

# Paradise found

If you've ever fancied your 'own' private carp lake, Adam Fisher may well have the answer. We join him on the banks of a hidden gem

Words Mark Parker Photography Lloyd Rogers



All of Trelough Pool's carp population are stunningly coloured and fin perfect

**T**HERE are very few things as quintessentially English as a classic estate lake, bordered by mature reeds and lilies, with a scattering of towering oak trees thrown in for good measure.

Trelough Pool on the Whitfield Estate, set in the beautiful landscape of Herefordshire, is a far cry from typical commercial puddles with their concrete slab pegs and uniform appearance.

Once the preserve of the landed gentry, this idyllic, unspoiled English gem – and many others like it – have now been thrown open to allcomers by the Wye & Usk Foundation, with anyone entitled to fish it for the price of a £15 day ticket. And the best bit is, with a maximum of three anglers permitted per day, you and your mates can book the whole lake all to yourselves!

To get the lowdown on what visiting anglers can expect from this virgin water, we met up with freelance fisheries consultant Adam Fisher on the pool's well-tended banks, where he was looking to stalk fish using the simplest of float tactics.

## A little piece of heaven

At four acres and around 400 yards long, Trelough Pool is as tranquil as a monastery. It hardly sees a human visitor, let alone an angler, with most footfall coming from the abundant wildlife.

Having never purposely been stocked with coarse fish, it began life as a stillwater trout fishery. The trout have long gone, and in their place are shoals of quality roach and rudd, a few bream and some large and beautiful carp. It's likely that the coarse fish came in via the trout stockings, although this has never been verified. As usual, nature has found a way!

Adam first stumbled across Trelough, and the other idyllic lakes that are now on the W&U Foundation's books, in his previous job in the organisation's marketing office.

He explained: "I was always approaching landowners seeking permission to fish the river courses on their property, and it was while visiting these estates and driving past their overgrown and mouth-watering lakes, that my angling mind started turning over. I wondered if I could get these on the books, as well as the river sections?"

Negotiations followed, and before long the Foundation was able to offer visiting anglers exclusive access to previously unfished private estate lakes – a totally unique experience for the price of a day-ticket.

Bookable for up to three anglers at a time, Trelough Pool offers the perfect environment for pole, waggler or feeder fishing. However, Adam's preferred tactic on this day would be stalking. He planned to feed a few likely-looking marginal areas with bait, and then creep into position armed with a simple float rod set-up. ▶

### Margin stalker

In keeping with the beautiful sleepy surroundings, Adam spent the morning fishing traditionally with a straight peacock float, lift method style. With the float locked at depth on the mainline by a pair of rubber float stops, the simple shotting pattern was a pair of BBs placed 10 inches from the hook, with a single No.4 shot just three inches from it.

The rig was then set to fish 4in overdepth in the 4ft swim so that the No.4 shot was just touching bottom. His size 16 hook was baited with a single grain of sweetcorn and fished over a couple of handfuls of corn and hemp.

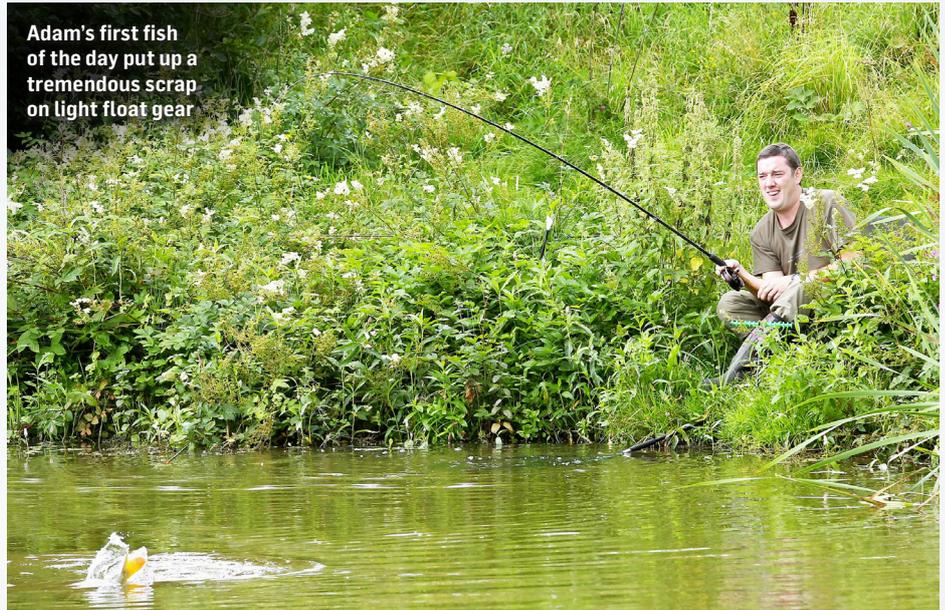
After baiting several swims, Adam carefully stalked the banks looking for signs of feeding fish such as bubbles, tail patterns or puffs of mud clouding the water.

After finding positive signs in his first baited spot, he gently lowered his rig into the water, before tightening the mainline until the float cocked. Within a couple of minutes, the quill rocked slightly before dipping under and quickly resurfacing.

Resisting the temptation to strike at what looked like a line bite, Adam focussed intently on the orange tip of the float, and within seconds it rocked again before burying. A sharp strike set the hook and the fish was on!

Playing it hard, Adam's centrepin reel buzzed like an angry bee in a jam jar. "The beauty of a 'pin is that you can use your finger as the clutch, giving the fish line as and when it needs it," he grinned as the carp ploughed away along the margin.

After a great fight lasting ten minutes, a fin-



Adam's first fish of the day put up a tremendous scrap on light float gear

perfect double-figure common carp lay in the landing net. The fish looked like it had never been caught, and we both knew that there was a very strong possibility it hadn't.

Following a few quick photos, the carp was returned back into the swim, which was re-fed with hemp and corn before Adam moved on to his next spot.

After 45 biteless minutes, however, he returned to the original swim, which had enticed another visitor judging by the small plumes of silt clearly visible under the surface.

Gently lowering his sweetcorn-baited rig on

to the spot, the float buried almost instantly.

The result? Yet another beautiful Trelough Pool carp, again just into double figures, which brought a fitting end to a cracking afternoon's fishing in truly stunning surroundings.



### Great British Fishing

Day tickets at Trelough Pool on the Whitfield Estate are priced at £15. To book it, or any of the W&U Foundation's other hidden gems, visit [www.wyeuskfoundation.org](http://www.wyeuskfoundation.org) or contact the booking office on 01982 560788



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