

Taking the chance to sample fishing in a different world...

Our Neil goes north to Alaska

RULE-making fishery bosses may have hit the fantasy button on some English waters, but as town's Neil Stafford found out... we have yet to get anywhere near Alaska's norm.

Yes good fish care should be a given: but insisting on use of 'fishery' nets and pellets is quite another – when you have to pay extra to hire one and way above the retail price for t'other!

That is when, unsurprisingly, some punters think they're being ripped off.

But Alaska has a different approach – one unlikely(?) to catch on on our average commercial.

There tourists fish with professional guides. And if they catch a fish the guide nets it, unhooks it, takes a trophy snap...and puts it back – all without the angler getting to touch so much as a scale.

Holidaying with his wife earlier in the year, Neil took time out to sample fishing in a largely unspoilt wilderness, and experienced the 'hook but don't touch' policy. "It came as a surprise to say the least," said the Northampton Nene secretary.

"Guides have to hold licences and, if they lose them, they also lose their livelihoods. Naturally everyone is very keen on fish welfare and, most of the time, won't even let you touch a fish."

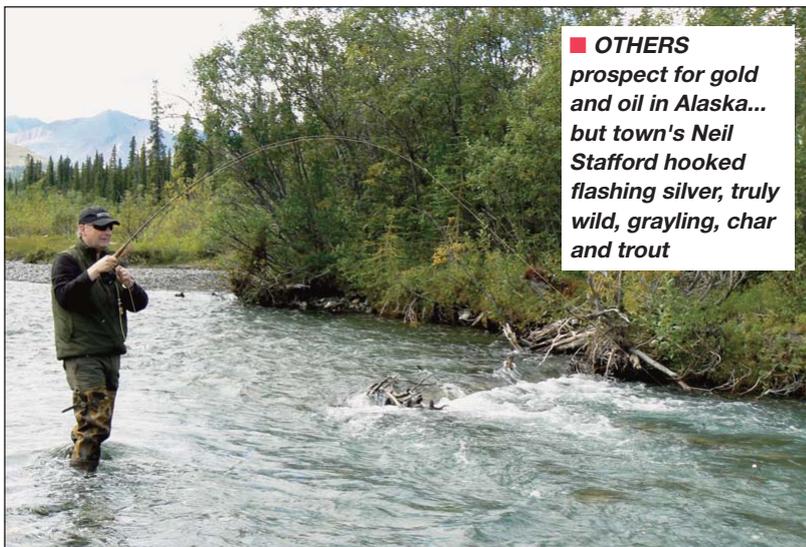
Why? Fish are a valuable part of the tourist industry, and minimising stock losses makes economic sense... but it is unlikely that, anytime soon, we will have guides unhooking our gudgeon on the Grand Union.

Neil caught grayling on fly, rainbows, and Arctic char on lures and, at sea where he could even keep his fish, silver salmon. Sounds good.

● Back home, while Sunday's conditions weren't quite Alaskan, many found themselves ice breaking before they could fish – leading to postponement of both the Castle

Ashby AT league final round and the Meadowlands penultimate leg. But that didn't stop 'Roman' netting a 19lb common from Stanwick's Elsons.

● CASTLE Ashby, brickyard, Saturday, Chris Garrett 46-12, Mick Hewlett 19-8, Pete Stockwin 14-2; Sunday, Grendon, Garrett 16-6, Hewlett 16-6, Dick Rogers 8-10; midweek, Grendon, John Kent 10-13, Keith Bishop 8-10, Alan West 8-5.



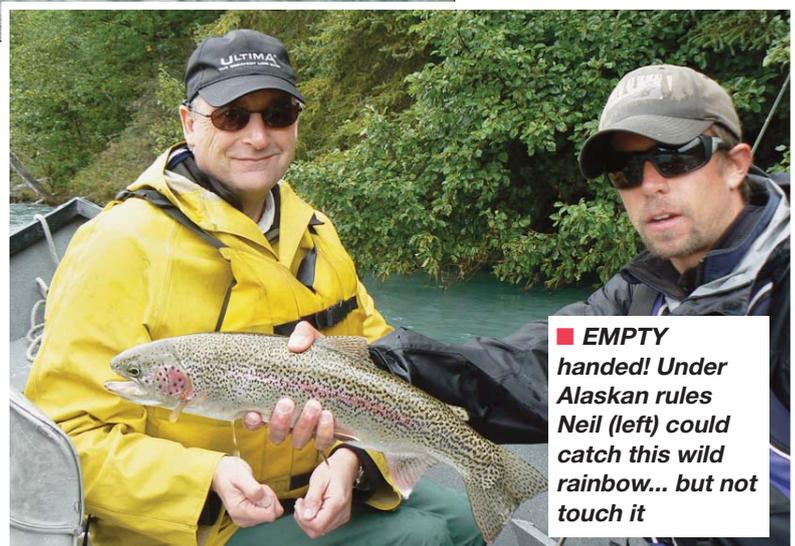
■ **OTHERS**
prospect for gold and oil in Alaska... but town's Neil Stafford hooked flashing silver, truly wild, grayling, char and trout

● OSPREY, Lakeside: Pete Carter 19-12, Mark Wilson 19-8, Mark Carter 19-4.

● WHITE Hart Flore, Barby Mill: John Berry, Vinny Atkinson 10-13, Tom Griffiths 6lb.

● NORTHAMPTON vets, Mill Cotton: Bob Spencer 16lb, Trevor Griffiths 8-14, Glen Tilson 8-12.

● CASTLE silverfish 5th round, Canons: Stuart Cheetham 6-3, Alan Pitt & Geoff Lewis both 4-5.



■ **EMPTY**
handed! Under Alaskan rules Neil (left) could catch this wild rainbow... but not touch it

● NENE, Grafton willows cut: Andy Swift 6-1, Paul Keel 5-12-12, Derek Reaney 2-12.

● LITTLE Harrowdon, Cranford: Ken Taylor 5-15, Sam Corteze 3-13, Adie Chance 3-11.

● GLEBE, Heyford cut: Dave Haddon 1-6 (mostly one perch), Rus Lay 0-14, Bob Eales 0-9. Nine out of 10 others blanked.

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or angling@intermediauk.com (click link to email)