



Autumn Newsletter 2012



Ray Mears joins RP on the Wye; Natural Environment Minister Richard Benyon and Countryfile monitor riverflies; the invasion of the Demon shrimp; Riverfly photography competition and more...

The Leckford ambassadors who inspired a riverfly revolution

In 1998 The John Spedan Lewis Trust for the Advancement of Natural Sciences (JSLTANS) ran its first riverfly workshop at Leckford in Hampshire. Dr Cyril Bennett, Warren Gilchrist, Peter Francis and colleagues retire, at the end of this field season, after delivering in the region of 50 workshops. Founder members of the Riverfly Partnership (RP), it is their instrumental work that led to the development of the Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (RMI). The many RP partners and Riverfly Monitors across the UK are indebted to Cyril, Warren and Peter for their inspiration, dedication, enthusiasm and expertise. Although it is the end of an era, we are delighted that all will remain closely linked with RP. Cyril, a leading light on Ephemeroptera, will be focussing research on species conservation and the impact of siltation on riverfly assemblages.

How good is your river? Riverfly Monitoring Initiative

This year RP has delivered 32 Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (RMI) workshops to groups from Kent to Gwent and Ross-shire to the Roe Valley. There are now over 75 active RMI Groups working in partnership with the statutory agencies to protect the health of their local rivers. We applaud the incredible effort of all involved. Groups have been working hard despite often inclement weather, not just to monitor sites, but to publicise their efforts - putting out [press releases](#), showcasing their work at [local events](#), getting [filmed](#), and signposting their sample sites on the riverside. The higher the profile of the initiative, the greater the deterrent to potential polluters. With our final workshop of the year at the end of October, it is time to take stock and plan for the next field season. The ongoing feedback we receive is vital. Please contact Louis Kitchen at rmi@riverflies.org with changes to sites being monitored, incidents revealed, problems faced, suggestions, questions, news and more.

At the time of writing the EA and RMI Groups in both the Thames catchment and SE Wales are investigating low scores. See www.riverflies.org for latest news.

Existing RMI Groups can take up the offer of free support days on their rivers with a RP Tutor – a chance to refresh RMI skills, resolve problems, and learn more about the fly-life on their patch.

Countryfile joins S&TA to monitor riverflies

Countryfile's Matt Baker joined John Slader from S&TA on the Itchen to learn to fish, mimic Blue winged olives, *Serratella ignita*, and monitor riverflies (using RMI), broadcast on BBC1 on 14 October.

Love Your River - Environment Minister Richard Benyon monitors riverflies on the Chess

Richard Benyon MP, Natural Environment Minister, and James Cracknell joined the River Chess Association and Chilterns AONB to monitor riverflies (using RMI) on the River Chess. The visit to the Buckingham chalk stream formed part of the Love Your River campaign demonstrating a 'hands on' approach to caring for your local river.

Demon shrimp found in the UK

A new invasive freshwater shrimp, the 'Demon shrimp', *Dikerogammarus haemobaphes*, has been [found for the first time in the UK](#). Locations include the River Severn at Tewkesbury, the Bevere near Worcester, and two Worcestershire canals.

Related to the '[Killer shrimp](#)', *Dikerogammarus villosus*, the Demon shrimp is being treated as a high impact species. David Throup, Environment Manager for the Environment Agency said, 'We are concerned that this invasive species has been found in the Midlands. We now have a dedicated team whose focus is to establish the degree of the problem, and whether the shrimp has spread wider than the locations already found. We are treating this as a priority so that we can come up with a plan to help contain its spread as far as possible.'

Biosecurity is vital to control of non-native species and all water users should help to *stop the spread* by following the advice of the [Check, Clean, Dry](#) campaign.

See the [Freshwater Biological Association \(FBA\) guide](#) for shrimp identification. If you think you have discovered Killer or Demon shrimp, please email a photograph to alert_nonnative@ceh.ac.uk for identification.

Ray Mears on mayflies

Ray Mears joined RP in Powys on the banks of the River Wye in the summer, to capture footage of one of Britain's rarest mayflies, the [Yellow mayfly](#), *Potamanthus luteus*. The Wye remains a stronghold for this species although populations appear to be in decline. There have been no recent records from sites where the species has been known to occur on the Usk and Thames, however there are recent records from the Teme and unconfirmed records from the Stour.

Climate threat for highland mayfly

The [Upland summer mayfly](#), *Ameletus inopinatus*, found in pools and streams at altitude and the cooler waters in the far north of Scotland, may be suffering as a result of temperature rises due to climate change ([Kitchen, 2010](#)). The Riverfly Recording Schemes (RRS) is carrying out [further work](#) in the Cairngorms National Park to explore the species' relationship with water temperature and other factors limiting its distribution.

Riverflies – a beacon of good water quality

Publicising riverflies and freshwater conservation to a wide-ranging audience is essential to our aims. This summer RP joined events spanning fly-fishing festivals, [Big Nature Day](#) at the Natural History Museum through to the Westquarter Bioblitz in Falkirk; National Insect Week (light-trapping with caddisfly expert Ian Wallace); in addition to attending key national and international scientific meetings. Contact RP for support in your activities.

Mayfly in the Classroom

[Mayfly in the classroom](#) (MiC) is an educational tool developed by Wild Trout Trust (WTT) and RP for use in primary schools. Inexpensive & simple to use, the programme is designed to help teachers demonstrate the magic of the mayfly lifecycle to inspire a generation. Eleven schools in Cumbria have been running MiC since 2011 with excellent results. Thirty schools in Wales are already signed up for 2013. The WTT is looking to expand MiC across the UK. For further information contact Ben Tyser on btyser@wildtrout.org.

International riverfly meeting to be hosted in UK 2015

Following a successful bid by RP, Salmon & Trout Association, Buglife, FBA and The James Hutton Institute the UK will host the next [International Joint Meeting on Ephemeroptera and Plecoptera](#). Craig Macadam presented work by RP, including Riverfly monitoring, and RRS at this year's [meeting](#) in Wakayama City, Japan, to more than 80 riverfly scientists from across the world. The 2015 conference will take place at the James Hutton Institute in Aberdeen.

Calling for your photos of riverflies

Do you have riverfly images? The competition for the best British riverfly images, run by [National Insect Week](#) (NIW) and RP will be awarding a first prize of £500 and second prize of £250. There are still flies on the wing, and plenty of larvae in the water, so there are stunning images to be captured even at this late stage in the season. If you have some great photos in hand then don't delay, the competition closes on 31 October. Note there is also a NIW category for the best 'British insect' photograph.

Congratulations to riverfly ambassadors:

- Prof Steve Ormerod, Cardiff University, on being elected as [Chairman of the RSPB](#)
 - Alan Hildrew, President of FBA, on receiving the [International Ecology Institute \(ECI\) prize](#)
 - Action for the River Kennet and Thames Water for receiving Best Community Led Project in the [UK Water Efficiency Awards](#) for the [Care for the Kennet](#) campaign
 - Eden Rivers Trust, Environment Agency North West and local farmers on their [Wild Trout Trust Conservation Award](#) for the [River Petteril project](#)
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Know your flies?

Can you tell an Olive from a Blue-winged olive? See:

- [Field Studies Council](#) (FSC)/Riverfly Partnership suite of easy to use guides to riverflies
 - [Freshwater Biological Association](#) (FBA) detailed scientific keys
 - [FSC](#) & [FBA](#) field courses - ranging from 'Entomology for Anglers (Level 1 & 2) (early booking essential) through to three day ID courses on Trichoptera
 - Ask your riverfly questions to Riverfly Recording Schemes rrs@riverflies.org
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Flies on line

Join us on Facebook [Riverfly Partnership](#) and Twitter [@Riverflies](#) for latest news.

Visit www.riverflies.org for RMI workshops, events, news, publications, posters on the riverfly life cycles (free to download), species surveys and recording, dossiers on the Biodiversity Action Plan species, identification sheets on killer shrimp and more.

Note that this newsletter includes highlights only following on from RP Spring e-newsletter. The ongoing and outstanding work of all involved in each RMI Group and the various activities of partner organisations is acknowledged.

To **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** to this newsletter email: info@riverflies.org with the email title 'subscribe' or 'unsubscribe'. Please forward this email to others that may be interested.

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