

Chronicle Fishing

Every now and then as anglers you come across a venue that takes your breath away. This month Team Chronicle had the privilege of fishing a venue that did just that. Tucked away in the beautiful Brentwood countryside surrounded by bluebell filled woodland and a fed from a natural stream is the lovely, private and very exclusive day ticket water known as Bentley Fishery.

Bentley Fishery, Brentwood Essex

Bentley is not your average day ticket lake; there's no showing up uninvited without prior arrangement with John the owner to have a look around or to fish. On this strictly over 18s venue you have to book in advance, and let's get one thing straight from the off – this is not an easy lake, and by no means aimed at the beginner carp angler or the runs water enthusiast. You need to be a hardcore session angler fishing 48 to 72 hours to reap the rewards that Bentley has to offer. Although the lake record caught last summer stands at 29lbs, the minute you see this lake you can't help but think that there are now a couple of 30s lurking in one of the many nooks and crannies around the lake. The owner has a high level of respect for all the anglers that have booked, and once you are fishing the chances are you won't ever see anybody except the other anglers booked on with you.

Once through the secure closed gate and into the car park, you can feel the excitement building as the quality and investment that has gone into this venue is immediately evi-

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dent. You haven't even seen the lake yet, but the anticipation of what's to come starts to take over. John the owner wasted no time in greeting us, giving some good advice, and showing us around as well as showing us his brilliant range of Bentley's own premium carp bait – great value, and it smelt amazing! First we were shown the barn, which is equipped with a couple of fridges to store bait and electric sockets for you to charge bait boats, phones and other electric devices. Opposite were the clean toilets, which had a selection of local leaflets inside should you wish to get

a takeaway delivered to the gates.

Barrows loaded, we began the short walk down to the main lake passing the stock pond on the way, which itself looked good enough to fish, before arriving at the main lake, which can only be described as a carper's paradise. The lake itself is 40 years old, dug in the early 70s and is approximately 3.5 acres in size with two islands, which stand in the centre. It offers eight purpose built swims, all of which give you ample room to set up for your session and are well designed too, giving each angler plenty of water between swims, while cleverly planted trees hide the other anglers and separate the lake, making you feel like you have the place to yourself. Only five anglers are allowed on at any given time, although larger parties would be



Sam Baldwin with two lovely stockies – a 17lb 5oz mirror and a 14.





(Left) Ricky Westpfel with the biggest of the session at 25lbs caught on Bentley's own tipped with yellow corn.

(Right) Rick with this stunning 21lb mirror, which again fell to Bentley's own! The fish loved it!

considered if arranged with John.

When you begin your walk around the lake anticlockwise down the gentle slope, you arrive at swim one, aptly named the Boat swim, as you really do need a bait boat to get the best out of it. Bait boats are actively encouraged by the fishery for you to get the most out of your time here, which Sam Baldwin did by landing two stunning carp, one at 17lb 4oz and the other at 14lb. Next you will find the Gate swim, which gives you access to the islands as well as a carp looking group of lily pads. Further round are the two Paddock swims, numbers 3 and 4, which again allow you access to the islands and good section of open water. From there, next comes the newly made Point swim. Facing directly down the lake, and from this swim is where Ricky Westpfel netted his two fish, a 21lb mirror and one which tipped the scales at 25lb – both absolutely beautiful carp.

Now to the last pair of swims – the Double Bunker and Bunker swims – 6, 7 and 8. The Double Bunker is two swims together, and it's the only swim on the lake that has this feature. It gives a little more of the lake to whoever fishes it, as well as being more sociable. The Bunker swim is opposite the Gate swim and gives you the most options on the lake – both islands, open water, near mar-



gins and far margins if the Gate swim is empty. This is where Paul Wood had one fantastic session, landing a total five fish to 20lb 12oz, which is a rarity for the lake and a superb bit of angling. As well as bringing your own baits to the venue that you are confident using, we recommend adding Bentley's own boilies to your arsenal. They are made to the highest standard by one of the leading bait companies in the UK with no expense spared, and at £8 per kilo they are well worth the price. The fish are switched on to them and they regularly catch all over the lake, just as they did for us!

The lake is surrounded by nature – the trees and bushes really cap this water off and the lake looks amazing with lily pads and overhanging trees

where you know the carp will love to hold up. It is so peaceful here the silence is only broken by the sound of horses in a nearby field and the owls at night... and hopefully the sound of your alarms ripping off as you hook into one of the pristine specimens that reside in Bentley. The lake holds 57 mirrors and 31 commons, and John prides himself that all carp are hand-picked, home grown carp from the UK of a very high quality, all stunning and individual. There are two exceptions and it's a story he will share... When John took over the fishery he kept on only two originals from the lake; one very old warrior fish of over 40 years in age and a fish called Fin, due to the fact it has one missing fin. At 16lb 11oz, it was one of the five that Paul Wood managed to land on his session



Paul Wood had a brilliant session netting five, including these two at 20lbs.



Paul Wood holding two lovely hard-fighting commons.

along with the same carp Ricky caught a few weeks earlier down in weight due to spawning. Pristine carp need good water quality, and that's provided from a natural stream that feeds this beautiful lake, as well as the two state of the art silent aerator systems. John is always on hand to pass on his knowledge of the water and to give advice. He loves to hear of your catches and see your pictures.

If for any reason you cannot make your trip to Bentley you must give 48 hours' notice so your space can be filled.

Bentley's is one of the elite waters that you will find in Essex. We recommend booking a midweek session, as weekends are becoming difficult to book because there are only a handful of waters of this quality, and getting on them is becoming harder and harder as more and more anglers discover these hidden treasures. Sorry, but if you're new to carp angling, this one is not for you; you need to be a seasoned carper to take this one on. It is a challenging water for those dedi-

cated anglers that like to put in the graft to be rewarded with pound for pound some of the best looking carp in Essex. But Bentley is there for the taking – are you the one who will break the lake record and land its first thirty? Every good angler will know it's not always possible to catch, but even if you blank at Bentley's you will leave with a small piece of it in your heart and you will definitely be back for more. Team Chronicle definitely will!

For up-to-date information and booking please visit bentleyfishery.co.uk.

Videos and more stunning photos of Bentley's and other venues we've visited can be seen at chroniclefishing.co.uk

For more information on our reviews or to book us to visit your fishery contact us at info@chroniclefishing.co.uk ■

Prices

Summer

Day ticket 6am to 6pm£15

12-hour night ticket 6pm to 6am . . .£15

24 hour ticket – 6 am or 6pm start . .£25

Winter

Day ticket, 7am to sunset£10

24-hour ticket£20

Booking Information

Please Call John on 07939074089

Deposit will be required when booking.

Methods of paying will be cheque or

cash only please.

Rules

- Age limit strictly 18 years plus.
- Fishing from designated swims only.
- Strictly no stalking.
- Rods not to be left unattended.
- Strictly no damage to foliage.
- No spodding.
- Barbless or microbarbed hooks only.
- All bivvies must be a recognised style in green or camo only.
- Landing net minimum 42 inch.
- Full size carp unhooking mat.
- No fish to be held above knee height.
- No keepnets or sacks.
- Mainline 12lb minimum.
- No braided mainline.
- No fixed leads.
- No leadcore.
- No nut baits.
- No trout pellets.
- Particles in moderation.
- Please dip landing nets before fishing.
- EA rod licences required.
- PLEASE USE PROVIDED TOILET FACILITIES
- NO LITTER OR ROWDY BEHAVIOUR



The visually stunning Bentley Fishery.