

Groundbait For Perch

by Kevin Ball

I rarely see groundbait being used by Perchfishers members on fish-ins and the like. For me I almost never go fishing without my trusty old groundbait bowl and mix.

Be it float-fishing, ledgering or feeder-fishing I never go fishing without a mix of groundbait. My local Fenland Drains are somewhat featureless for most of the year and with perch, tench and bream being the mainstay of my fishing nowadays a feeder full of groundbait, as opposed to single bait ledgering, is a vital factor in carrying the maggot (or caster) loose-feed to the bait area with either a bunch of dendrobaenas or a large lobworm on the hook.

Being a creature of habit (what you hadn't realised?) the mix has been the same for many a year now!



My preference is for a base mix of brown crumb and then any standard groundbait mix - always in red and id it's available in the tackle shop *Sensas Lake*. As you can see from the picture I separate my groundbait mix into individual containers - adding one to two parts crumb for a normal days fishing.

Dependant on the time of year the water based mix will contain anything from liquid molasses in the summer to liquid worm extract in the winter. In winter I also add in a couple of hefty spoonfuls of Archie Braddocks' *Perch Magic*. I have to be honest and say I have no evidence that the *Perch Magic* attracts perch but it certainly attracts the roach in the winter - vital when requiring a livebait.

I normally prepare my mix at home, before setting off, and find (to the wife's horror) that the stainless steel "balloon hand whisk" from the kitchen is an ideal tool for circulating water into the mix and introducing another vital ingredient to any groundbait mix!

Finally add an initial half pint of maggots and very soon what seemed like a paltry small mix can double (and more) in size.



Whilst I don't profess to being an expert in the mixing of groundbait or the usage of it (indeed I also can't say with any proof that it has, or does, improve my catch rate of fish - perch in particular), but it does without any doubt draw in the baitfish. Many occasions I've seen myself catching small fish whilst others (non users of groundbait) seemingly struggle.

It's probably more of a confidence thing with me nowadays, having used it for many years, and I'd feel lost without a mix sitting beside me and in a position where I wasn't able to use it. Indeed there are fisheries which I've only visited once - simply because the use of groundbait is banned!

I can remember fishing one particular session with fellow Perchfishers member Richard Mills and my father on Ardingley Reservoir in West Sussex and using long-range tactics with a groundbait feeder and worm & maggot hookbaits and catching 'good' perch throughout the day. My dad who was sharing a large swim and presenting single lobworm hookbaits at around the same distance catching zilch. He gave-up and eventually switched his attention to pike!

The purpose of this short article is merely to do nothing but promote the use of groundbait. Many of you use quiver-tip rods; why not try switching your bomb for a feeder full of **your** favourite groundbait mix.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Kevin Ball'.