## My fishing journal

Where: Nether Wallop, Hampshire

**Date: 15 April 2025** 

Weather: sunny with some cloud

(fishy weather!)

Topography (what the ground is like): an in-line fishing lake (where the Wallop brook runs into the top of the lake and then out at the bottom)

**Who:** six 13 year olds who had all done some sort of fishing before but not necessarily fly-fishing

What: a one-day trout fly-fishing course for 12-15 year olds to learn

about casting, tying flies, river life and catching fish

Catch: five rainbow trout

Host: Simon Cooper who lives at
Nether Wallop Mill and organises
fishing courses for kids and families
at the lake (as well as all sorts of
other fishing at fishingbreaks.co.uk).
He also writes books - I'd definitely
recommend his book The Otters'
Tale, especially if you're interested
in learning about life on the river.
I've loved reading it. Steve was our
instructor for the day



Eva. 13



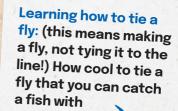


We put our rods together - it's important to make sure you have the pieces in the right order - and then threaded the line through the eyes on the rod



Every week the lake is stocked with 25 rainbow trout. They weigh about 2lb each and are about two years old

TOP TIP: Always carry the rod pointing backwards and always wear glasses







Steve got us all casting with wool on the end of our lines. The aim is to be as accurate as possible and land the wool inside the hoop



River life. This bit was fascinating. Steve took a sample of the gravel from the brook and sorted through it so we could see exactly what insects were in the water. This can help you understand what the trout are feeding on

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**Everyone** spread out around the lake. I looked for a place where I thought the fish might be lurking. At first the boys chose the other side

## About the day

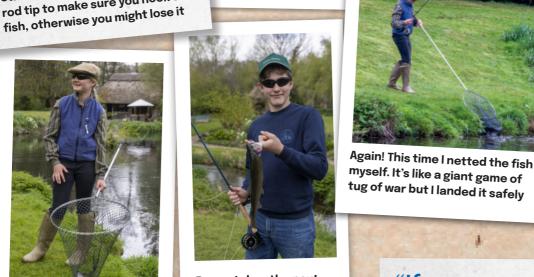
It was a great day full of interesting things to learn and best of all we caught fish that we could then eat for supper. It was my first big trout. I've only ever caught small wild brownies on a Scottish loch before. I cooked mine as Steve recommended - with lemon and garlic butter. It was delicious. Simon talked to us at lunchtime about the chalkstream and all the wildlife on the river. He also gave us copies of his books and I've loved reading The Otters' Tale. There is so much to learn about life on the river





rod tip to make sure you hook the

Fish on! After about five minutes I felt a lurch on the rod and I had a fish



Ben catches the next fish, which he keeps for tea, too. It's his first ever trout

"If you are not going to kill and eat your fish then keep it in the water and release it"



Xan caught two trout as well. He's a keen fly-fisher and did an excellent job of keeping his rod raised as he landed the fish



The one that got away: Tom hooked a fish but it managed to make a break for freedom



The top team: Jonty, Seb, Xan, me, Tom and Ben. I'm super keen to come on the three-day course this summer (see What's On, page 34, for details)