

AMATOLA FLY FISHING CLUB

Incorporating the Frontier Acclimatisation Society and the Stutterheim Trout Angling Club

NEWSLETTER – SPRING / SEPTEMBER 2013



Spring is traditionally the time for new things and so it's apt that this is the first newsletter of the now merged F.A.S. and S.T.A.C. clubs, a move that will hopefully result in hybrid vigour.

The first day of spring was also the club's AGM, preceded by the annual Gubu fishing competition (and this year, casting competitions too). About 36 folks attended the weekend's get together and the 21 competition entrants raised R5960 profit. The weather was horrific and we were lucky there were no drownings. Given the frontal 30 knot winds, each of the 36 fish that came out on Saturday was a bonus. The biggest fish landed was 45 cm, but Ryan Smith, who arrived at Gubu on Thursday to get the clubhouse ship-shape, told some I-got-broken-up-twice-on-Friday-morning stories, so there's no doubt that the plus-50 cm fish are around, only they are wiser at keeping out of harm's way.

Dean Stoltz caught the most and the biggest and so got the jackal's (he's a skinny *ou* so you can't really call him a lion) share of the prizes including the much coveted Shilton fly reel. A great effort was shown on the casting competition front, Karl Krull winning the distance casting, Scott Blair the broomstick distance casting, and Dean Stoltz the accuracy casting. It was pleasing to see how many casters did well on the broomstick event as this seemingly bizarre activity was included to make the point that if one masters the casting basics and understands loop formation, then a fishable cast can be made with just about anything. A broomstick is totally unforgiving of any casting errors (as opposed to a fly rod, which is very forgiving) so hopefully the lessons learned by those whose fly felt a little short will be inspired to work on their casting and thus enjoy easier fishing especially in less than perfect weather.

A big thank you must go to all who sponsored prizes, time, and all of the other bits and bobs (like fire wood, boerie rolls, etc.) that helped everything come together. The list in alphabetical order: Bluewater Flies, Diverse Power Electrical, EL Dynamics (and Scott Blair), Glenn Raath, Nedbank, Rance Timber (and Craig Warren), Ryan Smith, Sandile's Rest & Trout Lodge, Schultz Power Systems, Sedgwick's Old Brown Sherry, Shilton Reels, Stealth Fly Fishing, and Xplorer Fly Fishing. And of course thank you to everyone who made the trip for the competitions and/or AGM.

Most of what there is to report was reported at the AGM and is included in the AGM minutes (the additional attached document, please take a read through "Matters arising" and "General"). There are only two items to re-iterate.

1. The Border Rural Council (BRC) has extended a special, promotional invitation to host AFFC members at their Cata Lodge and fish the BRC waters (including Mnyameni Dam for which DWAF has granted special permission) on the weekend of 18-20 October, all free of charge. It's on a first-come basis and to reserve a place contact Cata Lodge's, Boniswa on 083 734 0739 or 07 2568 926. Cata Lodge's chalets sleep 12 people i.e. 6 each and 16 if there are couples who could share a double bed (see www.amatolaflyfishing.co.za for more info on the BRC fishing project).

The Mnyameni Dam has a thriving population of wild-spawned (i.e. self sustaining) rainbows and it's a scenic water. The Cata River is home to the original Loch Leven (Scotland) strain brown trout that came to Pirie Hatchery over a century ago. The stream is tiny, and the fish small but large in spirit and it's a joy to spend a day boulder hopping between the little riffles and runs if that rocks your boat. The lowland section has some bigger pools and classic undercuts, which two year ago produced a 2lb surprise.

2. All things being equal, stocking will take place on the 18th (Friday afternoon @ Maden) and 19th (Saturday morning @ Gubu) October. This is the same weekend as the BRC invitation, so members who are visiting Cata Lode can lend a hand where necessary at Gubu in the morning and then move on to the Keiskamma Valley. More details will be e-mailed in due course.

Also, remember that all paid-up members can now also fish Maden, which I hear is fishing well. Plus as the water warms into October it's one of the best months for stillwater trout fishing so don't let the opportunity be missed—make time for recreation.

And that be that. Enjoy the fishing.

Edward Truter



Grant Wylie (left) and his 40mm trout fry during the AFFC Sandile Trout Farm visit, 1st September 2013



Viv Waters on the broomstick - casting competitions at Gubu, 31st August 2013



Matt Bekker and a Maden Dam trout caught just after the AGM, 1st September 2013