



Our future is more important

BASS member **Julian Fox** finds an old issue of Sea Angler and it reminds him that writing down details about your fishing can be helpful, but also that things have changed

I was clearing out a loft, it was hot and dusty, but I consoled myself that I might find some old fishing books - and I did, along with a copy of Sea Angler from 1996.

Looking back is something we all do occasionally, but the memory can play tricks on us, remembering the good stuff and storing the ordinary in a place that's hard to get to, like in my mum's loft.

That's one of the reasons why keeping a fishing log is worthwhile. It's often hard to remember the important things. As I get older I tend to focus more on the good stuff and try to put the other stuff, which just seems to be in the way, to one side.

My fishing log is quite simple - the date, where I was fishing, the weather, fish caught (if any) and other information such as seeing dolphins or meeting interesting people.

I don't think the format, electronic or paper, really matters. What does matter is that it gets written down and you record what you think is important.

Anyway, I was interested in what the old copy of Sea Angler would say about how bass fishing was different compared with previous years.

There were two articles on bass, the first about a woman in Cornwall who had caught a 13-pounder on bait. There were no specific articles on lure fishing for bass - or indeed lure fishing for anything at all, which I suppose isn't that surprising.

Today things are different and lure fishing has tackle manufacturers falling over themselves, insisting that their lures have the best wiggle, their rods will help you cast further, and their reels are smoother with umpteen bearings and exquisite line-lay.

They may be right, but lure fishing today is as different to the mid-1990s

as a Sony CD Walkman is to an iPod Nano. Both do the same job well, but if you want to look the part don't you just want to have the iPod? You won't hear the music any better, but at least you won't look like you've walked off the set of 'Back to the Future'.

Lure fishing is definitely in the sea angling mainstream, with more anglers appreciating the different skills and tackle needed to catch bass on lures. This is good news for the sport as a whole, and perhaps reflects the fact that freshwater lure and fly

anglers are now applying their skills to sea angling - the more the merrier I say.

The second article was by Dave Lewis and covered fishing for striped bass on the eastern seaboard of the USA, at a time when dedicated management of striped bass had been going for over 10 years and commercial fishing was heavily restricted...and still is.

He caught a lot of good strippers and enthused: "This was undoubtedly the most exciting, enjoyable, productive and totally exhilarating shore fishing session I have experienced anytime, anywhere."

Looking at my fishing log and the old Sea Angler doesn't really make me yearn for the old days because the future is far more important and that should be the way with our fishing too. It can be interesting to read about past trips, but what you do next time is far more important than what you did on your last one.

So let's not forget the old days - just put them behind us, and if you've never fished for bass or never lure fished for them, perhaps now is the time to start. In a few years when you look back, you won't regret it. SA

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Back in 1996 there was no mention of lure fishing for bass, or for any species

