

Talks secure more water for anglers

West Lothian Angling Association season permits are now available online or soon at several outlets in the area.

Anglers will have an additional 38 miles of water to explore as talks to adopt some of the tributaries on the upper Almond have been successful.

The tributaries are the Linhouse Water, Murieston Water, Kilandean Burn, including the Harwood Water, and the West Calder Burn plus the Breich Water.

The ambitious organisation has also been successful in adding the main stem of the river from Kirkton in Livingston all the way to West Benhar.

Scot Muir, the association's secretary, said the tributaries were accessible, particularly the Breich Water which does have a head of brown trout.

Nearly 270 permits were sold last year, a record, and anglers enjoyed good sport with encouraging catch returns submitted.

Those who tie their own flies should, he said, start preparing black spiders, always a go-to fly for the Almond, plus Griffiths Gnat and wet fly patterns ready for the opening of the season.

From February 1 anglers can target salmon and sea trout but not above the Iron Bridge in Almondell Country Park near Mid Calder.

The brown trout season opens on March 15 and Muir said: "Last year was a record for us in terms of permit sales with the numbers reaching nearly 270.

“This was post-lockdown, of course, when people were desperate to get out and about and do something. A number of them were youngsters who came with their dad and we are really keen as an organisation to encourage them into the sport.

“That is why the tributaries could be good as they can be fished with light tackle and worms and maggot. There is no overhead casting of a fly required for that.”

He confirmed that the permit price remains frozen from last year and are available online now from Fishing around the Forth (www.fishforth.org).

Printed permits will soon be available from Tangles at 5 East Main Street, Broxburn EH52 5EE, West Lothian Angling at unit 10, Nasmyth Court, Livingston EH54 5EG, Linwater Caravan Park, Clifton Road, Newbridge EH53 0HT, and Edinburgh Angling Centre at Unit E, Granton Retail Park, 65 West Harbour Road, Granton, Edinburgh EH5 1PW.

Anglers who are members of Cramond Angling Club receive a £10 discount so they can fish the West Lothian Angling Association's stretch for £5.

The club, pre-pandemic, held highly-popular fly tying nights in Mid Calder Community Centre and Muir said they hope to re-start them soon when restrictions allow.