

South West Regional Fisheries

Devon Fisheries Report

Enforcement

There have been several seizures of illegal fishing equipment on the Axe, Otter and Sid catchments. These included a small stop net set in a back water on the estuary at high tide to prevent fish moving back into the main channel as the water receded. It was aimed most probably at mullet where the poachers' intention was to spear the fish with bow and arrow. A net was set across the River Axe by poachers who were apprehended with eight sea trout. A case file has been completed and submitted to the legal team with a prosecution being recommended.

Changes to live fish movement process

New Barn Angling Centre in Paignton became the first fishery to trial the new Live Fish Permit. This was a useful exercise to see where improvements to the new system could be made before it comes into force.



Confiscated fishing equipment



Illegal gill net taken from the Axe

Under the new Aquatic Animal Health Directive all fisheries that wish to stock or remove fish must now be registered with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS). Despite an awareness campaign many fisheries are still applying for Section 30 consent without being registered and this is causing a delay in their application. The registration process requires a named person to be responsible for the fishery and all stocking activity at the site. It also requires that all fish species present are recorded. This has revealed a number of fisheries holding species restricted under the Import of Live Fish Act without the necessary licences.

Angling participation events

Good weather helped another good year of events. There was greater interest than in previous years, especially the game angling sessions at Kennick reservoir. Exeter & District Angling Association and Newton Abbot Fisheries Association both ran evening junior teaching sessions which were well attended. Clubs also got involved with local schools' activity weeks and with running sessions for people with learning difficulties.

Projects

Exeter Lake Project

Contractors, Bridge Civil Engineering, conducted an initial archaeology survey of the site at the end of August. This revealed medieval field boundaries which were recorded before work on the lakes could begin. The two lakes and wetland took about a month to excavate during a welcome dry spell. Ramped access points from the canal bank, paths and platforms are now being installed. Once completed, the lake will be allowed to fill and the site will be landscaped and left to naturalise before being opened to the public. The lakes will be managed by Exeter & District AA who are keen to make the venue a junior angling Centre of Excellence.



Heavy plant work at Exeter Lakes

Fisheries monitoring programme

In total 127 fish surveys were conducted this year. The programme comprises 52 sites on the Exe, 11 on the Lyn and 64 annual sites on the Avon, Axe, Dart, Erme, Taw, Teign and Torridge. Data is currently being collated and results should be available in December. We have also completed the annual Transitional and Coastal Waters (TraC) monitoring survey on the Taw/Torridge estuary. This required five sites within the estuary to be netted. The fish are identified, measured and counted. Over the past three years a total of 15 different species of fish have been recorded during this operation.



First time angler with tench

Other news

Coarse fish seminar

A seminar is planned for 14 November at Exeter University. Topics covered will include the new Live Fish movement process, stocking barbel to stillwaters, fisheries management techniques and using invertebrates as an indicator of good water quality. All stillwater coarse fishery owners and clubs are welcome to attend. There is no charge for the seminar and lunch and refreshments will be provided. Anyone wanting to attend should contact **Chris Carter** on **01392 316 182** before **31 October** to book a place.



Successful angler holding rainbow trout