

BREAM ON A BUDGET

Stu Lennox is on a mission to amass over 100lb of bream on just £5 worth of bait. Can he do it?

Fishing is hard enough as it is, so why oh why I often decide to set myself little challenges I will never know! While pleasure fishing recently at Bents Pool in Oxfordshire on the Newlands AC ticket I was catching a lot of bream using very little bait. I began to think that a really good weight could be put together, so I decided to set myself the challenge of catching 100lb of bream using only £5 of bait. If possible, I also wanted to do it in under six hours. The challenge was set!

ARRIVAL

I know the evening period is most productive, so I've arrived at the lake around 1pm on a Friday after an early finish at work. I'm surprised to see that it is relatively quiet, with only a few of the resident carp anglers present. I can therefore get a good peg with a reasonably short chuck to the tip of the island.

The island on this lake is quite snaggy and has a shallow bar of about a foot deep running around it, this extends about 18 inches from the island and then gently slopes down to around 12-14ft deep at the bottom of the shelf. The shallow water is a good bet for the odd carp

and the deeper water for large weights of bream.

During a couple of practice sessions I have caught well on the pole but since then the roach had become ravenous and were dominating the bites on this area. I have therefore decided to focus solely on a Method feeder swim further out.

The carp anglers on this lake often catch plenty of bream so I've decided to use slightly stepped-down carp tactics to target my quarry. This is also due to the large head of carp in this lake; one of which is a common that I would really like to catch!



ANGLER FILE

Name: **Stu Lennox**
Age: **32**
Lives: **Andover**

DRENNAN



THE MENU

With a self-imposed £5 limit, my bait consists of two 1kg bags of Pure Pellet 4mm trout pellet at £2 a bag and a single tin of corn, which cost me 60p. I decided to fish a large In-Line Flatbed Method Feeder with scalded pellets and double corn as hook bait. The ESP 85g feeders were chosen due to the large amount of feed I could introduce with each cast and also the distance I needed to cast.

I have chosen to use scalded trout pellets around the Method Feeder. This mix binds extremely well and will withstand the strong cast needed and will remain around the feeder for several hours unless disturbed by feeding fish.



THE RIG

The business end of the rig is a 4in length of short, supple braid tied to a very strong hook. Today I'm primarily using 12lb Sinklink and a size 12 Super Specialist Barbel hook. Combined with my 10lb main line this gives me the confidence that I can land anything I might hook.



MAKE A SCALDED PELLET METHOD MIX:

STEP 1: Cover the trout pellets with just enough water to completely submerge them. Large containers with a greater surface area will make this easier.



STEP 2: Dense and oily trout pellets take roughly twice as long to soak than standard coarse feed pellets. My 4mm pellets were soaked for eight minutes before draining off any excess water.



STEP 3: A handful of corn is also added. This provides a few hook bait samples, plus a visual fleck to the feeder to help draw fish in.



STEP 4: Add another handful of fresh trout pellets. This gives the fish a few hard, crunchy items within the mix.



STEP 5: Finally the mix is kneaded and moulded into a strong, paste-like consistency.



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THE SESSION

Around 2pm I bait up with double corn, fold the hooklength back into the baited feeder and make my first cast. Feathering the line to protect the soft hook bait, the rig lands in the deeper water around 12ft from the island margin. I am fishing using alarms and lightweight bobbins and the line has barely settled before a stuttery take sees the bobbin bouncing. The first bream is soon on its way to the net!

The fish is around 2lb, which is the normal stamp for this lake. This pattern continues throughout the day with plenty of small 2-3lb bream with the best going about 4lb. It is obvious there are a lot of fish in front of me so if I have not had a

bite within 15 minutes I recast.

I soon get into a rhythm of baiting, casting and landing a fish. Some of the bites have come before I can even sink the line!

By now the fish can be seen bubbling up over the bait that has fallen from the feeder each time I've retrieved it. The swim slowly builds up over the session and luckily the carp and pike have left me alone. At 8pm I bring my nets in to see how I've done. I've fished hard for six hours and have just scraped my goal with a total weight of 104lb 9oz! A great day's fishing using inexpensive bait and some really simple and effective tactics.

