

## Mark Holmes on Otters

Dear Tim,  
Mark Holmes here. I have just read your leader for Carpworld October and can I just say, a big thumbs up for your stance on otters.

When I was a magazine editor, I wrote an editorial about how otters represented the biggest single threat to carp fishing. That was in November 2008. As usual, I was painted as some kind of gloom and doom merchant, just going off on one. Of course people are now realising why I wrote it.

*"This period of softly-softly has neither resulted in catchy monkey or sod all else!"*

You may or may not know, but I have been chairman of Bradford No1 AA for a good few years. It is the fourth largest club in the UK with over 85 waters. One of our waters, Queen Mary's Pond in Ripon, held perhaps the largest Yorkshire carp at mid-40s, and the fish originated from a stocking going back to the '70s. Yeah, you've guessed it, it was ripped to shreds with all its mates, some original Leney's from 1957 too. However, I have never been of the NIMBY brigade but have seen the devastation that these things can do if left unchecked. Like you, I am never afraid to say what everyone else is thinking but aren't say. I had exactly the same type of conversation with Simon Scott years ago that you had with the Angling Trust's Mark Lloyd. This period of softly-softly has neither resulted in catchy monkey or sod all else!

I am writing to just tell you that I am going to write an article about the apathy that exists within our ranks that will ultimately cause us as much damage as otters, if we don't do something about it. I really believe there is an undercurrent of enthusiasm within our ranks that needs to be tapped into. The softly-softly approach will not stir that and we have to try to be proactive.

I know angling politics puts off many people, but apathy is not an option here, as you well know.

All the very best,  
Mark Holmes.

## Fishing for Ghosts

Dear Carpworld,  
I have just read Carpworld issue 253 and I thought I would share with you my experiences regarding otters and the damage they can do to a fishery.

I used to fish an estate lake in Norfolk; the syndicate there was started some years ago by a group of locals, including my grandfather. After extensive groundwork and stocking of the lake, the fish and the fishery were flourishing. That was up until around eight years ago when an otter holt was found in the woodlands next to the lake. Needless to say, the fishery closed two years ago! All species in the lake had grown amazingly, with tench to 8lb and carp to 35lb. It was a lovely place to fish, and I'm sure if it were still going today it would hold some amazing fish.

I still have an expenses list for the fish stocked into the lake, which is well over £10,000, and all of which came from the people who wanted to start a fishery for everyone to enjoy.

I think it is very narrow-minded to introduce otters into a place that could damage the income of people, or destroy the work they have done. Is it that these people feel the otters' needs are more important than the people who rely on the fisheries for their income?

In my opinion, we need to act now to protect the fisheries that will be attacked in the future, or, as you said, we might all be fishing for ghosts in the not too distant future. All the best,  
Steve Moore.

## Disabled Anglers

Dear Tim,

I attended the charity event in aid of MNDA at Linear Fisheries and received a book from you, signed by yourself and Lee Jackson. Despite suffering from

polio, and having no use of my left arm and little use of my right leg, I still get out fishing and have enclosed a picture of a 33lb carp from Unity Lake to show what can be achieved by disabled anglers.

Many thanks,  
Ray Sullivan.



## Otters in Cornwall

Dear Tim,  
I have been extremely disappointed and angered to receive calls from anglers enquiring about otters clearing out my fishery. It quickly became apparent that the reason for their calls was an item in the October Carp Leader by Adam Roots in which he listed Cornish fisheries affected by otter predation. My business, Stenhill Fishery, appeared on the list of fisheries which, he says, have been affected.

Whilst I agree with much of his article, that otters are a problem for fisheries, I would like to clarify the situation at Stenhill Fishery. We have had otter/minkproof fencing for eight years and retain a stock of approximately 60 x 20s, three

known 30s and around 80 doubles. There are also tench to 10lb 5oz and roach to 2lb 13oz. The catch reports speak for themselves, with an increase in the number of bigger fish over the years. These can be viewed at [www.stenhillfishery.co.uk](http://www.stenhillfishery.co.uk) (and at our old website [www.stenhillcarpfishing.co.uk](http://www.stenhillcarpfishing.co.uk)).

I would be extremely grateful if you could clarify the situation for readers, because I pride myself on good fishery management and feel the article is not a fair reflection of my business and could be detrimental.

Brian Cox,  
Stenhill Fishery.

**Turn to page 7 where, in his Carp Leader feature, Tim Paisley replies to the letters on otter predation.**

**The Cranium Crushing Crossword** sponsored by Nutrabait

The three winners who each receive 5kg of Nutrabait's boilies plus a tub of pop-ups to match (variety is determined by the sponsor) are: **Simon Cansdale**, Portsmouth, Hants.; **Simon Carr**, Biggleswade, Beds.; **Anthony Bray**, Camberley, Surrey.

**The Winning Wordsearch** sponsored by Frank Warwick Carp Baits

The three winners who each receive a prize package worth almost £50 each are: **Toby Palmer**, Chichester, West Sussex; **Greg Williams**, Luton, Beds.; **Darren Broadhurst**, Thatcham, Berks.

**Fox NX-R Competition**

The two winners who each receive a set of three Fox Micron NX-R alarms, plus an NX-R receiver worth £579.96 in total are: **Charlie Sparks**, Tatsfield, Kent, and **Mr. Ray Lloyd**, Wymondham, Norfolk.