

# **Brackley & District Angling Club**



## **Beginners Guide to fishing St James Lake**



[www.brackleyanglingclub.co.uk](http://www.brackleyanglingclub.co.uk)

# Introduction

St James Lake is situated within a park of approximately five acres on the southern edge of Brackley and is approximately three acres in size. It is a man made water created by Anglian Water Authority in 1977 as a balancing lake for the new residential development of Brackley. The fishing privileges to this water were granted to The Brackley & District Angling Club in 1978.

The lake's classification is that of a mixed coarse fishery with a healthy stock of bream, roach, rudd, chubb, tench, crucian/hybrid carp, perch, pike, chubb, gudgeon, and crayfish. There is also a good Carp population with Common Carp from 5lb to 26lb. Mirror Carp from 4lb to 26lb. Linear Mirrors and Leather Carp up to 20lb.

This lake bed is largely of uniform depth. The deepest point is around 6ft, with an average depth of 5ft and steep margin drop-offs. The main feature is an island lined with willows towards the eastern end of the lake, although the lake also offers plenty of reeds and overhanging trees to enhance its marginal activity.

The lake is open to members of the public who exercise their dogs, feed the ducks and geese or just wish to enjoy the wildlife and scenery.

There is a full match programme throughout the season to cater for all different types of angling and The Club operates a junior fishing club during the summer months and tuition days for complete beginners of all ages.

There are special rules and tackle requirements for those wishing to Carp or Pike fish, as fish conservation and fish care is paramount to this Club and the membership. Please see our website for further details.

Open season: 1st March to the last day of February.

# Permit & Rod Licence

To fish St James Lake you will need **two permits**.

1. An **Environmental Agency Rod Licence**. These can be purchased at your local Post Office or online.
  2. A **Brackley & District Angling Club Permit**. Choose from one of the options below. The membership application form can be found on our website.
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## Membership Fees

Senior Permit	£22 (£42 Night Fishing Permit)
Disables/Senior Citizen Permit	£10 (£20 Night Fishing Permit)
Junior Permit	£10 (£20 Night Fishing Permit) Aged between 12yrs & 15 yrs
Under 12 years olds	FREE A permit must still be applied for

## Day Tickets

Day tickets can be purchased at Davies & Partners Estate Agents on Brackley High Street during office hours. They can also be brought on the bank (a bailiff will be round during your session), but there will be a 50% surcharge.

Senior Permit	£6
Disabled/Senior Citizen Permit	£3
Junior Permit	£3 Aged between 12yrs & 15 yrs
Under 12 years olds	£2.50

# Tackle & Bait

## for beginners

Here is a basic list of items you will need to get yourself started at St James Lake. This tackle can be found at any local tackle shop, and will be more than adequate to help you catch roach, perch, bream, & tench.

### Essential Float Fishing Tackle

- 1 x float rod
- 1 x reel with quality 6lb line on it
- 1 x landing net & landing net pole
- 2 x rod rests
- 1 x chair/seat box
- 1 x disgorger (to help unhook fish)
- 1 x 2 pint bait box
- A selection of self weighted floats
- 1 x box of assorted shot (small weights to anchor your float)
- 1 x packet of barbless size 18 pre-tied hooks to nylon
- 1 x scissors
- 1 x bait catapult
- 1 x ground bait mixing bowl (a bucket works just as well!)
- 1 x plummet weight

### Bait

- 1 pint of white maggots
- 1 bag of Sensas Lake ground bait

Hooks to nylon ensure your bait presentation is professional.



Ground bait is essential to attract fish into your swim.



Quality line on your reel will ensure smooth casting



Pre-weighted floats, such as this Drennan Crystal, will make it easier to cast.



A tub of assorted shot is needed to ensure you can set your float correctly.

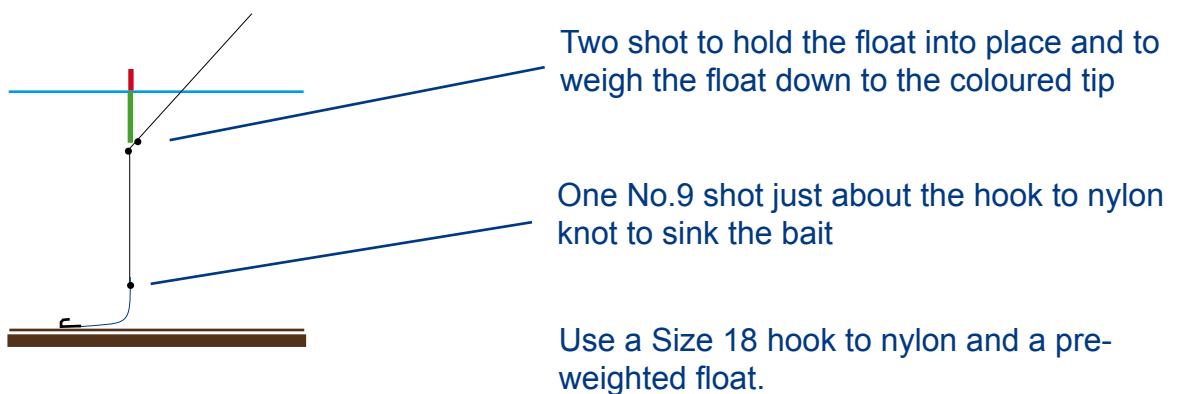


# Float Fishing Tactics

## for beginners

Fishing is a very tactical sport. The weather, the swim you are in, the depth, and the fish you are targeting will all determine which method you use. The tactics shown on this page suit most days at St James Lake, and will target roach, perch, chubb & bream.

### Float Rig Set-Up



### Plumbing the Depth

Before you start fishing it is important to know how deep your swim is and make sure that your hook is touching the bottom of the lake with about 4cm to spare.

Here is how to plum the depth;

1. Attach the plummet and cast out to where you want to fish
2. If your float vanishes from sight, then raise the float up.  
If however the float lies on the top, then move the float towards your hook.
3. Repeat until your float sits perfectly on top of the water - you hook is now exactly on the bottom of the lake.

### Top Tip

Only fish as far out as you can accurately throw your ground bait. Tight feeding is key to catching a lot of fish, and as St James Lake is relatively flat bottomed the extra few feet will make little difference.

# Top Tips

Here are some top tips to get you started at St James Lake...

Peg 5 is a hot spot for bream in the summer. Fish as close to the willow tree on the Island as you can.

Familiarise yourself with the Club rules. Barbless hooks only, and you will need specialist tackle if specifically targeting carp or pike.

Regular matches are held at St James Lake. They are very social events and offer members a chance to swap tips with fellow members. There is even a chance to win a trophy and some money!

Most pleasure anglers favour pegs 5 to 16. Not only do they offer great fishing, but they are reasonably sheltered from the wind.

When mixing groundbait make sure it maintains a fluffy consistency. If mixed correctly it will disperse on impact of the water and provide an even carpet of food for your hook bait to sit on. If mixed too soggy it will sink like a stone and stay as a lump on the bottom.

Two local tackle shops that members often recommend are J&K Tackle in Bicester and Castaways in Banbury. Links can be found on our website.

It will probably take up to 1 hour to attract a good shoal of fish to your swim. Perseverance is key at St James Lake. Try not to swap and change tactics until you have given your original method a good go.

If you are unable to get hold of any maggots there are some baits to be found around your house. Try using bread punch for roach, sweetcorn for bream or dig up some worms to catch a monster perch!

As a general rule, fish toward the middle of the lake to find big shoals of bream. Tench and large perch can normally be found under the branches of a sunken tree next to the bank. Roach can be found all over.

The Club website is regularly updated and is a great source of information. Use it to find out how the lake is fishing and where the hot spots are. Remember to email in your fishing tales and pictures.