



Wild Trout Trust

Newsletter Autumn 2010

The Wild Trout Trust is dedicated to the conservation of wild trout in Britain and Ireland through protection and restoration of habitat

Wild Trout Trust & Orvis Conservation Awards 2010



PHOTOS Top-left: Tim Boycott receiving the Professional Winner award on behalf of the Eden Rivers Trust, bottom-left: the team from the Avington project on the River Kennet receiving the Professional Runner-Up award, top-right: representatives of the Bickling Fishing Club and National Trust receiving the Amateur Winner award for their work on the River Bure upstream of Bickling Mill, bottom-right: William Moffitt, Blacksessiagh Regeneration Group receiving the Amateur Runner-up award for work on Creevan Burn, Co. Tyrone



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WILD TROUT TRUST ANNUAL GET-TOGETHER 2011

The Trust's Annual Get-Together will be held at the Park Hotel, Pandy, near Abergavenny on 16 & 17 April 2011. The Saturday will comprise a morning of talks and an afternoon of river walks to see habitat enhancement work on the River Monnow under the expert guidance of the Trust's Conservation Officers. We will hold a dinner on the Saturday night and as a real highlight, the Monnow Fisheries Association has offered fishing for those keen to stay on Sunday. Please keep an eye on the Wild Trout Trust website for updates: www.wildtrout.org.

DIARY DATE SNIPPETS

30-31	October	2010	Haddon Hall Grayling days.
30-31	October	2010	British Fly Fair, Stoke-on-Trent.
13-14	November	2010	Irish Fly Fair, Galway.
8	December	2010	WTT Annual Raffle: draw, Orvis, Sherborne, 6pm.
10	March	2011	Riverfly Conference, Natural History Museum, London.
22-31	March	2011	WTT Annual Auction.
7	April	2011	WTT/Lloyds FS/FFC Auction, Flyfishers Club, London.
14	April	2011	River Restoration Centre Conference, Nottingham.
16-17	April	2011	WTT Annual Get Together, Park Hotel, Pandy, Abergavenny.
11	June	2011	Three Fly Challenge, Meon Springs, Hampshire.

2011 eBay AUCTION

Preparations are underway for the 2011 eBay auction already. This is an increasingly crucial part of the funding for the WTT. The auction will take place from March 22nd – March 31st 2011. Catalogues will come out a few weeks before that date.

Already we have some interesting lots, including an Eden cane rod (7ft 4 weight), donated by the maker Bernard Ramanuskas, and supported by Mark Leggett of The Alternative Tackle Company. James Babb, editor of Gray's Sporting Journal described Eden Cane rods thus:

'Compared with his predecessors and many of his contemporaries, (Bernard Ramanuskas's) Eden Cane rods are quicker and brisker, feeling familiar to anglers raised on graphite but with a subtle elegance and refinement graphite will never equal. And they are beautiful, with five coats of dipped and sanded spar varnish on the honey-colored blanks before the Pearsall Gossamer silks go on, then a coat of polymer sealer on the wraps and another glasslike coat of spar varnish.

Eden Cane rods are, in a word, magnificent, the best cane rods I've fished, and they are, if not a screaming bargain, then at least fairly priced'

More details are available at [www.al-](http://www.alternativetackle.com)



↑ Mark Leggett of The Alternative Tackle Company presents Shaun Leonard with an Eden cane rod for the 2011 auction.

ternativetackle.com and the rod will be available to view (and perhaps swish ... very carefully!) at the British Fly Fair International.

Other lots to contemplate over Christmas include bonefishing at Bairs Lodge in the Bahamas and fishing for sea trout in Patagonia - both courtesy of Nervous Waters.

There will be the usual wide range of

prices, from £20 to thousands of pounds. We do try to make sure that there is something of interest for everyone so there is plenty of opportunity to try new waters and make new friends.

If you would like to donate something to the auction (fishing, flies, books or something more unusual) please contact Denise Ashton at dashton@wildtrout.org.

CLA GAME FAIR 2010

During the many years (about thirty-five) that your editor has been attending the CLA Game Fairs it has been remarkable how few of those events have suffered from adverse weather. From time to time there has been a shower or two and perhaps a little breeze, but not much to affect a well nourished fisherman. There was a notable exception at Floors Castle when the Tweed broke its banks overnight and swept away the casting-platforms but everyone carried on regardless and when the waters went down the sales of wellies and sun-hats broke all records.

The Fair at Ragley Hall in July 2010 did not break the general pattern. There was an occasional refreshing shower but most of the time the sun shone benevolently on the WTT's stand and the heads of the Wild Trout Trustees therein. Shaun Leonard our director, was there directing, Nigel Ash was applying his own form of entertaining terrorism to the sale of draw tickets, Christina Bryant was present to ensure that details of the administration were correct and Tim Jacklin, Andy Thomas and Paul Gaskell were the providers of high-quality technical information. Supporting cast in the form of Kristian Kent, Chris Glover, Andy Heath and Denise Ashton were in evidence and Mike Weaver (past Chairman of trustees) added a touch of seniority to the company. Above all of this star-spangled assembly was Allan Frake, newly retired and basking in the surrounding admiration. It is rumoured that Patrick Lloyd appeared at some stage - as he does.

A special mention must be made of Don Burgess and his most generous provision of excellent FREEMINER beer. If you have not encountered it previously then rush out and buy some now. It has my personal recommendation.

A steady stream of visitors, members, old friends and seekers of knowledge came to the stand. Sales of draw tickets were good and sales of merchandise were satisfactory. Recruitment was somewhat disappointing as many of the visitors were members already and attendance at the Fair overall was not helped by the Met. Office putting out forecasts (utterly inaccurate for us) of absolutely dire conditions.

We look forward to the next GF, in July 2011. Perhaps some of you would like to volunteer to join us on the stand at Bleinheim Palace.

John Williams



THE BIG SOCIETY, THE WTT AND THE CLA GAME FAIR

In addition to the volunteers who form a substantial part of our Trustees and Executive Council the WTT has always worked in partnership with local volunteer groups to help them to help wild trout. Without local involvement, our projects would not be as effective or sustainable in the long term. Our volunteers bring a wide range of knowledge - lawyers, accountants, editors and graphic artists in addition to biologists, ecologists and those with the invaluable skills required for practical work on the ground and in the stream. We believe that the WTT is well positioned, with our track record, to take advantage of the opportunities that 'Big Society' may bring. We will update you in the newsletter of developments, as they become clear.

The CLA Game Fair is an occasion when volunteers from local groups can meet members of the Trustees and Executive Council, both to man the stand and to discuss the aims and the workings of the WTT. We do put a lot of effort into having an interesting stand - a Living Stream, Bugs and Grubs and a Children's Art competition: something for everyone. But we do need new ideas and help is always welcomed. We wish to give the stand a fresh look in 2011 and include some interactive exhibits to show what we do and the impact it has on the river. If you have ideas, skills and time to help us build some exhibits, please get in touch!

And if you would like to join the team at the Game Fair or to volunteer in any other way, please let us know. Contact Denise Ashton on dashton@wildtrout.org or 07802 454157.



PHOTOS
Left: WTT Game Fair stand, centre: Alan Frake basking, above: FREEMINER hard at work for the WTT.

CONSERVATION AWARDS 2010

AWARDS CEREMONY

The Awards ceremony this year was held in the splendid surroundings of the officers' mess of the Household Cavalry in Knightsbridge Barracks. The accommodation was comfortable and convenient for our purposes and the service from the waiters, who brought an unceasing supply of food and wine, was superlative.

Shaun Leonard welcomed the assembled company, described the background of the competition and gave an outline of the evening's agenda. Shaun thanked everyone at HCMR, especially Lt. Col. Lockhart, Adjutant Capt. Olver and Mess Corporal Bestwick and his staff for the tremendous spread laid on for us. Shaun also thanked the Award judges, Allan Frake, Jenny Mant and John Shillcock for their huge efforts, covering 870 miles in two and a half days to inspect the entries. John Shillcock has signalled his intention to make this the last year as an Award judge: all at the Trust are hugely appreciative of John's efforts over the years.



PHOTOS Above: Richard Banbury (Orvis) with Shaun Leonard, right: Allan Frake, Bottom-right: Nigel Ash and Paul Gaskell, below: Allan Frake discussing the River Kennet entry with Russell Spencer of Cain Bioengineering Ltd.

Orvis are due much praise for their ongoing support, not only of the Awards but of the Trust more widely. Finally Shaun thanked Trust Administrator, Christina Bryant, who had responded brilliantly to his late call for a new Award venue.



WILD TROUT TRUST BERNARD VENABLES AWARD 2010



“...most positive, thoughtful and giving supporter...sage counsel...never to be ignored...”

The second part of the evening's formalities was the presentation of the Wild Trout Trust Bernard Venables (BV) Award 2010.

When presenting the Award Shaun Leonard said: “The BV Award is given to a volunteer contributing in an outstanding way to wild trout and also to the Wild Trout Trust.

Many huge players in this field have yet to receive this award, but a note of some of the past recipients puts in context what it means - Allan Frake, Peter Hayes, Tim Jacklin and Edward Twiddy for example.

Let me build a picture of this year's winner with some quotes from his friends. Firstly, on his contribution to WTT:

*“...exactly what WTT needs...rolls up his sleeves, good fun and allergic to corporate bull****.”*

“...most positive, thoughtful and giving supporter...sage counsel...never to be ignored...”

“...the architect of so many raffle successes – a fearsome predator of stray £10 notes and leaner-upon of timid souls who have not quite got themselves into the WTT tent to pay their sub's!”

At a personal level for me, this person brings life and sparkle with him, awesome stamina and rare, sound thinking.

For wild trout, he is a passionate advocate; as supporter of the small river and of trout for trout's sake, especially in his beloved Dart catchment. There, he not only does his share of wild trout fishing (with one elk hair fly, apparently) but cares for his river with the Dart Anglers Association and does his share of encouraging youngsters into fishing and understanding the river.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2010 Bernard Venables Award winner is Nigel Ash”.

BACKGROUND TO THE 2010 AWARDS

JUDGES REPORT

BACKGROUND TO THE 2009 AWARDS

Now in their 12th year the Wild Trout Trust's Conservation Awards are a way of celebrating and acknowledging the efforts, ingenuity, imagination and achievements of those involved in trout habitat management. Looking back over this lengthy period there has been an extremely wide diversity of projects. Inevitably things change and evolve. Gone are the days when individuals or single organisations submitted entries, nowadays it is all partnerships, with collaboration and working together as the normal way of getting projects financed and completed successfully.

Perhaps these days, people are braver and aspirations higher. A decade ago habitat improvements were tentative and restrained. In recent times it is much more of a 'lets go for it' attitude with those involved being more confident and better informed on best practice - largely due to the Wild Trout Trust's habitat-improvement publication 'Wild Trout Survival Guide' and the CD guides for the restoration of Chalk, Upland and Urban rivers.

In past years the judges frequently raised some concerns over the lack of pre and post project monitoring; some form of project appraisal is considered to be essential in evaluating whether money and resources represent good value. Other practitioners can learn from demonstrable success ...and indeed, failure!

To their credit, all the finalists this year have ongoing monitoring in place. That is not easy within the constraints of tight budgets and the logistical difficulties of monitoring at the river-reach level.

Common issues were very evident amongst this year's finalists - the old enemies of diffuse pollution, excessive sediment, bank damage from farm stock, over-wide dredged channels, poor physical channel structure and lack of good ecological habitats for the various life stages of fish and other river animal and plant communities.

There were some excellent examples of familiar habitat improvements and fish passes, in which fisheries, wild trout and other wetland conservation interests were the primary focus, but the judges were particularly enthused this year to see projects where much careful thought had been applied at the planning stage to ensure that the remedial treatments being proposed and applied to improve physical and ecological habitat were being carefully

thought through and evaluated; decisions were based on reliable survey data, sound scientific principles and a healthy dose of pragmatism.

The competition always attracts habitat management projects at various levels, carried out by a plethora of differing individuals and organisations. This was particularly evident amongst this year's finalists where projects ranged from those costing hundreds of thousands of pounds to one which virtually cost nothing apart from some oil and petrol for the chain saw! There were projects involving extensive and complex engineering work to those driven by pure enthusiasm, usually from a few dedicated individuals using what materials and pieces of equipment they could obtain locally.

The judges arrive at their decisions for winners and runners up in the Professional & Amateur Categories by scoring each of the projects against a series of 12 specific criteria, amongst which are:-

- ⇒ impact on wild trout,
- ⇒ appropriateness of the scheme to the river,
- ⇒ techniques and materials used,
- ⇒ funding sources,
- ⇒ monitoring,
- ⇒ sustainability and after-care management,
- ⇒ value for money and value to wildlife in addition to trout.

Inevitably, with such high quality entrants, the judges are always on the lookout for that little bit of extra enthusiasm and signs of innovative thinking that enhances our knowledge and helps to drive future initiatives and ideas forward.

PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

In the Professional Category – Cain Bioengineering Ltd entered a chalk stream river restoration project at Chisenbury on the Upper Avon in Wiltshire on behalf of the project partners who included the Wessex Chalk Stream Project, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Natural England and Wessex Water. Clearly a lot of 'detailed thought had gone into the design and construction as well as finding solutions to the serious logistical problems of difficult access and a narrow working corridor. However, they managed to reinstate optimal

Continued at the top of page 7

channel widths and bed variation, create low level margins for access and reduce bank scour, install spawning riffles, sedimented backwaters for lamprey and other stillwater fauna and flora, introduce copious amounts of large woody debris and create novel experimental hurdle-sediment-traps in the heavily dredged sections of the reach. Monitoring invertebrates, fish and the physical changes within the channel as a result of the work was also part of an on-going appraisal programme. →

Moving away from the southern chalk rivers the next project in the Professional Category was on the River Welland just north west of Peterborough where the enhancement works of spawning riffle creation (particularly for sea trout), flow deflectors to improve channel dynamics and fish easements past obstructions were the main priority of an Environment Agency and Welland Rivers Trust partnership. A local school with a penchant for river studies also benefited from the project by the installation of a novel pumped-gravel beach thereby allowing access for the pupils to carry out riverine educational activities.

Continued below



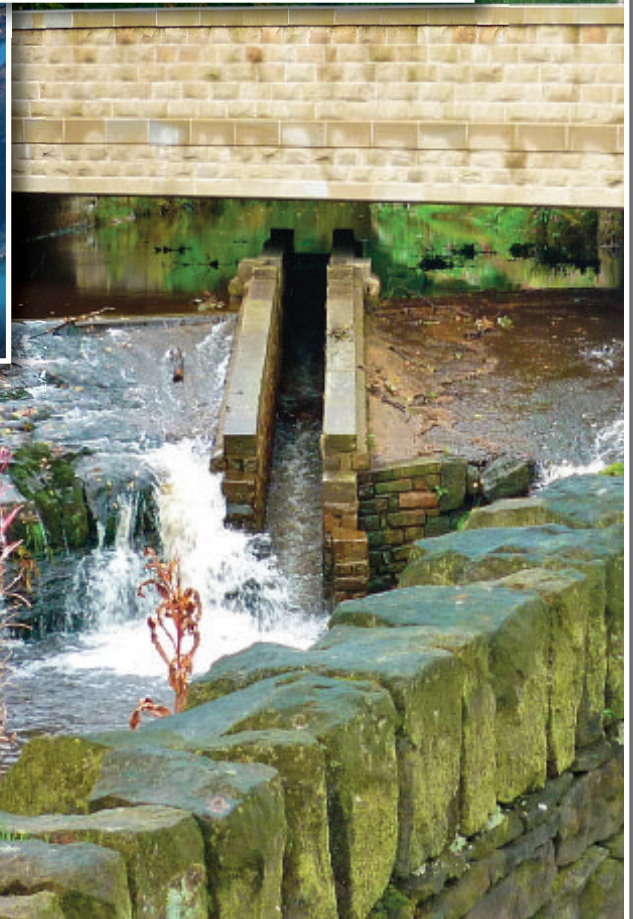
↑ River Avon restoration at Chisenbury



↓ Sea trout spawning riffle on the River Welland



↑ Some of the completed works on the River Kennet



↑ Fish pass on the River Colne at Marsden

Cain Bioengineering also entered another chalk stream project on the River Kennet catchment at Avington near Newbury on behalf of the project team which included the Avington Estate, Hungerford Town & Manor, Environment Agency and Natural England. This project was awarded the Runner –Up award in the Professional Category. Sediment-impoundments and an over-wide channel were the main challenges at this particular site. The solutions involved extensive channel narrowing with site-won gravels, bank stabilisation and sensitive re-profiling, de-silting and sediment management, large woody debris and the creation of wetland areas in the river margin as well as floodplain scrapes, ponds and additional wetlands.

A quite different project was entered for the River Colne in the urban centre of Marsden, West Yorkshire. This was a classically opportunistic project between Kirklees Council and the Environment Agency who collaborated by combining a major-road bridge reconstruction in the town with the installation of a Larinier fish pass on the weir beneath the bridge. Challenges to design and materials used included working within a Heritage Conservation Area that required a sensitive approach to engineering design within the built environment of the immediate surrounds and the existence of a major sewer underneath the weir. Although constructed recently, the pass is being used by fish.

The winner of the Professional Category was the Eden Rivers Trust who submitted "The Sub-Catchment Project", a multidisciplinary, very much strategically led initiative involving ecology, GIS, aerial surveying, electro-fishing surveys and environmental modelling, all used to develop costed and prioritised conservation plans for five sub-catchments. Elements of delivery included the usual problems of addressing point-source and diffuse pollution, bankside damage by animal stock, barriers to migration, poor habitat and poor fish recruitment. The judges were particularly impressed by innovative thinking that supports this project's approach to addressing serious bottlenecks in the

WINNER - PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY



Eden Rivers Trust - Sub-Catchment Project

various life-stages of wild trout and the detailed scientific approach to determining which factors are the most important ones to be addressed - for example, where do you direct your effort and get most value for money?

AMATEUR CATEGORY

The runner-up in the Amateur awards Category was the Blacksessiagh Regeneration Group, who have been working very effectively in close partnership with the Loughs Agency on the Creevan Burn, a tributary of the River Drumragh in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. This project demonstrated a robust package of habitat improvement initiatives, particularly fencing out livestock to reduce fine sediment input, restoring

spawning and nursery habitat, and installing low level deflectors and groynes to replicate natural river morphology. One of major influences to the successful outcome of this project was project co-ordination by the Community Development Group: this comprises members from a farming background thereby encouraging the farmers themselves to improve and maintain their river fishery asset and highlight the positive links between sustaining both

good farming and good river habitat management practice.

Also in the Amateur Category finalists were the Kells Anglers Association, in County Meath, Ireland who are working on streams in the River Blackwater/Boyne system with a great deal of enthusiasm. They tackled the seemingly ubiquitous problems of siltation and improving nursery and spawning habitat primarily by creating stone weir pools, gravel spawning-areas, stone, boulder and gravel deflectors and by fencing out livestock. Some very innovative fund-raising initiatives were employed to ensure that this project was on a firm financial footing: the initial monitoring results are extremely promising with some significant increases in salmon and trout spawning redds being observed.

The winner in the Amateur Category was the partnership project of the Blickling Fishing Club and the National Trust who clearly relish a difficult challenge by re-instating woody debris in a North Norfolk river - in this particular case the River Bure upstream of Blickling Mill where historically the river authorities and the club had always removed fallen trees from the river channel. Both channel morphology and fish populations have improved and



↑ Improvement of trout habitat on the Creevan Burn

some interesting and very comprehensive invertebrate, fish and geomorphological studies are also being carried out in relation to the evaluating the positive effects of the increasingly popular habitat improvement technique of installing large woody debris in the river channel. A special mention should be made of the role of Dave Brady in the practical work and the team effort involved in the monitoring work.

WINNER - AMATEUR CATEGORY



Blickling Fishing Club and National Trust - Installation of large woody debris into the River Bure upstream of Blickling Mill

TIM JACKLIN REPORTS ON

Plotting a new course



A major river restoration project was completed on the River Glaven in North Norfolk this August. The work was a real partnership effort between the landowners, Stody Estate, and Wild Trout Trust, Environment Agency, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, River Glaven Conservation Group, Professor Richard Hey, University College of London and the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS).

The project took place on a 400-metre reach which, at sometime in the distant past, had been straightened and moved to the edge of the floodplain, probably for the purposes of milling. The project involved restoring the river's natural form by putting back pools, riffles, and meanders, narrowing the river and reconnecting it with its flood plain. The restoration was designed and closely supervised by Professor Richard Hey, a professional fluvial

geomorphologist recently retired from the University of East Anglia.

"Rivers like these small chalkstreams simply do not have the energy to restore their natural forms once they have been disturbed by man," said Professor Hey. "It would take the river literally thousands of years to recover if it was left to nature, but with careful planning and by working with the river's natural processes, this can be reduced significantly, to a matter of a few years."

Before work commenced, the site contained an impressive number of species of conservation-interest including water voles, white-clawed crayfish, brook lampreys, otters, bullheads and wild brown trout. This meant that detailed planning was required to minimise the impact of the works upon the

existing biodiversity of the site. Close co-operation between Wild Trout Trust, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency ensured the works were carried out at the appropriate time of year. Water vole surveys were carried out by Steve Henson of Norfolk Wildlife Trust, ably assisted by fellow River Glaven Conservation Group stalwart, Ian Shepherd. Tim Jacklin of the Wild Trout Trust, working under the Anglian Sea Trout Project banner, organised the prior rescue of fish and crayfish from the site and oversaw the works.

Crayfish, bullheads, eel, trout and brook lamprey needed to be protected during the works.

The works were completed in

on the River Glaven

two phases, with a large volume of earth being moved in 2009 by the Environment Agency's local Operations Delivery team to reconnect the river to its floodplain. The same team returned in August this year, with driver Mick Hicks again expertly at the helm of the excavator, to complete the project.

"It was amazing to see the river taking shape," said Tim. "The

new meanders were dug in the dry and the levels of the new pools and riffles were set. Then the flow was diverted into its new course and the old course blocked off. Imported gravel was introduced to fine-tune the level of the riffles and it was great to see how many good trout spawning areas could be created with a relatively small amount of gravel."

Stody Estate and Farm Manager, Ross Haddow said "We are delighted with the outcome of this project. It is an excellent example of all the different parties working towards improving the river and its surroundings. We are committed to sensitive management of this site in the future and all the surrounding land has now been put into Higher Level Stewardship."

The site is being closely monitored. In-stream and meadow biological communities are being studied by a research team from University College London, Queen Mary University of London, CEFAS and the Environment Agency. Thus far two PhD and four MSc studies have been focused on the site. CEFAS and the Environment Agency also have good data on the fish stocks from this site and it will be interesting to see how the recovery proceeds.

As a sad footnote, Steve Henson of Norfolk Wildlife Trust died suddenly and unexpectedly shortly after the completion of this project. Steve was a highly respected ecologist and an active member of the River Glaven Conservation Group. He was a good friend to the Wild Trout Trust and worked with former director Simon Johnson and Tim Jacklin on many projects in Norfolk. He will be sadly missed.



TIM JACKLIN REPORTS ON EVENTS IN THE NORTH

TROUT STREAM MANAGEMENT IN THE REAL WORLD

The fate of wild trout in our rivers and streams prompted over 110 people to gather at a conference in Appleby, Cumbria in March this year. Entitled “Trout Stream Management in the Real World”, the event was organised by Eden Rivers Trust and held at the Tufton Arms Hotel.

Delegates and speakers came from all over the United Kingdom. Papers were presented on the very latest research and advice on managing rivers for trout. Topics included river habitat-restoration, invasive-species management, monitoring, fisheries management and best-practice case studies. The keynote speaker was Andrew Ferguson (Professor Emeritus, Queen’s University Belfast) who gave an excellent talk on “Genetic Considerations in Trout Stream Management”. This explained how wild trout populations are genetically varied and that this is critical in maintaining the abundance and adaptability of trout.

The Wild Trout Trust’s Conservation Officers, Andy Thomas, Paul Gaskell and Tim Jacklin were amongst the speakers and covered the topics of re-connecting trout habitats with easements to fish movement, building community and volunteer involvement in river habitat improvement projects and progress with the Anglian Sea Trout Project.

The conference included a special event on the Tuesday night called “How Good Was Your River?” Thirty guests who have fished the River Eden since the late-1930s came along to share their thoughts and experiences about the river and its populations of wild trout and salmon. During the evening, guests described how the river had changed over the years and suggested possible causes for declines in trout and salmon numbers. The information was captured during the evening and made available on the Eden Rivers Trust website – www.edenriverstrust.org.uk.

The sponsors of the conference included The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Wild Trout Trust, Environment Agency (Penrith), APEM Aquatic Consultancy, Institute of Fisheries Management, Salmon & Trout Association and Natural England.

Simon Johnson, Director of Eden Rivers Trust, said, “The two day workshop brought together a fantastic array of world class experts on trout stream management. This facilitated a highly stimulating debate which I am sure will lead to on the ground practical work to improve rivers for trout.

This will help to deliver our goal here at Eden Rivers Trust of establishing thriving populations of wild fish in healthy rivers and streams in the Eden catchment.”

UPLAND RIVERS HABITAT MANUAL LAUNCHED!

Another highlight of the Trout Stream Management in the Real World conference was the English launch of the Wild Trout Trust’s latest addition to its range of habitat advice manuals, The Upland Rivers Habitat Manual. Launches were also held in North and South Wales in March and April this year.

Following the successful track record of the Wild

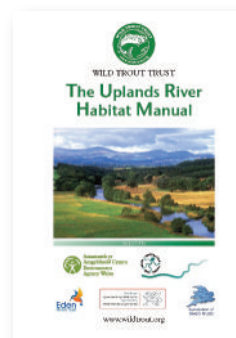
Trout Survival Guide and the Chalkstream Habitat Manual, the Upland Rivers Manual is aimed at fishing clubs, river keepers and riparian owners, helping them identify problems and finding solutions. It gives clear ‘DIY’ advice for local river improvement projects as well as the fundamental importance of land use and

the need to work in partnership to address catchment wide issues.

Wild Trout Trust Director Shaun Leonard said “This guide is an excellent practical resource for clubs and owners. It is so important for grassroots organisations to feel they can address the problems of their local rivers at both a reach and a catchment scale. This guide is one way that the Wild Trout Trust can support and inspire local groups to take action. Wild trout, including sea trout, are a strong and visible indicator of the health of the river system and fishing clubs and owners have a tremendous opportunity – and responsibility – to look after them and the wider ecosystem “

The Upland Rivers Manual is the result of collaboration with the Environment Agency in England and Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government, the River Restoration Centre, the Association of Rivers Trusts and Eden Rivers Trust.

The Manual is available free from the Wild Trout Trust website www.wildtrout.org as a series of downloadable PDF files, or as higher quality files on a CD from the Wild Trout Trust office for £10.00 including post and packing – contact 02392 570985 or office@wildtrout.org or purchase via the website shop.



WEIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

As reported in the last newsletter (Summer 2010) Leek and District Fly Fishing Association (LDFFA) were the recipients of Wild Trout Trust advice and practical help earlier this year on the River Dove in Derbyshire. The work involved the introduction of large woody debris to provide vital in-stream cover for both juvenile and adult trout and grayling. Following on from this work LDFFA have completed the removal of a weir from the river. This was done by hand by volunteers from the club led by Alex Swann, Andrew Heath of Trent Rivers Trust and Warren Slaney and Jan Hobot, river keepers from the nearby Haddon Estate waters on the Wye.

Their work has removed a long-standing impoundment from the river, improving in-stream habitat and re-connecting upstream and downstream sections. Newly available clean spawning gravels were evident within hours of the weir removal. Monitoring work is being carried out on the site by PhD students from Hull International Fisheries Institute to record changes in physical habitat, fish and invertebrate populations. Look for the results in future WTT publications.

GOYT

Did you know that the medical condition goitre or “Derbyshire neck” was named after the Goyt valley, because of its (historically) common occurrence in the area due to a lack of iodine in the diet? This is just one of the many facts learned by WTT staff when they are out and about improving trout habitat! Apparently this deficiency still poses

problems for the livestock in the area and farmers have to provide supplements to their cattle.

There are however no deficiencies in the efforts of volunteers from Disley & New Mills Angling Club (DNMAC) who have been instrumental in completing a second phase of river improvements the River Goyt near Stockport. Following the success of an initial trial to introduce and retain large woody debris in the form of tree-kickers into this high-energy river, Wild Trout Trust and DNMAC gained approval from the Environment Agency for further structures to be completed.

A further ten tree-kickers were introduced to the river and a number of smaller flow deflectors and cover-logs were pinned to the riverbed. A section of bank that was being undermined and threatening to collapse was protected with soft revetments constructed from logs and conifer brushwood. Tim Jacklin and Paul Gaskell of WTT spent four days assisting DNMAC volunteers who were galvanised into action and led from the front by Andrew Parker, continuing the work over a further two weekends to completion. Andrew was instrumental in organising club volunteers and carrying out liaison with landowners.

The works were the culmination of a partnership effort between DNMAC, Wild Trout Trust and the Environment Agency. Funding and technical help with consents was provided by staff from the Environment Agency’s Warrington office, including Kevin Nash, Paul Breslin and David Astbury. Thanks are also due to Derbyshire County Council’s Countryside Service for help with the collection and delivery of materials to site, and allowing works on their land.

More about DNMAC’s work on the River Goyt is on the web at <http://dnmacgoyt.blogspot.com>.

↓ DNMAC volunteers on the River Goyt



MORAY FIRTH SEA TROUT PROJECT – DEMONSTRATION DAY

In early September WTT's Shaun Leonard and Tim Jacklin headed north to Inverness at the invitation of Marcus Walters of the Moray Firth Sea Trout Project to a conference and demonstration day. At a well-attended conference, delegates heard a range of talks on sea trout topics. Marcus gave an update on the Moray Firth Sea Trout Project (www.mfstp.co.uk) outlining his investigations into the decline in sea trout numbers in the region. Andy Walker, formerly of Fisheries Research Services Freshwater Laboratory, spoke about his professional experience with sea trout and gave a demonstration of the mysteries of scale-reading! Simon McKelvey of Cromarty Firth Fisheries Trust gave an insight into the planning and permissions required for river restoration works in Scotland, whilst Malcolm Thomson of Orkney Trout Fishing Association and well-known angler Ally Gowans gave some fascinating insights into Scottish sea trout angling. Shaun and Tim spoke about the WTT's role and the techniques of river habitat improvement.

Day two was led by Shaun and Tim who demonstrated some practical habitat improvement techniques on the River Peffrey near Dingwall and a side channel of the River Conon. Volunteers assisted with the installation of stone groynes, flow deflectors and vortex weirs that illustrated how trout and salmon habitat can be restored to channels that



↑ Tim and Shaun installing a flow deflector of the River Peffrey

have been affected by drainage works. Partners in the Moray Firth Sea Trout Project aim to undertake extensive habitat improvement work on the River Peffrey to restore it to its former status as a good sea-trout nursery river and we at WTT look forward to lending further support!

SPAWNING GRAVELS FOR THE WILLOW BROOK

Spawning habitat for trout has been greatly improved on the Willow Brook in Northamptonshire thanks to the efforts of members of Willow Brook Flyfishers and the Wild Trout Trust. One hundred tonnes of gravel were introduced to the river in early October to create two spawning riffles. The gravel was sourced from a local quarry and moved on to site with the assistance of landowner and farmer Bill Martin and his machinery. The volunteers then spent the day shovelling and raking the gravel into position and discovering muscles they never knew they had!

Financial support from the local Environment Agency Fisheries team made the project possible and the Wild Trout Trust provided assistance with planning and gaining approvals. Further work is planned installing flow deflectors to scour the river bed and produce a greater variety of depths.



↑ The Willow Brook work party

PETTERIL

The River Petteril Conservation Project took another step forward with help from the WTT this autumn. Under the leadership of Alison Reed, Eden Rivers Trust is working on a number of fronts to improve the river once described as the “Jewel of the Eden” (see WTT’s summer newsletter). Following advice from Tim Jacklin of WTT, Alison invested a great deal of effort in landowner liaison and securing consents from various regulatory bodies, paving the way for a WTT Practical Visit in September.

The visit was carried out by Tim Jacklin and Paul Gaskell on a section of the River in Wreay Woods, a nature reserve managed by Cumbria Wildlife Trust. Tim and Paul introduced and secured large woody debris structures and demonstrated techniques for reducing excessive rates of erosion. Those benefiting from the demonstrations and practical experience included



staff and volunteers from Eden Rivers Trust and other rivers trusts, Cumbria Wildlife Trust, local angling associations and local contractors.

Simon Johnson, director of Eden Rivers Trust said “We are delighted with the results of this visit. The support and guidance from WTT has been invaluable and anyone considering restoring a trout stream should contact them. Their advice and assistance is free and will ensure your project gets off the best possible start.”

↑ Tim Jacklin and Paul Gaskell demonstrating techniques for securing large woody debris.

ANDY THOMAS REPORTS ON PROJECTS IN SOUTH & WEST

So what has been going on down South in the last six months? Well, the demand for WTT advisory visits appears to be insatiable and the spring brought the usual flurry of requests for AVs with visits undertaken on the Stour and Darent in Kent, the Fynn in Suffolk and a tributary of the Ouse in East Sussex. Visits were also made to the Gloucestershire Coln, the Wey (North) in Surrey and the Meon, just down the road from me in Hampshire.

The start of the fishing season saw a slight shift from requests for AVs to requests for training sessions with a combination of classroom presentations and hands-on practical workshops. One day in particular sticks in my mind, mainly because it absolutely poured with rain for most of the day. Nothing seemed to dampen the enthusiasm of the “Revive the Wye” group! The training day was requested initially by Jenni Balmer, who (at the

Andy explaining some “technical trickery” to the Revive → the Wye group just before the heavens opened



time) was the EA Fisheries Officer covering the Buckinghamshire Wye. She was particularly keen to organise a habitat improvement workshop for various community groups in the area. Eighteen enthusiastic volunteers attended the training day; the team discussed project planning, obtaining consents and health and safety procedures before installing an American style “tree sweeper” designed to provide habitat for juvenile fish in the river margin. The team also installed some large woody debris (LWD) flow deflectors and learned how to manage a large fallen willow, both to reduce the flood risk and create some good quality habitat.

Another valuable training day took place on the banks of the delightful River Culm on the Somerset/Devon borders. Here the objective was to share ideas and information with the local EA fisheries and biodiversity teams on riparian tree management. This was a great opportunity for the WTT to demonstrate that we have a role to play in training the professionals as well as clubs,

community groups and landowners on aspects of habitat management. The EA group session started with a presentation, and then it was time to depart for the river and meet officers from the Culm Fly Fishing Club, to discuss options for tree management.

For anyone planning extensive coppicing regimes, this river provided some excellent examples of issues to consider. For me, the biggest lesson is that coppicing long tracks of bankside trees can lead to more shading of the river, not less. Leaving occasional clumps of tall landscape trees to provide some high level shade will help to control excessive bushy growth below which can, without considerable effort in management, turn river margins into thick hedgerows. Low bushy cover is essential but like so many aspects of trout habitat management, you can have too much of a good thing! Another example of where a mix of habitat – some tall trees, some low bushy cover, some open spaces – is the result to aim for.

SOUTH COAST SEA TROUT PROJECT – UPDATE

Despite a lack of progress on securing funding for future work, some progress in delivering action on the ground has been made as a result of a successful partnership with the Sussex Ouse Conservation Society (SOCS) and the River Adur Conservation Society (RACS). Both groups successfully bid for DEFRA / Rivers Trust project funding to help deliver Water Framework Directive actions within their areas. A key issue identified on some Sussex rivers is access for sea trout to be able to freely migrate into optimum spawning areas. The Batts Bridge Culvert on an upper tributary of the Ouse and the Perching Weir on the Woodsmill Stream (Adur catchment) were two obstructions

identified by the groups. This was an ideal opportunity for WTT to support SOCS and RACS, with our specialist knowledge and practical skills, to assist them to get the jobs done by designing and installing two easements.

The two projects required very different approaches but the principles of reducing the head loss (upstream and downstream water level difference) and water velocities through the two structures were broadly similar. When creating a fish easement it is not necessary to design a fully functioning fish-pass. It is sufficient to increase the opportunities for fish to be able to swim more easily over a weir or through a culvert. The



↑ The Batts culvert where sea trout used to pool up downstream, unable to make it up and through the culvert



↑ A new box sections bolted to the concrete aprons will make upstream migration on the back of some extra water much easier this autumn

legislation regarding the construction and maintenance of formal fish-passes is complex and often results in large scale engineering works, maintenance agreements and a raft of health and safety measures, all of which demand big budgets. The advantage of installing easements is that the solutions can be within the capability of individuals, fishing clubs as well as larger organisations such as Rivers Trusts.

After several site meetings, plans were drawn up and circulated to the EA and Sussex County Council Highways Department for the necessary permissions and consents. Works started at the end of August and in early September with Andy Thomas providing the technical and practical support. The two projects have resulted in several miles of good quality habitat being opened up for trout spawning.

So how did we do it? Well the first job on the Batts Bridge was to enable trout to be able to negotiate two wide, shallow concrete aprons below a road culvert and then provide enough depth of water through the culvert for fish to be able to burst upstream. Access to the site was very poor so the solution was to hand-build two boxes with a narrow exit from oak bulks.

The preferred solution at Perching Weir was much more conventional. Here the solution was to

introduce 30 tonnes of block stone (for stability) and flint reject gravels in two steps to enable trout to push upstream over a weir under a semi-derelict farm bridge. Knocking the bridge down and removing the weir would have been the preferred method but was not an option we could pursue.

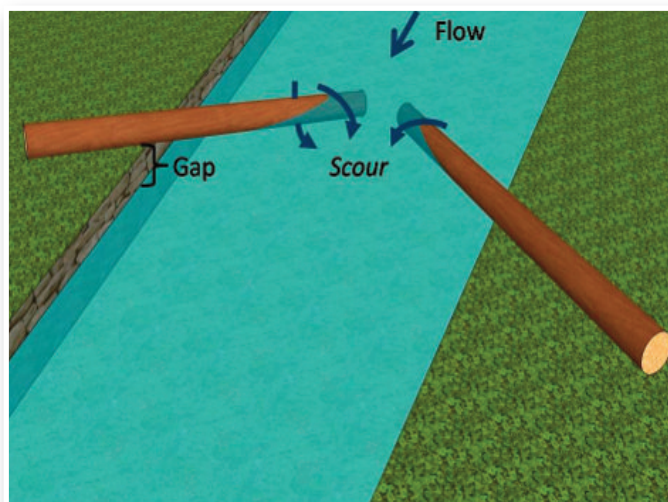
When building a pre-barrage out of stone and gravels there is always the concern that, in low flows, water will flow through the bed of the structure rather than raising water levels. This is invariably the case on small spate streams where base flows can be extremely low. However, the gravels locked between the stones will seal after a spate or two and allow the water levels to rise. One important aspect to remember is to avoid marginal erosion problems by creating a low, dish shaped section in the centre of the pre-barrage to concentrate flows mid stream.

The list of potential projects to improve habitat for South Coast sea trout is a long one and with a lack of overall funding for the programme, progress will be slow. However we will find funding on a project-by-project basis and thereby keep the momentum going in typical WTT fashion – by practical projects carried out in partnership with local clubs, landowners and Rivers Trusts.

TROUT IN THE TOWN UPDATES - PAUL GASKELL

An exciting development in Trout in the Town is the launch of the Urban Rivers Restoration Guidelines at this year's conservation awards. The manual will follow the format of the existing Chalkstream and Upland habitat guidelines and be available in high resolution on CD, or as a free (compressed) download from the WTT website. The guidelines aim to support local interest groups who would like to protect and enhance their urban river corridors; it offers practical solutions to the many common challenges faced by, for example, local Trout in the Town chapters across the UK.

Big news for the winter is the habitat restoration work being undertaken on rivers in our capital city (rivers Cray and Wandle) as a series of Practical Visits. This restorative work is the culmination of long years of campaigning, research and negotiation with relevant authorities; it is another step towards re-establishing thriving and self-sustaining wild trout populations in both watercourses. As mentioned by Tim elsewhere in this newsletter, some highly successful second-phase PV works have been carried out on Derbyshire's River Goyt (also a TinTT chapter). This time, we demonstrated soft revetment



↑ Proposed habitat restoration work on the Wandle - now approved

techniques to control inappropriate erosion as well as creating a second instalment of juvenile habitat in the form of brush and tree-kickers. And, just to show that I do get out into the countryside and keep all my conservation skills sharp, recently we completed examples of habitat-restoration plots to complement and extend the existing skills base and work on the River Monnow. The demonstration

works were designed and conceived following my grand tour of the catchment earlier in the year. Andy, Shaun and I colluded on site to arrive at our joint favourite solutions for producing higher quality spawning and adult habitat for the Monnow Fisheries Association.

A new “Urban Flyfishing” DVD is being launched at the British Fly Fair this year. The production company (Fish On Productions), that produced the film, is a corporate member of the WTT and is pledging a proportion of sales income to the Trust. They have also produced and included (free of charge) a short promotional film that celebrates Trout in the Town, Mayfly in the Classroom and the AV/PV programme of the WTT.

↓ Photograph from the Urban Rivers Restoration Guidelines



BUGS AND GRUBS

Identification courses are to be held at Langford Lakes and the adjacent River Wylye (near Salisbury) on the 2nd July 2011. In the event of over subscription for that date a second date will be arranged.

The course is run jointly by the Wild Trout Trust and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. Both organisations have conservation and restoration, supplemented by education, as their objectives and this co-operation will bring benefits to each of them. The Wild Trout Trust is species-specific but, as the trout is close to the top of the food-chain, work done to improve conditions for the trout must improve conditions for almost every other living thing in and near the water: this is embraced also by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's fundamental policies.

Course-leaders will be Richard Cripps and Shaun Leonard. Richard has led all of the WTT's courses in previous years: he is well known as a speaker on many ecological and biological subjects, notably to fishing and fisheries organisations. Also he leads other courses for the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. Shaun Leonard is the director of the Wild Trout Trust and a qualified and experienced educationalist.

Both Richard and Shaun have been studying fresh water ecology for more than 25 years.

The course will be in a format that is similar to that followed previously but the content has been expanded to include external factors such as use of

land adjacent to rivers and lakes and the flora and fauna therein.

The proposed date for 2011 is the 2nd July. If that date is not possible for you then do record your interest as it could be possible to arrange a second event. We will be limiting the classes to twenty students; in the event of over subscription we will try to arrange an additional date. Please register early if possible.

The basic agenda for the one-day course is:

- 9:00 am Meet for coffee
- 9:30 am Welcome by Richard Cripps for the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Shaun Leonard for the Wild Trout Trust.
- 9:45 am Introduction to the factors that affect life in rivers and lakes, recognition of harmful and beneficial influences, means of collecting specimens, methods of identification.
- 10:45 am Fieldwork on the nearby river Wylye (bring your own waders or gum boots).
- 12:45 pm Lunch (bring your own picnic; coffee and tea provided).
- 2:00 pm Fieldwork on the nearby Langford Lakes.
- 4:00 pm Closing discussions (all times will be flexible).

The cost of a one-day course is £25. Applications, accompanied by full payment, should be sent to Christina Bryant, The Wild Trout Trust, PO Box 120, Waterlooville, PO8 OWZ. Telephone/fax 023 9257 0985, email:office@wildtrout.org.

WILD TROUT TRUST SHOP

All WTT merchandise can be ordered via the Shop on our website at www.wildtrout.org; by sending an appropriate cheque to the WTT Office; or by credit card over the phone – call the WTT Office on 023 9257 0985. All postage prices are for the UK, please enquire for overseas.



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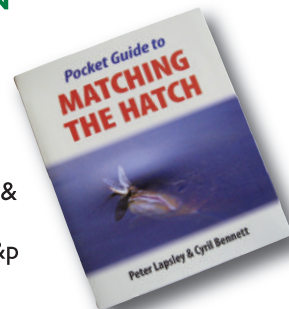
We have a range of new, Wild Trout Trust-badged items – you can give your loved one an excellent Christmas present and donate to our work in the river for wild trout.



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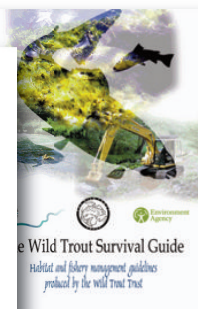
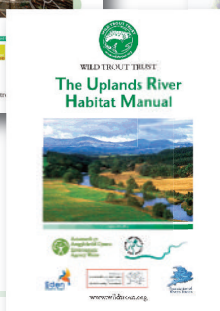
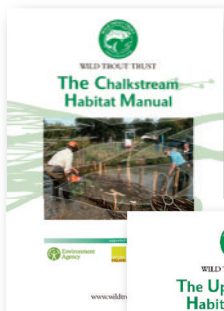
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WTT GUIDES AND MANUALS

The Wild Trout Survival Guide (softback) - £10 + £1 p&p
The Uplands River Habitat Manual (CD) - £10 + £1 p&p
The Chalkstream Habitat Manual (CD) - £10 + £1 p&p
Urban Rivers Restoration Guidelines (CD) - £10 + £1 p&p (available end of November)



WHEATLEY FLY BOXES WITH WTT LOGO

1407F with 12 compartments and a foam lid at £ 30 and the 1404 with double ripple foam inner at £19 + £1.25 p&p



THANK YOU

To all who responded to our plea for help in tracing some lost members and we have managed to make contact with quite a few. Here are those that we are still looking for together with a few more that we have now lost contact with.

- Michael Albon, Thatcham
- Charles Bennett, Yeovil
- Alastair Clarke, Tanworth
- Foston Fishing Club, Yorkshire
- Thomas Goddard, Dorchester
- Stephen Grove, Barcelona
- Mark Hancox, London
- Roger James, Horsham
- Paul W Ledger, Petersfield
- D S W Lee, Sheffield
- Russell Mabon, Cirencester
- Kenneth Norcross, Warrington
- R J Smith, Camberley
- Mrs P A Stevens, Bodmin
- Jamie Stewart, Matfen
- Prof L Threadgold, Salisbury
- J Walton, Newcastle upon Tyne
- Graham Wilkinson, Huddersfield

FLY FAIR IN IRELAND

The Wild Trout Trust will be at the Irish Fly Fair this autumn. The event will take place on 13th and 14th November in Salthill, Galway. If you are coming, do call in on the WTT stand and say hello. For more information see the event website at - www.irishflyfair.com.

NEW CHARITY - FISHING FOR FORCES

A new charity has been established, Fishing for Forces, which focuses on getting wounded servicemen and women to the waterside for a day of therapy and a break from the medical environment. The fishing is open to all who have been on operational duty in all wars back to World War 2 and disabled veterans are particularly welcome at all the venues that have facilities. The charity's spreadsheet encompasses novices to competent anglers and all they have to do is get to the waterside and mentors and tackle (and probably food) will be provided if required. A number of excellent events have already been held – see the website for further details www.fishingforforces.org or contact Bill Howell on 0207 385 2135.

WILD TROUT TRUST

Reg Charity No 1077041

www.wildtrout.org

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Edward Twiddy

Director

and Conservation for Scotland & Ireland

Shaun Leonard
director@wildtrout.org
tel 023 8027 6037

Newsletter

Editor: John Williams
Layout: Richard Handley
office@wildtrout.org

Sponsorship & Communications

Denise Ashton

sponsorship@wildtrout.org 07802 454157

Conservation Officers

Tim Jacklin

North East; North West; Midlands, Anglian; North
Wales

tjacklin@wildtrout.org 07876 525457

Andy Thomas

Southern, Thames, South West, South & Mid Wales
athomas@wildtrout.org 07876 525499

Paul Gaskell

Trout in the Town

pgaskell@wildtrout.org 07919 157267

Wild Trout Trust Office

The Wild Trout Trust

PO Box 120

Waterlooville PO8 0WZ

Tel / Fax: 023 9257 0985 email: office@wildtrout.org
Christina Bryant is the Trust Administrator and is normally at her desk 10:00–15:00, Monday to Thursday. When this is not possible and at all other times, please leave a message on the answerphone and Christina will respond as soon as she is able.