



[EAST MIDLANDS]

The flying yachts man

"WHEN YOU TAKE OFF everything goes silent. It's eerie," says professional moth racer Chris Graham. No, he's not talking about learning to fly, but instead the new kind of boat that is making a big impression in the sailing world but not many waves.

Moth sailing is relatively new, rather stylish and very fast. What sets it apart from other forms of dinghy is the addition of hydrofoils – wing-like structures underneath the boat's hull which allow it to rise above the water's surface when it reaches a certain speed.

When the boat is above the water – known as foiling – its drag significantly reduces and seriously

increases its speed. The moths can go as fast as 30 knots (55km/h) and with this pace comes spectacular crashes.

Although moth sailing is still fairly new, opportunities to test out your sea legs are starting to pop up all over the country. Under an hour's drive from the landlocked East Midlands, the Grafham Water Sailing Club has a fleet of these craft that will make all other forms of dinghy sailing seem dull.

Matthew Priest

Members of the Grafham Water Sailing Club, rent out their hydrofoil moths: contact the club for details, www.grafham.org