



Gareth Henson with a lovely Shell Bass



Andy Pary's 5lb 7oz Bass

Please email your catch reports to -

Geoff - The Wash round to the Bristol Channel, Channel Islands and European Mainland.
geoff@ukbass.com

Nigel - Wales, Northern England, Isle of Man, Scotland, The North West and Eastern England.
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Kiss my Wrasse Goodbye

By
Peter Macconnell

I guess that by the time you read this most of you will have got the gist of the story about wrasse being caught in pots and landed live, in the south west of England. They are then being transferred, still alive, to Scotland to be placed in salmon rearing cages in the sea lochs of, mainly, the west coast. These wrasse are what is apparently called 'cleaner fish'. Probably, you will have had a chance to take note of the campaign by the Devon Wildlife Trust to prevent, or at least limit this fishery within Devon waters. What happens is that pathetic excuses for proper salmon are kept, pellet fed, and grown, in cages in sea lochs until they are shipped off to Sainsbury's or Iceland or some other supermarket. When in these cages the salmon get horribly infested with sea lice. Until recently

salmon waste products, are polluting the sea, and decimating Scotland's natural stocks of proper wild salmon and sea trout that also become infested with the lice.

Wrasse from Scotland have been used for some time to pick clean these salmon in their cages by eating the sea lice. But it seems more wrasse are needed and they have run out of their local stocks (what a surprise). So now they are buying live wrasse from along the south coast of England at premium prices. Last year more than 60,000 Cornish wrasse were caught and sold for this purpose.

Very rightly, The Angling Trust, together with its legal arm, Fish Legal, is campaigning to seek to stop this activity, and David Curtis of BASS/SOSB is helping in that campaign. There is also a very useful analysis of the situation, on the AT website, by Malcolm Gilbert. According to the Devon & Severn IFCA it will all be 'properly

In Cornwall there has been no regulation at all to date.

Now, I don't know about you but, from my point of view, wrasse, especially ballan wrasse, are an anglers' fish. They are regularly fished for with bait and lure and there is a thriving C & R contingent who target wrasse especially in the colder months of the year. They can make for some very sporting light tackle fishing when the bass are quite scarce, especially for lure anglers.

So far as I can tell anglers were not consulted about this proposed new fishery. We keep being told by the IFCA's and their apologists that the needs and aspirations of recreational sea anglers are being acknowledged and considered. Are they really? The whole thing strikes me as one unsustainable fishery supporting another unsustainable fishery, at the sea anglers' expense.