

Tucked away on 40 acres of weedy, silty Cornish reservoir

TONY DESCRIBES HOW HE TACKLES THICK WEED AND DEEP SILT

Welcome to the Jungle!

I love all types of carp angling, the sport is so diverse, but I especially like the lakes that are generally overlooked because they are low stocked with an unknown quantity of carp and difficult to fish due to the topography and lake bed make-up; for example weed and deep silt! Also getting to swims can be an issue for some anglers, but this is an advantage for me.

Most people these days seem to want to know exactly what they are fishing for in angler-friendly swims with an angler-friendly stock. Difficult, low-stocked, silty, weedy or generally a pain in the arse to

get to and I'm in angling heaven, because I know that most anglers won't be interested in this type of angling.

I call it the jungle!

I have nothing against driving to a swim, unloading and setting up, or chasing target fish, as I do this myself. I just prefer the aforementioned! I think it holds more mystery and anticipation, which is why I started carp fishing in the first place. I find it more exciting and rewarding. I thought I'd write a short article on how I tackle this type of lake, the ones that really make you think about what you're doing with the deep, smelly silt and plenty of weed to contend with.

CONFIDENCE

Confidence is a major factor when it comes to taking on waters like this, more so than usual because in your mind you know the silt is deep, you know it's weedy and you know there is a low stock, so everything has to be perfect. I've heard anglers say "that'll do" many times, but the truth of the matter is it won't. The odd take will obviously occur, but over time that sort of attitude will cost an angler photos from their album! This applies to choosing a swim as much as rig

placement or anything else. With my time being so limited these days I apply the utmost care when it comes to everything I do. I need to be 100 per cent in my own mind (anyone who knows me knows I'm a bit of a perfectionist when it comes to doing it my way). If you go at it half-heartedly, what's the point? Do everything the best you possibly can, putting in as much effort as you can, and that way your confidence will rocket and, by not leaving things to chance, you will ultimately put more carp in the net!

WATERCRAFT

Now that confidence is high it needs to stay that way, so knowing the make-up of the lake is vital. There is



The Atom bivvy comes in handy when space is an issue – and it's inconspicuous with the camo netting



My helicopter setup incorporating Q Ring and Drop Out Chod Safety Clip, allowing the lead to come free when playing carp in weedy conditions



How the setup looks with the XL Buffer Bead over the top, making it neat and safe – the hook bead stopper can be adjusted accordingly



early spring, but when the weed is up I like to fish a fairly tight line with the tips up. This combats my line sinking into marginal weed and allows a take to register on the alarms far more quickly than fishing a slack line and then finding a carp sitting halfway through a massive weedbed after a couple of bleeps!

Thanks to Gardner's Drop Out Chod Safety Clips, a safe helicopter setup with a drop-off lead can be used to great effect in this situation. I set mine up on a three-foot length of 25lb Mirage fluorocarbon and I use a Covert Hook Stop at the top of the setup. The depth of the silt determines how high I set the Stop; for example, if I'm fishing in 12 inches of silt I'd set the Stop at around 14 inches. These are ideal for close-in work but they will move on the cast if fishing at distance so a different stopper would be needed in that situation. Under the hook bead stopper I use a soft rubber Covert Safety Bead followed by a size 12 Kwik-Loc Flexi-Ring Swivel (ideal for changing hooklinks quickly). A Covert Buffer Bead XL is used under the swivel to protect the knot and give protection to the Covert Q-Ring, the Drop Out Chod Safety

destroying. What I go for on lakes as described is a helicopter setup, which will allow the lead to penetrate the silt and/or weed, while allowing the hooklink and hookbait to sit above it.

I imagine you're all now expecting me to describe a chod rig, but not on this occasion! A chod rig is a favourite of mine during the winter and

no point in slinging a bait into an area the fish don't frequent at certain times of the year or in particular weather conditions, so learning how the lake lives and breathes will definitely stand you in good stead. If you can, walk the lake as much as possible to get a feel for the place. This obviously counts for all lakes, but it's especially important on larger, low-stocked lakes. On one particular lake I fish the carp could be several miles away, so watercraft and knowing the venue to locate the carp is paramount. This all adds confidence.

TACKLE IT

When it comes to tackle, strong and safe is the name of the game. Don't compromise on tackle. When all the hard work comes together to hook a fish, to lose it because the tackle isn't up to the job is soul



A lovely dark mirror that no one knew about
Inset: The new Gardner Silt range comes in handy for fishing over darker lake beds

Tackling weed and silt...



The new Mainline Impact range and, of course, the Cell!



Aromatic Fish is a great colour for silt fishing and keeps the birdlife away from the hookbait during daylight hours

Pop Up Hook Aligners really make life easy and give great hook holds



This one was caught with the rig placed in more than 10 inches of silt

a dark coloured silt bottom and tricks the birds so they miss my hookbait and eventually move off elsewhere in search of a meal. I do like to use a mix of baits to keep the fish guessing, so even though I'm tricking the birds with a dark hookbait in the day, I never go anywhere without the Cell, which has a washed-out look to it and I think this gives the carp confidence to get on the feed so it's always included in my fishing.



Carp angling heaven!

A strong, supple coated braid in conjunction with a Continental Mugga hook turns pick-ups into fish on the bank

Clip and the lead. The lead I use is the lightest I can get away with because a 2oz lead in a foot of silt acts much heavier. For added confidence I use the Gardner Chod variety. My hooklink will be a little longer than usual, again to add confidence that the hookbait is sitting in the correct position. In this instance I'd go for a soft coated hooklink of at least 15lb, such as Chod Skin or Sink Skin. These hooklinks are lovely materials which are very user friendly and can be knotless knotted straight through to a Continental Mugga hook incorporating one of the new Pop Up Hook Aligners. It is as simple but effective as a rig gets. Split the coating to reveal the softer section at the desired point to mount a counterbalance and the pop-up will sit beautifully poised, ready for the hook to sink into a big, leathery bottom lip! I would normally go for around 1½-2 inches to ensure the point is clear of any bottom weed or debris. I tie my hookbaits on with floss and use a slip knot to a rig ring.

BAIT

The lake I'm referring to in this article is fairly shallow and has plenty of birdlife, so I've found that a darker bait works best during daylight hours and any colour at night. Mainline Aromatic Fish is perfectly suited to blend in well with



THIS IS A SMALL INSIGHT ON HOW I TACKLE PROBLEMS WITH PRESENTATION WHEN FISHING IN AND AROUND DEEP SILT AND WEED; IT'S WHERE THE CARP LIVE SO LEARNING HOW TO FISH THESE AREAS EFFECTIVELY WILL CERTAINLY HELP THE ALBUM FILL UP!