

Press release: Five guilty of illegally fishing in Nottinghamshire

Fishing without a licence has landed five Nottinghamshire anglers with penalties totalling more than £3,500.

Shaun Ryan of Bentinck Close in Newark, Teresa Cotton of Bramerton Road in Nottingham, Sean Bosworth of Hanley Avenue in Nottingham, Robert White of Melbourne Road in Nottingham, and Miodrag Katin of Woolmer Road in Nottingham were all guilty under Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.

All were reeled in by Environment Agency bailiffs on regular patrols designed to catch unlicensed anglers in the act – and protect the sport for those who do follow the rules.

The five offenders were tried on Wednesday 1 February at Nottingham Magistrates Court. Fines totalled £2,750 but with costs and victim surcharges included, the five paid out penalties totalling £3,661.99. A rod licence currently costs from just £27.

Callum Underhill, Environment Agency enforcement officer, said:

Wednesday was a good day for the near-million anglers that fish legally every year, respecting each other and the sport. There really is no excuse – if you don't have a licence, pick one up from the Post Office or online before we pick you up.

It makes no sense to have the embarrassment of a court visit, a criminal conviction and a bill for potentially thousands of pounds when an annual licence is currently just £27. We think these cheats will think twice before picking up a rod illegally again and if they don't, our officers are ready and waiting.

The money from rod licence sales supports fish, fisheries and fishing, and protects the future of the sport. A small number of anglers refuse to buy a licence, cheating the sport and their fellow anglers.

For the minority who flout the rules, the most common offence is fishing without a valid licence, which could land them with a fine of up to £2,500 and a criminal record.

In 2015/16, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire enforcement officers checked 6,255 licences and reported 158 for fishing illegally, bringing in fines and costs totalling £45,517.

Last year in England, the Environment Agency checked more than 62,000 rod licences and prosecuted more than 1,900 anglers for rod and line offences,

resulting in fines and costs in excess of £500,000.

Any angler aged 12 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. A full rod licence costs from just £27 (concessions available) and is available from the Post Office either online or in a local branch, or by phoning 0344 800 5386.

Money from rod licence sales is invested in England's fisheries and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers including protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease; restoring fish stocks through re-stocking; eradicating invasive species; and fish habitat improvements. Rod licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing and to encourage participation in the sport.

To help crack down on unlicensed fishing, the Environment Agency urges people to report illegal activity by calling its incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Notes to editors:

- Miodrag Katin, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127, as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853. Mr Katin was caught on 4 June 2016 on the River Trent at West Bridgford, Nottingham.
- Robert White, who pleaded guilty, was fined £450 and ordered to pay costs of £127.47, as well as a victim surcharge of £45, making the total penalty £622.47. Mr White was caught on 23 July 2016 on the River Trent at Gunthorpe, Nottingham.
- Sean Bosworth, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127.47, as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.47. Mr Bosworth was caught on 12 July 2016 at Trent View Fishery, Hoveringham.
- Teresa Cotton, who was proved guilty in absence, was fined £660 and ordered to pay costs of £127.47, as well as a victim surcharge of £66, making the total penalty £853.47. Ms Cotton was caught on 2 July on the River Trent at Colwick, Nottingham.
- Shaun Ryan, who pleaded guilty, was fined £320 and ordered to pay costs of £127.47, as well as a victim surcharge of £32, making the total penalty £479.47. Mr Ryan was caught on 23 July 2016 on the River Trent at Gunthorpe, Nottingham.

- All were found fishing for freshwater fish or eels with an unlicensed instrument in a place where fishing is regulated, contrary to Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.