

Make time to go fishing



Fisheries in Yorkshire

May 2015

Have you seen any diseased eel?



Eel with signs of skin damage

National Fisheries Services (NFS) at Brampton continue to monitor fish health and diseases in wild fish populations. This includes investigations into the impact of eel parasites and viruses. The River Dee Trust recently told us of reports of dying eels in Scotland, with fish exhibiting significant skin damage, with additional reports on the River Spey.

We are in contact with colleagues in Scotland, who are conducting tests on these fish to identify the cause.

So far, we have not received any reports of such cases in England and Wales.

We are asking people to be vigilant and report any similar cases [here](#), to your local fisheries officer, or staff at **NFS Brampton on 01480 48380**.

Have your say

The next event in our annual programme of fisheries forums will be held on Wednesday 10th June at the Mercure Fairfield Manor Hotel in York at 6.45pm. This meeting will have a North Yorkshire focus, with the following items on the agenda:

- The work of the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust - Rita Mercer, YDRT
- Fisheries update – David Morley, Environment Agency
- Getting more people fishing - Andy Loble, Angling Trust

Meetings are free and open for all to attend. Please contact [John Cheyne](#) (01905 759557) to book your place.

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Working together

- We are funding the Wild Trout Trust to carry out advisory and practical visits, and identify project proposals for potential funding. Advisory visits offer expert advice to individuals or organisations that have responsibility for a stretch of river or a lake which is (or has potential to be) wild trout habitat. Visits involve a WTT Officer walking the site to discuss how to best manage and improve the habitat. WTT Officers can also write up project proposals detailing habitat enhancement methodologies for your site. Visits and reports are free, subject to covering the cost of travel expenses. Contact your local [WTT Officer](#) if you wish to use this service.
- **FishingInfo** has now been launched by the Angling Trust at www.fishinginfo.co.uk, replacing our 'Where to fish' angling guides. We are continuing our work with the Angling Trust to improve and develop this site.
- Two hundred and fifty anglers are now working with us testing the free [electronic logbook app](#) we are developing with the Angling Trust and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture. The partnership is also talking to the Freshwater Biological Association about how they may be able to become involved.
- All applications for new hydropower schemes on our rivers appear on our list of [applications for abstracting or impounding water](#). Notices are displayed for 28 days and you have an opportunity to comment if you are concerned about a proposal. Proposed schemes also require planning permission, so will be available to view on local authority planning websites.

Stillwaters



We are working with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to restore a former fish farm, now known as Skerne Wetlands Nature Reserve in East Yorkshire. We have created 30 hectares of wetland habitat, and will divert a 1km long section of West Beck through the site to reconnect part of the river with its flood plain. We are considering using a restored pond here as a crucian carp ark site.



We developed a stocking plan for Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet, along with Sheffield Council and Peter Gribbon. Necessary repairs to the dam head meant it had to be drained and the fish removed. Crucian carp were the first species to be introduced from our fish farm at Calverton, and to protect them from cross breeding it has been agreed that no carp will be stocked into the fishery. Later in the year the Council will source further fish to get the fishery back up and running.

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- We developed a stocking plan for Walton Nature Reserve, working with Walton Angling Club, Wakefield Council and Mainstream Fisheries. This followed a pollution incident which resulted in a large number of fish deaths. The first stocking included roach, bream and perch. A second stocking including tench has now been made, and further fish will be introduced later in the year.

Yorkshire's rivers

- The bypass channel around Rodley weir, River Aire, has been confirmed as an efficient fish pass following Hull International Fisheries Institute's study of tagged brown trout at the site. Three-quarters of the fish that entered the pass went on to exit at the upstream end. Some fish also use the channel as habitat for feeding or shelter. Yorkshire Water own Rodley fish pass and we contributed funding and technical support during design and monitoring.
- We are working with the Aire River Trust to investigate ways of improving fish passage at Skelton Grange weir, Leeds.



We funded and led a project to remove Newlay Lower (Horsforth) weir on the River Aire, with support from the Aire Rivers Trust. This restored upstream habitat benefiting fish and invertebrates. Similarly, on the River Don we removed part of Ward End weir, Hillsbrough. A section of weir was left standing as a visible reminder of the city's industrial heritage (see above photo). Both removals form links in the developing 'Fish Highways' on these rivers. The Highways are sequence of fish passes and weir removals providing free passage between the upper reaches of the river and the sea, to benefit coarse fish, salmonids and eel.

- We are beginning work on Barlow Brook, a tributary of the River Rother, Chesterfield. Our project involves weir removal (to restore natural flows), fencing of the river bank (to reduce silt input) and securing wood in-stream (to increase the amount of trout habitat). We are working in partnership with Chesterfield Borough Council and will involve additional partners as the project progresses.
- We are working with East Yorkshire Rivers Trust in Lowthorpe Beck. The project includes a bypass channel for Lowthorpe weir and a fish pass at Neat Holmes Wood weir.
- We are beginning a three year river restoration project on the River Derwent, in partnership with Natural England and the East Yorkshire Rivers Trust. This year we will be starting giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed controls and surveying Settrington, Scampston and Menthorpe Becks to identify sites for habitat improvement work in 2016 and 2017.



Stock-proof fencing and a drinking bay have been installed on Otterburn Beck as part of our Upper Aire project with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and the Yorkshire Farming and Wildlife Partnership. Similar work has taken place throughout the upper Aire and is allowing native plants to grow alongside the river, providing cover for fish and reducing the amount of silt washing into the river, smothering spawning gravels.

Enforcement

- During January, February and March 2015 our enforcement officers questioned 1,246 anglers and reported 118 for various fisheries offences. During the same period we dealt with 21 illegal fishing reports made to our 24-hour incident hotline (0800 80 70 60).
- We patrol throughout the year, but from time to time also carry out intensive programmes of visits over the course of a few days. During the latest of these, we visited 46 waters between the 2nd and 4th of May and checked 246 anglers, resulting in 25 offence reports being issued.
- An angler fishing with three rods & lines but only having one valid licence has been fined £200 and also has to pay costs of £351, plus a £20 victim surcharge. A rod licence permits the use of up to two rods & lines when fishing for coarse fish & eel where Regional Byelaws and rules permit. In a separate case, fishing without a licence has cost an angler £1,078 having been found guilty at Doncaster Magistrate's Court in May.
- Rod licences can be bought [online](#), over the phone (0344 800 5386) or at a Post Office. All income from rod licence sales is used to fund our work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries. This includes improving habitats for fish and facilities for anglers, tackling illegal fishing and working with partners to encourage people to give fishing a go.



Please contact us for more information on any subject covered in this newsletter. Phone us on 03708 506 506 (Mon to Fri 8am to 8pm) or email enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Please report incidents to our 24 hour hotline on 0800 807060.

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