

1. The great increase in Otter numbers is proving more than an inconvenience for fisheries owners and angling clubs. Indeed Dave Marvell of otter fencing firm Otter Stop has warned that not enough fisheries take action until it is too late. Dave sees the impact of otter damage first hand and commented that it was his belief that within ten years if a club or owner does not have an otter proof fence the fishery will be void of large carp in particular. The E.A. who were trying to help solve the problem by meeting half of the cost of fencing are having to withdraw their cash as part of their cost cutting programme. To surround a ten acre lake 1,000 metres of light high tensile fencing will cost £5,000. Website www.otterstop.co.uk gives details of both supply and fitting.

2. Northumbrian Water fisheries manager Don Coe has had to remove a section of Derwent Reservoir to angling, due to the presence of a breeding pair of Little Ringed Plovers. Don has been instrumental in responding to TAA requests for providing more coarse fishing over the years, but I am afraid the North bank field next to the bird sanctuary area will no longer be fishable. Do not forget there is an 8 match spring series on Whittle Dene starting this Sunday (March 23rd), a coarse open at Whittle Dene on August the 25th, and on the 16th of November there is the annual Derwent Reservoir Coarse Open

3. Hexham AA have asked for some advice from fellow clubs regarding a club Health and Safety policy and Risk Assessment, after forming a sub-committee to review this subject. They have info from the Angling Trust but are interested in what other clubs procedures are. Currently their under tens have to fish with a parent / guardian and 10 to 17 years can fish unaccompanied with the exception of Beaufront. Sadly due to the blame and claim society it is looking likely that in the future all under 16s will have to be accompanied. This rule is likely to apply to Wydon Burn. Do the TAA have an alternative insurance cover?

4. Season tickets are now available from the Northumbrian Anglers Federation to fish their stretches of the Tyne and coarse permits at £30 can be had from head bailiff Willie Farndale. www.northumbriananglersfed.co.uk.

5. Things are continuing at Throckley Reigh and we will hear from Les how his follow up meeting with Gordon the peg installer has gone. It is not just the Reigh that is worth fishing. Last week Craig Scott fished the TAA stretch of the Tyne at Newburn after seeing dace dimpling on the surface at high tide. He fished waggler only a foot below the surface and before the tide changed and the fish moved on he had 78, 2 to 6 oz dace and 2 small roach.

6. The Angling Trust has agreed new measures with the Government for the control of cormorants and goosanders. They include the funding of 3 Fishery Advisors to be employed by the trust from April to help with the applications for licences. Also a commitment by the Government to review the exiting national limit of culled cormorants from 2,000 to the emergency level of 3,000 in 2014/5.