

A special tale from my top 10

Looking back on my wildfowling and fishing over the years there are one or two in my top ten that will remain upmost in my mind, here is one of them

On a traditional morning flight out on my local estuary I had just missed a fine flight of pinks heading out to their feeding grounds they had edged past me at around 60 meters luckily for me I was able to make the next morning and hoped to be in a better position. The tide was still near perfect and as I plodded out over the estuary mud it wasn't long before I arrived at my chosen spot which was a small creek leading into the river. It was a cracking dark morning with a new moon and a north westerly wind which would produce birds with a fast tail wind! As always I was there in plenty of time just in case they jumped up early. I was pretty sure I had the estuary to myself so things were looking good for a successful result apart from the usual added pressure of having only one attempt. As the grey of morning arrived I could hear the restless behaviour from across the river even although they only numbered around 50 birds the wind made me think there might be more, then all of a sudden they were up and heading straight towards me. From the kneeling position I crouched down and hoped for the best and when the wink! wink! Sounded close I slowly peered up and swung the Laurona through the first bird, watching it fold I poked at the second bird only to miss cleanly. My disappointment on the second bird soon disappeared when I picked a fine fat pink that was slipped gracefully into my game bag. Within 30 minutes I was back in the car and heading for home, what I haven't mentioned was my plan for part two which commenced after I had cleaned and safely stowed away my Laurona, then dried and hung up my goose

The night before I had dug up some mighty fine lob worms placing them in a wooden box lined with moss stripped from a local dry stone dyke, great for hardening them up so they don't slip off the hook whilst casting. It was only 10am and my plan was to be fishing for salmon or something! around 11am. The river in question was on a different estuary from where I had been earlier but well within range for a few hours fishing.

After a breakfast that was quickly demolished I soon found myself pulling into a layby next to a tidal bit of water that I knew quite well, off course 3 other cars were already there no surprise to me after all these guys were hardened salmon fishers that hogged all the best pools and had probably been fishing since first

light, my favourite pool was being fished by an older gentleman also my second best pool was the same so as I knew both these guys I asked politely if I could fish in between them, that went well and with a distance of 50 meters away from one another I set up my spinning rod. My main line was 20lb a swivel then 15lb down to the single hook, then my splendid lob worms from my garden not like now bought from a shop!



Only a few flounders and one small sea trout had been caught but as the tide was still falling there was still a chance. I cast out over to the far side and let my worms and small weight drift down stream before resting about mid river the time was about 11.30am holding my spinning rod I waited watching for signs of an otter that sometimes showed around September after 15 minutes I got a slight knocking then more, I raised the rod tip and bang! fish on right away I knew it was no flounder eel or sea trout, then it came out of the water a gleaming silver bar no salmon but a cracking 7lb Grilse. With all the splashing I soon had some assistance to help me land him which was just as well as I was on a steep banking that led down to the river edge.

I explained where I had been in the morning and the success with the pinkfoot all of us agreed it was indeed a special day, a poor mans double, luck, whatever I tried for another fish but decided after 10 minutes that was enough excitement for one day. The fish had been knocked on the head because that's what most of us did at that time after all it was a fine size for the table and not only mine, sitting on the bank gave me time to reflect would I ever do this again and up to now the answer is no, but never say never I know for sure there will be more guys with similar adventures, this is Definitely one of my top 10

JM