

# Shropshire's Hidden Gem

Birch Grove is a water steeped in modern carp fishing history and it's available to all for exclusive fishing. Carpworld takes a look at this hidden gem and other venues offering carp fishing holidays.

Deep in the heart of Shropshire lies a beautiful, tree-fringed lake surrounded by wildlife, in a peaceful, natural setting. The lake is called Birch Grove and anyone who has been reading Carpworld for any length of time cannot fail to have read about the exploits of editor Tim Paisley, and others, who have fished this enigmatic water, which has earned its place in modern carp-fishing history. Books have been written on the water, and videos made of the carp that have graced the banks in the past. However it's not only the 'names' who have fished there, because the lake offers exclusive carp fishing for anyone on a weekly basis, and just being at the water allows anglers to sample the atmospheric delights of one of the most famous waters in the UK.

Tim Paisley's book *From The Bivvy* tells of 120 days spent fishing a winter largely on Birch Grove, and the list of anglers who have fished on the lake reads like a Who's Who of carp fishing.

Birch Grove is approximately five acres in size and features a smooth, silty bottom, bloodworm beds, overhanging trees, lily pads, reedbeds, and deep margins. The water is around 13ft deep with deep margins sprinkled with lily beds and overhanging trees. The pool houses five comfortable pegs and can be fished by four people at any one time. Several of the pegs can be fished by two people.

It is estimated that there are around 200 carp in the lake following the introduction, towards the end of 2009, of 50 additional carp, which were stocked from the local growing-on pool.

Shaun Harrison of Quest Baits with one of Birch's stunning mirrors.



**LOCATION:** Somewhere in Shropshire. This is an exclusive venue and anglers are not allowed to just turn up and walk round. The exact location will be revealed at the time of booking.

**LAKE SIZE** About five acres.

**LAKE FEATURES:** Depth approx. 13ft. Smooth, silty bottom with plenty of bloodworm beds, overhanging trees, lily pads, snags, reedbeds, and deep margins.

**FISHERY RULES:** Four rods can be used, as can remote-control boats. No nut baits.

**CARP STOCK:** It is estimated there are around 200 carp in the lake, of which the vast majority are 20s with a sprinkling of 30s. It is thought that the first 40lb fish will be caught this year.

**PRICE:** £680 per week for up to four anglers. Non-fishing guests are allowed by arrangement.

**CONTACT DETAILS:** Telephone Angling Publications on 0114 258 0812 and ask for Pip or Jemima. Alternatively, email Pip at [pip@anglingpublications.co.uk](mailto:pip@anglingpublications.co.uk)

Simon Crow with a pristine Birch Grove common.







The lodge at Birch has all the facilities you'll need to make your stay a comfortable one.

There are now fish to upper-30s with a large number of 20s, backed up by mid-doubles. It is expected that the first 40lb carp will show its face this year. There is a boat provided for baiting up and bait boats are now allowed on the water. The fish are not easy to catch because over the years they've seen just about every type of rig and bait imaginable, from some of the best anglers around – but this only adds to the aura of the lake and when the fish do feed and are hooked, they fight like demons!

The lake features a wooden lodge containing a dining area, kitchen, shower and toilet, and there is even a swim right outside the door! The other swims on the lake are all boarded and have plenty of space for bivvies. You can park your car behind several of them, which is a bonus.

Birch Grove is available for parties of up to four people between the beginning of June and the end of October. Between November and May a winter syndicate is in operation. Anglers can bring along non-fishing guests who are able



to stay on site. The lake is run exclusively by Tim Paisley and his Angling Publications team.

Tactic-wise, the margins are well worth a try, particularly the far margins. Open water tactics pay dividends as well, and it's always worth looking for bubblers and casting to them. All areas of the lake can be reached by casting if required and there are large lily beds, which hold carp in summer and which can be easily cast to, although bait boats can be used if required. Zig Rigs work well and Birch is an ideal place for surface fishing amongst the pads.

As a fishery, Birch Grove is a stunning, beautiful water and offers anglers the chance to fish one of the most famous waters in the UK on an exclusive basis. Its peaceful surroundings, comfortable swims, and good facilities attract anglers from all over the UK who want to sample a piece of carping history.

In the words of Simon Crow: "It's almost as good as Redmire, and it's certainly one of the best available waters in the country that is open to all."



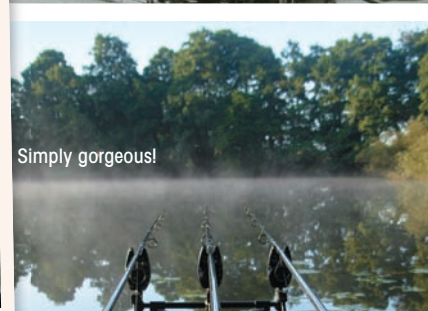
Looking out from the 'Bouncing Bobbins' Swim.



Carpworld's Nigel Banks posing with a mid-20 mirror.



Shaun again! This time with a cracking common.



Simply gorgeous!

## Also recommended...



### York Lakeside Lodges

A luxury family holiday venue with full four- and five-star tourist board accredited accommodation right on the lakeside. Several lodges with access to a 10-acre lake stocked with carp up to 30lb, yet only minutes from one of the most beautiful cities in the UK.

**LOCATION** Five minutes' drive from the centre of York, near the racecourse.

**LAKE SIZE** 10 acres.

**FISH STOCKS** General coarse and carp to 30lb+.

**FACILITIES** Several luxury lodges for family holidays.

**PRICES** Various from £275 per week plus £20 per week fishing.

**WEB** [www.yorklakesidelodges.co.uk](http://www.yorklakesidelodges.co.uk)

**TEL** 01904 702346



### The Avenue

This small but exclusive fishery is actually in the grounds of Rob Hales' home! Excellent for stalking and margin fishing. The lake record is held by Chris Tarrant. A lovely cedar lodge is provided for exclusive use. An easy runs water with an excellent stock of fish.

**LOCATION** Shropshire area. Visitors will be escorted to the site from the Monument fishery office.

**LAKE SIZE** Two acres.

**FISH STOCKS** 100 carp, mainly mid-doubles and 20s. Several 30s to 34lb.

**FACILITIES** A luxury cabin with all facilities is provided.

**PRICES** £250 per week per angler. Exclusive use £1,000.

**WEB** [www.rhfisheries.com](http://www.rhfisheries.com)

**TEL** 01952 463141



### Waveney Valley Lakes

With a large selection of lakes all stocked with carp to 44lb, Waveney Valley Lakes is a Mecca for carpers looking for some action with quality accommodation. Angling permits are extra and swims can be booked. The site provides carp angling for anglers of all abilities, in very pleasant surroundings.

**LOCATION** Wortwell, Norfolk.

**LAKE SIZE** Eight lakes of various sizes.

**FISH STOCKS** Huge stocks to 44lb.

**FACILITIES** Caravans and lodges all with full facilities.

**PRICES** Mini breaks from £150. Weeks from £275.

**WEB** [www.carpandcatfishholidays.co.uk](http://www.carpandcatfishholidays.co.uk)

**TEL** 01986 788 676.