

Sean cashing in on his hobby after a tip-off from nature

Sean Ford has a world-wide client list for his fishing zigs and he has achieved that without having a website. Word-of-mouth and a Facebook page has meant that the Livingston-based angler has turned his hobby into a money-maker.

It all started when he was struggling to tempt carp to his hook and Sean noted that beetle patterns were popular with fish on his local water at Eliburn.

He sat down at his vice at home and the self-employed businessman now has an eight-week order backlog.

A recent batch has been dispatched to Canada and Sean has regular orders from the Far East, Australia and New Zealand plus the Continent as well as in the United Kingdom.

Tickle Tackle Zigs, believed to be a world leader, also engages Sean's wife Emma as business administrator to help keep pace with the rapidly-expanding order book as more and more anglers hook into the idea of using his hand-made, individual, foam-based patterns.

The 31-year-old is currently working on new designs but they will not be released to the public before they have been tested by his team of anglers.

Sean said: "Basically, I make lures from foam and now have around 50 patterns on our product catalogue, but we're developing new ones all the time. I sit down at the vice and an idea just comes.

"The growth has been remarkable and it all started as I was struggling to catch carp at my local reservoir at Eliburn in Livingston.

“I noted that the lake had leeches, snails and bug-like insect so I came home and got out a vice. The life-like bugs started to catch fish and I have developed the products since then.”

An initially post on social media kick-started the business and materials include foam, a marker pen, resin and paint, all of which is available in local West Lothian hobby stores. Sean does use some fly tying materials which are also available online or locally.

Sean added: “The zig is so popular with anglers as it sits above weeds and they tempt a number of fish including, of course, carp but also trout.”