

Magnificent wild brown trout caught in Bourne Rivulet



This magnificent wild brown trout is one of the biggest fish ever caught in the Bourne Rivulet. It was caught in one of the tiniest parts of the Bourne, within Lower Link Farm.

A visiting angler has caught an exceptional wild brown trout from one of the new chalk streams created within the curtilage of Vitacress Salads' Lower Link Farm at St Mary Bourne, Hants. The fish – estimated to weigh more than 5 pounds - was seen lying in a small stream close to the end of a culvert, 50 yards upstream of the viaduct shown in the famous view from Champansford bridge.

The fish's capture – on Tuesday 23 June - was witnessed by Terry Lawton who said: "We have known for some time that these tiny new streams were home to some magnificent wild brown trout but this was a fish to take your breath away. It was approaching 24 inches in length but it was so broad and deep that it must have weighed well over 5lbs. Its extraordinary width and depth was so typical of Test trout. It is without doubt one of the biggest fish ever caught in one of the tiniest parts of the Bourne Rivulet.

"Stalking the fish in gin-clear water, its successful capture, and subsequent release, was a fantastic performance as there was so little room in which to play it."

Harry Plunket Green's biggest fish weighed an exceptional 3 1/2 pounds and other fish approaching 5 pounds have been recorded since. The fish's captor has been able to check records for a number of years, some going back as far as 1915. He has put the fish down in his own records as "around 5lbs", with which he feels safe. The fish was caught on a shrimp pattern designed by the captor.

At the start of 2007 Vitacress Salads removed a series of pipes and culverts carrying the discharge water from its watercress beds and salad packing operation and employed Cain Bio-Engineering, the specialist river restoration company, to convert them into new miniature chalk streams which has added to the fishable waters of the Bourne Rivulet. The project provided a rare opportunity to create ideal trout habitat from the stream bed up with the right geomorphology – physical features – and biological features such as weeds and macro-invertebrates for wild trout to flourish and thrive. The capture of this fish is a crowning success for the project.