, spending a day on the River Dove. Starting from Viator's Bridge, I began by looping downstream and fishing back up, with short casts, using a tiny flashback nymph below a mayfly pattern. By my third or fourth cast I had landed a small brown trout and shortly after that, my first grayling, a sporty looking fish with a sail-like dorsal fin, which makes the larger ones difficult to stop when the current is fast.



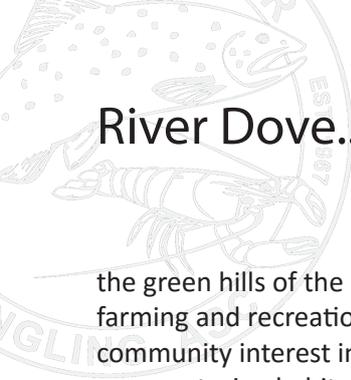
Viator's Bridge, referred to in Izaak Walton's 'The Compleat Angler'

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River Dove...continued

the green hills of the Peak District National Park. In Australia, we would refer to this as a biosphere reserve, where farming and recreational activities are allowed but in a way that is sympathetic to the environment. Across England, community interest in rivers is high, with organisations such as the 'Wild Trout Trust' paying close attention to river care, restoring habitat, reporting river polluters and lobbying for natural river flows to be protected.



Mayfly patterns

Mayfly hatch – they were on the all the bushes along the river bank

With the late spring sun dappled through an impossibly green canopy, the recent storm activity had brought on a mayfly hatch, and the trout began to rise. For a fly fisher, it doesn't get better than this. To marvel

as the mayflies emerge with a quick shudder, on the green swirling surface, before being lifted on flopping wings to safety. I changed to a mayfly pattern without the nymph attached below, content to catch fewer fish and delight at using the untethered mayfly pattern. I lost count of how many fish had struck as my fly floated above the weed beds, instinct driving them to make the most of this spring feast.

By the close of this fine, mid June day, I had caught and released three grayling and close to 10 brown trout. This from the same 'delicate River Dove', which Izaak Walton had fished centuries earlier and 'loved above all the rest'.

'For Angling may be said to be so like the Mathematics that it can never be fully learned; at least not so fully that there will still be more new experiments left for the trial of other men that succeed us.'

- Walton to the Honest Angler (*The Compleat Angler*)



River Dove brown trout

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The International Fly Swap

By Stan Weatherill

During a discussion on Facebook with one of my cousins in Quesnel B.C. Canada it came up that she had just had a great night at her local freshwater fishing club tying flies. We thought it might be a good idea to do a fly swap between WATFAA and her club "The Streambourne Fly Fishing club".

Initially we put the challenge out to our respective club colleagues, each prospective tier to be prepared to tie enough flies for a cut off of up to 12 starters. I have to say the response was slow and with the demise of our website looming and no more club meetings until February my easiest method of contact with WATFAA Members was through the online forum. After a few emails and phone calls I managed to shanghai a few contenders.

Myself, Tom Meredith and a non-Member friend of his Chris Hammond, Adrian de Lello, David Gellatly David Coombes (AKA Magoo) and a couple of other Members that later had to pull out for various reasons were WATFAAs fly tying representatives. One Member who shall remain nameless, said he would be in but went to ground when it came to the crunch - this must worth a carton of beer from him for the next meeting!?

So there were six WATFAA fly tiers to commit to tying 12 flies, to swap with the Canadian group with a completion date set for Jan 30 2016. Meanwhile the Canadian group were in the middle of a snowed-in winter and (10 tiers I believe some tied 2 lots) had already tied theirs. We committed to sending the 12 flies and offered for them to just



The Aussie Flies

send say 6 flies while we send the 12 to make up for a smaller group. The Streambourne Flyfishers were very generous and insisted on sending their 12 flies each. Two weeks later a package of beautifully tied flies turned up at my home, which then needed distribution to the WATFAA tyers. Two weeks later, I got word our flies had arrived in Canada.

Outcome: Flyswaps are not just about the flies, as flyfishing is not just all about the fish caught. From a fly tiers' perspective it's a great chance to tie a fly pattern well, and by tying a dozen or so flies at the same time it gives an opportunity to practice and tie a fly consistently, locking the pattern into a tier's psyche. It's also an opportunity to connect with like minded people from other parts of the country/world, and a bit of club team building and camaraderie never goes astray.

From my point of view, trout are "trout" it doesn't matter where in the world they are, if a fly works here it works elsewhere as well. The presentation of these flies is important though and there is nothing like local knowledge as to how to handle the current local conditions and local trout food.



The Canadian Flies

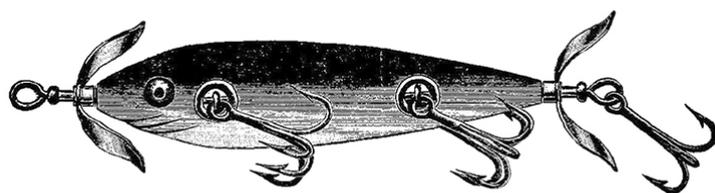
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From the Archives

sourced by Russell Hanley



Bruce Were with some assistance from Bretton Stitfold has put together a CD compendium of all the WATFAA Freshwater magazines from April 1968 to December/January of 2013/14. Reading through these old magazines provides interesting insight to the activities of our club and a snapshot of life in Western Australia over nearly five decades. We continue our browse through the old editions of Freshwater with an article that appeared in the April May 1991 issue. The article is reproduced here exactly as it appeared in the original magazine.

THE ALBANY AREA

by Peter Barker

The streams around Albany are rather low at present. Fish can still be found however, but you will need to look carefully. Last Friday I managed to catch five trout in the King River. Three were undersized, but two weighed in at about 700g.

The King River is a very interesting water to fish, just above where it meets the saltwater, the stream is very dark in colour and it is difficult to see anything. That means you will have difficulties with obstructions in the water and you'll need to be extra careful to spot any fish. They say that makes it harder for the fish to see you, but I'm not so sure.

People fishing for redfin in the Kalgan River have been rumoured to be catching the occasional Rainbow and Brown. This is not really surprising because a couple of the tributaries such as Napier Creek and Chelgiup Creek have been stocked. I can only find redfin in Chelgiup Creek, but that may be because I am not looking in the right places, or the redfin may have got them, or they may have gone down into the Kalgan.

King Creek also has brown trout in it. I caught a small one some time ago, so that suggests that they are self propagating.

If you are coming down to Albany, give me a call. As I've mentioned, the waters are a little thin at the moment. Many spots are on private property so you'll need to know who to ask, but there are still a good number that are worth trying.

(Note from Russell Hanley: Before any reader drives enthusiastically down to Albany with a view to exploring the local trout waters please be aware that, according to my records the last stocking of the King and Kalgan system was in 2000. At that time 20,000 rainbow fry were stocked. Now if there are self sustaining populations of either browns or rainbows then I would be most interested to hear of it - the best evidence would be photos of fish taken recently with precise location information. The King has not fallen off the radar with respect to stocking, but there are a number of issues to be worked through to determine if that will ever be possible again.)



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Book Review

by Peter Taylor

BOOK REVIEW: "Stalking Trout: A Serious Fisherman's Guide." By Graeme Marshall & Les Hill (The Halcyon Press/ SeTo Publishing, Auckland 1985)

This is a book designed to help you improve your skill and incredibly important to WATFAA Members, whether you are already a talented fisherman or not. The title of this book tells the story: "Stalking Trout: A Serious Fisherman's Guide". This is really a thoughtful examination of the fundamentals of fishing for trout. If you want to see what is covered, check out the Contents page. Key elements that can help you to become a better trout fisherman cover important issues like: 'The Senses' (of the trout); 'Where to Look' (to find the fish); 'What to Look For' (if you want to see and fish to a trout); 'How to Stalk' (if you want to do the right things to put yourself into an opportunity); and, 'Fishing to Sighted Trout' (a culmination of what to do and how to do it once you have established the opportunity). There is more that follows and will help you to improve.

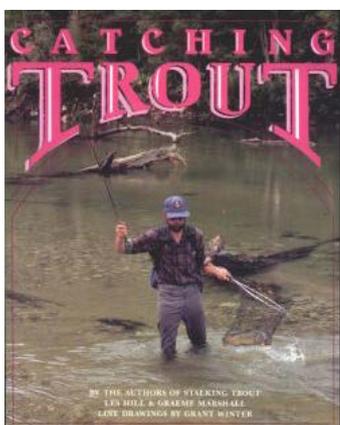
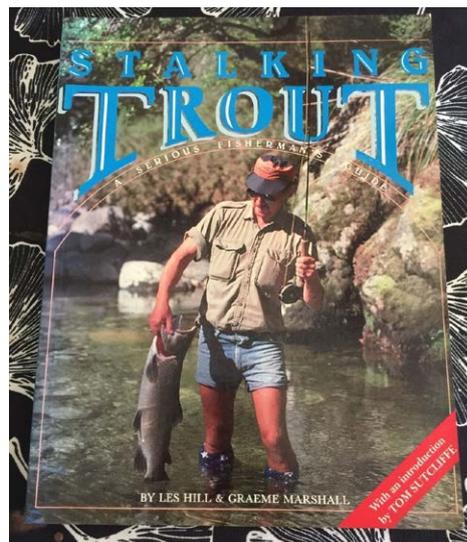
This book is a good source of fundamental information on the nature of trout and how to fish for them with increased success. It is certain that there are many fabulous books on offer that deal specifically with trout and how best to improve your chances. My suggestion though, is that much of the advice that one might seek as a starting point, or a place from which to improve, can be found in this book, in a format and style that is entertaining, easy to follow and to understand. Even though the book was first written in 1985, it remains a relevant classic on this subject.

For me, the best thing about the book is the way that its authors, both very experienced fishermen, have been able to tell the story of the trout and how to find and fish for them in a very obvious but engaging way. The third contributor (Grant Winter) has produced for us some clever, entertaining but informative line diagrams that highlight the stories of the authors.

In their authors' note, which describes the aims for this publication, they write: "The obvious question was, why did some anglers spot more fish? We concluded that it was because they knew what to look for and where to look. They understood too, that their conduct on a river ensured their success..." In the Introduction, they go on to say that: "Stalking trout is hunting in every sense... To succeed...He must concentrate on how he steps, his department, his speed – in other words his own camouflage. In addition, he must be alert for every little hint of a trout – usually he will be granted little more!..." This takes me back to a recent presentation on river fishing by Doug Buchanan and Dave Humphrey, two WATFAA Members, highlighting these points and explaining what they have done to achieve some degree of success.

If you read this book and find it valuable, the smart thing to do would be to look at what sort of follow up a reader can find that relates to this. Hill and Marshall produced a companion book that is just such a follow up, called "Catching Trout". It extends the discussion, working on your new-found knowledge, to explain what you might want to do now to catch them.

All in all, "Stalking Trout" is a fabulous manual that is only enhanced by its companion, "Catching Trout".



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Fly of the Moment

By Peter Taylor

In this edition, the “fly of the moment” is a ‘drowned worm’ pattern. There are many such patterns in Australia, NZ, Europe and the USA. Many are very similar but the US ‘San Juan Worm’ is a precursor. This version is more like the NZ pattern and best suited to fishing in muddy, flowing water, meaning it is best fished in a stream after rain. The materials make it very visible and a bead head helps it to sink quickly.

It is a quick, easy, cheap fly and falls into Bob Wyatt’s category of ‘trout ammo’, meaning it doesn’t matter much if you lose a few: which will happen anyway as the intention is to get down deep in flowing, murky water. Generally, the hook for this fly should be a nymph or wet fly type, in size 8 to 12. A bead head is required to aid sinking and the thread should be your own choice, to match the body material. The body material is called ‘pearl core’ chenille in micro or normal sizes and is easily available from our local supplier, “Flyworld”. Colour of the chenille is by taste but there are a number of options with red and purple the main ‘go-to’ tones.

Prepare by taking about 6.5cm of the pearl core and melt each end to seal, rolling to a point.

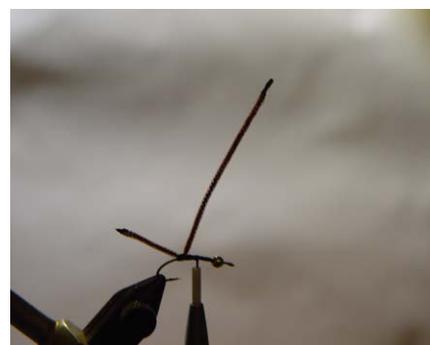
The first step is to place the bead on the hook tie the body in with about 1.5cm overhang for the tail.

Then, loop the chenille forward to just behind the bead and tie in to secure the bead.

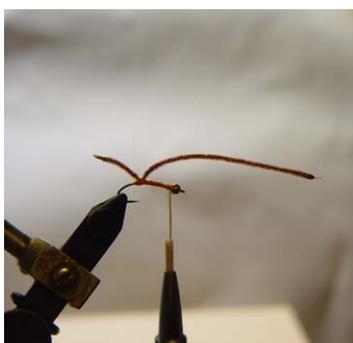
Tie off, glue knot and you’re ready to fish. That’s all there is to it.



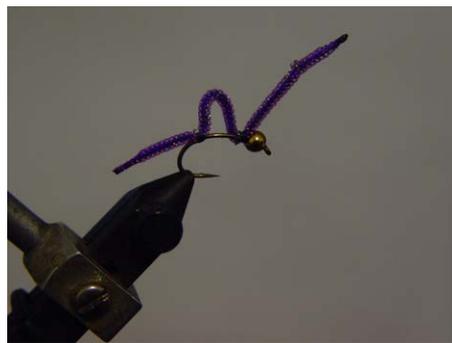
Colours



Step 1



Step 2



The finished product

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Member Profile

Many members of the club are unable to regularly attend our activities evenings or the various fishing events hosted at our cottage. So we have quite a few members who don't know much about each other. In this section of Freshwater, a member selected from the membership database will tell us a little bit about themselves. Each member we approach will be asked to answer the same set of questions about themselves.



Steve with a nice brown from the Wakaia

Steve Parker is the current President of WATFAA and a well known Club Member who has been around for years. He is a great source of information to many Club Members with a wealth of fishing experience both within and outside of the Club. He was asked the standard collection of questions and gave us these answers:

Where were you born and where did you grow up? Newbald in East Yorkshire in the UK. I spent my first 13 and a half years in England and emigrated to Australia with my family in 1967. We came to Perth via Aden and Port Said.

Can you remember when you first became interested in fishing? We had a little river at the bottom of our garden in England I fished it all of the time for little fish and also chased Pike. It was a wonderful introduction and got me started.

continued

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Member Profile continued...

Tell us your favourite fishing memory. There seem to be too many in my mind to narrow it down to one. I have been blessed in my life with Game Fishing, Fly Fishing and lots of wonderful stuff all around the world. If I had to narrow it though, there's one famous example of fly fishing New Zealand where I had to lay in a Twizel stream to cast to a 6 pound trout, which I eventually caught. That is real satisfaction at being able to do something out of the ordinary.

What is the most unusual fish you have caught? Fishing a lake in the South Island of New Zealand, Lake Poaka, I caught an Atlantic Salmon.

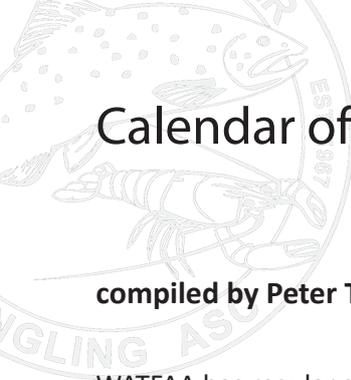
What kind of fishing do like best and why? I love all kinds of fishing. It is just great to get out and do it. You know though, the best fishing experience for me is fly fishing. There is nothing better for me than stalking a trout in crystal clear water with a dry fly. If it works, there isn't anything to beat it.

When did you join WATFAA? About 23 years ago.

Why did you join WATFAA? When I was about nine years old, I saw a guy fly casting in England but didn't know what it was. When I had come to Australia, I talked one day to someone from WATFAA about it, got some information, went along and joined in about '93.

What development would you like to see in freshwater fishing in WA? I'd like to see better quality fly fishing closer to Perth. Plenty of good fish in clear waters and fly fishing friendly environments without having to get away from Perth for more than a simple, short trip without an overnight stay.





Calendar of Events

compiled by Peter Taylor

WATFAA has regular social events each month for Members and visitors. We have a team of three who work on a schedule and are happy to consider any suggestions that Members want to provide (contact Club Secretary). There is a list of activities on our website, which together with the Club News section should keep people in the loop with what is coming up.

WATFAA's monthly club meetings are held on the second Tuesday night of each month (except January) at the WA Rowing Club, The Esplanade, Mt Pleasant, near Canning Bridge. The activities planned for the rest of this year are subject to change and/or confirmation, with members notified of changes by email. Details are as follows:

May/ June. First and second rounds of the fly casting competition, including tuition. This will be held by Magoo.

July. A movie night, possibly themed to fishing Tasmania.

August. A Fly tying night.

September. A tackle auction.

October. A quiz night.

November. A guest speaker (TBA).

December. Usual Christmas break-up.

January. No Club meeting.

February. To be advised.

The Club will conduct the following events on the dates below, although these may be subject to change if circumstances require, and more detail will be made available to Members before the events:

Winter Wash - to be held around the West Australia Day/ Foundation Day/ Harmony Day long weekend, 4/5/6th June.

Fish-a-Fest - to be held around the Queen's Birthday long weekend, 26th September.

AGM. The Clubs Annual General Meeting is planned for August this year. We are waiting for any changes to the State's Associations Act (we should know end of June or early July) before finalising arrangements.

The Club Secretary will distribute an email with details and explaining processes with enough time for Members to take any action required.

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WATFAA INFORMATION

The Western Australian Trout and Freshwater Angling Association Inc. was established in 1967.

The objects of the Association are:

- (a) The encouragement of the art of freshwater angling.
- (b) The encouragement of the conservation of freshwater angling waters and fish habitats as specified by council.
- (c) The maintenance and care of fish stocks in streams and other freshwaters by stocking with trout and other suitable species, and any other measures, as specified by Council.
- (d) The fostering and encouragement of a spirit of sportsmanship in freshwater angling.
- (e) The working in co-operation with Government Departments and other bodies, kindred associations and persons for the furtherance of the objects of the Association or any of them.
- (f) The promotion of social activities amongst freshwater anglers.
- (g) Such further or other objects as may be conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them, including the ownership, management and sale of real estate, property, investments and chattels.

The Club is actively involved in the promotion of freshwater angling in the State and offers members a number of benefits including activities nights, a fully equipped cottage in Pemberton and regular events throughout the year.

If you have enjoyed the magazine and identify with the objects of the Association then you may wish to become a member. New members are most welcome.

Membership application forms can be downloaded from the WATFAA website:

watfaa.org.au

Alternatively you can contact the membership officer:

Mick Burman

mimamoth@bigpond.com

Mob: 0414 401 993

Freshwater is produced by a small team of volunteers from the membership of WATFAA.

Chief Editor Peter Taylor

Assistant Editors Geoff Barrett, Geoff Buckland

Production Editor Russell Hanley

We welcome articles of a generally fishy nature that are consistent with the objects of the Association. If you wish to submit an article then it needs to be in MS Word or equivalent. Any illustrations or photographs should be in digital form and submitted as separate files.

Submissions clearly labelled as contributions to Freshwater can be sent to: pjtaylor@westnet.com.au

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