

Manderson Trust Update April 2021

The first year of the 5-year plan is now up and lockdown has been eased enough for some normality to be resumed at the Trust.

In preparation for the opening of night fishing and the Easter weekend, the cormorant ropes were taken down on lake 5. The winter months see an influx of cormorants from the coast and the continent that feed on inland waters and we have, in the past, provided them with a welcome fish buffet! This year we took remedial action. Blue nylon ropes were zig-zagged across lake 5 and lake 1 to dissuade them from landing. They need a long take-off run to get airborne and will not land if there are obstructions. This has worked very well and good stocks of roach and rudd have survived the winter. Spring sees the nomadic cormorants make their way back to the sea and the ropes come down.

The loss of fish to otters has not been too bad this year. We think they have had 7 fish up to 8lbs. The visits are quite predictable. The river in flood and a clear night seem to be the key factors. Mink are around but not in numbers so losses are minimal.

Lake 5 was stocked with 59 smaller mirror carp up to 5lb about a month ago bringing estimated numbers of carp to over 100. They are, however, proving very elusive. Once the water warms up, we expect to see them out in force. At the moment there is a steady capture of older resident carp and good-sized silver fish taken on maggot. Maggot seems to do well as an all-round bait even for the carp.

Lake 1 has reopened after being closed for restocking. About 150 carp up to 1lb were put in at the end of last month, to add to the 500 6'-8' roach and bream that went in about six weeks ago. Cormorant ropes will stay on lake 1 for a short while longer until we are sure things are properly settled. They do not pose much of a problem when fishing. Fishing to the margins on lake 1, which drop off quite steeply to 5', seems to produce the better catches. The fish are constantly on the move so there will be quiet times punctuated by manic periods with a 'fish a chuck'.

Night sessions started in earnest over the Easter weekend with several members booked in to do the Friday and Saturday nights. Sport was slow but steady and most anglers had a fish or two over the session.

The resident barn owl is doing its rounds in the early mornings and a pair of kingfishers, nesting on lake 2, can be seen through most of the day when the weather is kind. Our first grass snake was seen on lake 3 at the end of March and another on lake 4 over the Easter weekend. Spring is on its way.

We have applied for a grant from the Mick George charity to resurface the access paths around lake 4 and 5. We will know if that has been successful at the end of April. The new double platform for disabled anglers, funded by donations in memory of our past president Jack Shelley and a generous grant from The Church and Lands fund, should be in place at the same time.

This coming year we should have enough funds to restock lake 4 with native species other than common carp. Tench and Crucian carp seem popular choices as the key species.

Just a reminder we are a day ticket and membership charity run to provide fishing for disabled anglers but that everyone is welcome. Day tickets start at £6.

A quick welcome to John Hare from Olney who won a family membership to fish The Trust in The Angling Trust Charity Auction.

A brief request. The Trust is trying to build up a set of tools for a workshop to maintain the equipment we have. We are short of smaller hand tools like spanners, screwdrivers and pliers. If anyone is doing a spring clean of the garage and needs to get rid of some, they would be most welcome. Tools of any sort always come in handy on a site like ours. You can contact us through the website or our Facebook page.