



RIBBLE CATCHMENT CONSERVATION TRUST

Welcome to our first e-newsletter

The Trust has been extremely busy during the first half of 2010, so much so that we've taken on another part-time member of staff to help out in the office whilst we're out and about. We are also pleased to announce that Jack Spees has been appointed the Director of the Ribble Trust as from the 12th July 2010. Among our numerous projects there has been the removal of various weirs, the creation of new river habitats and we even managed to include 7 schools in the Trout in the Classroom scheme this year. Having just taken on two volunteers to help with river surveys, the Trust is in the midst of a busy summer...

Boyces Brook Habitat Scheme

Back in the summer of 2009, the Trust constructed an off-stream spawning channel at Boyces Brook in Ribchester, the purpose of which was to create more spawning ground for fish and increase their numbers in the Ribble catchment. This year the Trust has worked on improving the habitat surrounding the new channel, and back in March 2010 we gathered together a group of volunteers to assist in the planting of numerous indigenous young trees. In around 10 years time the area should begin to resemble substantial woodland, which not only provides shady conditions for the spawning fish, but is also a small step toward minimising the process of global warming.



Montford Weir

BEFORE (October 2009)



AFTER (March 2010)



Around 30 weirs on the Calder system currently pose significant barriers to upstream spawning ground for migratory fish such as salmon and trout. Montford weir near Brierfield was one such barrier and the decision was made to reduce it in height by removing and re-shaping some of the existing stone blocks comprising the weir. The work was done during low flow conditions and a sediment trap was used to prevent too much silt polluting the water downstream. The removal of the weir resulted in a faster flow and a lower level of water, leaving some of the river channel exposed. In a very short period of time new vegetation will begin to grow on the exposed banks which will provide increased habitat for birds and river mammals such as water voles.

Padiham Weir

Another major barrier to fish migration on the Calder System was Padiham weir. Due to the size of the project, the Trust joined forces with the Environment Agency to carry out the modification of the weir. A rock ramp style fish pass was installed and the weir was reduced in size to 600mm (2'). This project was completed in May 2010 and marked the beginning of the Trust's attempt to open up a further 20% of the Ribble catchment to salmon, trout, grayling and eels for the first time in many years. The removal of the weir has been one of the Trust's greatest success stories to date - fish of all species and ages are now able to pass the weir in all flow conditions.



Invertebrate Surveys



The Trust held two very successful invertebrate workshops in June. The Invertebrate monitoring scheme aims to provide monthly check-ups of the water quality in the Ribble and its tributaries and helps to flag up pollution incidents. The more invertebrates present, the healthier the river. The Trust felt privileged that so many local people were keen to help out and would like to thank all of their volunteers for their great enthusiasm and continued involvement.



Trout in the Classroom



Our Trout in the Classroom Scheme has done well this year with 7 schools in the area now taking part. Fry have successfully been released into streams around Clitheroe, Whalley, Longridge, Chipping and Dunsop. Local press coverage has resulted in more schools asking to be included in the scheme for

next year, which is fantastic for teaching young children about rivers and conservation.

Angling Passport Scheme

The Angling Passport Scheme is new for 2010, opening up new waters and bringing fishing opportunities to more people than ever before. It enables fishermen to explore some of the most beautiful and least fished stretches of water containing a variety of species including trout, grayling, chubb and dace, and only for a few pounds. Some of our beats require a more stealthy approach to fishing than usual which will test even the most experienced angler. However the beats have good access and are easy to fish making them ideal places for beginners to practice their skills. Tokens can be purchased from the Trust's website at www.ribbletrust.org.uk and are interchangeable with other schemes throughout the country, including the Eden, Trent, Tyne, Wye & Usk, South West Lakes and the West Country.

<p>Angler's Record Please retain</p> <p>No. <input type="text"/></p> <p>Date Beat</p> <p>Catch</p> <p>For fishing info and tokens go to: www.ribbletrust.org.uk</p> <p>Place in box AFTER fishing</p>	<p>Catch Return</p> <p>No. <input type="text"/></p> <p>Date Beat</p> <p>Catch Comments: Please provide as much information as possible - species, number caught, method etc.</p> <p>Place in box BEFORE fishing</p>	<p>1 Xxxxxxxxxx Angling Passport TOKEN 2010</p> <p>No. <input type="text"/></p> <p>This token expires on 31/12/2010 Non Refundable</p> <p>Date Beat</p> <p>Angler's Name</p> <p>Car Reg No.</p> <p>Place in box BEFORE fishing</p>
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Barrowford Weirs

Work has been ongoing on three weirs in Barrowford this year that present barriers to migratory fish. Work on weir one took place in April and involved simple chipping away at the concrete to reduce it in height. The following month, a series of small weirs were constructed in front of weir two to create a 'step system', providing fish with sufficient take-off depth to clear the main obstacle. Work on the third weir is soon to commence with the installation of a fish pass on the weir itself. With these barriers overcome, a great deal more of Pendle Water will be opened up to salmon and trout as it was decades before these industrial weirs were constructed, resulting in a more varied and sustainable eco-system.



Step system at weir two.

West Bradford Fish Pass



Before

The Trust discovered that a fish pass previously installed at a weir in West Bradford was ineffective due to its poor design. In order to ensure that fish could pass this barrier the decision was made to remove the weir altogether. Following the weir's removal, the banking was reworked and reinforced with cobbles from the stream and in time it will naturally re-establish itself with vegetation. Weirs aren't just barriers to fish; they also retain gravel, resulting in a distinct lack of substrate and poor habitat for fish. With the removal of the weir the Trust expect the stream to return to a more natural state.



After

Next up...

In addition to our continued efforts at Barrowford, work on the A59 culverts is in the pipeline (no pun intended) to create improved passage for fish through the tunnels beneath the road, and habitat schemes at Easington Beck and Pendle Water are planned for later in the year.

Supporting the Trust

The Trust would like to thank all of our volunteers, members and contributors whose help is essential to achieving our objectives. To become a member, donate or volunteer for us visit our website at www.ribbletrust.org.uk



ENVIRONMENT
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