


2nd Edition

ENGLISH WHITEWATER



**BRITISH
CANOE
UNION**



A map of England, colored in a light cream or yellow, set against a light blue background. The map is divided into five distinct regions by dark grey lines. The regions are labeled with black text: North-West in the top-left, North-East in the top-right, West in the center-left, South and East in the center-right, and South-West in the bottom-left. The lines represent regional boundaries, including the Welsh border to the west and the Scottish border to the north.

North-West

North-East

West

South and East

South-West

English Whitewater

The BCU Guide



Pesda Press LTD

www.pesdapress.com

This Guidebook was produced by BCU Coaching

The royalties will go towards specific projects that will help access.

For further details, membership, etc., please send SAE to:

British Canoe Union
National Water Sports Centre
Adbolton Lane
Holme Pierrepont
Nottingham
NG12 2LU

Front cover – Erme Gorge / Photo: Mark Rainsley

Back Cover – Upper Duddon / Photo: Tim Burne

– Newark Weir / Photo: Paul Shepherd

Second edition 2014

First published in Great Britain 2003 by Pesda Press

Tan y Coed Canol

Ceunant

Caernarfon

Gwynedd

LL55 4RN

©Copyright 2014 British Canoe Union

Maps – Bute Cartographic

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014

ISBN: 978-1-906095-45-1

The Author has asserted his rights under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as Author of this Work.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Printed and bound in Poland. www.Pozkal.com

Dedicated to the memory of
Chris Wheeler and Matt Parker

Acknowledgements

This guide wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of so many people. Paddlers have provided river descriptions and photos, checked countless drafts, commented on grades, walked down rivers and paddled runs to check that important point. Others have provided advice, help and support in all kinds of ways.

Contributors are acknowledged in each guide and photographers in the captions. A big thank you to you all and to all the people who sent photos we didn't end up using or passed on suggestions to the contributors.

Special Thanks

A special thanks is due to the regional coordinators and editorial team, Andrew Jackson, Bill Taylor, Franco Ferrero, Jim Pullen, and Mark Rainsley who bore the brunt of the effort involved in producing this guide.

Important Notice

Paddlers should need no reminding that whitewater paddling is an adventure sport involving an element of uncertainty and risk taking. Guidebooks give an idea of where to access a river, where to egress, the level of difficulty and the nature of the hazards likely to be encountered.

Conditions vary considerably with changing water levels. Erosion can block a river with fallen trees or change a rapid by moving boulders and even collapsing bedrock.

This guidebook is no substitute for inspection, personal risk assessment and good judgement. The decision on whether to paddle or not, and any consequences arising from that decision, remain yours and yours alone.

Foreword

Welcome to the second edition of *English Whitewater*. Having established itself as a key guide to the best of whitewater and park and playspots within England this second offering adds further to the myriad of challenging steep brooks, classic trips on classic rivers, and previously unfamiliar offerings that is paddling in England.

As with the first edition it is a privilege to introduce *English Whitewater* as a collaborative effort. From the involvement of the publisher Pesda Press, the regional co-ordinators and contributors, to the involvement of Local Waterways Advisers and the Coaching Service, this work reflects the collective experience and knowledge network of enthusiasts, all willing to share their perspective on England's many and varied rivers.

The unique offerings within provide the paddler with the opportunity to appreciate the variety of landscape, flora and fauna that England has to offer. We hope that you enjoy the offerings provided while at the same time respecting the trust and responsibility they place on you for ensuring that we and future generations can continue to enjoy the pleasures they offer. Particularly bear in mind the need to minimise our impact on local communities and the often delicate river environments that we encounter along the way. For our part the royalties from this book will again go towards specific projects that will help advance and protect access arrangements.

On a final note I would just also like to take the opportunity to remind and encourage all of us to remain safe when out on the water. All of us play a part in ensuring safety out on the water. Know your limitations and always work within them. Prepare yourself, your equipment and others appropriately for each and every trip and journey being undertaken and be particularly aware of and prepared for the prevailing seasonal and weather conditions.

Welcome to the world of English Whitewater ... enjoy.

Paul Owen

Chief Executive of the British Canoe Union

Contents

Dedication 3
 Acknowledgements 4
 Important Notice 4
 Foreword 5
 Access 10
 Code of Conduct 12
 Grading 13
 Using this Guide 14

The South West 19

Cornwall

001 Tamar – Greystone Bridge to Horsebridge .. 21
 002 Tamar – Horsebridge to Gunnislake 21
 003 Lynher 22
 004 Warleggan 23
 005 Fowey – Golitha Falls to Treverbyn Bridge .. 24
 006 Fowey – Treverbyn Bridge to Drawbridge .. 25
 007 Fowey – Drawbridge to Bodmin Parkway station 25
 008 Par 26
 009 De Lank 27
 010 Camel 29

Exmoor, Devon and Somerset

011 Torridge 31
 012 West Lyn 31
 013 Oare Water 32
 014 Badgworthy Water 33
 015 Hoarook Water 34
 016 East Lyn – Malmsmead to Brendon 35
 017 East Lyn – Brendon to Watersmeet 36
 018 East Lyn – Watersmeet to the sea 37
 019 Horner Water 39
 020 Frome 40
 021 Frome (Bristol) 41
 022 Exe – Silly Bridge to Bridgetown 42
 023 Exe – Bridgetown to Exebridge 43
 024 Exe – Exebridge to Bolham Weir 44
 025 Exe – Bolham Weir to Bickleigh 45
 026 Exe – Bickleigh to Haven Banks Quay 45
 027 Dane’s Brook 47
 028 Barle – Upper section to Simonsbath 48
 029 Barle – Simonsbath to Landacre Bridge 49
 030 Barle – Landacre Bridge to Tarr Steps 50
 031 Barle – Tarr Steps to Dulverton 50
 032 Barle – Dulverton to Exebridge 52

North Dartmoor

033 Bovey 54
 034 North Teign – Upper section 55
 035 North Teign – Footbridge to South Teign confluence 55
 036 Teign 57
 037 Taw 58

038 Moor Brook 58
 039 East Okement 59
 040 West Okement – Above Meldon Reservoir .. 60
 041 West Okement – Meldon Reservoir to Okehampton 61
 042 Okement 62
 043 Lyd 63

South Dartmoor

044 Swincombe 66
 045 Black Brook 66
 046 Cherry Brook 67
 047 West Dart 67
 048 East Dart 68
 049 Webburn 69
 050 Dart – Dartmeet to New Bridge 70
 051 Dart – New Bridge to Waterwork’s Bridge .. 73
 052 Dart – Waterwork’s Bridge to Buckfastleigh .. 75
 053 Dart – Buckfastleigh to Totnes 76
 054 Avon – Shipley Bridge to South Brent 77
 055 Avon – South Brent to Gara Bridge 78
 056 Erme – Upper section to Harford Bridge ... 79
 057 Erme – Harford Bridge to Ivybridge 80
 058 Erme – Ivybridge to Ermington 82
 059 Yealm – Hele Cross to Mark’s Bridge 83
 060 Yealm – Mark’s Bridge to Yealmpton 84
 061 Plym – Ditsworthy Warren House to Cadover Bridge 84
 062 Plym – Cadover Bridge to Shaugh Bridge .. 86
 063 Plym – Shaugh Bridge to Bickleigh Bridge .. 87
 064 Plym – Bickleigh Bridge to Plym Bridge 88
 065 Meavy 89
 066 Walkham – Upper section to Huckworthy .. 89
 067 Walkham – Huckworthy to Bedford Bridge .. 91
 068 Walkham – Bedford Bridge to Tavy Confluence 92
 069 Tavy – Upper section to Hill Bridge 93
 070 Tavy – Hill Bridge to Harford Bridge 94
 071 Tavy – Harford Bridge to Tavistock 95
 072 Tavy – Tavistock to Denham Bridge 97

Playboating in the South West

073 Woodmill Weir 98
 074 Spetisbury Weir 99
 075 Hayle Sluice 99
 076 East Mills 99

South West Squirt Boating

077 Flowerpots Weir 100
 078 Four Pynes 100
 079 Dart 101

South West Surfing

Where, When, How 102

The South and East 105

The Thames Valley

080	The Double Weir	109
081	Abingdon Weir	110
082	Sutton Courtenay Weirs	111
083	Mapledurham Weir	113
084	County Weir	114
085	Blakes Weir	115
086	Marsh Weir	116
087	Hambleden Weir	118
088	Hurley Weir	119
089	Marlow Weir	122
090	Boulters Weir	123
091	Jubilee River	125
092	Old Windsor Weir	126
093	Chertsey Weir	127
094	Shepperton Weir	128
095	Sunbury Weir	130

Trent Valley

096	Holme Pierrepont WWC	134
097	Newark Weir	136
098	Farndon Weir	137
099	Trent Lock Weir	138
100	Sawley Weir	139

Eastern Counties

101	Nene White Water Centre	141
102	Lee Valley WWC	142
103	Swanton Morley	143
104	Hellesdon Mill	144
105	Horstead Mill	146
106	Mendham Weir	147
107	Cardington (CASC)	148

The North East 151

Cheviot

108	Usway Burn	155
109	Coquet – Blindburn to Low Alwinton	156
110	Coquet – Low Alwinton to Rothbury	157
111	Coquet – Rothbury to Weldon Mill	158
112	Bowmont Water	159
113	College Burn	159
114	Linhope Burn	159
115	Breamish	160
116	Harthope Burn/Wooler Water	160
117	Till	160

North Tyne

118	Kielder Burn	162
119	Lewis Burn	162
120	Akenshaw Burn	162
121	Tarset Burn	162
122	Tarret Burn	163
123	Chirdon Burn	163
124	Houxy Burn	163

125	Warks Burn	164
126	Rede	164
127	North Tyne – Bellingham to Chollerford	165
128	North Tyne – Chollerford to Hexham	166

South Tyne

129	Ash Gill	169
130	River Nent	169
131	Park Burn	170
132	West Allen	171
133	East Allen	172
134	Allen	173
135	South Tyne – West Ashgill to Alston	174
136	South Tyne – Alston to Haltwhistle	175
137	South Tyne – Haltwhistle to Hexham	176

Tyne

138	Wansbeck	178
139	Devil's Water	178
140	Ouseburn	180
141	Derwent	180
142	Tyne – Hexham to Wylam	181

North Yorkshire Moors

143	Eller Beck	185
144	West Beck	185
145	Esk – Crunkly Gill to Egton Bridge	186
146	Esk – Egton Bridge to Whitby	187
147	Rye	188
148	Scalby Beck	189

Weardale

149	Killhope Burn	191
150	Rookhope Burn	191
151	Middlehope Burn	192
152	Bollihope Burn	192
153	Waskerley Beck	193
154	Spurlswood Beck	193
155	Bedburn Beck	194
156	Wear – Wearhead to Daddry Shield	195
157	Wear – Daddry Shield to Stanhope Ford	196
158	Wear – Stanhope Ford to Wolsingham	196
159	Wear – Wolsingham to Witton-le-Wear	197
160	Wear – Durham to Finchale Priory	198

Teesdale

161	Bow Lee Beck	200
162	Hudeshope Beck	201
163	Eggleston Burn	201
164	Balder	202
165	Sleightholme Beck	203
166	Greta (Tees)	204
167	Tees – Cauldron Snout	205
168	Tees – Below High Force to Scooberry Bridge (‘Low Force Section’)	205
169	Tees – Middleton to Cotherstone	206
170	Tees – Cotherstone to Barnard Castle	207
171	Tees – Barnard Castle to Winston Bridge	208
172	Tees Barrage – TBIWWC	209

Contents

Swaledale

173	Whitsundale Beck	211
174	Stonesdale Beck	211
175	Arkle Beck	212
176	Swale – Upper	213
177	Swale – Reeth to Richmond	215
178	Swale – Richmond to Catterick	216
179	Swale – Catterick Playspot	217

Wensleydale and Nidderdale

180	Widdale Beck	219
181	Gayle Beck	220
182	Bain	220
183	Cover	221
184	Ure – Appersett to Aysgarth Falls	221
185	Ure – Aysgarth Falls	222
186	Ure – Aysgarth Falls to Wensley Bridge	223
187	Ure – Hack Falls to Sleningford	224
188	Ure – Sleningford to Ripon	225
189	How Stean Gorge	226
190	River Nidd – Wath to Darley	227
191	River Nidd – Darley to Ripley	227

Wharfedale

192	Oughtershaw Beck	229
193	Green Field Beck	229
194	Cray Gill	230
195	Buckden Beck	231
196	Pen-y-Ghent Gill	231
197	Cowside Beck	232
198	Skirfare	232
199	Washburn – WW Course	233
200	Wharfe – High Bank to Hubberholme	234
201	Wharfe – Kettlewell to Burnsall	235
202	Wharfe – Burnsall Bridge to Bolton Bridge	236

Aire, Calder and Ouse

203	Harden Beck	239
204	The Aire Wave	239
205	Hebden Water	240
206	Calder – Sowerby Bridge WW Course	242
207	Ouse – Linton Lock	243

The North West

Eden Catchment

208	Liddal Water	249
209	Esk (Borders)	249
210	Belah	249
211	Swindale Beck	250
212	Scandal Beck – Ravenstonedale	251
213	Lyvennet	251
214	Leith	252
215	Lowther	252
216	Grisedale Beck	254
217	Glenridding Beck	254
218	Aira Beck	255
219	Sandwick Beck	257

220	Dacre Beck	257
221	Eamont	257
222	Croglin Water	259
223	Irthing	260
224	Gelt	262
225	Petteril	263
226	Caldeu – Upper	263
227	Caldeu – Lower	264
228	Eden – Hellgill Section	265
229	Eden – Angerholme to Kirkby Stephen	266
230	Eden – Lazonby to Armathwaite	267
231	Eden – Armathwaite to Wetheral	268
232	Eden – Playspot – Wetheral Weir	269
233	Eden – Playspot – Carlisle	270

Derwent Rivers

234	Troutbeck (North)	272
235	Glenderamackin	272
236	Mosedale Beck (Northeast)	273
237	St John's Beck	274
238	Glenderterra Beck	275
239	Greta (Keswick)	276
240	Cocker	277
241	Langstrath Beck	278
242	Gatesgarthdale Beck	280
243	Newlands Beck	280
244	Derwent	281

West Lakes

245	Liza	284
246	Ehen	284
247	Calder – Upper	285
248	Calder – Lower	287
249	Mosedale Beck (Southwest)	288
250	Lingmell Beck	288
251	Nether Beck	289
252	Irt	289
253	Bleng	290
254	Whillan Beck	290
255	Esk – Upper	291
256	Esk – Main River	292

Windermere and SW

257	Tarn Beck	295
258	Crosby Ghyll	295
259	Logan Beck	296
260	Duddon – Upper	296
261	Duddon – Middle	298
262	Duddon – Lower	299
263	Yewdale Beck	300
264	Church Beck	301
265	Torver Beck	301
266	Crake	302
267	Force Beck	303
268	Scandale Beck (Ambleside)	304
269	Great Langdale Beck	305
270	Little Langdale Beck	306
271	Brathay	306
272	Stock Ghyll	308

273	Rothay	308
274	Trout Beck (South)	309
275	Cunsey Beck	310
276	Leven	311

Kent and Lune

277	Sprint – Upper Falls	314
278	Sprint	314
279	Mint	315
280	Kent – Scroggs Bridge to Burneside	317
281	Kent – Burneside to Kendal	318
282	Kent – Scroggs Weir to Sedgwick Bridge	318
283	Wasdale Beck	320
284	Birk Beck	321
285	Borrow Beck	322
286	Needlehouse Gill	323
287	Rawthey – Upper Reaches	323
288	Rawthey – Main River	324
289	Clough	325
290	Deepdale Beck (Dentdale)	326
291	Dee (Dentdale)	327
292	Barbon Beck	328
293	Leck Beck	329
294	Twiss	330
295	Doe	330
296	Greta (Ingleton)	331
297	Wenning	332
298	Hindburn	333
299	Roeburn	334
300	Artle Beck	334
301	Lune – Tebay to Rawthey Confluence	335
302	Lune – Rigmaden Bridge to Kirkby Lonsdale	337
303	Lune – Halton Rapids	338

Lancashire

304	Tarnbrook Wyre	340
305	Wyre	340
306	Ribble	341
307	Lead Mines Clough	341
308	Douglas	343
309	Irwell	343
310	Roch	344
311	Spodden – Healey Dell	345

The West

Peak District

312	Clough Brook	350
313	Dane – Gradbach to Danebridge	350
314	Dane – Danebridge to Rushton Spencer	351
315	Heydon Brook	352
316	Black Clough	353
317	Etherow – Salter's Brook Bridge to the weir	354
318	Goyt – Above Errwood Reservoir	355
319	Goyt – New Mills to Brabyns Park	356
320	Goyt – Brabyns Park to MCC site	357
321	Dean Clough	358

322	Little Don or Porter – Woodhead Pass to Langsett Reservoir	359
323	Don – Deepcar to Oughtibridge	360
324	Wye – Buxton to Litton Mill	360
325	Noe – Upper Booth to Barber Booth	361
326	Noe – Bagshaw Bridge to Hope	362
327	Ashop – Top of Snake Pass to Snake Inn	362
328	Ashop – Snake Inn to Alport confluence	363
329	Derwent – Darley Dale Bridge to Matlock Bath	364

Other possible options in the High Peak.....365

The Midlands and West

330	Churnet	367
331	Derwent – Milford to Darley Abbey	368
332	Derwent – Darley Abbey to Church Wilne	369
333	Trent – Stafford and Stone CC	370
334	Trent – Twyford to King's Mills	371
335	Teme – 'Downton Gorge' – Burrington Bridge to Linney playing fields	372
336	Teme – Linney playing fields to A49	373
337	Shrewsbury Weir – River Severn	374
338	Severn – Ironbridge to Jackfield Rapids	375
339	Severn – Bridgnorth to Bewdley	376
340	Chester Weir – River Dee	376



Cornwall

001	Tamar – Greystone Bridge to Horsebridge.	21
002	Tamar – Horsebridge to Gunnislake	21
003	Lynher	22
004	Warleggan.	23
005	Fowey – Golitha Falls to Treverbyn Bridge	24
006	Fowey – Treverbyn Bridge to Drawbridge	25
007	Fowey – Drawbridge to Bodmin Parkway station	25
008	Par	26
009	De Lank	27
010	Camel.	29

001 Tamar

Greystone Bridge to Horsebridge

Contributor	Mark Rainsley
Grade	2
Length	12km
Start	SX 367 805
Finish	SX 400 749

Introduction

A pleasant combination of flatwater touring and easy whitewater. Few major rivers will offer you the solitude and silence you'll experience downstream of Greystone Bridge.

Water level

The Tamar will be paddleable throughout the winter, being a major river with a huge drainage. However, very high levels are best avoided as some of the weirs will become dangerous and difficult to avoid.

Gauge

It should be clear if the river is too high for comfort; take a look at the weirs directly below the put-in.

Access and egress

You need to access the river 300 metres upstream of Greystone Bridge on river right (Cornwall!) where there is an unmarked track down to a water extraction building (SX 367 805) beside the river. There is no worthwhile parking here, so do the shuttle first.

At Horsebridge (SX 400 749) there are several options for parking, of which the best is on the river right side of the river.

Description

Much of this long section is flat, but there are numerous small weirs which have runnable slots in the centre and pools with defined waves and eddies below. These make great training spots. There is only one weir with a significant drop, the rest are all under a metre in height.

Open boaters and touring kayaks will be in their element here; the wooded valley is almost eerily quiet and the only sign of civilisation comes when the river passes through Endsleigh Gardens. The only natural rapids are found just past the house.

Other important points

Worth combining with the following section for a long day out.



 Coffin Weir, Tamar / Harry Franklin

002 Tamar

Horsebridge to Gunnislake

Contributor	Mark Rainsley
Grade	2
Length	9km
Start	SX 400 749
Finish	SX 433 723

The South West – Cornwall

Introduction

A great touring section which has more white-water interest than that upstream. The 'Rock Garden' rapids and shorter distance make this a better proposition for novice whitewater paddlers in short kayaks.

Water level

The Tamar will be paddleable throughout the winter, being a major river with a huge drainage. This section is not recommended in high water due to the large weirs.

Gauge

Use your discretion in judging whether the river is high.

Access and egress

At Horsebridge (SX 400 749) there are several options for parking of which the best is on the river right side of the river.

This trip finishes directly below Gunnislake New Bridge (SX 433 723) where it is possible to egress on the river right bank up to a quiet lane.

Description

A more serious undertaking than the section upstream. As well as the small more channelled weirs like those found on the upper section, there are two large weirs which will require **inspection and possibly portage**, 'Coffin Weir' and 'Broken Weir'. Both are easy to inspect or portage by stopping on the river left bank as soon as you spot the ominous horizon line.

In the penultimate kilometre, the highlight of the trip is found, the 'Rock Gardens'. Long, successive natural rapids provide endless chutes and eddies; the perfect training ground.

Other important points

Those with an interest in the region's industrial heritage will want to keep an eye on the river right bank.

003 Lynher

Contributor	Mark Rainsley
Grade	1/2
Length	15km
Start	SX 319 709
Finish	SX 384 608

Introduction

A lovely unspoilt river. The river features are small but defined and this is a great place to enjoy your first whitewater.

Water level

This is a sizeable river, paddleable for much of the winter months. High water is not recommended as the rapids and eddies will wash out.

Gauge

An ideal level at Kerney Bridge would be to have enough water to float, but a few rocks exposed in the riverbed.

Access and egress

Access at Kerney Bridge (SX 319 709) which has reasonable parking and launching.

Newbridge (SX 357 680) is a good spot to break the trip, with access to the river from a lane on river right below the bridge.

Notter Bridge (SX 384 608) allows egress on the river right bank.

Description

The Lynher has only occasional grade 2 rapids



📷 Lynher at Kerney Bridge / AS Watersports

and those seeking major action should look elsewhere. The Lynher's real strength is as a touring or coaching river.

The best section is the 5km from Kerney Bridge to Newbridge. This has many miniature rapids with natural waves and eddies almost purpose-built for learning basic moving water skills. There is one weir to **inspect** on this section.

A longer trip can be had by continuing to Notter Bridge, the tidal limit. This section has more sporadic rapids and Pillaton Weir which can cause pins in low water.

It is possible to make a longer expedition still by paddling on down the estuary, but then you'd have to grasp all that confusing tidal stuff.

004 Warleggan

Trengoffe to Fowey confluence

Contributor	Dan King
Grade	2 (3)
Length	2.5km
Start	SX 159 674
Finish	SX 129 651

Introduction

The tiny Warleggan is quite a challenging river for the grade, a typical Cornish ditch! It offers a more adventurous start to the popular 'play' section of the Fowey.

Water level

Plenty of wet stuff from the sky needed.

Gauge

There is a gauge on the weir at the get-in. 4 would be a scrape, 5 upwards is good to go. Anywhere above 7, trees would become a serious problem.

Access and egress

Put in just above the Trengoffe gauging weir (SX 159 674), just south of Panter'sbridge.

Take out on the River Fowey at New Bridge (SX 129 651), 2.5km below the confluence.

Description

Don't be fooled by the low grade; the Warleggan flows quickly and low hanging branches are a potential hazard.

Consider launching 200 metres or so up the bank from the gauge weir for an extra couple of small rapids. From the get-in, the weir is best taken on river left. Straight away, low branches become a bit of a nuisance and you need to keep a good lookout ahead.

The river is continuous and doesn't have many secure eddies. A couple of small weirs are easily readable and should be good to go at the levels needed for this section. A barbed wire fence next to a low bank on river left where cattle drink will need **portaging** on river left.

The Warleggan eventually flows past some fishing huts, and a few rocks well placed by the fisherman create a couple of nice small

The South West – Cornwall

playholes before it flows out into a hopefully swollen River Fowey.

Other important points

There are probably a few kilometres more of good paddling to be had upstream.

005 Fowey

Golitha Falls to Treverbyn Bridge

Contributor	Mark Rainsley
Grade	3 (4)
Length	5km
Start	SX 228 699
Finish	SX 206 675

Introduction

The Fowey (pronounced 'Foy') drains the east side of Bodmin Moor, Cornwall. Cornwall's grade 4 trip looks like an improbably small stream at the put-in bridge. Don't be put off ... within a few hundred metres it is a sizeable whitewater river well worth attention in high water conditions.

Water level

Save this for a rainy day. The river upstream of the put-in should ideally be filling or even spilling its banks.

Gauge

You need a minimum of enough water to float at the put-in, but the more the merrier.

Access and egress

The put-in is Draynes Bridge beside the Golitha Falls car park (SX 228 699). Launch below the bridge from the footpath.

This section finishes at Treverbyn Bridge (SX 206 675) where there are, in fact, two bridges close together.

Description

The whole venture looks unpromising at the start. The first few hundred metres involve ducking and weaving tree branches on what is essentially flat water. Persist! After the river bends right and the tourist path ends, the trees clear and a good section of rapids and falls begins.

Things kick off with a long grade 3+ rapid where the river narrows into a flume. This is closely followed by two successive grade 4 drops. These will need **inspection** on river right and merge into a single monster rapid in very high water. The river loses a surprising amount of height on this section, known as Golitha Falls. Keep an eye out for some metalwork which can be exposed at lower levels.

A third, longer grade 4 rapid is the end of the difficulties, but the river chunters on with a noticeable gradient and continuous grade 3 rapids until a stream enters on river right.

From here to the take-out the river is grade 2. Two footbridges marked on the OS Landranger map do not exist, having been swept away in floods. One has been replaced by an unlikely-looking slippery log. The last hazard is a small weir just before the take-out.

Other important points

This section builds in difficulty without much warm-up or warning, and is also prone to fallen tree hazards. Sadly a paddler lost his life here in January 2012; proceed with care.

006 Fowey

Treverbyn Bridge to Drawbridge

Contributor	Denzil Pearce
Grade	2 (with weirs)
Length	7.5km
Start	SX 206 675
Finish	SX 160 653

Introduction

After the steep Golitha Falls section, the Fowey still has enough gradient left to maintain some easy whitewater interest.

Water level

A healthy flow after rain is needed.

Gauge

All rocks in the riverbed should be covered, as a minimum.

Access and egress

Launch at Treverbyn Bridge (SX 206 675).

Finish at The Halfway House Inn near Drawbridge (SX 160 653); use their overflow parking area.

Description

This section begins with a long stretch of grade 2 gentleness, interspersed with a few small weirs, both natural and man-made. As you approach and pass Trago Mills the interest consists of varied but not unfriendly weirs, with gentle pools below to pick up the pieces, should anyone come unstuck. You may wish to consider running this section by itself, putting on at Two Waters Foot (SX 186 649) and taking out at the bottom end of Trago Mills car park; this makes a great introduction to whitewater.

After this is a short stretch of grade 2 with a couple of small drops, before you reach Drawbridge and the Halfway House Inn. Consider continuing down the following section, known as the 'playspot run'.



 Fowey playspot, below Drawbridge / Dan King

007 Fowey

Drawbridge to

Bodmin Parkway station

Contributors	Dan King and Simon Medlyn
Grade	1/2 (with weirs)
Length	6km
Start	SX 160 653
Finish	SX 110 640

Introduction

This mellower section of the Fowey (pronounced 'Foy') follows the A38. Although the whitewater is intermittent, it is a popular trip as it has some good play potential.

Water level

A healthy flow after rain is needed.

Gauge

There is a gauge halfway down at New Bridge; look for a small crossroads on the A38 beside

The South West – Cornwall

an orange-painted cottage. One way is sign-posted for Lostwithiel, the other Cardinham; take the Cardinham turning, the gauge is on river right just below the bridge (SX 129 651). The top red line is 3 feet, the bottom is 2.5 feet. Below 2.5 is a scrape and not worth it. At higher levels, the smaller weirs get washed out but the larger of the drops get better.

Access and egress

Put in at The Halfway House Inn near Draw-bridge (SX 160 653). Park in the pub car park, using the overflow area if possible. Steps lead from the front of the pub straight to the river. Take out at Bodmin Parkway train station (SX 110 640). Turn into Station Road off the A38 and park at the station car park, only a short walk up a public footpath from the take-out.

Description

The river is quite small and is only suitable for small groups. Be alert for the odd fallen tree in the river, although they are generally easy to spot and avoid.

From the get-in the river is flat for approximately 500 metres and winds its way into the woods of the Glynn Valley. After a small broken weir the river flattens out again, with various fishing walls and well-placed boulders creating eddylines which are good for squirting, and for beginners to moving water. After a small tributary joins from the right (the Warleggan), the river bends left beside a large house; here a drop produces a great deep playhole. The higher the level, the better the hole! When levels are extremely high (portage around bridges high) this produces a nice steep surf wave.

Following on, a couple of grade 2 rapids flow down under a small stone bridge. The next

point of interest is the second play wave. Smaller and friendlier than the last, it also gets better with more water.

After a small metal footbridge the river continues with grade 2 rapids. There are few eddies apart from the odd fishing wall. If you are just here for the playwaves, then New Bridge (SX 129 651) is a good point to finish; egress river left after the bridge, limited parking is possible about 100 metres north beside a Forestry Commission gate.

If continuing, the river quietly winds around the valley with mostly flat moving water and the odd section of grade 2. The last significant drop offers a rocky route on river left or a slot-like drop next to the right bank. You will then reach the A38 road bridge; a small weir underneath the bridge creates a fun surf wave and a nice stopper in higher levels. Carry on down a short distance and egress after the next stone bridge. The station car park is a short walk up the path.

Other important points

If this section is running at 3ft then the nearby Camel is worth a look.

008 Par

Contributor	Denzil Pearce
Grade	4-
Length	< 1km
Start	SX 072 562
Finish	SX 072 562

Introduction

A short but committing mini-gorge tucked away just outside St Austell.

Water level

As with most Cornish runs, it needs to have rained very recently for this to be going.

Gauge

If it looks like you will be pin-balling down off every rock it is best to leave it until there is more water, a pin would be hard to deal with and a swim would be very bad news. At high levels it reputedly becomes one continuous rapid from start to finish.

Access and egress

Walk upstream from the little car park at Pons Mill (SX 072 562) until you reach either a little beach or a low bridge (depending on levels) to launch from.

Egress is a little more tricky, the best method is perhaps to pin yourself against an angled metal grid where water is extracted for a hydro scheme and use it as a ladder to climb out with your boat! This is found in the first calm bit after the end of the rapids. Work out where the egress point is before launching.

Description

There is a very gentle lead in, grade 2 at most, until the river turns a blind corner and changes characteristics dramatically. From here on it is tight and very continuous, with no real exit route once you have started the mini-gorge as the sides are slippery, vertical brickwork (it was canalised for the sake of the mill). It is essentially one long, steep rapid with lots of little drops, but not much in the way of recovery pools. Towards the bottom it feeds into a very tight constriction that is just a little wider than a boat; to make life interesting the constriction is deeply undercut, so keep your nose up when entering it, especially if the level is a

bit low. You then burst out over one last little drop that is probably the biggest of the run, and land in the relative calm beside the water extraction point that doubles as an egress.

Note that there are some nasty little siphons to watch out for and some undercut sections too, this combined with the fact that a tree across any part of it could be a serious problem makes **inspection essential**; you can scramble up a small bank and inspect it as you carry your boats to the top.

Other important points

This is very quick to run, so multiple laps are the norm.

There is potentially more fun to be had upstream between Luxulyan Valley and this section, but it would require quite a bit of water to be worthwhile.

009 De Lank

Contributor	Mark Rainsley
Grade	5 plus portage
Length	5km
Start	SX 114 759 or SX 101 749
Finish	SX 089 738

Introduction

Grade 5 in Cornwall. What could possibly go wrong?

Water level

The De Lank drains Bodmin Moor, and retains its flow for a day or two after rain. You need some recent rain to bring the river up.

Note that a significant amount of water is extracted halfway down, at the quarry. If you are only doing the bottom section from the

The South West – Cornwall

footbridge, then you want as much water as possible.

Gauge

At the put-in, you need just enough water to float under the bridge. Much more than this might not be a great idea for the top half, due to the gradient!

Access and egress

The river above Delford Bridge (SX 114 759) is paddleable but very overgrown. Put in at Delford Bridge. If you want to avoid the river's hardcore sections, then walk a few hundred metres along a footpath to the footbridge at SX 101 749.

Take out at the bridge near Tregaddick (SX 089 738) or paddle a kilometre of flat water down to the River Camel and take out at Merry Meeting Bridge (SX 089 732).

Description

From Delford Bridge, the river is flat for about a mile and there are a number of tree blocks to **duck or portage**. Trees continue to be a pain throughout the trip.

A glance at the map will show you that the river then loses a hundred metres in height in the following kilometre!

When you see quarry workings appear above you on river right, be on your guard. There is one bouldery fall to warm you up, and then suddenly the river falls off the edge of the world! Tight back-to-back drops provide plenty of excitement as the river loses an impressive amount of height in a short distance. It is all paddleable, but depending upon water level and how shiny your boat is, you'll probably make a **portage** or three. 'Eighties' throwbacks who get excited about Spuds and full face hel-

mets will be in their element.

However, sharp-edged blocks of quarried rock and old, metal industrial junk start appearing in the falls; not very nice. Then, when the quarried blocks begin to outnumber the rocks put there by nature, the river flings the ultimate insult at you ... it simply disappears. You are presented by a blank wall where the river should be; (**portage**).

The river has sunk under the masses of discarded blocks of stone heaped into the gorge. These blocks are overgrown and have almost blended into the surroundings. There are plans to remove all of the quarry detritus; but as of 2013 there is still no sign of this happening. Meanwhile, you are left with the humiliation of shouldering your boat up the river right bank and carrying it down past the quarry buildings to a track which carries on along the bank of the (missing) river. Select a spot to climb back down to the river, but don't be fooled – the river resurfaces and then disappears again more than once.

When you put back in, you'll find some more steep falls. Note the large pipe on river right which appears to have taken a significant amount of water out of the river. You reach a footbridge at SX 101 749 which is a great starting point if the river is high, or if you want to miss the gruelling adventures above.

From the footbridge onwards, the river eases to continuous grade 4 and eventually grade 3 just before the bridge near Tregaddick. This section would be great in spate.

If you've started from Delford Bridge, you'll probably collapse from exhaustion at the take-out.

Other important points

If you do this at all, I guarantee that it'll just be

the one time. Leave the playboat at home and take your elbow pads.

010 Camel

Contributor	Mark Rainsley
Grade	Grade 3 (3+)
Length	5km
Start	SX 097 805
Finish	SX 091 778 or SX 089 764

Introduction

A small, but continuously entertaining river, the Camel offers grade 3 creeking! This secluded river valley is a pleasure to visit and paddle. I won't forget watching a brown trout throw an impressive wavewheel over the lip of a fall.

Water levels

Rain is needed to bring this section up. The Camel seems to hold an acceptable flow of water for a few days after high water, perhaps because it drains boggy moorland.

Gauge

You need a minimum of enough water to float under the bridges at the start. High water would be jolly, but care would have to be taken regarding low tree branches.

Access and egress

The Camel joins a sizeable stream at the bridge near Trearne (SX 097 805), where there is limited parking near a ford across the stream. The ford offers a good launching point for the river.

Take out at Gam Bridge near Tuckingmill (SX 091 778) or at Penrose Bridge (SX 089 764).

Description

The Camel is challenging at the grade and needs respect. There is room for only three or four paddlers on this narrow river. Trees are a tad irritating ... there are usually several across the river on this section, all of which can probably be ducked or paddled over **with care**.

From the very start, the first of many bedrock ledges forms a small drop. The river has non-stop small rapids interspersed by these small drops. Some of them may form back looping stoppers in high water, and stopping to portage/inspect could be tricky as eddies are limited. Some of the drops feature undercut pools below. Towards Gam Bridge, there is one long, harder rapid where the drops come thick and fast, and the river loses noticeable height.

Gam Bridge is a possible finish point; just above the bridge, a stile on river right leads to the road. Directly downstream of the bridge, wire strands across the river try to discourage you from carrying on, but it's worth it; numerous grade 2 rapids help you wind down from the fast and frantic paddling above. The river opens out and you pass through gardens, and finally in front of the chalets of a fishing resort before Penrose Bridge.

It is recommended that you go no further. The river directly below is truly awful; choked with low bridges, fallen trees, barbed wire and piles of garbage.



ENGLISH WHITEWATER – 2nd Edition

The BCU Guidebook

- **Completely revised 2nd edition**
- **340 river runs and playspots**
- **90 new entries in this edition**
- **Full colour throughout**
- **Improved maps**

The British Canoe Union Guide to the whitewater rivers of England.

This second edition has been completely revised and updated. It is a comprehensive guide to the whitewater rivers, playspots and artificial whitewater courses of England.

The guide is illustrated with photos and maps, and the new format makes it even easier to find the information you need.



ISBN 978-1-906095-45-1



9 781906 095451 >

Published by Pesda Press