

Driftbeaters and the Lift Method

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Maybe it is a shame that still waters are never really still; it would make float fishing so much easier. Unfortunately, lakes are always on the move, often with great volumes of water drifting very slowly but inexorably across the surface. To keep our bait dead still and fishing correctly on the bottom, we can, under most circumstances, simply use a Waggler or a long antenna attached bottom end only and bury the line under this surface drift.

But there are going to be occasions when the wind gets stronger or when we are fishing for big fish and having to wait a long time for a bite when this is not the complete answer. Perhaps on a big water the surface drift goes too deep for your tackle to hold still or the distance at which you are trying to fish is too great. Either way, you have no option but to take the next step and hold your tackle and bait firmly in place with a big anchor shot.

This may seem a bit crude but with the right float and tackle set up, the need for a big anchor shot can be turned into an advantage. Driftbeaters and Carp Antennas

are brilliant floats that go with a brilliant fish catching system. Because they are strictly stillwater floats for lakes and pits, they are always attached bottom end only.

These floats have a buoyant fluorescent sight bob at the top of a very fine fibre glass antenna, and they are designed specifically to be fished with an anchor shot hard on the bottom. The bodies are situated right at the base of the float and the antenna are very thin to minimise the effects of drift. Most importantly, the fat little sight bob at the tip is there more for buoyancy than for vision and it is buoyant enough to “hold up” on the surface and fight against the pressure of drift on the line.

To set these floats up and get them fishing correctly, you will need to follow the sequence in diagram 1. The whole idea is to get the bait anchored down on the bottom at one end and the sight bob just riding on the surface at the other.

Although these floats are being anchored in position, it is still vitally important to sink





Because the antenna come in a range of sizes and are interchangeable you can increase or decrease the length of the float and alter the size and buoyancy of both the body and the sight bob. This interchangeable ability extends into the crystal range of floats so you can build more or less exactly the float you want for any conditions.

Peter with a fine double-figure carp. Note the Driftbeater float was used to catch it.

all the line and not to allow a belly to form downwind between float and rod top. So you will need to over-cast, bury the rod top right under water and wind back quickly into the baited area before your anchor shot hits bottom.

This anchored down stationary method of float fishing is particularly effective when you are having to wait long periods for bites from big fish, perhaps fishing out each cast for 20 or 30 minutes at a time. On this method bites are big and bold so you have plenty of time to strike and do not need to hold the rod. In fact the system fishes best if the rod is kept nice and still in a pair of rod rests.

The lift method

The Lift Method is a bit like ultra light legering with a bite indicator immediately above the lead. As soon as the fish moves that anchor shot, you get an indication on the float. What sort of indication depends on the distance

between the hook and anchor shot and also on the species of fish involved.

When the anchor shot is really close, say 5cm to 10cm and you are fishing for Carp, Bream or Tench, you can get wonderful lift bites where the site bob rides right up out of the water as the fish picks up the bait. By increasing the distance between hook and anchor shot, the float more often disappears beneath the surface but due to the balance and tension which always exist between the buoyant sight bob and the anchor shot, it must be said that lift bites are very common on this method.

The anchor shot has two sources of pressure which are being exerted on it to drag it along or lift it off the bottom. The big one is the pressure of wind drift on the line and the lesser one is the buoyancy of the sight bob which is riding on the surface. The advantage which this rig offers is to provide you with the opportunity to counterbalance the rig against these pressures very critically so that as soon as a fish picks up the bait, you



are guaranteed a big reaction from the float.

At the same time, you can exercise some control over the type and size of bite indication you get on the float by moving the anchor shot closer to or farther away from the hook. Exactly how much shot you should use to anchor the bait in place and how long a tail you should leave between it and the hook is down to experiment. However on shot size you should always think big and in general you should always have this shot close to the hook. In extreme conditions, I have fished two SSG just 8cm from the hook, on other occasions it has been as little as two No 1 at 20cm.

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These special floats with sight bobs allow you to present a stationary bait at distance or in rough, windy conditions with remarkable precision and finesse. They provide sensitive and prolonged bite indication which allows you to time the strike to perfection and once you get them set up correctly, they virtually fish themselves. A much neglected but brilliant fish catching method !

