

How to bag a record roach- Frogmore, match lake

By Matt (Foxy) Young

Well, where do I start, there is so much to know about this and everything needs to be accurate and correct to achieve the best chance of getting that elusive 1lb+ roach. It has taken me a lot of time and effort to get it all right and it sure does work so I hope it works for you. This technique that I'm about to teach is designed for the use of a pole but if you're more of a rod 'n' line person, then you can always give it a go with that. Here is the reward that you can get:



1lb 9oz-venue record and my PB



Not a rare size to catch often

Bait



For my roach fishing at Frogmore I only use two types of bait and these are pellets and casters. However, it isn't that simple. Pellet wise I use 2.8mm trout pellets and 4mm skretting pellets which are much lighter in colour than trout pellets. The idea behind using two types of pellets is that there is always pellets on the bottom as the pellets have different break down times. The bigger the pellet, the longer it takes to break down. Small pellets like the ones I use, 2.8mm are also known as micro pellets.

As they are so small it makes the fish search around a lot harder for the pellets which keeps them in your swim for longer. One trick I do with my pellets I soak them as soon as I arrive at my peg. Therefore by the time I've set up (30-45 minutes), the pellets are then completely soaked and soft all the way through. Soft pellets are also easier for the fish to digest in which they prefer to feed over soft pellet than hard. When you feed soft micro

pellets, a cloud gets given off which attracts the fish off the bottom and in the surrounding area. The main reason why I started to use them though is that all the pellets will sink, especially with micro pellets; some tend to float on the surface film due to being so light. I've had 4mm float sometimes even. So by adding water to them and the pellets absorbing this water makes them soft so they ALL sink.

Then we come to casters, now you may think there is only one type of casters and in a way you're right. I use fresh and old casters for roach fishing at Frogmore. What I tend to do is buy half a pint of maggots one week and by the week after, they have turned to casters. The really dark coloured one. than fresh One more they float. When fish to come up your hook bait the free floating caster on the hook and the weight of the hook counter balances the bait so it is closer to the time it takes for the free offerings to sink. So I use the fresh casters for feed only and then old casters for the hook.



thing about old casters is that they turn a colour which roach like better than a light Old casters are also quite a bit bigger casters so you can cover the hook better. advantage and probably the best is that fishing for bites on the drop and want the in the water it's essential that you make fall through the water at the same pace as offerings. The way that I do this is to use a

Feeding

When I first started fishing, I always got told feeding is the most important thing to catch fish and I didn't believe it was but as I grew up I realised it was. The term 'little and often' is the best way to go but there is also one other method of putting a big carpet of bait down which is mainly used at commercial fishery's.

Feeding is the **key** to catching fish! Remember 'little and often.' When fishing your always after that one fish and feeding just a little bit is enough for one fish, then you feed a bit more in hope to catch one more, and another and so on. It's all about getting a rhythm. As I only fish at around 3m for these roach which is all you need to go as they come in real close. As it is such close range there is no need for a fox match toss pot to feed so I can feed by hand. By feeding by hand is a huge advantage as the noise of the bait hitting the water is louder, leading to bringing the roach up in the water.

Right, so how do I get the correct feeding for these roach? I start the session off by feeding one large handful of the soft pellets by the margin reeds at around 3m. On top of that I throw in a dozen casters; these will be the fresh casters that I'm feeding as they sink. As I've said already it takes me roughly 30-45minutes to set up fully usually and as I've already fed some pellets and casters before I started setting up, there will be roach feeding and they will be very confident in feeding as there is no line to spook them. So that first put in should give you a roach straight away, the average being 4-7oz which is nice. I always feed around 6 casters before I 'slap' the rig in the water and then the rig will be sinking at the same pace as the free offerings of casters. It also starts the rhythm of getting the fish up in the water with constant feed but remember 'little and often.'

The next step is to feed a small handful of pellets along with a few casters. It's usually around the third or fourth roach that I feed a few pellets but it depends on the size

of the fish. Obviously, a bigger roach will spook feeding fish easier due to louder splashes so if I caught roughly a 15oz roach as my second fish, I would feed the pellets then. But if they were just the average sized roach of 4-7oz then it would be the fourth roach when I feed the pellet. You then continue this through the session and it will become a rhythm where you will know just what to do next and so on. In addition, when netting a fish of any size, feed a few casters, and then when you're ready to go out again, feed a few more casters.

Tackle

I am mainly a pole fisherman and a pole is what I use for catching these amazing roach. The pole I have is a MAP F16 and for the price it's a very good deal at around £250 depending where you buy the pole from. I use my top 3 kit with the no.1 section taken out. This is so the elastic can come out easier and there is a lot less bend which some matchmen like, me being one of them. It is fitted with no.6 fox match solid elastic through the no.2 and no.3 sections.

That's the pole and elastic that I use but now I will tell you about the rig I use. The mainline that I use is fox match micro plus 0.12 (3lb 6oz) to a 0.10 hook length (2lb 9oz). When you buy micro plus line you get a 100m spool of one breaking strain and then a free 25m spool of the next size down of breaking strain which is used for hook lengths. Going down from that is the float. The float that I like to use is a Tubertini pro 79 4x10 float.



This type of float is the best for roach fishing in my opinion for a few reasons. One of them being the thin and long bristle which is more sensitive which means bites are shown more. This float is also very streamlined so that there is not a lot of tension or pressure when the fish takes the bait and feels the float. By being streamlined, there is less chance of a fish spitting out the bait too. Another advantage is the wire stem which I reckon is the most important part of the float for this type of fishing. The reason being, that again, a wire stem is more sensitive and registers bites better. The idea of a wire stem is also that it 'cocks' straight away. And for fishing for bites on the drop it means if you get a fish take the bait instantly, you will know straight away as the float is standing up already.

The hook is quite important to as there are all different types on the market these days which are designed for all different baits. My choice of hook is a size 20 fox match

power point which I find perfect for casters. Something that I will explain in further detail later is having a long length of line from the tip of the pole to the float.

Now you may think I use shot as the weights for sinking the float down to the required amount but you would be wrong, I use stotz from Preston Innovations. If you don't know what these are and have not heard of them, here is a summary that I have made to help you out. The way I make my rig sink even slower is to spread the stotz out along the line, commonly called shirt button style. I have one no.10 about 1ft under the float so that it cocks almost instantly for the bites on the drop.

What are stotz?

Preston stotz are similar to normal shot but they are a rectangular shape designed for use on larger diameter lines which also work perfectly on fine diameters. The weight of a stot is the same as a shot. So a number 10 stot is the same as a number 10 shot. The wide groove makes placing them on the line quick and easy. Another advantage is the increased surface area that grips the line, this prevents damage and also stops them 'pinging' off the line when they are grouped together. Stotz are also very cheap for the amount you get at only £1.50. You can also buy a stotter if you don't want to bite them on.



The technique

Earlier in the article you read about 'slapping' the rig into the water and are extremely effective with the use of a pole. Since I've started this technique there has been other anglers trying it out and getting some great results. When doing this, you need to be careful of where the rig ends up as your fishing against the reed line. There have been a couple of occasions where the rig has gone in the reeds and got stuck but with a weed cutter, problem solved. So accuracy of where you slap the rig is just as important as accuracy of feeding. The first tip that I can give you is to slightly over shot the float so that the tip is just a pimple when the float has set completely. You have to make sure that you don't over shot the float so that it sinks quickly as you need a slow drop. The margins are quite deep and with a float that doesn't take a lot of weight, deep water is ideal as the rig will take longer to set till it's at the full depth. So a light float with a thin bristle and wire stem is a must and will definitely improve your catch rate.

The idea of slapping the rig down onto the water is another way to bring the fish up off the bottom into the upper layers of the water. Being such a light weight float and the small spread out shot, the noise is almost like a handful of casters going in. Whereas if you were to use a 2 or even a 3g float, the amount of shot that would be on the line could spook the fish if you slapped the rig in. As I've said before, a stot just under the float, around 1ft, enables the float to cock straight away.

What happens?

Usually when using this technique, the roach start off small with the average being around 4-7oz which is a nice size anyway. As the feeding progresses the bigger fish that lay on the bottom come up in the water to feed and it becomes a 'feeding frenzy' and therefore you get the bigger sized roach very often at around 12oz+. The key thing to this though is you can't go swapping rigs and fishing somewhere different, for example you decide to fish the island for an hour. If you were to do this, the fish go back down on the bottom and even disappear sometimes I've found. However, if you feed the same way as you would if you were fishing and get the timing right, it should be fine.

Well I hope you enjoyed reading this and I hope that by using my technique, you catch a PB roach for yourself. If you have any questions, just email me on the junior email address, and I will do the best I can to help you out. In addition, if you get a good result, let me know because I am interested in if it works for you too.

You can email me here : juniors@verulam-angling.co.uk

Best fishes

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