

# Upper Ouse gets big Christmas stocking fish boost from the EA

**R**ECENT days have seen tankfuls of young fish – more than 23,000 in total – going into the Upper Ouse!

The bulk were 4 to 8 inch barbel, with the rest junior chub, dace and roach, and all had been reared at the Environment Agency's fish farm – the breeding station funded with money from rod licence sales.

Adams Mill (where Lewis Thomas is pictured, right, adding another netful), and where the Ouzel joins the main river at Newport, Lavendon Mill and Radwell were among more local sites stocked. Others went in at Sharnbrook, and into the Ivel, Thet and Cub tributaries.

Those fish follow 6,000 others which went in this side of Bedford in September – with thousands more into the upper Ouse and Ouzel over two years before that.

It is all part of the EA fisheries team's practical efforts to restore a river hit hard by predation ranging from red signal crayfish (consuming huge quantities of eggs, fry and fry food) to cormorants, otters and human thieves.

Over three years they have worked hard to improve spawning sites with the ambition that resident fish and those being added, when the survivors reach maturity, will be able to re-populate the river at much higher rates than the recent norm.

While 23,000 may not sound that many when spread over 10s of miles of rivers – such are normal fatality rates that, in the wild it could easily have taken a couple of million fertilised fish eggs to produce that many 1 year+ fish.

■ Despite minus 6 temperatures, MK vets' midweek Christmas match was a cheery occasion – for some. Paul Chapman (pictured right) won with 8lb of roach and dace on the Stony Ouse, with Kevin Osborne on 6-1 and Ernie Sattler 5-7.

■ After FIFTY YEARS of trying, Newport club sec Richard Dorrell finally won the club's Christmas match (Abbey pits) with 7-12 of roach to 1-6. Dave Adams had 7-5 and James Mead 6-6.

■ Linford, boatyard canal: Steve Funnell 5-14 of perch, Mick Hefferon 3lb, John Hough 2-14.

■ Towcester, Castlethorpe canal: Grenville Read 3-8, Les Goodridge 3-1, Dave Martin 2-5.

■ Olney's flood-hit Saturday Ouse do fell to Mick Burrell...with 2-1-8 of bleak. Les Wallis had 0-14 and Gary Britton 0-12-8.

■ DATS, Deans Rd canal: Loll Harding 1-14-4, Mark Haynes 1-6, Rus Nash 1-2-4.

■ Calvert, Claydon Lake: all dry nets – Happy New Year lads!

■ **PLEASE stay alive for next week's column! Three youths were photographed (tackle on backs, Sunday) 'crabbing'**



*sideways along the handrail of the weir bridge over the Ouzel back of Willen north – while the flooded river poured in a torrent over the TOP of the bridge beneath their feet.*

*So stupid. Just one slip and it could be goodnight for ever...*

■ **FIXTURES:** Sunday (Dec 23) Galleon Xmas match, 07779 456286. Jan 1 MKAA 'hangover Ouse open and, Jan 13, start of MKAA teams of 4 winter league 07703 556788.

*Happy Christmas.*

