

FIF Project “Increasing Junior Membership”

Report to the Angling Trust May 24th 2015

Substantial progress has been made on the three parts of the project, Increasing Junior Membership, which has been funded by the Angling Trust Fisheries Improvement Fund.

Ten pull-rope aids have been installed by Club members along the Club’s whole stretch of river to make access to the river easier where the banks are high and steep. These are very easy and cheap to make (see Figure 1) and very effective.

The work by the Tees Rivers Trust to improve the river habitat along the Junior Section of river started on 18th May. Where the river bank had been eroded by the out flow from a tributary beck in times of spate it has been reinforced with brushwood and wired logs so as to also provide cover for fish. Underwater fish cover features have been constructed from the trunks of trees cut down to let more light into the river to encourage insect life. Figures 2 to 5 illustrate this. This work, together with the construction of a simple fish pass at an existing weir is expected to be completed by the end of the first week in June.

There has been a very successful first fishing tuition day for local scouts and schoolchildren on 24th May. This is a joint venture between Ayton Angling Association and Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club with the support of the Angling Trust. The Ayton stillwater, where the event was held, is an excellent fishery with two connected lakes where a lot of work has been done to provide safe and easy access for all anglers and specially for disabled anglers. It is located in a quiet and beautiful wooded setting just below the Cleveland Hills. (See Figure 6) The Ayton members very generously gave up a day’s fishing just after the fishery was stocked so that the youngsters should have the best chance of catching fish. The Angling Trust’s Andy Loble provided the gazebo and fishing gear shown in Figure 7.

Twelve youngsters from local schools and Scout troops attended the event and were given one to one tuition in fly casting, fishing and fly tying by the Angling Trust’s Jeff Metcalfe and Ayton and Hutton Rudby club members. They were keen learners and this produced excellent results: six caught fish and all learned the elements of good casting. It was noticed that the girls’ and boys’ performances in both casting and catching fish were equal. Figures 8 to 13 show them in action.

The young people tasted their catch as a barbecue lunch and clearly enjoyed their whole day. Another tuition day is planned on the Ayton stillwater on 31st May followed by two days of river fly fishing tuition on the River Leven in June.

Both fishing clubs at Ayton and Hutton Rudby recognise that if fishing in particular, as a popular sport, and care for the river habitat in general, are to survive it is vital to get young people to take up the sport of fishing in the face of competition from indoors – centred pastimes. This opportunity to get young people involved in fishing in an ideal, inspiring countryside location has been seized with enthusiasm by both clubs' members and the youngsters themselves.



Figure 1 Pull rope



Figure 2 Bank reinforcement



Figure 3 Fish cover



Figure 4 Flow divertor



Figure 5 Materials for fish cover



Figure 6 An inspiring venue



Figure 7 Getting ready



Figure 8 Casting tuition



Figure 9 Well done!



Figure 10 Our first fish.



Figure 11 Anything you can do...



Figure 12 ...I can do too!



Figure 12 The art of fly tying.



Figure 13 Our two female stars at lunch.

John Gifford, Secretary Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club
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