



"I'm standing up to my waist in water and can see sandeels in the surf"

B.A.S.S. member **Peter Macconnell** confesses that he likes to wade to catch his bass... he says it's all about being 'immersed' in his sport

One of the great pleasures for me about bass fishing is the possibility of wading. I don't know why, but I always enjoy catching bass when I've got my feet in the water rather than fishing from a boat. You could say that I like to be immersed in my sport.

Now this may seem a bit weird, but I used to have a nice 16ft bass boat, from which I caught twice as many bass per trip as I ever did from the shore. When I sold it and went back to shore fishing, my enjoyment didn't diminish, even though my catch rate did. I had been missing the wading.

I didn't enjoy wading so much when

most anglers, including me, wore thigh waders. There was always the danger of going too deep and the sudden and unexpected trickle of water coming over the top, not a pleasant experience.

It was the arrival of decent affordable chest waders that made the big difference. First the heavy-duty rubber and nylon ones, then neoprene, and now multilayered breathable fabrics combined with the choice of boot-foot or stocking-foot types. Wader technology certainly has moved on.

I still prefer boot-foot neoprenes because they seem more robust than breathables, and since I never walk really long distances or fish in the middle of warm summer days, overheating is not something I worry about very much.

Most of my bassing is before breakfast or late in the evening and into the night, so my priority is being warm enough,

and neoprenes are just the job.

If you like to walk miles along beaches and coastal paths, searching for your fish and building up a lot of body heat, then breathables are probably for you.

My last two pairs of waders have been 'FB' type...the code used by one wader manufacturer to denote that they are for the well-built fisher. According to the catalogue, FB stands for 'fuller bodied' though it has been pointed out that it also stands for 'fat bloke' or something even less complimentary. I just like to be comfortable.

Want to join?

For more information on BASS, go to www.ukbass.com

Health warning

In today's society we are more health and safety conscious than ever, so from personal wading experience I offer the following useful tips.

Use a wading staff, a third leg so to speak. Collapsible ones are available, which can be folded up like modern aluminium tent poles and carried in a little bag at your waist.

However, I prefer a wooden stick that floats when not in use. They are not as cumbersome and in the way as you might think. I have mine on a loop of cord, which goes over my right shoulder with the stick hanging loose on my left side during actual fishing.

Do not wear a fleece jacket when wading. If you fall over it will soak up water like a sponge and make it harder for you to get up. Instead, wear a lightweight wading jacket with two big pockets on the outside for lures, flies or bait, and two small ones inside for traces, leaders, hooks and clippers.

You should shove your car keys down the inside of your waders and into a trouser pocket.

Be careful where you put your feet when wading among boulders. If you step between two rocks and then turn you could end up trapping your foot.

Finally, always fish an area of water before wading into it. You could be scaring fish away that are just yards from the shoreline.

It may be grey and damp outside now, but come late June or July I can imagine myself standing up to my waist in light surf and looking into the side of the second breaker. I can see bass chasing sandeels. I cast my lure...what else can a bass angler want? **SA**

Wader technology has moved on, so getting your feet wet is less likely

