

CHARFIELD ANGLING ASSOCIATION - CATCH RETURN ANALYSIS 2009

A consideration of fishing pressure

Catch returns have been received from 45 members which represents a very creditable 63% of all members (excluding Renishaw members).

The change of rule requiring that all members submit catch returns has provided much more data than in previous years.

In 2009 there were nearly 5 times as many visits to the river reported as in the previous five years. I am not aware that the river has been fished any more often in 2009 than previously; it is probably the case that more members are submitting returns.

Regrettably, by reason of the failure of members in the past to submit returns the data which we have is distorted.

Until all members make full and accurate returns we will not be certain of the health of the river or whether there is too much fishing pressure. Hence the requirement for catch returns and the availability of sanctions against members who ignore the rules (Rule 3.7).

If those members who do submit returns are representative of the membership as a whole we can extrapolate from the data that we have. That would suggest that the river (a beat) is fished approximately 380 times per year.

Of these visits the vast majority are by anglers fly fishing (90% of recorded visits are for fly fishing).

The most popular beat is beat 2.

The most popular period peaks in May.

We know that some of the popular beats are being fished once or more per day, day after day. This is considerable pressure on a small river. If those who do not submit returns fish as often as those who have submitted returns then some areas of the river may be overfished.

On the other hand the statistics indicate that the upper beats on the river are being fished infrequently even during the peak May and June period.

This may be in part due to the parking as we all know that the wooden bridge is popular with people other than CAA members.

If more members did fish the upper beats then perhaps there would be a reduction in poaching; perhaps members especially if fishing together should consider fishing the upper beats.

Those members who do fish the upper beats are more successful as regards trout; the brown trout rod return for the lower three beats is 1.8 whereas the brown trout rod return for the upper three beats is 2.9.

There is one possible anomaly upon which we are checking. There is a return showing a grayling and other species being caught above the flight pool. This may be a user error.



