



NEWSLETTER October 2021

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Preparing to cast.

After last month's thin effort, we have a bumper issue this time out. Thanks to Steve and Dick for the super articles of their respective trips to the Orange River, which enable us to relive these memorable outings.

As usual, the Events Calendar allows you to plan your life around the various outings. Hope to see you at all of them. Arthur.

Events Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Time</u>
3 rd October	Fresh water outing	To be advised	06h30
6 th October	Committee meeting	Steve's home	18h00
13 th October	Fly tying workshop	Dick's home	18h15 for 18h30
17 th October	Carp outing	Southport area	07h00
28 th October	Monthly meeting	Umtentweni Tennis Club	18h00 for 18h30
1 st November	Grub'n travel meeting	Buchaneer's restaurant	18h00
6 th to 7 th November	Barbel outing	Lake Eland	TBA
10 th November	Fly tying workshop	Neil's home	18h15 for 18h30
28 th November	Christmas outing	Steve's dam	Early

Coming Events.

As the south westerly is expected to howl on **Sunday, 3rd October, the Outing to Umtwalume has been cancelled. We will insted fish a bass dam.** Wait for the SMS from Steve for instructions.

At the **Committee meeting, being held at Steve's home on Wednesday 6th October,** outings for the next few months will be planned. If you have any new venues in mind, drop a line to any committee members and we will see what we can do to fulfil your wish .

The fly-tying workshop is at Dick's home on Wednesday 13th October. Address is: 9 Captain Smith Road Southbroom.

There is a carp outing to the BBS dam in the Southport area on Sunday 17th Oct. Meet at the Southport filling station at 07h00. Bring your own sarmies and liquid refreshments.

The monthly meeting is again at the 'Tweni Tennis Club on Thursday 28th October. As usual, braai afterwards. John Neaves will hopefully (definitely??) be available to give his long awaited presentation.

Past Events.

Plato Lodge Trip. Orange River. 2021 Saturday 4 Sept. to Sunday 12th Sept. By Stephen Brand

Neil, Arthur, Sean, and Frank (picked up in Howick), Steve, Mike, Piet and John in the 2nd vehicle, left the South Coast around 5am and had a good journey to Kimberly Hadeda Lodge; very comfortable accommodation. Steve warmed up the stew and a good supper had by all.

Sunday 5 September

We left Kimberly around 7am for Keimoes via Upington, where we stopped to get lunch and headed for Ikaia Lodge, where we unpacked and had our lunch. Neil stayed and enjoyed the view of the guys fishing the river in front of the cottage, Mike and Steve had a nap, while the rest of the guys went and fished the river. Mike and Steve drove down, as our cottage was right on top of the hill. Frank got a SMY 450 mm in a pond up from the rapids, while Sean was fishing in the rapids above the bridge on the far side after wading across.



He caught 2 SMY 450 mm and 410 mm. Then the haggling started on the first beer. Flies used were the brassy and PTN. Piet got a knock on a black woolly bugger. We all sat around the fire and had a braai for supper. Guys were tired and lights out at 21:06.

Monday 6 September

Mike up at 4:30am making a noise, so we all got up and did our ablutions, had coffee and we were packed up by 6:30 and drove down to the river to watch the sun rise. Shortly after 7 we were all on the road and headed for Kakamas Spar for our supplies for lunch and then a quick detour to Augrabies Falls, which 4 of the guys hadn't seen before. Around 9:15 we left there for Plato Lodge, arriving around 10am where we had a quick coffee and unpacked our kit and headed down to the river. Sean hooked the first fish, but it broke him off on a submerged tree, then Frank was into a muddy which he managed to land. After lunch Piet landed a 42 cm SMY from the small island in front of the picnic spot. Frank hooked another muddy, but lost it over the rapids. Around 4:30 we packed up and headed back to the lodge after nothing further was caught. We were spoilt by Neil's cooking of chicken braai, butternut and baked potatoes. Slightly later night and all in bed by 22:00 after a nice hot shower.

Tuesday 7 September

7am breakfast at the Lodge: eggs tomato and homemade wors and toast. After an 8:06 departure down to the river, Neil rushed down eager to catch a fish and set up his kick boat with Arthur. We took a more leisurely drive and saw what looked like a Kestrel in a tree and a few buck and a possible hawk. We had arranged for the lodge to lend us a boat which the farmer brought down to the river for us. After arriving at the river the boat arrived and Frank and Sean crossed the river onto the island and fished the other channel to no avail, while Neil and Arthur went down stream on their kick boats, also to no avail. The current was too strong to kick back up, so they ditched the boats down stream and they were retrieved by bakkie later while the coals were getting ready for our burger braai. After lunch the guys scattered in various directions and fished to their hearts content, but to no avail. Around 4pm we packed up and headed back to the lodge. Around 19:30 we sat down to supper: Kudu steaks, chips, salad and cauliflower with Malva pudding. At 22:00 all were in bed after a hard days fishing.

Wednesday 8 September

All up a little later: 6 ish had breakfast at 7 am and down to the river at 8 ish. Neil, Sean and Frank took the boat over to the island to fish the other channel and others went down stream. Neil came back with a tally of one 48 cm SMY, Sean and Frank got nothing, so it was worth the paddle. That was that for the morning fishing. Neil, Arthur, Piet and Sean assisted in making sandwiches for lunch, which went down well. Mike, Piet and John went to fish above the rapids and picnic spot. Mike got one SMY 27 cm after wading in about 15 metres. Piet landed a 35 cm just a cast length from the picnic spot on an orange bead with red wire. Neil got two on the far side of the island; both 48 cm and Frank got two, one of 30.5 cm and the other measured 32 cm. Sadly John and Steve lost a fish each. We packed up 17:00 and headed back to the lodge. Neil and Piet cooked us a hearty meal of Kasslers, mini Russians, sweet corn, butternut and potatoes. We were all in bed by 22:30.

Thursday 9 September

Most were up between 5:15 and 6am packing all our essentials for the day and off to a hearty breakfast of mielie meal porridge, venison wors with fresh bread and coffee. 8am off down to the river for another day's fishing. Neil, Sean and Frank went over to the island where Neil got 1 SMY 46 cm and another of 30 cm and a muddy of 50 cm. Sean lost one in the rapids. We had hotdogs for lunch. After lunch Mike went and sat in the river, with a blood worm pattern and caught 2 SMY of 39 cm and 32 cm respectively. John had two "on-offs" up stream. On the island Neil got 3 SMY of 57 cm and 30 cm.. Sean got 1 SMY 46 cm. Frank got one 31cm SMY. We left the river around 17:00. Supper was braai-broodtjies and chops with potato salad and marshmallow pudding.

Up early, packing and getting ready for our last morning on the river, after scone breakfast, we packed up the final bags and were on our way.



Friday 10 September

Water level had dropped slightly from yesterday. Sean was lucky enough to catch a large mouth yellow fish 57 cm and 4 SMY of 46 cm, 55 cm, 56 cm, and 59 cm. Neil got a 40 cm SMY and Arthur finally got a 30 cm SMY. Frank also got a SMY of about 39 cm. Piet got 2 SMY between 35-40 cm.

Neil: 8 SMY and 1 muddy, **Frank:** 5 SMY and 1 muddy, **Sean:** 1 LMY and 7 SMY, **Piet:** 4 SMY,

Mike: 3 SMY **Arthur:** 1 SMY, **John:** 0, **Steve:** 0.

Totals 22 Small mouth yellow fish, 1 Large mouth yellow fish and 2 mud fish.

We all had lunch at the river and left around 13:00 for Keimoes and arrived about 15:30.

Saturday 11 September

Up early and an uneventful trip to Clarens for an awesome night out on the town except for the open mic night. The food was awesome.

Sunday 12 September

Up early and homeward bound on the last leg, arriving home after dropping every one off around lunch time.

Thank you all for making it a wonderful trip.

A few of the many high lights of the Yellowfish Trip to Plato Lodge on the Mid Orange River.

By Arthur Cary.

Six months of meticulous planning by Neil, came to a head on Saturday 4th September, when he, Steve (complete with his broken left foot in a cast,) Mike, John, Piet, Sean, Frank Berry (from Howick) and Arthur headed off to Plato Lodge, 1500 km away on the mid Orange River. The trip ended a week later on Sunday 12th when a tired, but happy mob returned. Although the Catch Record Book shows that the catch rate was only one fish per 10 hours of fishing, the group have memories of having had a super time with a great bunch of comrades.

Throughout the planning stages, Neil kept the Magnificent 7 informed via a Whatsapp group and those who read through the 4 foolscap pages knew precisely what had been planned for each of the 8 days. Those who did not, did not. (No names, no pack drill, Piet!!!!)

Positive points were: The accommodation at Ikaia Lodge, in Keimoes, was magnificent; right on the banks of the Orange River. Worth a stop-over if you are down that way.

The region surrounding Plato Lodge receives an average of 100 mm of rain a year, yet in January this year they had a deluge of 90 mm in two hours!! Debris caught on trees in the veld, two metres above ground level, is testimony to the resulting flood.

Neil and Arthur only had one kick boat outing; not to be repeated on the fast flowing river. Before they set off, they made sure that Piet had cell-phone contact with Liam, who was on a guiding trip 300 km down stream. If the duo were washed away, Liam was to put out a rope to stop them, before they reached Oranjemund.

Frank, Sean and Neil used the Lodge boat to cross the river to an island from which Neil had caught 20 fish in an hour last year. This time the 3 of them caught a total of ten fish in two days!!!!

Excuses, sorry, reasons for the dearth of fish varied from:

Water temperature (17.5 deg to start with, rising to 19.5 deg) Increased temp resulted in more fish.

Water clarity which was poor. A black Woolly Bugger could not be seen more than 25 cm below the surface. Again fishing improved with improved clarity.

Level of the river. On the Monday the river was racing, hence the anxiety when the kick-boaters launched. By Friday the level had dropped at least 30 cm and 10 fish were taken in 3 hours fishing. Many of these were from areas which had not produced a fish all week.

Again thanks to Neil's planning, we of course ate like kings, whether it was sarmies on the road or kudu steaks at Plato.

Not many fish, but memories that will last for a long time to come; it was, however, good to get back home, but roll on the next one.



Neil's and Dick's Guided trip to the Orange River. 11th to 15th September. By Dick Plaistowe.

Our trip to the Orange from 19th-25th September was arranged and guided by the well known South African and International fishing and hunting guide, Fred Steynberg, who is based in Rhodes. Neil and I and three others made up the party of five fly fishermen, plus Fred and his camp assistant Siya, for a total of seven people. This was a comfortable number in the camp.

Neil and I overnighted at Mark's house in Joburg, and the three of us met up with Rudi and Heather in Kleinmoes where we stayed at iKaia Lodge. We topped up with supplies at the well stocked Kakamas Spar the following morning and then drove to the Camp via Pofadder. For the record and future reference, the route to the Camp was as follows- turn right 20 kms outside Pofadder on the Springbok road at the Pella sign, onto dirt, left turn after literally 100 metres sign-posted Klein Pella and Goodhouse, turn right about 40 kms, signposted Goodhouse, right again after about 36 kms signposted Kabees, and then follow the road down into the Orange River valley, and finally turn left downstream for about 7-9 kms. I still haven't figured out where Klein Pella or Goodhouse or Kabees are and perhaps following these instructions will get one horribly lost. There is no cell phone reception for the last 80 odd kms so I guess that could be a problem ???

The Camp was basic, but adequate and comfortable- solar/battery powered camping fridge/freezers for food and ice, for lighting and for charging phones/hearing aids/torches etc., kitchen gazebo with tables for food preparation, gas cooking etc., trestle style camping table and bench to eat at, camping chairs around the fire on which we braaied each night, tents with stretchers, which are far more comfortable than sleeping on the ground. Neil took his own tent and in hindsight I'd also rather have a tent to myself which I'll do next time- the extra space is useful for a small table and chair, and all one's personal clobber, and importantly, also ensures that one isn't woken up by snoring or the zip being noisily opened during the night by one's mate going out for a nature break.

Fred has three Ark inflatable boats, with 54 lb thrust electric motors, which we used to go up or down the river to fish the rapids, also used for fishing the large waters and for the final day's drift trip of about 8 kms.

To cut to the chase then, Neil caught a total of 25 fish (2 Barbel, 1 Tilapia, 2 Mud fish, 1 Largemouth Yellowfish, and 19 Smallmouth Yellowfish) and Dick caught 16 fish (1 Barbel, 4 Tilapia, 2 Mudfish, and 9 Smallmouth Yellowfish). The Barbel were caught as by-catch, whilst targeting Largies and the Tilapia were caught immediately adjacent to the camp. Successful flies included Copper Johns, pink beaded jig hooks, orange beaded Green Caddis for the control flies, while the most successful fly for barbel and largies, was the Muishond.

The water was just under 20 degrees on my thermometer, still below the 23 degrees that Fred reckons one needs for good fishing, which explains why the fishing was tough. Anyhow, it was at least warmer and more successful than the SCFA trip the fortnight earlier. Fred said that the water was unusually cold for this late in September, perhaps due to the heavy snow falls on the Drakensberg and protracted snow melt, and the generally cold Highveld winter.

In conclusion, a couple of observations and thoughts:

-this location could be an ideal SCFA camping venue for future trips, being reasonably accessible except for the last few hundred metres where tyre pressures need to be reduced to negotiate the sand

-we need to confirm that camping and fishing permits are available online or at Pofadder. Either way, the permits would have to be reserved in advance to avert the disaster of getting there and being told to leave.

- 4 days and 5 nights was far too short for me, but I guess not everyone can take leave from work or the family for longer. I'm not certain how long I could chill out there, fishing, reading, bird watching etc. but I'd like to go for 10 days next time.



-there were up to two other groups of fly fishermen in the area at any time, also camping, who appeared to be private groups, not guided. I suspect this is going to increase in the future, which may result in restricted access, particularly if the guiding organisations want to protect their turf, as it were.

-finally, we are blessed to have such an extraordinary "world class" landscape, climate and river to enjoy within reasonable proximity, so, let's make use of it whilst we still can. .

Saltwater outing to Umtentweni. Sunday 26th September. By Arthur Cary

Only 4 members tried their hands in the 'Tweni salt and they were all equally unsuccessful. Ken, (all the way from Ramsgate,) John, Warren and Arthur made up the quartet. Weather conditions were great for the first half hour, although the surf was heavy along the beach and there was a fair amount of seaweed being washed up. The water was also definitely on the cool side. The south westerly that raised it's head soon after 07h30 made casting an increasing dangerous past-time and we all gave up after only an hour of trying. Hopefully, Umtwalume will yield some fish on Sunday the 3rd of October. Check the calendar above for details.

Monthly Meeting. Thursday 30th September. Umtentweni Tennis Club.

Present. 11 members. **Apologies.** Bill, Ken, David, Mike, Kevin, Conner, Ian and Liam

Flies of the Month. Judged by **Jaco.**

Freshwater: Perdigon Nymph: Sean, Neil, Neil, John and Arthur.

Saltwater: Epoxy Glassy: John, Sean, Neil, Neil, Mitch, Arthur.

When the results were announced, Jaco came in for a fair amount of good natured lambasting. (Arthur was unusually quiet, but John was elated with his win.) I'm sure that although Sean and Jaco were seated next to each other, this had nothing to do with the results. Well done Jaco, under tough conditions!!!!

General.

Piet, Sean, John a Steve, John and Arthur extended their thanks to Neil for his organisation of the Plato Lodge trip. Not many fish, but a truely memorable experience.

Mitch suggested that a trip to the Riet River, south of Bloemfontein, be investigated. It is not too far and the yellow fish in the area, are apparantly very obliging.

Neil gave an account of the trip to the Orange River, in the Namaqua district, from which he and Dick have just returned. (see Dick's report above.) It sounds as though an SCFA outing to the area, at the end of Sept or early in OCT next year, may already be in the planning stages. No grass under the feet of SCFA!!!!

Steve reported that club funds are good, a new account has been opened and he intends closing the bulk SMS account and opening a new Whatsapp group, in order to inform members of club goings-on.

Fry, Fingerling and Stockie Stories.



Good news, is that FOSAF won their court case against the Department of Environmental Affairs. Government have been trying for years to have trout declared an invasive species and while it is important to note that the judgment does not declare the list of invasive species to be invalid, it does suspend the implementation of this listing. 1st round to the FOSAF legal team. Well done.



News from Pat in Cape Town, is that he is gradually settling down. He has a place on False Bay, but a negative is that all the local still waters are polluted and no activities are allowed in and around the vleis. Why not try that stunt of fishing for cob in the Bay from a kick-boat, Pat?



The road to Mountain Lake from Matat has been somewhat repaired and although not yet a declared highway, it is passable. Unfortunately, the cottage has had no attention, so only camping is allowed, as the top toilets and showers can be used.

Last Cast.

That's it for this month. Thanks once again, to Steve and Dick for the articles; I hope that these whet your appetite for the month's fishing that lie ahead.

Cheers Arthur

