

### John Wilson



### Angler's Retreat

# Landing the zander caps perfect day in paradise

**I** GET to fish around some, which is just as well I suppose, otherwise I could run out of material for this page. But with coarse fisheries like the fabulous Bury Hill complex in Surrey on my hit list there is little fear of that.

I rate this beautifully landscaped three-lake fishery, set in deep woodland just outside Dorking, among the most bountiful, diverse and picturesque it has ever been my privilege to fish. And it's all available on a day ticket, less than 25 miles from Trafalgar Square.

David de Vere, the owner, invited the Go Fishing crew and myself to sample his wares back in August and suggested the "jungle" end of the 12-acre lake - the largest of the three and over 200 years old - might suit our requirements.

How right he was. This boomerang shaped old estate lake with a long, tree-lined island in the middle is stuffed full of roach, perch, bream, tench, carp averaging double figures, pike and zander. What's more, you have the choice of bank swims or fishing from a punt.

The lake is surrounded by tall, mature trees, with extensive beds

of white lilies in many swims. The habitat is decidedly "fishy", and even more so at the jungle end where I chose to make a dawn start by carefully lowering a mudweight at each end of the punt into four feet of water just 20 yards from the overhanging branches.

No wonder this end of the lake is called the jungle. Carp just love this overgrown area, for so long as my lift float rig landed within a foot or so of the branches, the ball of carp pellet paste would be

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taken. If I cast short, it remained untouched.

By regularly catapulting loose feed along the tree-line I was able to get the carp moving within an hour or so, taking three good ones up to round 14lb and dropping another two before they became suspicious.

What fantastic sport it was catching carp from a punt. I have accounted for probably thousands of boat-caught pike over the years from my local Norfolk Broads, where it is often



**CATCH OF THE DAY:** This zander of around 7lb was hauled in after snapping up a cube of luncheon meat

the only means of access. But never before have I punt-fished for carp.

A quite unique feature of the large lake is the recently installed aeration flow system, the first in Europe. Two huge screw pumps lift upwards of six million gallons of water a day into a small separate lake.

**I**T then drops over a weir to become a swift-flowing, pretty stream, before being channelled through two outlets back into the opposite end of the lake again.

The system changes the water every three days. Designed jointly by David de Vere and the Rivers and Streams Company, in consultation with the

Environment Agency, I can foresee that in the not too distant future many owners of well-stocked, coloured-water coarse fisheries will be using this fabulous idea as a blueprint towards ensuring controlled levels of oxygen and water quality - particularly as our weather conditions are becoming so unpredictable.

Of the two other lakes, Milton and Bonds, both around three acres apiece, I had time to fish Milton for a morning only. My plan was to bag up on the pound-plus crucian carp for which it is justly famous.

The trouble was my waggler fished sweetcorn and small meat cubes presented on a size 12 hook tied direct to 2lb 8oz line

attracted the attention of too many tench. Introducing loose feed on the little-and-often principle close beside a bed of lilies had just about every species in the lake queuing up.

**S**KIMMER bream, bigger bream, small tench, big tench (I lost one of at least 6lb plus) rudd, hybrids, and several fat crucians averaging 11b 8oz came my way.

Then, to top it all, a zander of around 7lb gobbled up my cube of luncheon meat. Yes, a zander.

If you fancy some hectic stillwater fishing, then I cannot recommend anywhere more prolific than Bury Hill Fisheries. There's an on-site restaurant, shop and tackle facilities too. Tel: 01306 877540.

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