

Riverfly workshop helps River Erewash volunteers increase water quality monitoring

Last Sunday, 28 March 2010, twelve volunteers from the River Erewash Foundation attended a Riverfly Workshop, co-ordinated by the Environment Agency, which showed them how to monitor the health of their local river by keeping an eye on the populations of riverflies such as the mayfly.

Riverflies are an essential part of the food chain. A thriving population of riverflies is an indicator of a healthy river, which is far more likely to support healthy aquatic plants and fish populations.

During the workshop, which aims to put healthy rivers back as a focus in the local community, Riverfly Partnership tutors taught volunteers to identify six groups of aquatic invertebrates including mayfly and stonefly.

The Environment Agency attended to assist with identification of invertebrates and provide technical support to Riverfly Partnership entomologists. The workshop was partially funded by Severn Trent Water as mitigation for a previous pollution incident.

River Erewash Foundation volunteers will now monitor up to twelve new sites along the entire Erewash catchment. The Environment Agency currently monitors 11 sites along the main river and 11 more on Erewash tributaries. The extra information will be used by the Environment Agency to monitor water quality fluctuations and potentially identify areas of previously unrecorded pollution entering the river.

The River Erewash Foundation is a collection of anglers and conservationists that are committed to restoring and conserving the River Erewash and its tributaries. Mick Martin from the Foundation says "The Riverfly Workshop has now enabled the 'River Erewash Foundation' to assist the Environment Agency by increasing invertebrate monitoring sites throughout the river system. The recorded data will identify polluted areas, aiding all our attempts to restore the river Erewash while also improving its biodiversity for wildlife and offering fantastic recreation areas for local communities". For more information on the River Erewash Foundation go to www.rivererewashfoundation.co.uk.

The Riverfly Partnership is a network of more than 50 partner organisations, including the Environment Agency. For more information, see www.riverflies.org

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**MORE INFORMATION Contact Lyn Fraley on 0121 711 5829/5855
(these numbers can also be used during an emergency to contact a duty press officer)**

Notes to Editors:



Dai Roberts from the Riverfly Partnership shows volunteers how to identify aquatic invertebrates on the side of the River Erewash at Toton.



Environment Agency Environmental Monitoring Officer Chris Bradley helps with classroom work

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www.environment-agency.gov.uk