



Cardiff Bay Barrage

The building of the Cardiff Bay Barrage was at the time a hotly contested topic among anglers who fished the rivers Taff and Ely. These now run into the Bay and what was a dynamic natural estuary is now a Fresh Water Lake.

It is questionable as to whether the building of the Barrage has altered or decreased the runs of migratory fish with totals varying from four hundred to six hundred. It appears from monitoring in 2017 that numbers are down on the River Taff. The South East Wales Rivers Trust in conjunction with Natural Resources Wales and landowners, private and Councils is carrying out projects to improve habitat for migratory fish in all the rivers in the Taff System, which includes the River Ely. To date this work has seen salmon, all be it late in the season, reaching some areas that they have not been able to get to for over two hundred years such as the river Taff Fawr. This has been funded by Environment Agency Wales (as it was until 2013 and currently by Natural Resources Wales). Since the closure of the Salmon Hatchery programme in Wales major efforts are being put into introducing gravel. The South East Wales Rivers Trust was the first in Wales to do this. This is being followed by habitat schemes and a programme to remove or help fish passage over old industrial weirs and other in stream obstacles such as pipes crossing the river above the river bed. Some monitoring has been done where the gravel was introduced, but more is needed. Initial monitoring is extremely promising in some areas. This work can be followed on the Trusts web site: www.sewrt.org.

Cardiff Bay itself is now established as a large fresh water lake and as such is home to many of the fish species that were in the rivers Taff and Ely as well as some more undesirable ones such as non-native Shrimp and Zebra mussel's continental invaders. Sadly the Shrimp has already due to transfer by man's leisure activities reached other areas of the country.

Fishing in the Bay is controlled by the Harbour Authority and day tickets and season permits are available at reasonable cost. Visit the authority web page for more info: <http://www.cbwac.com/content/fishing/coarserules.htm>.

If you want to fish the Bay, much of the river Ely and the river Taff from the M4 motorway downstream into the Bay then contact www.glamorgananglersclub.org.uk.

The Bay itself is open for coarse fishing all year round but both the Taff and Ely are subject to restrictions as they are rivers. Species present include roach, chub, dace, perch, Rudd, bream, carp and pike. In the summer month's mullet are a regular visitor which provides extra angling opportunities. Hamadryad Park on the river Ely has some purpose built angling platforms and is an area where Rudd and roach are to be found as well as some good Pike. One area that is currently fishing well for perch is the area of the bay where the Sails are. Carp to twenty pounds have been caught in the bay and the river Taff above Black weir is noted for its Barbel and Grayling. Fishing for Salmon in the Taff is Catch and Release only. From an angling point of view, three anglings associations with reasonable fees rent the fishing, they are: Glamorgan Anglers, Bute and Birch Grove, and Royal Oak a club based at Ystrad Mynach on the Rhumney. There are also other places such as tackle dealers around Cardiff who sell the permits, as well as Channel View the Leisure Centre

In the past, fishing days for young anglers have been held during the summer months on the Bay. They were well received. Since its closure from the incoming tide it has become a mecca for many sports and some international boating competitions have been held on there. I would like at this point to quote from the words of that great Welsh Angler Moc Morgan. His passion for youth advancement in fishing was always a pleasure to see. During one of his attendances on the Bay he wrote, quote: "The doubting Thomas's who predicted doom and gloom because of the development of the Bay should be here today. I can assure you how wrong they were. As with many other Cardiff projects it is something as a nation we can be proud of. No Millenium Domes here!"

Sea fishing is allowed from the long arm that extends out from the Barrage seawards and there is a large paying car park at the end of the Marina on the Penarth side. I can recommend a visit to the Bay whether for angling, walking, bike riding, or just to soak up the atmosphere that being there provides. 🐟