

RIPARIAN EXAMINER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WYRE RIVERS TRUST
AND THE WYRE WATERS CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP

Foreword

Phil Robson– Chairman, Wyre Rivers Trust & Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership

I am delighted to introduce you to the latest Newsletter of our growing charity.

From humble beginnings some years ago the Wyre Rivers Trust has gained support and grown its income over the past 4 years to better serve our beautiful river Wyre and her tributaries.

Backed by a team of trustee`s who alone funded the charity for its first 6 years of life, together with a hardy team of volunteers the Trust`s impact upon the Rivers health and ecology is now being felt.

In the last 3 years the Trust has been joined by Partners representing the wider Wyre Catchment to form the Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership whose reach now extends from the birth of the Wyre in the Bowland hills down to the beaches of the Fylde Coast.

We are the only Rivers Trust and Catchment Partnership in England that can look from the head of its river in the hills and see the mouth of the river opening into the sea and vice versa.

Our partners span land owners, local Authorities, farmers, universities and many diverse river users and local communities that live and work within the Wyre Catchment.

Our driving goal is to improve the entire catchments ecological status as measured by the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) the standard by which each of England`s rivers will be measured. To our trustee`s this will be evidenced by increasing Salmon and Sea Trout numbers, enhanced mammal and avian life and less polluted bathing waters along our coast.

We want the entire catchment achieve the Good Status under WFD as a minimum by 2027.

To this end the Trust and its partners will work together in Partnership with the Environment Agency and DEFRA to win funding from the Public and Private sector. In addition to this we will use the efforts of our volunteers to deliver projects for the benefit of the Wyre Catchment.

Within this Newsletter you will find projects that have already been delivered to the benefit our many river users. We are planning many more projects and have a number of initiatives already funded and in delivery as I write this foreword.

If you would like to help us please make contact via the details presented on Page 3 of this newsletter.

I would like to thank all those who have already given up their valuable time to help us to date without whom the river would be the poorer.

Come and join us and help us and improve the prettiest river in England...no bias here!

Contents

What do we do? - Page 4

Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership - Page 5

Riparian Restoration - Page 6-7

- Improving river bank habitats.

Invasive Non-Native Species - Page 8-11

- Eradicating INNS from the Wyre Catchment.

Beach Care - Page -12

- Tidying beaches at Knott End.

Top Tips - Page -13-14

- A handy guide for landowners.

Stanah BioBlitz- Page -15

- 24 Hours to document the flora and fauna of The Wyre Estuary Country Park at Stanah.

Wyre River Trust – Registered Charity Number: 1161776

Registered in England, Company Number: 8008486.

Registered Office - Factors House, Back Lane, Higher Whitley, Warrington, WA4 4PX

Contact us at - www.wyrivertrust.org

Our projects are supported by a wide variety of organisations including; The Environment Agency, United Utilities, The Forest of Bowland AONB, Wyre Borough Council and the Lancashire Environmental Fund.

We would like to thank them all for their support.

What do we do?

River Restoration

- Improving river bank habitats by creating buffer zones which allow river bank habitats to flourish. This reduces diffuse pollution and bank erosion and increases aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity, improves water quality and will eventually provide shade to the watercourse.

Monitoring and Research

- By monitoring the watercourses of the Wyre Catchment we can identify areas of river, stream or brook that we would like to improve. Through research we can use methods of river restoration that are tried and tested, we can also devise new methods of river restoration where necessary.

- Monitoring also allows us to assess the success of the projects that we deliver; this enables us to quantify the improvements that we have made to riparian habitats and make changes to future projects if they are required. This monitoring takes many forms but is most commonly achieved through river corridor surveys, kick sampling and fixed point photography.

Education and Engagement

- By educating and engaging the public we can bring the issues which face rivers and their catchments into the public domain. Raising awareness of these issues may cause more people to become interested in the water environment and take actions to ensure that they are not having an adverse impact upon it.

Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership

Using collaboration to deliver water based objectives

Why?

- To deliver “Good” status under the Water Framework Directive across the Wyre Catchment by 2027.
- To ensure that organisations across the catchment are working in a holistic manner.
- To ensure that the views of all stakeholders are considered.

Who?

Partners

Blackpool and The Fylde College, Environment Agency, Garstang Millennium Green Trust, The Friends of Garstang Walking Festival, Grosvenor Estates (Abbeystead), The Lune and Wyre Fisheries Association, Lancaster University, Natural England, United Utilities, Wyre Council, The Wyresdale Anglers.

Want to be involved?

- We are always on the lookout for the views of stakeholders. Please use the details on Page 3 to contact us.

Riparian Habitat Improvements



Scorton Habitat Scheme

Supported by the Lancashire Environmental Fund and The Woodland Trust

Metrics

- 1,503 Metres of stock proof fencing
- 9 Stiles
- 3 Gates
- 2 Livestock drinking troughs
- 1 Interpretation Panel
- 1,600 Trees (Donated by the Woodland Trust)
- 25 Volunteers

Wyre Habitat Creation Scheme

Supported by the United Utilities Catchment Wise Fund and The Conservation Volunteers

Metrics

- Over 1,700 Metres of stock proof fencing at 3 sites
- 3 Access Hurdles
- 2 Stiles
- 1 Reed Bed
- 1 Interpretation Panel
- 400 Trees (Donated by TCV)
- 20 Volunteers

Benefits

- Improved water quality - From reduced inputs of faecal matter and sediment
- Improved habitat quality - For both aquatic and terrestrial species
- Increased biodiversity - In the aquatic and terrestrial environment
- Increased bank stability - From the root networks of trees, shrubs and grasses
- Reduced soil compaction - From restricted livestock access
- Reduced inputs of faecal matter - Reduced point source and diffuse pollution
- Improved spawning habitat for migratory and non-migratory fish



Invasive Non-Native Species

Key Facts

- Present across the Wyre Catchment
- Three key species:
 - *Himalayan Balsam - Page 7*
 - *Japanese Knotweed - Page 8*
 - *Giant Hogweed - Page 9*
- All are spread through human action
- There are many impacts of INNS
 - *Reduced biodiversity*
 - *The decline of native species*
 - *Increased bank erosion*
 - *Damage to property*
 - *Impaired access to rivers*
 - *Risk to public health (Giant Hogweed)*

Biosecurity - Preventing the spread of INNS

Check

Check your equipment for any seeds, beasts or foliage before you leave the river.

Clean

Whilst on site wash and brush your equipment thoroughly to remove anything that may be stuck to your equipment.

Allow your equipment to dry completely, some INNS can survive for two weeks in damp conditions.

Dry

Himalayan Balsam - *Impatiens glandulifera*



Vector

“Explosive” seed pods that are activated by movement. These have the ability to disperse seeds as far as 10 metres. This when combined with the proximity of plants to watercourses ensures that the resulting dispersal of seeds can occur over a huge range.

Removal

Mechanical or Chemical - Himalayan Balsam can be removed through “bashing” “slashing” or “pulling” or the species can be sprayed with a herbicide to eradicate it. The replanting of areas where Himalayan Balsam has been removed is crucial as it reduces the ability of seeds to germinate in the following spring.

Identification

Spring - Small, single stemmed plants with fleshy leaves.

Summer - Waist or chest high plants, verdant serrated leaves and pink flowers.

Autumn/Winter - Straw coloured stalk debris which often remains on river banks.

Japanese Knotweed – *Fallopia japonica*



Vector

Regeneration from Rhizome or Stem fragments which have the ability to grow into a new plant. The plant also spreads through the underground action of the rhizomes which produce stems that have the ability to grow through cracks in concrete and other building materials

Removal

Mechanical or Chemical - Mechanical removal is hugely costly and requires all plant matter to be buried 5 meters underground at a licensed landfill. Chemical removal can be undertaken using a handheld or vehicle mounted atomiser or a stem injection device.

Identification

Spring - Small, single (red) stemmed plants with heart shaped (red or purple leaves).

Summer - Head high plants, verdant green heart shaped leaves arranged in a zig zag pattern. White flowers.

Autumn/Winter - Dead stems which remain as dense stands.

Giant Hogweed - *Heracleum mantegazzianum*



Vector

Seeds, Giant Hogweed can produce 20,000 seeds per plant, these are dispersed in close proximity to the plant which they originated from. Seeds tend to germinate in the following months but they can remain viable in the soil for 2 years.

Giant Hogweed sap is an irritant - Do not touch this plant

Removal

Mechanical or Chemical - Mechanical removal can take two forms, the removal of flower heads (to reduce the ability of the plant to create a seed bank.) or the removal of the entire plant via repeated root cutting. Chemical control can be achieved with a Glyphosate based herbicide. via atomiser or stem injection.

Identification

Spring - Small leaves often forming a “maple leaf” shape before developing a several large fronds with serrated edges.

Summer - Up to five metres tall, leaves 3 meters wide, larger white flower heads.
Stem (10 cm diameter) green with purple blotches.

Autumn/Winter - Large woody stems often remain in areas that are dominated by Giant Hogweed.

Wyre Beach Care Project

Removing litter from the beaches of Knott End

Why?

Litter is the scourge of the marine environment.

- Plastics are ingested by marine organisms causing great suffering and possibly death.
- Birds and other terrestrial species can become trapped in litter which can be potentially fatal.
- Litter is unsightly and it often collects in large piles which put beach users off.

Who?

- A team of hardy volunteers that attend a monthly beach clean in all weather conditions.

Progress

- The Wyre Rivers Trust and Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership have now delivered 21 beach cleans.
- Over 300 hours of invaluable volunteer assistance have been gifted to the project.
- Over 250 bags of litter have been collected from the beach and Saltmarsh at Knott End.

The dates for the Knott End Beach Cleans which are taking place in 2016 are listed on the final page of this newsletter

Top Tips



Where possible install stock proof fencing to restrict livestock access to the watercourse, this will improve water quality and allow a buffer zone to form between the river bank and the fence line which promotes increases in biodiversity and increases soil stability. This can also significantly reduce the number of waterborne diseases that livestock contract from drinking out of the river.



Avoid the use of fords between the months of October and March, Salmon, Sea Trout and Brown Trout often make use of the gravels that are found in and around fords for spawning. Any vehicle movement through these gravels can have adverse impacts on the development of their eggs and/or fry.

Top Tips



If you have Invasive Non-Native Species (See pages 6-9) present on your land please remove them using a method is suitable for the species in question. If you cannot remove them please report their location using the Lancashire Invasives website (www.lancashireinvasives.org) or by contacting the Wyre Rivers Trust using the contact details in this newsletter.



Where possible please try to reduce pollution pathways that may exist on your land. The separation of clean and dirty water in farmyards by ensuring that surface and foul water drains are working correctly can have a significant positive impact on the quality of the watercourses which surround them. This will have benefits for both aquatic and terrestrial species.



The Stanah BioBlitz led by the Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership took place on the 5th and 6th of June 2015 at the Wyre Estuary Country Park. The country park is situated around 3.5 miles from the mouth of the River Wyre and is home to a myriad of wildlife. The event spanned 24 hours and began on the 5th of June at 18:00 with a Saltmarsh Saunter, Evening Bird Walk and a Bat Walk. Further bird walks, invertebrate hunts and mammal trapping took place on the 6th of June. 374 species were recorded by a small group of eminent scientists and wildlife enthusiasts. The event was augmented by displays from Fylde Bird Club, The Royal Society of Biology, Blackpool and The Fylde College, The Marine Conservation Society and other organisations.



The data which was collected at the BioBlitz has been checked and verified and will be submitted to the National Biodiversity Network. This will form a crucial baseline for the Wyre Estuary Country Park and will allow those working on the site to monitor any changes to the flora and fauna which reside there. The event was supported by The Royal Society of Biology, Wyre Borough Council and a Green Partnership Award courtesy of Lancashire County Council. Without the support of the aforementioned organisations the event would not have been able to go ahead.

For more information about events please visit our website: www.wyriverstrust.org

Events Calendar 2016

The Wyre Rivers Trust and Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership will be hosting a number of events in 2016.

Our website will be updated with information on these events as it becomes available.

River Walks

13th May, 29th July & 10th September 2016

Beach Cleans

Knott End - 01/03/16, 12/04/16, 10/05/16

14/06/16, 12/07/16, 09/08/16, 06/09/16, 11/10/16,
08/11/16, 06/12/16

Various Locations - 14/04/16, 09/06/16, 11/08/16,
20/10/16, 08/12/16

Estuary Cleans - Various Locations

17/03/16, 26/05/16, 14/07/16, 22/09/16, 10/11/16

Please check our website for further information on any of the events listed on this page.