

September has always been a month of preparation for AE fisheries. By now I have confirmed orders for most of the stock fish, and I just await the colder weather to start harvesting. I have been lucky to work at some great venues and estates this summer, from National Trust park waters to council owned urban lakes. Part of why I love what I do so much is the variety. No-one water is alike, so travelling the country working at so many various places means I keep learning all the time.

This summer has seen a high number of venues experiencing mortality amongst Carp. Often unexplained. Whilst attending the annual Fishery management seminar as a guest speaker there were some interesting discussions regarding current fish health issues. I love going along to my old college to meet up with friends and colleagues, many of whom are some of the best and most reliable and professional people in fishery management today.

Blaming high rate mortality on "an oxygen crash" is a cop out in my opinion. I say this because whoever is responsible for an individual water, should have the experience and qualifications to know that you need to monitor water quality regularly during the warmer months. You can't just chuck fish in lakes, not feed them, have matches daily and expect things to be fine all year!!! Some fishery owners do just that, because they are blind. It ends up costing them so much money trying to please a type of angler they will never please.

This type of angler is a moaner. Not skilled in watercraft or any angling skill, he/she doesn't understand nor care about fish. But he/she wants, no, expects to catch 100lb fish every time they sit at any peg. When they don't, the first thing they blame is the owner.

A golfer can't blame the golf course because he doesn't get a hole in one every time.

An F1 driver doesn't blame the circuit when he crashes braking late into a corner.

A footballer doesn't blame the.....well ok, they blame anything for not scoring, but you get the idea!

Trying to run a match type venue for anglers with no ability is not sustainable and will always end in tears. I get involved when things go wrong. I don't particularly enjoy telling people that their venue or stock is poor and needs proper managing, but I do tell them. I am well aware that I do myself out of work by being honest. I am aware that I lose a few potential fish supply clients because I don't like selling my fish to shitty holes in the ground! But I also know that in all my work I am honest and professional and each year I continue to develop the business and get more interesting and varied projects, and I am very proud of my achievements. I am soon off to Georgia once again. This time I am taking a 150m seine net on the plane to show the guys how to properly net their lakes. I can't wait to see what they have been up to since my last visit. We keep in touch and they have emailed me updates and catches so it should be a great trip.

I am also back out to Jersey in a few days to look at potential works for next year. We had so much fun, although it was tough going last year during the draindown of Val de la Mare, but the people made us very welcome.

The Isle of Man project is nearing a start. Very excited about this as there is no proper coarse

## AE FISHERY SUPPLIES

LEMINGTON LAKES, TODENHAM ROAD, LOWER LEMINGTON, MORETON-IN-MARSH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, GL56 9NP  
MOBILE: 07966 250399 TELEPHONE: 01608 651717 EMAIL: ANDREW@AEFISHERIES.CO.UK WEB: WWW.AEFISHERIES.CO.UK  
PARTNERS: ANDREW ELLIS, ANDREW MACHIN, & DEBBIE MACHIN



fishing on the island, and it's been hard work getting it off the ground, but I can't wait to help develop that one. Sunset lakes, keep an eye out for it in future!

I have been involved in the start up of many new fisheries, and next year a new carp syndicate will emerge. I am proud of it as I advised the owner to buy NO fish! The lush lake contains over 100 fish already, and with simple feeding and grounds management, it will be an amazing place to become a member. Myself and Iain Macmillan are due to fish it soon, and during the survey I netted fish to just under 40lb, so again, watch this space! The start of November sees us working at a lovely estate in the new forest, developing the fishing and moving fish around the lakes there to maximise the potential of each one.

Then Back to Lemington and the fish farm, where the annual stock management plan starts. This winter I am reducing the Biomass in our Tench Lake, as the larger fish have slowed in growth. I already feed them, but they reproduce so prolifically that just by reducing the numbers of small fish, I know from experience that the others will benefit hugely next summer. When I survey some waters and tell the owners they have too many fish, they think I just want to buy them so I say that all the time. I farm my own stocks so don't need yours!!!! However reducing smaller fish to improve sport is something I place a lot of importance in, and until you net your lake with proper equipment you don't truly know what you're dealing with. There are operators who simply don't have the right kit, their nets are not up to scratch, and the mesh is too big to catch juveniles. One such company also states they are the largest suppliers of fish, but we all know they simply act as middle men and buy from fish farms and add a percentage. I know in any business this happens, but I don't think it's fair to pretend to be doing all the work yourself when really you just sub-contract and use other people because you don't really know what you're doing!! This leads people to get poor service, and this past year more than any, I have had many jobs after people had been let down by these same rogues.

I always show clients around any number of waters I am directly involved in, and am happy to let people inspect the farm and fish prior to delivery. I think there are a lot of people these days that buy fish and get let down, mainly because the people advertising certain fish haven't really got them but they know if they get the order then they can deliver what they have got and will probably get away with it! My record is faultless for fish supply, my big carp are often seen in angling publications and my Crucian, Tench, Bream Roach and small carp are all excellent fish. Commercialists tend to steer clear of me as I won't sell them 100,000 carp for peanuts!, to be fair, I don't want my lovely fish going somewhere they probably won't survive a year, so its fine by me!

I get so much satisfaction when I have stocked an old estate lake, or a pretty carp fishery and you watch the fish thrive and grow, it's a passion. This year it's been an expensive one too, as I have had more demand for fish I have created new ponds, and paid out for an electricity supply to be available to the furthest ponds and also a pumping station so I can get water to the pools to keep the fish happier during the crazy summers! To this extent I will (for the first time in 5 years!) be increasing my price list from January 2013. All of my costs

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have continued to rise over the years but I have managed to keep the prices maintained. I guess success equals more demand so it's a good thing, but I won't cut corners or scrimp on the details.

I have been trying to take it easy since April, when I had an MRI scan revealing a prolapsed disc. Many people moan about a bad back, but trust me, without the ridiculously strong pain killers I am on the pain is unbelievable. I have just had steroid injections, which should get me through the winter, but it isn't a cure, just relief! Not getting any younger I suppose?! Well I wish all my clients old and new a good autumn and I hope to be reporting of bumper fish sales in next month's update!!

ANDREW ELLIS

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