

More Baits

Sweet corn

Sweetcorn can produce very good results, although its popularity has dropped in the Warren in favour of pellets. Fished close in with a float off the edge of the reeds in the match lake last season produced some good bags of Tench. Useful for targeting big roach in the main lake during late spring when the smaller fish are making a nuisance of themselves with the more traditional maggots and casters.

Tips for using sweetcorn in the Warren

Where weed is a problem try using a tiny piece of yellow rig foam on the hook so that the sweetcorn and hook just sink. This has the effect of laying the sweetcorn on top of the weed instead of sinking into the weed. Place the sweetcorn on the hook (size 12-14) and a small piece of rig foam. Test the rig in the margin. If the sweetcorn floats trim a piece of foam off and retest. Keep doing this until the rig just sinks. Particularly useful when quivertipping with corn. A piece of rig foam will last you years.

Try picking out the choicer bits of sweetcorn and storing them in golden syrup. This has the effect of pickling them and they will last for weeks. The syrup will dissolve off around the sweetcorn giving a greater attraction to your hookbait

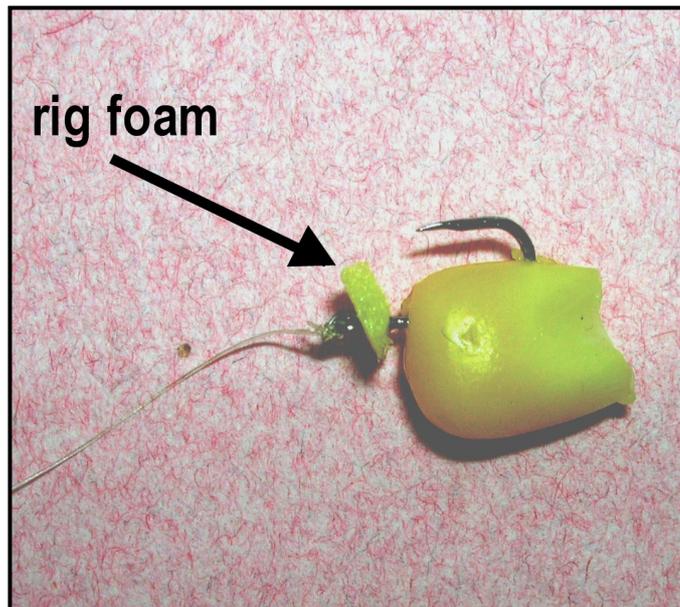


Fig. 1
Balanced sweetcorn

Maggots

One of the more common baits. Very useful in spring and autumn. Since all the lakes contain a huge head of small silver fish which are very active in the summer it is very difficult getting through the small fish at this time of year. Quivertipping with maggots when the water is cool is a particularly effective way of picking up the quality fish (see the catch reports for January 2006)

Dead maggots

An excellent loose feed for gravel pits, particularly when ledgering. Dead maggots will lie on top on any silt or blanket weed giving a visual signal to any feeding fish. A particularly effective loose feed is a mixture of live and dead maggots. The dead maggots lie on the lake bottom while the live ones burrow in, causing the fish to root around for food.

Preparing dead maggots

Take some live maggots, place in a plastic bag and put in the freezer for 24 hours. When you want to use the frozen maggots take from the freezer, place in a bait box and cover in cold water. This method will hydrate the frozen maggots as they thaw so that their appearance is no different to the live ones.

Casters

Casters are one of the best baits for picking out the quality fish. Most suited for float fishing. Over the years fishing the Warren I have had roach and Rudd over 3lb, bream over 9lb, Tench over 8lb and a Crucian carp of 4.75lb all on float fished caster. A Tench weighing 12lb 4oz was caught on float fished caster from the logs area in April 2005 by member Gary Shaves.

The secret to successful caster fishing is keeping your bait in tip top condition. Freshly turned casters are white to pale orange in colour. When exposed to the air the casters will continue to darken. Dark brown casters the casters will float and become useless as a loose feed. Casters used at the bankside should be placed in a bait box and immersed in water; this prevents them from turning into floaters.

If you buy your casters before the day you intend to fish don't keep them in the plastic bag bought from the tackle shop, they will turn rubbery and develop black marks on them where the plastic bag burns them. Remove them from the plastic bag and place them in a bait box. Immerse them in water and drain off; this has the effect of making the caster shells very crispy. Drain off the water and cover with a couple of damp paper towels. This will cut down the oxygen supply to the caster and maintain it as a sinking bait. If you intend using caster regularly buy a Fox bait box that is airtight to store the casters in, otherwise put some Clingfilm over the box before placing the lid on. If 'er indoors is understanding store in the fridge until ready to use. If stored in the fridge using this method they will keep for a couple of weeks.

More to come