

# My Angling

## DAVE BROWN

DAVE BROWN, AGE 57, HAS BEEN FISHING SERIOUSLY SINCE 1971. HE IS A JOINER BY TRADE BUT NOW WORKS AS THE BUILDING FOREMAN AT LANCASTER INFIRMARY FOR THE N.H.S. AS PART OF THE MAINTENANCE TEAM.

DAVE IS MARRIED TO MARILYN AND THEY HAVE SIX CHILDREN AND NINE GRANDCHILDREN BETWEEN THEM AFTER BOTH BEING PREVIOUSLY MARRIED.

THEY HAVE BOTH BEEN IN THE SOCIETY SINCE THE YEAR AFTER IT WAS FORMED. THIS YEAR THEY WERE ASKED TO BE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATORS WHICH HE SAYS THEY ARE BOTH ENJOYING.

So they say there is an article in every angler, well here we go then.



**F**or me, angling life started seriously back in 1971 when I was twenty years old. It began on the Lancaster canal catching the usual small roach and perch and then advanced to lakes where bream and tench came to the net.

A thirst for larger specimens and different species, urged me on, and in time took me to the rivers.

The Lune, which is my

local river produced dace, bream and wonderful roach up to two and a quarter pounds. Unfortunately this river does not contain Chub or Barbel, although I think it would be suitable for both species. The Lune is mainly a Salmon river with coarse fish in the lower reaches.

In 1975 a fishing pal Pete, took me to the river Severn at Monkmoor. We fished all day and Pete caught

barbel unfortunately, I failed miserably.

In the evening I decided to move down stream, and in the last hour caught my first ever barbel, not a big fish, it must have weighed about three pounds, but from that day on I was hooked. I expect many of you have experienced that very feeling!

I was eager to gain as much knowledge as I could

muster, and a few days holiday on the Severn at Bridgnorth, with my good mate John proved to be a great learning curve, and lots of average sized fish came my way.

Round trips of 240 miles were made twice a year to the Severn at Ironbridge and many more small barbel came to my net while fishing with the then hemp and maggots /caster feeder

# Life



Ironbridge, after several hours I started to catch a few, however Marilyn hadn't had a bite, even though she was fishing the same as me, fishing as she had been instructed, and in what I considered to be the better swim.

I could not get a bite for her in the swim, so asked her if she wanted to have a go where I was fishing, being very strong minded she said no, but after a few more hours she finally gave in. At long last she caught her first barbel.

Just like me, she too was well and truly hooked!

Those who have fished Ironbridge, may know that there are houses on the far bank. At one house the occupants were enjoying a barbecue as Marilyn was playing the fish.

I gave her instructions as she played the fish, and when we eventually landed the barbel, she received a round of applause from the assembled crowd across

the river, who had been watching things develop, between bites of hotdogs and hamburgers!

In 1997 we saw an advertisement for the Barbel Society open day at Stapeley water gardens and decided to go along. I was in awe of the people we met there.

Trefor West, Fred Crouch, Ray Walton, John Bailey to name but a few, people I had read about in the magazines, and had admired from afar.

We joined the Society that day, and I can say we have never looked back.

The Society has introduced us to so many like-minded people, who are now our friends and fishing colleagues from all across the country.

In 1998 a camping holiday was arranged at Crookham for a few days over the bank holiday.

On the day we fished the Kennet with Fred Crouch, I could not believe my eyes.

I had never seen a river

with so much weed in it, let alone tried to fish one.

I thought to myself, we can't fish this, but how wrong I was, and with the help of Fred we managed to catch barbel.

The next day we fished the day ticket water at Aldermaston Mill, and putting into practice what we had been shown, we caught . I managed a personal best at the time, an 8lb12oz fish, I was over the moon!

The river Kennet is a wonderful little intimate river, and there is lots of wildlife to watch while waiting for the rod to wrap round, and the pin to scream away.

Holidays in 1998 took us to the famous Royalty fishery at Christchurch on the Hampshire Avon and Throop on the Dorset Stour. 1999 again saw us on the Royalty and a small Barbel of 5lb 6oz was my reward rolling meat, something Trefor had shown me how to do.

In 1999 a holiday to

method and of course meat.

Some of the fish were getting up towards six pounds in weight. I was learning fast.

These trips continued on a yearly basis, and then in 1995 I was fortunate enough to meet Marilyn and immediately took her to the Severn, we didn't fish though as it was November.

We were back the following July fishing at



Devizes was booked, and with it a day with Trefor on the Bristol Avon.

This produced a few fish, with Marilyn catching her first double of 10lb6ozs, something I had been trying to achieve for twenty years!

2000 saw us again down on the Bristol Avon again, but a week of very hot weather meant the barbel did not want to play, but a day on the Thames brought some nice chub on sweet corn.

2000 to 2004 saw us catch a lot of average sized barbel on the Severn, Teme and Ribble having joined the Prince Albert Angling Association.

The Ribble is the closest river containing Barbel to us.

One evening while fishing the river, a roe deer came down to drink at the waters edge on the opposite bank .

We feel very privileged to see such creatures at close range and in their natural habitat.

In 2004 we had another day at Crookham as Fred's guests, and at last I caught my first double at 10lb6ozs. I was ecstatic.

At least now, Marilyn and I were on equal terms, if you know what I mean!

We fished the Severn and the Ribble regularly through the next few seasons, and have caught numerous fish of all sizes including a middle Severn double of 10-4, a fish I class has my best fish as middle Severn doubles are not that common.

One day while fishing a flooded river at Cound on the Prince Albert stretch near Shrewsbury I had a kingfisher land on my rod, actually fishing for minnows off my rod, only 6 feet away, quite amazing.

We have been involved with the juniors all this time, and a day at Beauchamp Court in 2001 saw me tutor for the first time, a daunting task, fortunately my junior caught one of only three fish caught that day, the

river was low and very slow after not having any rain for several months, its amazing how much enjoyment you get from seeing and helping other people to catch.

The following year we fished a junior day at the Kennet on the R.D.A.A. stretch at Lower Benyons, and although we did not catch, we were eager to get back to that river, has others with more local knowledge had caught on what they considered not to be good conditions after a overnight frost and a very cold day.

On the day we met Graham Elliott, who spends a lot of time on the Kennet, and he gave everyone information about the venue. The following summer saw us booked into a cottage for a week's holiday and although the weather was very hot we managed to catch a few Kennet fish.

We carried on fishing the Severn, and purchased a touring caravan which was located in Madley Shropshire, so most weekends we found ourselves fishing the mighty river Severn at several different venues.

In 2007 we traded in our tourer, and secured a static caravan at Quatford near Brighthelm, and joined Birmingham Angling Association which has given us a lot more venues on the Severn and also the Warwickshire Avon.

Another holiday down to the Kennet in 2006 proved to be extra special. We stopped at a cottage in Kingsclere and on our first full day met a couple, Charles and Denise Kellet, who had fished the river for thirty years.

Charles introduced us to Upper Benyons the

next day, and on another really hot day, I managed my best fish to date at 12lb 4ozs. Since that day we have been down to Charles and Denise's, and stop at their home, they use our caravan, and fish the Severn.

Last year, I was very lucky to be invited into the syndicate at Crookham and took up the offer and have enjoyed the fishing this past season. I have been on a learning curve once again.

The highlight of the year was at the Society Conference, when Marilyn and I were given the prestigious Gordon Scott Award for services to the Society, it was a complete surprise to us.

In October of 2008 a holiday out of the Sun newspaper saw us at Poole in Dorset and another day on

Throop, again a blank but we will keep trying to catch from this superb looking river.

During this year we also met Ade Kiddell and his wife Sonia, and we fished another part of the Severn at Arley. We all had fish, and in the afternoon Sonia brought us tea down on the river, very civilized and most welcome.

Charles, Ade, and myself had a day on the Warwickshire Avon, and we all caught barbel. The first time we had seen the river and all fishing different styles and baits.

So the average angler catches a few fish from a few different rivers, and things learnt have been put to good use.

The most important thing is, that I have fished with, and had lots of fun and enjoyment with so many different anglers.

I have found great company and great fishing venues and hope this continues for many years to come.

