

## Cressbrook & Litton Flyfishers Club

### Head Keeper's Pre Season Report 2009

At the time of writing, the river is running clear and quite low due to the lack of rainfall and freezing temperatures for the last couple of months. We have been very busy carrying out the tree work on Freddie's, Morley and above Harry's and also removing diseased trees and coppicing some healthy Alders below the Bobbin Mill.

As well as cutting down trees you will be glad to know that over 100 Willow sets have been planted to aid shelter for insect life, gain more privacy for fishermen and generally improve the riparian habitat.

The paths on the Points, Keeper's, Morley and Rock Face have been widened and levelled to make it possible for the cutter to make a back cut to keep the nettle growth in check this Summer! Chris and David have put a new set of steps in at the Bobbin Mill and I have made a new bridge for the middle of Keeper's.

On the poaching front, we have one case pending in court against a man from Stoke who pleaded guilty at the time of capture. We also received information that a poacher had been seen leaving Miller's Dale on the bus with a bag of fish just before Christmas. At least he had reduced his carbon footprint, which is better than the poacher we caught at Newbridge in 2007 who was driving a Porsche!

As Members are aware, I've arranged a Rivercraft Course this year. Due to the heavy demand a second course will be run on a first come first served basis. The first will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> May and the second will be on 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> June. Hopefully this will be a regular event in future.

David has been busy this winter creating, tweaking, printing and laminating new fishery maps. They are a great improvement on the old ones and will be going out to you shortly with your membership Cards.

I have arranged with a fencing contractor to repair and tighten the fence above and below the Bobbin Mill and hope to have this completed before the start of the Season or when the cattle are put out to graze.

During the winter we have had regular otter tracks on the rafts at Duffer's, Keeper's, Litton Mill and Upperdale. These have been mainly a single male but more recently there have been smaller prints, presumably female.

The demand for Grayling fishing this winter never really materialized - this may have been due to more traditional winter weather conditions.

After discussions with the Committee, it was decided to carry on removing Himalayan Balsam from its source in Buxton along the whole of the watercourse to the bottom of our beat. This will take up a considerable amount of our time, which would normally be spent on our water. Our reasoning is that we are the only party with a vested interest in eradicating this invasive species and to do nothing would result in a much greater problem in the future. We also feel that it will do no harm from a public relations point of view.

At the present time we are clearing litter, finishing off “cutting out” and improving and repairing the bank at Presidents ready for the new Season.

Finally, I've just found a replacement for Dave – an Alsatian bitch to replace the old dog!

Tight lines for 2009.

Stephen