

## North West brace of mirrors

By Andy Freeman

After a difficult and unrewarding five months on a difficult and low stocked Northwest Park Lake the result I had been waiting for finally came last week during a four night session.

During the four night stint mirrors of 24.08, 28.08 and 29lb were landed fishing over a light scattering of N-GageXP freezer baits half of which were soaked overnight in feedstim XP. Pop-up hook baits were presented over the baited areas with two of the fish falling to the new N-Gage Airball pop-ups and the other falling to a homemade corkball hook bait soaked in N-Gage XP liquid additive.

I fished this water between June and October last year putting in around 30 nights for just one take which unfortunately I lost due to a hook pull in the weed. I did get to see three of the resident mirrors on the bank whilst fishing the lake and decided that they were certainly worth returning for in 2011.

After arriving back on the lake for the first time this year last week I found a group of six fish cruising in and out of a small bay at one end of the lake on the back of the wind. I decided to set up just to the left of the fish just outside of the bay to avoid spooking them. The fish seemed to move off after a change in weather from bright sunshine to strong wind, rain and large hail stones. The first night passed without event and I was beginning to get itchy feet with where was fishing after seeing a few shows further to my left when from up a climbing tree I spotted an individual fish cruise past me and into the bay to my right. The fish was quite low in the water but I did think it was one of the rare and prized mirrors. I watched as it moved back out of the bay and towards my baited spot where I lost sight of it. I began to climb back down the tree



when the rod the fish had moved towards let out a few bleeps followed by a slow but steady take. After a tense but relatively short fight I had finally landed my first fish from the water and it can only be described as a stunning old mirror.

*First blood at 28.06 a stunning old mirror.*

Shortly after releasing the fish I decided to move swims and set up round to my left where I had spotted a few shows early on that morning. The area I was set up in had quiet that morning with only the one fish spotted moving in from the area to the left where i had seen the shows.

The moved paid off within a couple of hours after I was soon doing battle with another one of the venues mirrors and apparently one of the rarer visitors to the bank.



*The rare and impressive single scale at 29lb after moving onto showing fish.*

After this capture the action slowed down until around 7am on the final morning of the session when I had a take which turned out to be another one of the lakes stunning mirrors.



*Third mirror of the trip at 24.8 on the last morning.*

This lake is renowned for being difficult and with a low stock of around 20 mirrors, heavy weed and a considerable amount of angling pressure amongst a few of the contributions which make it so challenging. The fish were stocked in the early 70's and have seen it all over the years growing steadily for the northwest.

Fish of like these are quite rare in the northwest so I feel privileged to have had such a good result. I'm now looking forward to the challenging campaign ahead and am hoping to get amongst some more of the other residents.

***Best wishes***

***Andy Freeman***