

Anglers are urged: check and DRY kit EVERY trip after discovery of... **'Demon shrimp' in local cut!** *Species is as big a threat as Grafham's 'killer shrimp'*

FISH are beset by cormorants, crays, otters, poachers and biblical-proportioned floods – but it can and just DID GET WORSE...with the discovery of junior 'killer shrimp' in the cut!

Dikerogammarus haemophages – a smaller but equally voracious cousin of the 'killer shrimp' discovered in Grafham last year – is in the local Grand Union.

Environment Agency scientists found samples of the creature, more commonly known as 'demon shrimp', near Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne on Thursday.

And the fear is that, if it isn't there already, the alien species will spread into the nearby Tove, into the Ouse and then into lakes, streams and ponds throughout this area.

Described by the EA as: "Posing an equal ecological threat to killer shrimp," the centimetre-long bug is an aggressive coloniser with a taste for fish eggs, tiny fish fry – and invertebrates which are the main food source of both immature fish and water birds...which is bad news for future fish and bird populations.

Controlling its spread in 'open' water systems is described as 'difficult' (biologist-speak for next to impossible).

The hope is that bigger fish will eat enough demon shrimp to reduce its potential for damage; and that all anglers will take serious steps to help avoid hastening its spread.

EA Central Region head of fisheries and biodiversity Dr Ian Hirst said: "It can cling to wet nets and waders and, in cool conditions in a car boot or a garage, still be alive a week later.

"That's why we are asking everyone to follow our Check-Clean-Dry code: checking their equipment for strange organisms, wherever they've fished, cleaning them off, and DRYING the kit thoroughly."

The latter is a proven way of killing the problem beasts.

Originating from the Caspian Sea area of Eastern Europe, the demon has come to Britain (possibly partly via boat hulls and ballast tanks) through Western Europe's major rivers and canals...changing aquatic life systems on its way.

Looking much like an ordinary shrimp, it has distinctive red antennae and a liking for silty areas – making canals and ponds its ideal home.

■ Before the rains came Karl Bean (pictured bottom right) had this 16lb Furzton common.

■ With river sport washed-out (Ian Davey is pictured below where DATS' Stony Main had flooded right up to the Watling Street, Sunday) it was canal or nowt for many at the weekend.



● No need to look for the river – Stony Main was right up to the gate.

■ DATS, Black Horse cut: Paul Neave 3-5-12, Rus Nash 3-1, Dave Tysoe 2-15-8.

■ Calvert, Hill Farm lake: Derek Bishop (six carp) 33-6, Steve Dobbs 12-10, Barry Witteridge 5-2.

■ Midweek, pre the floods: Towcester vets, Navvi, Tosh Saunders 8-1, Gerald Green 5-12, Mick Reed 3-2.

■ Olney Ouse, Nigel Porter 9-2, Mick Burrell 5-5, Barry Glidewell 5lb.

■ MK vets, Calverton road Ouse, Mick Reynolds 1-14, Steve Chilton 1-5, Bob Gale 1-3.

■ FIXTURES:
Saturday, MKAA
youth Christmas
match, Bletchley
canal, 01908
320007;

AND MKAA
Christmas match –
venue dependent on
conditions – tickets
in most MK tackle
shops or call 07703
556788.



● Karl Bean & Furzton carp

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or email angling@intermediauk.com (click link to email)