

AQUATIC FLORA AND FAUNA

During 1985, with the co-operation of Rob Smith, I have conducted a series of experiments to determine the suitability or otherwise of various aquatic fauna on No. 3 bed. In order carefully to control and monitor the situation, two cages were used, a 6' 6" x 2' 6" placed in 2' of water in January, and a circular 3' cage in March.

The water during the early part of the year was remarkably clear with the bottom being visible up to 2-3' depths; however, as daylight and temperature increased the profuse presence of Daphnia greatly discoloured the water. In summer this tendency becomes even more obvious with the addition of algae and various debris on the surface, a situation which, when there is lack of wave action and because the water is surrounded by Reedmace, must add greatly to eventual water stagnation.

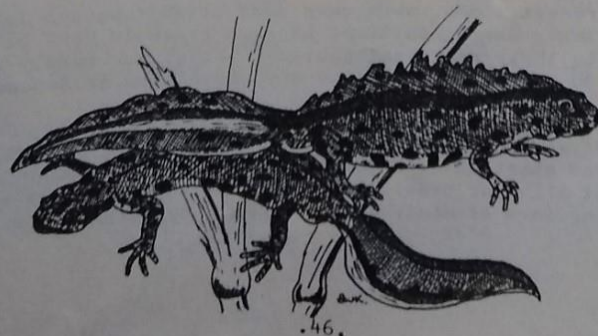
Fish species introduced included Three-spined Stickleback and Roach, both of which thrived extremely well. Although the latter species was affected later in the year by falling water levels, I do feel they would survive well in the open water. Following the inclusion of plants such as Hornwort, Starwort and Duckweed, all of which multiplied at a phenomenal rate, thinning out on a weekly basis became necessary; the thinnings being planted out close by. None lasted more than a few days before being eaten, presumably by wild-fowl. In addition Great Pond and Ramshorn Snails were added in spring, with the former surviving better than the latter. Great Pond Snails, I have since found, are naturally present, as are Wandering Snails.

As a parallel exercise, a trap was set for 1 week each month (April to October) with the hope of proving the presence of Eels. As yet none have been caught, the main occupants so far being four Great Diving Beetles and two Sticklebacks !

In conclusion, I am at present in the process of re-siting the cages for re-stocking, in anticipation of further studies in the coming year.

Albert Cook

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Crested Newts