AN INTRODUCTION TO

THE WATERS OF

LYMM ANGLING CLUB

J PRESCOTT

In memory of my wife Brenda Prescott

1936-2002

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you plann'd :
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:….

Cristina Rossetti

Contents

Introduction……. Page 1

Section 1 Belmont Pools Fishing Complex including Monks Moat and Friars Page 2

Pool. Plates A to F…….

Section 2. Stillwaters Plates G to T……. Page 3

Section 3. Rivers and Streams. Plates U to Z…….. Page 4

Appendix 1 Silver Carp……. Page 5

References……. Page 6

Acknowledgements……. Page 7

Introduction

The idea for this guide developed from chatting with the club chairman and committee members during Wednesday evening administrative sessions. It was suggested that a pictorial guide would complement the club's display used at County and Countryside Shows to illustrate club facilities and new member recruitment.

Having owned film cameras the digital camera revolution prompted me to convert to digital image taking, using a DSLR (digital single lens reflex) and digital compact cameras.

To learn the new skills required for digital processing I attended the following courses at Warrington Collegiate, Basic Digital Photography with English; Computer Project Course; English for Word Processing; Basic Photoshop.

Producing this work, although very time consuming with plenty of leg work carrying photographic equipment around the waters has been very enjoyable and satisfying for me. Because of the timescale involved I have not covered every water listed in Lymm A.C. Members Handbook. Hopefully I will eventually photograph and research the remaining waters then add them to the guide as appendices.

Current Lymm A.C. waters excluding any under lease renewal negotiations are as follows:

Abbey Lake	Monks Moat	Spring Pool
Beech Pool	New Pool	Statham Pool
Belmont Pool	Oak Pool	Shakerley Mere
Farm Pool	Peover Eye	Tabley Mere
Founders Pool	River Bollin	Tabley Moat
Friars Pool	River Dane	The Retreat
Golden Pond	River Dee	Village Pool
Grimsditch Mill Pool	River Severn	Whitley Pool
Longbarn Pool	River Vyrnwy	Willow Pool
Lymmvale	Roan Pool	Wincham Brook
Lymmvale Stockpond	Sandy Pool	Woodside Pool
Manor Pool	Sandybank Pool	Yew Tree Pool

Section 1

BELMONT POOLS FISHING COMPLEX

INCLUDING MONKS MOAT & FRIARS POOL

PLATES A to F

The complex consists of six pools situated on the Belmont Estate Northwich. The main water being Belmont Pool, the remaining pools are Beech, Willow, Rowan, Yew Tree and Oak.

Beech Pool is at the highest point of the estate's large pasture area and is spring fed. The spring used to supply Belmont Manor House years ago before mains water came to the area. To prevent Beech Pool from overflowing when the underground aquifers are full a spillway from the pool enters Rowan Pool which in turn overspills into Willow Pool. From Willow Pool a pipe that goes under the access track taking excess water into Belmont Pool. The outlet drain from Belmont Pool runs into a small stream which eventually drains into Budworth Mere. Yew Tree Pool is also spring fed and has an overflow pipe connected to Belmont Pool.

Belmont and Beech pools are being converted into carp fisheries.

Willow Pool is at present still considered a mixed fishery although this water holds a reasonable head of carp.

Yew Tree and Oak pools are classed as mixed coarse fisheries, with Rowan Pool earmarked as a stock pond for various fish species.

Monks Moat and Friars Pool are situated on the eastern side of Belmont Estate.

BELMONT POOL

Belmont Pool, a landscaped lake with a tree covered island is the largest of the six pool fishing complex which has been developed on Belmont Estate situated near the village of Great Budworth, Northwich. Belmont is a typical working country estate. Cattle, sheep and horses graze on the large pasture area where the pools are situated.

Lymm Angling Club has developed Belmont Pool into a fishery containing large carp. Gudgeon, roach and bream are also present in the water.

The pool attracts a wide variety of wildfowl, and a flock of Canada Geese take up residence in the area during wintertime, birds associated with pastureland can also be seen.

(A)

BEECH POOL

Tawny owl

Beech Pool is one of six pools on the Belmont Estate Northwich. The pool is at the highest point of the estate's large pasture area and is spring fed. The spring used to supply Belmont Manor House years ago before mains water came to the area.

Beech Pool was created in the spring of 2002 and to date vegetation in the margins is not fully established. The island however has been colonised by a pair of Canada Geese who breed there. Coots, moorhens and mallard ducks have also found it to be a place of refuge to breed. At dusk the tawny owl may be heard, if not seen in the nearby trees.

This water, like Belmont Pool is being converted into a carp fishery from a general coarse fishery and is still home to bream, roach, tench, gudgeon and crucian carp.

Crucian carp

(B**)**

OAK POOL

Oak Pool is a shallow pool that looks the most natural of the waters on the Belmont Pools' Complex.

The pool is partially surrounded by a rough plantation. The remaining area is pasture field which slopes gently upwards away from the bank side where reedmace (*Typha latifolia*) grow in the shallow margins. In the springtime during the frog's spawning ritual the reedmace provides shelter from predation by the heron.

Oak Pool abounds with roach, rudd, perch and crucian carp and is a good water to teach juniors and novice anglers fishing skills.

Rudd

(C)

WILLOW POOL

Willow Pool is another of the pools on the Belmont Pools Complex. In the past, this pool complete with an island was prone to pollution with chicken farm effluent entering the pool via its inlet stream. The pollution ceased after intervention by the Environment Agency.

Willow Pool is classed as a mixed fishery, containing bream, roach, rudd, perch and a reasonable head of carp.

The Willow Tree by the side of the pool who's lower branches dip into the water has for a few seasons provided a nesting site for a pair of coots. Two dead trees at the water's edge provide perches for cormorants who completely ignore the scarecrow swinging below.

(D)

MONKS MOAT

Monks Moat is on the far side of Belmont Estate well away from the multi-pool Belmont fishing complex. The moat was developed from ancient waters created by monks hundreds of years ago.

During the early 1990s English Heritage cleaned out the moat and cut back the rampant rhododendron bushes growing on the island. This island is strictly off limits to Lymm Angling Club members to protect the wildlife and leave undisturbed the badger sett. These animals can leave the island to forage in the adjacent fields via a fallen tree which spans one section of the moat.

To complement the unique hybrid fish that were resident in the moat before it was cleaned out, the club has added roach, perch, bream, carp and crucian carp to the water.

Roach

(E)

FRIARS POOL

Friars Pool was created in a peat rich area that made the water too acidic to support fish life. Crushed limestone was added around the pool and over a period of time the limestone neutralised the acid water. The pool is situated in a pleasant and peaceful area adjacent to Monks Moat on the Belmont Estate near to the village of Great Budworth.

On one side of the pool there is a small animal track which the fox uses, the fox being amongst the varied wildlife that can be seen in the woodland around the pool.

Small carp and tench have been introduced into the water, as these fish increase in size some will be transferred to other waters ensuring there will be enough natural food to sustain the remaining fish.

Small mirror carp

(F)

Section 2

STILLWATERS

PLATES G to T

The stillwaters covered in this section are as follows;

Farm Pool, Founders Pool, Grimsditch Mill Pool, Lymmvale, Lymmvale Stockpond, New Pool, Sandy Pool, Sandybank Pool, Spring Pool, Statham Pool, Shakerley Mere, Tabley Mere, Tabley Moat, Village Pool, Whitley Pool and Woodside Pool.

FARM POOL

A mature farm pool complete with two small islands within a sheep pasture is situated near to Antrobus Golf Club entrance on Fogg Lane Antrobus which is about 5 miles south of Warrington.

Canada Geese

The water has a field drain running into it which in wintertime keeps the water coloured. This, along with its location is possibly why up to the present time the Black Death (cormorants) have not paid it a visit.

At present the pool is heavily stocked with small roach, some perch and a few tench and is subject to a stocking re-assessment programme where some of the small roach are to be removed and the tench stock increased.

This is another club water where Canada Geese have made their presence felt, using the pasture field as a grazing area. Other common water birds can be observed on the pool.

Small roach

(G)

FOUNDERS POOL

Founders Pool was part of a fishing complex at Antrobus Farm Antrobus but since the creation of Antrobus Golf Course all the complex waters with the exception of Founders Pool have been closed to angling. Founders Pool has remained open, albeit with restricted access and with only one third of the bank side being open to anglers. Sections of the pool's bank and the car park are screened with netting to reduce the risk of fishermen being hit by golf balls.

The pool itself is surrounded by trees and shrubs, most of which were planted by club members. Beds of water lilies (*Nuphar lutea)* grow in the margins and a small island completes this prolific carp fishery which is about one acre in size. Roach, bream, perch, rudd and a few catfish are also present.

Catfish. (*Silurus glanis).*

(H)

GRIMSDITCH MILL POOL

Grimsditch Mill Pool with its three islands is approximately one acre in size and is situated alongside Grimsditch Lane adjacent to the Millstone Public House Higher Whitley. The pool was developed in 1981 from a silted area of swamp. Lymm Angling Club rented the water and when offered for sale took the opportunity to purchase the pool and the surrounding land. The area had a number of mature willow trees, but because they were becoming dangerous they have been removed. Other species of trees and shrubs have been planted by club members.

A pair of Canada Geese nest on one of the islands and the water attracts common species of wildfowl as well as garden birds.

Bream, rudd, perch, carp, golden orfe, grass carp and a few catfish make the pool a popular mixed fishery.

Grass carp.

LYMMVALE

Lymmvale which is owned by Lymm Angling Club was developed from a low productive acidic pool into a very productive and stable fishery through extensive water quality management. The 4 acre disused sand pit is situated at Newchurch Common near to Whitegate Linear Country Park, Winsford.

Fly agaric

The water has gained a reputation for its golden orfe and has held the British golden orfe record on several occasions. Tench fishing is very good and there are stocks of chub, barbel, carp, bream and rudd in the lake.

Along one side of the lake is a belt of pine trees, the other sides are lined with birch trees. In these areas different species of fungi can be seen in the autumn.

Little owl

Of the wildlife, grass snakes can be observed on warm summer days. Two species of woodpecker are regularly seen and foxes have bred on site, their den being dug in the sandy banks, and no doubt feeding on the many rabbits that abound. A wildlife survey at Lymmvale indicated that more than 50 species of birds can be seen.

Golden orfe

(J)

LYMMVALE STOCKPOND

Lymmvale Stockpond can be found from the car park at the top right hand side of Lymmvale. The pond looks to be a natural farm pool but is more likely a remnant of the sand quarrying in this area. (For location see the Lymmvale page). Its name suggests that it was originally used to rear small fish, mainly tench to replenish Lymmvale and other club waters. But now it appears to be another small fishing pool which contains a selection of coarse fish along with small tench.

Small tench

The Stockpond is surrounded with small trees and bushes and makes a little haven for moorhens and other small birds and mammals to breed.

Moorhens Nest with eggs

(K)

SPRING AND NEW POOLS

Spring Pool

Spring and New pools are situated adjacent to Lake Lane, Antrobus. A narrow strip of land separates the two pools. Club members have planted trees along this strip of land and on the land surrounding the pools. Water plants have been placed in the pools' margins to improve the water quality and appearance of the waters.

The safety of the pools' islands attracts various species of wildfowl and Canada Geese especially at nesting time.

The pools are stocked with different species of fish. Spring Pool is home to ide (silver orfe), golden orfe, golden tench, perch and a few barbel. New Pool houses bream, rudd, roach, tench and a few large catfish.

New Pool

Bream

Ide (silver orfe)

(L)

SANDY & SANDYBANK POOLS

Sandy and Sandybank Pools are on the farmland of Fields Farm Sandbach. These pools, unlike most of Lymm Angling Club's other pools entail a walk across fields to reach them.

Sandybank Pool complete with an island is an established fishery. Sandy Pool however, which is much larger than Sandybank Pool is a newer fishery. Both pools are stocked with carp, crucian carp, roach, rudd, bream, tench and golden tench.

A hedgerow of hawthorn along with some mature trees runs along a raised bank on the west side of Sandy Pool. The bank being of a sandy nature is riddled with a large rabbit warren.

Sandybank Pool

Golden tench

(M)

STATHAM POOL

Statham Pool is situated adjacent to Pool Lane Statham which is about 1 mile from Lymm village centre. The pool is approximately ¾ of an acre in size and is stream fed which accounts for fluctuations in water level. This water is deeper than most of Lymm A.C. pools and holds a mixed head of coarse fish including roach, perch, bream, carp, crucian carp, tench and a few pike and eels.

Of the flora and fauna to be found, a bank of Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) grows alongside Pool Lane to the detriment of native plants. The kingfisher is one of the many birds that can be seen along with mallard ducks which leave the pool to cross the lane where local residents feed them.

Left Japanese Knotweed

Below Eel caught at Statham Pool

(N)

SHAKERLEY MERE

Shakerley Mere is situated close to the M6 Motorway near Holmes Chapel. The mere was created from sand extraction which was used in the manufacture of coloured glass. During the 1960's quarrying ceased, the quarry being allowed to fill with ground and rain water.

Cheshire County Council subsequently developed the mere and surrounding woodland into Shakerley Mere Country Park. Families come to the park to feed swans, geese, ducks and other wildfowl. This feeding acts like a magnet for a whole variety of birds to visit the area. One section of scrubland and bank side of the mere is designated a nature reserve with limited access.

Lymm Angling Club lease the fishing rights for the remaining bank side from the council. The mere holds a stock of large carp and bream as well as roach, perch and a few other species of coarse fish.

Koi carp

(O)

TABLEY MERE

Tabley Mere is a large Cheshire mere of some 47 acres close to Tabley Moat on the Tabley Country Estate and can only be fished from the club's boat as bank fishing is not allowed. The boat is stored near the dilapidated boathouse where the lake area has been enveloped in a large reed bed, having a passageway cut through so that the boat can reach open water.

The main feature of the water is the folly in the guise of a tower which is situated on Tabley Hall side of the mere.

Pheasant

The mere is noted for its tench, carp and bream, but locating them is another matter. There is abundant bird life with species of geese, duck and other waterfowl present. The surrounding land and the mere have seasonal shoots over them for game birds and wildfowl.

(P)

TABLEY MOAT

Tabley Moat is a picturesque lake of about 8 acres set in the grounds of Tabley Country Estate situated in the Knutsford area.

Marliacea albida

The moat, typical of old estate lakes is slowly silting up. In summertime a substantial area of the water's surface is covered with pads and flowers of water lilies, *Nuphar lutea* the common yellow water lily and the white water lily *Nymphaea* 'Marliacea albida' which adds to the beauty of the moat.

Specimen fish anglers are attracted to the moat to fish for the large carp, tench, bream and pike which are the main species of fish that inhabit the water.

Pike

(Q)

VILLAGE POOL

Village Pool is situated adjacent to Village Lane Whitley and is sandwiched between the Village Hall and the Primary School.

Consensus amongst Lymm Angling Club members suggests Village Pool is the most popular of the club's pools. It is a prolific fishery of just under one acre in size, well sheltered from the elements, and home to ample stocks of coarse fish including carp, roach, bream, perch, tench, gudgeon, rudd and golden orfe.

For wildlife enthusiasts there is a foxes' den on the site and the pool's location attracts numerous small birds. Ducks, coots and moorhens are the most common wildfowl present and the kingfisher can be seen along with the heron when there is minimal pool side disturbance.

Perch

(R)

WHITLEY POOL

Whitley Pool, a disused sand pit of about 4 acres in size, is situated on the opposite side of Village Lane from the entrance to Whitley Village Hall.

This water is slowly recovering from pollution which started in the 1980s. Environmental Agency scientists estimate that because of the nature of the pollutant it will be a further 10 years before the pool becomes pollution free.

Lymm A.C. providing aeration, for the well being of the fish in Whitley Pool

The fish stocks which consist of crucian carp, tench, carp, uncoloured goldfish and a few roach are recovering although the water remains lightly stocked compared with other Lymm Angling Clubs' pools.

The resident waterfowl consists of coots, moorhens and mallard ducks all which nest around the water. In springtime clumps of daffodils that have been planted by club members brighten up the site.

Tench

(S)

WOODSIDE POOL

Woodside Pool's name is a misnomer as it is situated alongside the Northwich - Runcorn road. The opposite side of the pool has overhead electricity power cables running alongside it. This means modern carbon fibre rods or poles cannot be used.

Woodside Pool is a figure of eight water of about ¾ of an acre in size and is heavily stocked with crucian carp, rudd, golden rudd, tench, grass carp and silver carp.

Silver carp are, according to the Environmental Agency Fisheries Division an undesirable species and as non-native can no longer be imported or transferred to other waters (see appendix 1).

Above Netting team at Woodside Pool

Right Silver carp

(T)

Section 3

RIVERS AND STREAMS

PLATES U to Z

Flowing waters covered in this section are as follows;

Peover Eye and Golden Pond, River Bollin, River Severn Abermule, River Severn LLandrinio, River Severn Rossall and River Vyrnwy

PEOVER EYE & GOLDEN POND

Peover Eye, a small East Cheshire stream, flows through a valley on the Withington Estate at Chelford During the year 1750 a corn mill was built, straggling Peover Eye in the valley. The mill was used to grind cereals from the estate. It was called Bate Mill and the mill's sluices created a long upstream mill pool with an overflow sluice to take excess stream water around the mill. Bate Mill was bought by a local farmer from the Withington Estate in 1959 and continued to be used until 1970 when cereal milling ceased.

Golden Pond, a small farm pool is located adjacent to Peover Eye. Lymm Angling Club stocked the pond with golden rudd, golden tench and golden orfe, hence its name.

Fishing on Peover Eye around the mill is mainly for trout. A few species of coarse fish are also present.

Rainbow trout

(U)

RIVER BOLLIN

The River Bollin, a tributary of the River Mersey now discharges into the Manchester Ship Canal. Lymm Angling Club's members can fish the river above and below old Warburton Mill near Lymm which has been converted into luxury flats.

The most popular place to fish is just below the mill weir. Barbel is the main coarse fish which members angle for, other coarse fish include chub, roach, perch and dace. Evidence from the Environmental Agency suggests that salmon are once again present in the River Bollin and one place where they may be seen is negotiating the mill weir. Trout are also present.

Along the riverbanks the invasive weed (*Heracleum* mantergazzianum) giant hogweed which can reach 15 feet in height grows. This plant is a potential danger to public health. After contact with this plant if skin blistering occurs medical advice should be sought.

Barbel bait

RIVER SEVERN ABERMULE

At Abermule Lymm A.C. own the fishing rights on a section of the Welsh upper River Severn situated between Welshpool and Newtown Powys. The river at this point is considered to be a viable game fishery as well as a coarse fishery.

Trout and grayling are predominant and salmon are also known to inhabit the holding pools. Chub and dace are the commonest coarse fish species present.

Being in the Welsh countryside one must be aware that in fields adjacent to the river containing heifers a bull may be present and caution is the bye word.

Buzzards and ravens are amongst the birds that can be seen in the area and according to the club's wildlife officer if the angler is very fortunate the otter may be seen.

Brown trout

(W)

RIVER SEVERN LLANDRINIO

Rodney's Pillar

Lymm Angling Club own the fishing rights on a length of the River Severn at Llandrinio. The stretch is about three meadows downstream from Llandrinio roadbridge and not far from the clubs' length on the River Vyrnwy.

Looking across the river and its floodplain, Breidden Hills form a scenic backdrop. Rodney's Pillar can be seen on Breidden Hill. This monument was erected as a result of donations from the citizens of Shrewsbury to commemorate Admiral Rodney.

The main fish species present are: chub, barbel, dace and trout with the ubiquitous minnow ever present. This section of the river has a deep hole where in low water conditions salmon may rest on their journey upstream to the spawning grounds.

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Barbel

RIVER SEVERN ROSSALL

Lymm Angling Clubs stretch on the River Severn at Rossall is about 3 miles upstream of Shrewsbury and is a favourite with club members for its barbel, chub and pike fishing. The river here is an almost straight length having no bends to act as fish holding areas but there are gravel runs and streamer weed where barbel and chub lie.

Himalayan Balsam

Chub

Lengths of the river banks are covered from spring to autumn with Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera)* plants which can grow to over 6 ft tall. From June until September the plants are covered with pink flowers which make the riverbanks look picturesque but this non-native plant suppresses the growth of native grasses and plants. In autumn when the Himalayan Balsam dies back the riverbanks are susceptible to erosion when winter flooding by the river occurs.

(Y)

RIVER VYRNWY

Confluence of rivers Severn and Vyrnwy

Lymm Angling Club own the fishing rights on a length of the River Vyrnwy at Llandrinio which is approximately 2 miles upstream of its confluence with the River Severn at Melverley. The River Vyrnwy forms part of the boundary between England and Wales and is in a picturesque and peaceful area with the Breidden Hills providing the backdrop.

The river's upstream end of the stretch is shallow and fast flowing, supporting a good head of dace, barbel, trout and grayling. Chub, perch and roach inhabit the deeper and slower flowing lower end. Salmon are also present.

Due to grazing cattle there is not much in the way of flora but otters may occasionally be seen along the riverbank. A family of buzzards can be observed in the summer-time drifting in the sky on thermals and updrafts created by the Breidden Hills. The fast flying peregrine falcon can also be seen in this area.

Salmon parr

(Z)

Appendix 1

SILVER CARP (*Hψπτηαλμιχητηψσ μολιτριξ)*

Silver carp are filter feeders having specially adapted gill rakers to filter out single cell algae. The fish also feed on invertebrates. These non-native fish species were brought into the U.K. by Fisheries Departments of certain universities to be used for experimental trials on waters that were infested with geese and ducks. The birds' droppings generate algal blooms which can lead to water quality problems.

The trials finished some years ago. The outcome was that silver carp were not recommended for wholesale stocking into problem waters.

From an angling point of view, silver carp which can grow quite large, 2 to 3 feet in U.K. waters are rarely caught on anglers' baits. These fish are not detrimental to a fishery but from a biological aspect they remove one link in the food chain.

The Environmental Agency's policy is that non-native species of fish are no longer to be imported and certain species including silver carp are to be killed. Within the category of desirable fish from 1 acceptable to 5 least desirable, silver carp are in category 5.

Permission to stock silver carp must be obtained from DEFRA, but is highly unlikely. The few angling clubs that have silver carp stocked in their waters must apply to the Environment Agency for consent if they want to move these fish. It is unlikely that permission would be forthcoming.

J Prescott 13/04/2005

Information obtained from Bernie Chappel E.A. Fisheries Officer.

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Acknowledgements

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