

Bristol Water Fishery Report

1st April – 30th of April



BW Lakeside

April 2025 delivered a classic mix of British spring weather. We experienced everything from warm sunshine and still conditions to sudden downpours and powerful winds. In fact, three full days of boat fishing had to be cancelled across Chew and Blagdon due to high wind speeds, highlighting our continued commitment to angler safety. Temperatures fluctuated dramatically, with chilly mornings as low as 3°C and unseasonably warm afternoons peaking at 25°C. Winds were predominantly from the south, although occasional easterly and northerly gusts added variety to the conditions. Despite the wind disruptions, April remained mostly dry, leading to large hatches and falling water levels and in turn, some spectacular fishing.

Chew Valley Lake:

Fish Caught:

- **Top Patterns:** This was most definitely the month of the Nymphs, Diawl Bachs and Buzzers being a favourite with a coloured fly at the point when there was shade or just straight lining when the sun was bright. The most common lines used were the floating and the tip lines.
- **Best Areas:** The most productive areas of the lake were Wick and Moreton as well as herons.
- **Rod Averages:** Bank 4.69. Boat 6.34

Competitions:

April was a bustling month for competitive anglers, with a variety of events hosted across Chew and Blagdon. Competitions are a vital part of what makes our lakes so special. They bring together anglers of all levels, foster community spirit, and showcase the incredible sport of fly fishing in its best light. We are proud to host a wide range of events and are committed to making each competition the best it can be. From careful planning and support on the day to maintaining fair, enjoyable conditions, we strive to ensure every angler has a memorable and rewarding experience on the water.

Airflo Team Championships (Chew Valley Lake): 6th April



2025 Airflo Open Heat Chew Team Results 06-Apr-25

	No. of Fish	Total Weight	
1 Blagdon Fly Fishers	67	155 lb	1 oz
2 Airflo Nymphomaniacs	66	149 lb	0 oz
3 Team Turrell Tightlines	60	135 lb	10 oz
4 Snowbee	58	130 lb	7 oz
5 Hogs	53	119 lb	4 oz
6 West Country Raiders	49	105 lb	12 oz
6 BRFFA Emergers	49	105 lb	12 oz
8 Greylags	45	99 lb	7 oz
9 Welsh Wizards	44	94 lb	1 oz
10 Valley Cormorants	29	65 lb	2 oz
No. of anglers	60		
No. of Fish Caught	520		
Rod Average	8.67		

Best Bag

Paul Golding (Blagdon Fly Fishers)

38 lb 6 oz



This well-contested event saw fish largely located between Wick and Moreton, though some were caught from the Dam and Hollow Brook. Despite a fresh stocking earlier in the week, the newly introduced fish didn't feature prominently in the returns. Paul Golding claimed the top individual spot, while the team title went to Blagdon Fly Fishers. The competition was well-run under fair conditions and recorded a solid rod average of 8.7.

AMFC Group Competitions - 12th, 13th April

The Association of Major Flyfishing Clubs (AMFC) is a long-standing league that brings together some of the UK's most respected fly fishing clubs in a competitive but friendly format. Teams compete across a series of matches at premier reservoirs like Chew, Blagdon, and Rutland, with promotion and relegation between groups based on performance. It's a brilliant way to showcase top-level angling, encourage club spirit, and enjoy high-quality competition throughout the season.

12th April – Chew Valley Lake

Group 1 Winner: GWFFA (A Team)

Top angler of the winning team: Steve Cracknell (12 fish)

Group 2 Winner: BRFFA

Top angler of the winning team: Dave Reynolds

Group 3 Winner: Derbyshire County

Top angler of the winning team: Jack Westbury

13th April – Blagdon Lake

Group 3 Winner: BRFFA

Top anglers of the winning team: Jay Curry, Andy Hoffrock, and Barry Hawyes (all with 12 fish)

ATTEFF England Qualifier (Blagdon): 27th April

The ATTEFF Qualifier is a regional fly fishing competition run by the Association of Trout & Team England Fly Fishers (ATTEFF). These qualifiers are held across the country and



ANGLING TRUST TEAM ENGLAND QUALIFIER			
BLAGDON LAKE - 27th April 2025			
Anglers:	40		
Total fish caught:	98		
Rod average:	2.45		
Average fish weight:	2 lb	14 oz	
Largest fish:			
Best Total Bag with bonus:	17 lb	7 oz	
Name:			
Name:			DAVE REYNOLDS
		Fish	Total Weight
1	DAVE REYNOLDS	7	17 lb 7 oz
2	DAVE FRANKLIN	5	16 lb 6 oz
3	GARY MORRIS	5	15 lb 3 oz
4	ALEX JOHNSTONE	6	15 lb 0 oz
5	BAZ REECE	4	11 lb 15 oz
6	GARY HASKINS	4	11 lb 7 oz
7	ANDY STONES	4	11 lb 2 oz
8	ALASTAIR GARNER	3	10 lb 8 oz
9	PAUL SWEATMAN	4	10 lb 7 oz
10	NIK TOMPKINS	3	10 lb 7 oz
11	GRAHAM CURRIE	3	10 lb 0 oz
12	ALAN WILLIAMS	3	10 lb 0 oz
13	CHRIS FULLER	3	9 lb 12 oz
14	BARRY HAWYES	3	9 lb 5 oz
15	PHIL THOMPSON	3	9 lb 4 oz
16	MARK MILES	3	8 lb 11 oz
17	PAUL BOND	3	7 lb 14 oz
18	DAVE GREEN	3	7 lb 10 oz
19	JOHN HORSEY	2	6 lb 11 oz
20	JOHN STEVENSON	2	6 lb 8 oz
21	RON HOWARD	2	6 lb 7 oz
22	STEPHEN ELLIS	2	6 lb 0 oz
23	JOHN BRAITHWAITE	2	5 lb 13 oz
24	JULIAN WEDDLE	2	5 lb 7 oz
25	PAUL ROACH	2	5 lb 5 oz
26	CHARLIE HIX	2	5 lb 4 oz
27	PHIL SHAW-BROWNE	2	5 lb 3 oz
28	JIM LETHAM	2	5 lb 2 oz
29	DAVID MINALL	2	4 lb 10 oz
30	PAUL GOLDING	2	4 lb 7 oz
31	JOHN PIPER	1	3 lb 7 oz
32	MARK KENNEDY	1	2 lb 14 oz
33	MARTIN BURGESS	1	2 lb 13 oz
34	VINCE HOWLEY	1	2 lb 9 oz
35	DAVE JOHNS	1	2 lb 8 oz
36	BEN JAILER	0	0 lb 0 oz
37	JOHN PEARN	0	0 lb 0 oz
38	RON THOMAS	0	0 lb 0 oz
39	MIKE WALKER	0	0 lb 0 oz
40	DAVE WILTSHIRE	0	0 lb 0 oz

serve as the first step in selecting anglers for the national team. Competitors fish under set rules, usually in a loch-style format, aiming to secure a top spot and progress to the national final. From there, the best anglers may earn the chance to represent England at international events. It's a prestigious pathway for serious competition anglers looking to perform at the highest level.

A sudden change in weather made fishing tricky, but also sparked an extraordinary surface rise—one of the most prolific in recent memory on Blagdon. Dave Reynolds secured first place, leading 21 anglers who qualified through to the next round.

Evening League:

The Evening League at Chew and Blagdon offers a brilliant mix of relaxed competition and quality time on the water. Spread across 14 dates through the season, it's a great way to build consistency, meet other anglers, and enjoy the lakes in their prime evening conditions. Whether you're chasing points or just looking to sharpen your approach in a friendly, low-pressure setting, there's a spot for everyone. With simple rules and a welcoming atmosphere, it's the ideal series to get involved in — whether you're a regular or trying competition fishing for the first time.

Evening League 8th Apr 15.30 - 19.30					
Position	Angler	No. of Fish	Points	Time of 1st fish	Time of 3rd fish
1	Dale	16	22	15.47	15.53
2	John Piper	14	19	16.03	16.26
3	Adam Dreshner	12	16	16.16	17.48
4	Graham Currie	11	13	15.52	16.06
5	John Bowen	9	11	16.09	16.36
6	John Gumbleton	6	9	15.55	16.24
7	Richard Walker	6	7	16.09	16.36
8	Luke Cox	5	5	15.56	16.26
9	Alan Williams	5	3	15.52	14.31
10	Ethan	5	2	16.23	16.43
11	Gordon	4	1	15.47	16.58
12	Jim	4	1	16.13	17.03
13	Mark Kennedy	4	1	16.23	17.10
14	Andrew Maisey	4	1	17.08	18.27
15	Paul Roach	3	1	17.01	18.30
16	Iain	3	1	16.43	18.51
17	James	3	1	16.23	19.14
18	Cole	2	1	18.05	0.00
19	Robin	2	1	16.17	0.00
20	Paul B	2	1	0.00	0.00
21	Tony Coxhead	1	1	17.14	0.00
22	Gary	1	1	16.15	0.00
In the event of a tie, position was calculated by time of 1st and 3rd fish					
Total Fish Caught:		122			
Average per rod:		5.55			
(this average is based on a 4 hour match)					

Here are the latest league results from April.

8th April (Chew Valley Lake):

A very successful evening session with 22 anglers catching 122 fish, giving a rod average of 5.5.

Dale Burges took top rod with 16 fish, though the leaderboard position was based on cumulative points.

22nd April (Blagdon Lake):
In stark contrast, the second evening league of the month at Blagdon fished extremely tough despite an incredible rise around Bells Bush and Wood Bay. The rod average was just 1.2, with Alan Williams earning top rod honours with five fish.

Evening League 22 April 16.00-20.00					
Position	Angler	No. of Fish	Points	Time of 1st fish	Time of 3rd fish
1	Alan Williams	5	22	16.42	17.40
2	John Bowen	4	19	17.15	18.36
3	Stephen	4	16	17.04	19.09
4	Gordon	4	13	18.15	19.17
5	Rich	3	11	16.33	19.22
6	Adam	2	9	16.17	
7	Graham	2	7	16.30	
8	Paul Roach	2	5	16.41	
9	Mark	2	3	17.00	
10	Paul G	2	2	17.42	
11	Andrew M	1	1	16.43	
12	Dave O	1	1	17.21	
13	Iain	1	1	18.50	
14	John G	1	1	19.00	
15	John P	1	1	19.24	
16	Joan (Guest)	1	1		
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
In the event of a tie, position was calculated by time of 1st and 3rd fish					
Total Fish Caught:		36			
Average per rod:		1.20			
(this average is based on a 4 hour match)					

Tackle Shop Update:

Woodford Lodge Tackle Shop has undergone a significant restock, with a broader range of items now available than ever before. We've expanded our offerings to better support both beginners and experienced anglers—whether you're after top-quality flies, leaders, lines, or accessories. Be sure to pop in soon and explore our new stock.



Blagdon Lake

Fish Caught:

- **Top Patterns:** Much like Chew, the buzzer fishing was fantastic with some great returns and savage takes from the fish.
- **Best Areas:** The most productive areas of the lake were Top End, Bells Bush, Wood Bay and Pegs Point.
- **Rod Averages:** Bank, 2.38. Boat 5.37

Blagdon Lake: April was also an exceptional month for brown trout.

Rhys Davis had some remarkable catches during the Osprey Competition on the 20th, and Ranger Rich Walker followed suit on the 22nd, landing a beautifully conditioned brown trout during the Evening League. Both catches exemplified the quality of fish that Blagdon is producing this spring.



Pike Fly



Chew Valley Lake: On the 20th of April, Nick Clarke landed an incredible 29lb 5oz pike on the fly. Nick's perseverance, despite the rain and having forgotten his tackle bag, paid off in spectacular fashion. Using just a few flies purchased from the lodge and a Greys 9# Prowla rod, he managed to tempt a true Chew giant.



Just a week later, on the 27th, Andy Brown. One of Chew's most experienced anglers—brought in a superb 26lb pike on the fly, further demonstrating why Chew remains one of the UK's premier pike fly fishing venues. Not a day later and Andy struck again with a fantastic 21lber as well. Testament to Andy's skill and knowledge of these waters.


Barrows Tanks



Fish Caught:

- **Top Patterns:** Mention the lines used, best patterns and why it's been successful. If there are multiple methods, mention them too. Include retrieval techniques.
- **Best Areas:** The most productive areas of the lake
- **Rod Averages:** 1.23

Notable Catches:

 Barrow Tanks: Bernie Weaver caught a stunning 5lb 9oz rainbow on the 26th of April—highlighting the great sport the Barrows continue to offer.

Then, on the 29th, Louis Pearn topped off the month with an approximate 6lb rainbow caught on a sunburst FAB from Tank 3.



Women in Fly Fishing Event

On April 21st, the Bristol Reservoirs Fly Fishers Association (BRFFA), in partnership with Bristol Water, hosted their first ever 'Women in Fly Fishing' day – a landmark initiative designed to inspire, encourage, and support female participation in the sport. The day was a resounding success, welcoming a brilliant group of women who came along to try something new or further develop their existing skills.

Attendees were given the opportunity to take part in hands-on casting tuition, learn the art of fly tying, and enjoy time out on the water in our guide boats — offering a well-rounded and welcoming introduction to the world of fly fishing. The atmosphere was friendly, inclusive, and incredibly positive throughout, with plenty of laughter and learning shared among both guests and instructors.

This event would not have been possible without the passion, organisation, and commitment of the BRFFA committee. Their efforts behind the scenes — from planning and preparation to coaching and support on the day — ensured everything ran smoothly and created a memorable experience for everyone involved. We are deeply grateful for their continued work to grow the fly fishing community and promote accessibility and inclusion within the sport. We're already looking forward to the next session of this brilliant initiative!

Upcoming Events

May Pike on the Fly (Blagdon)

Starting 1st May, this exclusive event is fully booked, but anglers can call 01275 332339 to be added to the reserves list in case of cancellations. We wish all participants the best of luck. Be sure to keep an eye on our Facebook page to see the catches throughout May.



BRFFA Open

An exciting opportunity with a £1000 cash prize for the winner! Open to all, this competition promises fierce action on Chew, which has been in outstanding form despite recent bright conditions. This event is due to be held on Chew on the 3rd of May, contact the BRFFA or Woodford lodge for more information.

Stocking

Throughout April, our committed team of rangers were busy ensuring our lakes were well-stocked and ready for anglers to enjoy. A total of 3,500 trout were stocked into Chew Valley Lake, 2,500 into Blagdon Lake, and 1,500 into the Barrow Tanks. Their continued care and attention help maintain the quality of fishing across our waters, and we're grateful for their consistent work in keeping the lakes thriving.

