

Medway Man

Bob Morris



A couple of recent blank nights on large waters and the relative lack of action generally, signalled the onset of the mid-summer blues last month. This is a piscatorial phenomenon well known to most carp and specialist anglers. It is probably to do with the lack of rain at this time of year – which makes the rivers hard going and also the explosion of food items, such as bloodworm and other larvae, on most still waters. It varies from year to year according to conditions, but if I had to pick a month to miss, it would have to be August.

Having said this, I have been getting a few fish out here and there, including a couple of barbel from the upper Medway. These were not monsters but good to see during such a hard and generally unproductive spell! I have rather 'chickened out' on my quest for action on the lower stretches for this reason and will wait for a bit more rain to arrive and hopeful brighten things up a bit. One night, a couple of weeks back, I stuck out a small deadbait in the hope of tempting an eel, as things were so slow, but even the wrigglers were playing hard to get it seemed. The bait remained untouched at dawn, at which point I swapped it for floating carp bait, after seeing a few fish slurping in the margins. This saved the day in the form of an obliging 15 LB mirror that grabbed the offering within a couple of minutes, but the overall score for the session was still poor with just a couple of bream and a tench falling foul of my feeder tactics during the hours of darkness. Actually this counted as quite a good catch, by recent standards!

One interesting session that I did have recently was an evening after the tench, which seemed to be a bit elusive on this trip. It was on one of my local lakes and the problem was that I had been rather spoilt by early season action - which usually



Double Act

meant at least half a dozen chances or more during a 3-4 hour session. This time however, small movements on the float and patches of tiny bubbles had me half convinced that the tench had sussed me or my tactics out, or fallen into the above mentioned mid-summer apathy. When the float eventually did something positive, I found that the culprit was a decent crucian carp of 2lb 4oz. Then, just to take the Mickey slightly, a fast take developed on the feeder rod just as I was netting it, which after a brief tussle, allowed me to photograph the crucian alongside a tench of about a pound heavier. Another tench soon followed along with a couple of missed bites, so all in all not too quiet in the end after all! The Crucian got me thinking, though that maybe I will try scaling my tackle down slightly, to tempt a few more, as it is a long time since I have had any real action from them anywhere and it would be nice to beat my personal best of 3½lb – also from a local pit.

I am now looking forward to next two month's fishing, as I am hoping that both still and flowing water will be 'firing on all cylinders' – particularly if we get some reasonable spells of rain. Barbel and chub will be much on the menu and I always have a bit of a crack at the carp just before I start to get my Pike-fishing hat on again.



Not a monster!