

Press release: Gloucestershire Man ordered to pay £675 for illegally fishing for elvers.

Yesterday (6 February 2017) Paul Ridler, of Betjeman Close, Gloucester pleaded guilty at Gloucestershire Magistrates' Court to one charge of fishing for elvers without the appropriate authorisation.

Mr Ridler was fined £250 and ordered to pay £400 in costs, along with a £25 victim surcharge.

The charge was brought by the Environment Agency contrary to section 27B (1) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.

On April 7 2016, Environment Agency officers were patrolling the River Severn at Ashleworth. Officers spoke to two males, Mr Anthony Ridler and Mr Paul Ridler. Anthony Ridler confirmed he had the required authorisation to fish for elvers but Mr Paul Ridler did not have authorisation and would not be fishing.

Later that evening officers returned to find Paul Ridler in wet, muddy waterproofs and gloves with an elver net and empty bucket. Paul Ridler stated he was looking after the net for his brother who was further downstream, and this was the only net they had with them.

Officers located Anthony Ridler who was in the river further downstream with a dip net immersed in water, and confirmed he was fishing alone and indicated he was not aware his brother was using the spare net.

Paul Ridler stated to one of the officers that he was not elvering and it was a "silly mistake, which would not happen again."

Speaking after the case, Carl Salisbury, the Environment Agency officer in charge of the investigation, said:

We will continue to target those who decide to fish illegally without a licence or the correct authorisation and will work with other enforcement bodies to deal with the theft of fish.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline, 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.