

Fines for anglers caught flouting the law

Punishments issued during a day of sentencing at Brighton Magistrates' Court on 26 June 2019 saw 5 anglers fined £220 each.

Each angler was ordered to pay £127.47 in costs and a victim surcharge of £30.

The total amount of fines the 5 must pay came to £1,100, the total costs amounted to £637.35 and the victim surcharge total was £150.

Those found guilty of offences were:

- Andrei Ngrei, 27, of Gulliver Close, Kempston, Bedford, was caught fishing during the close season and without a licence on the River Great Ouse at Bedford on 24 March
- Ciprian Crimu, 33, of Alexandra Avenue, Harrow, was caught fishing during the close season and without a licence on the River Great Ouse at Bedford on 24 March
- Chris Biggs, 52, of The Rye, Eaton Bray, was caught fishing without a licence on 7 February 7 at Grand Union Canal, Three Locks, Soulbury, and then failed to provide his address when asked by the bailiff
- Vladas Lekutis, 49, of Earls Street, Thetford, was caught fishing during the close season and without a licence on the Little Ouse River, Redmere, Littleport, on 17 March
- Algiradas Paulaskis, 54, Earls Street, Thetford, was caught fishing during the close season and without a licence on the Little Ouse River, Redmere, Littleport, on 17 March

None of the defendants attended court on the day and the charges were proven in their absence and the fines imposed.

Environment Agency Fisheries Team Leader Ian Hirst said:

It's a crime to fish without a valid licence and offenders can be fined up to £2,500, have their fishing equipment seized and be banned from fishing. Our enforcement officers inspect rod licences throughout East Anglia and could turn up at any time.

These cases show that anyone found fishing illegally or fails to provide their name and address to an officer carrying out their duties may face prosecution and a fine.

The money raised through the sales of rod licences is re-invested and enables us to enhance and improve all fisheries for anglers, including rivers. Our officers routinely undertake licence checks and we urge anyone with information about illegal fishing activities to contact us.

Illegal fishing should be reported to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.