



## Spring Newsletter 2012



Anglers' Monitoring Initiative season fast approaching, Orange-striped stonefly survey, new adult caddis key and more...

### Anglers' Monitoring Initiative 2012

Preparations are underway for the Anglers' Monitoring Initiative (AMI) season, with the first workshops fast approaching. Activity is expanding across England, two new catchments join the fold in Northern Ireland (supported by Northern Ireland Environment Agency) and The Cromarty Firth Fisheries Trust in Scotland will extend our reach northwards with their workshop in March. We celebrate the outstanding work of the 54 existing groups who are helping protect the water quality of their local rivers across the UK.

The AMI is in a period of consolidation – despite being initiated with limited resources it has grown dramatically and resources are being directed to develop the infrastructure to support existing work and accommodate further growth.

### AMI coordinator

The Riverfly Partnership (RP) is delighted to welcome Louis Kitchen, known to many through his previous work as Riverfly Officer, as RP AMI Coordinator – the first dedicated post for the AMI. Louis will provide support for existing volunteers and help develop the infrastructure of the AMI.

Contact [ami@riverflies.org](mailto:ami@riverflies.org)

### Welsh clip

Historically, many of the rivers in South East Wales have been severely polluted by industry, and regrettably incidents are still causing problems. In 2009 a company was fined nearly £7000 for allowing the River Rhymney to be polluted with the insecticide Permethrin. The investigation came about after significant falls in biological water quality were flagged up by AMI volunteers – one of several AMI reports that has led to an Environment Agency (EA) prosecution of the company responsible for the fall in water quality. A dramatic decline in AMI scores has once again been observed on the Rhymney and investigations by the EA are ongoing. Poor AMI results on the Ebbw and Ely, also under investigation, further highlight the problems facing rivers in industrial areas, and underline the vital role that vigilant volunteers play in protecting our watercourses.

Established AMI groups across Wales are collecting valuable monitoring data. Several workshops are planned this year for new and existing groups, and further interest is invited. Contact [dai.theduff@btinternet.com](mailto:dai.theduff@btinternet.com).

### Would you like a RP Tutor to join you in the field?

The Riverfly Partnership continues to offer free Support Days to AMI Group/s - a RP Tutor will join you in the field to answer queries, assist with issues arising and teach new practical skills.

## Worn out nets?

The Riverfly Partnership is sponsoring EFE & GB Nets to supply replacement kick net bags to all AMI Groups. To receive replacements, send your worn out/damaged net bags to Caroline Hutchings at [EFE & GB nets](#), noting your name, contact details, the name of your AMI Group and Coordinator.

## AMI research

David Smith thanks AMI volunteers who supported his Stirling University MSc project 2011. His research identified the key driver for volunteer participation in the AMI as 'improving water quality' and 'protecting the environment'. The Riverfly Partnership welcomes academic research and collaborations.

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## Call for expertise

AMI is commonly used as an example of best practice in partnership work, citizen science and the delivery of direct conservation action. This reflects the diverse network and absolute commitment of organisations/individuals involved.

We would love to harness your expertise to help propel the RP/AMI forward – if you would like to be involved in any way, for example – bring data/IT (feed into the Technical Group – AMI data facility), fundraising (join the Fundraising network), copywriting, PR skills to the table please contact [info@riverflies.org](mailto:info@riverflies.org)

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## Which species where?

The Riverfly Recording Schemes (RRS), run by the volunteer coordinators of the caddisfly, mayfly and stonefly schemes, collate species data which help inform UK conservation priorities. Thank you to all that contributed records in 2011, see RRS report [here](#) – new species, reports and articles. Contact [rrs@riverflies.org](mailto:rrs@riverflies.org). We are delighted to note that RRS has been awarded DEFRA funds (for [biological recording by the voluntary sector](#)) of £9k to extend its infrastructure & reach.

## Keep your eyes peeled for the Orange-striped stonefly

The orange-striped stonefly, *Perlodes microcephalus*, (see banner image) is widespread in Europe. However new evidence suggests that the populations found in Britain belong to a different species. The most recognizable difference is that in Britain the adult males are flightless with wings reduced to a stub, whereas specimens elsewhere have a greater variety of wing length, some having fully formed wings as in the females ([Zwick 2011](#)). Pending further research the orange-striped stonefly in Britain is now referred to as *Perlodes mortoni*, a former name for the species.

Knowing the characteristics and distribution of the British populations will determine the species status. Keep your eyes peeled – your records will contribute to key research and conservation action. See [here](#) for further information.

## March brown

[Mostly about Mayflies](#) fly of the month for March is the March brown. One of our iconic riverflies - familiar to anglers and on the wing between late March and the end of April. The UK may be a stronghold for the species which is in decline across Europe and in parts of the UK. RP and RRS are researching the reproductive habits of this understudied species on the River Tweed where there are

abundant populations. This will inform potential conservation action for the species, which may include boosting weakened populations on the River Usk.

Do you see the March brown? Recording postcards are available [online](#) or in hard copy from [rrs@riverflies.org](mailto:rrs@riverflies.org).

Note – any conservation work incorporating the movement of eggs between catchments requires statutory body consent to ensure adherence to policy and avoid detrimental activity.

## Riverfly photography

As part of [National Insect Week 2012](#) RP is running a competition for the best riverfly photograph, with a first prize of £500. The competition will be open from 25 June to 31 October 2012. In the meantime keep your camera ready when out and about by the river. For more information download the photography competition [poster](#).

## New caddis key – the adults

Caddis experts Peter Barnard and Emma Ross have authored the new [RES Handbook, The adult Trichoptera \(caddisflies\) of Britain and Ireland](#). This much anticipated guide is set to be the standard work on identifying the adults of the 199 British caddis species. Get your copy from The Field Studies Council for £29.50. Order [online](#) or telephone 01952 208910.

## Bridges bar mayfly flight?

Research on the [Tisza mayfly](#), *Palingenia longicauda*, in Hungary by [Málnás et al](#) notes that bridges may create optical barriers, disrupting the signal of polarized light that mayflies use to identify water. Upstream flight of female mayflies is an important part of their lifecycle, enabling downstream drift of eggs and larvae. Read more [here](#).

## Have you a riverfly question?

Email it to [rrs@riverflies.org](mailto:rrs@riverflies.org) for a direct reply from one of our national experts.

## Tufa life

Following his discovery of Britain's newest caddisfly, *Synagapetus dubitans*, Adult Caddisfly Occurrence Scheme Coordinator Stuart Crofts, together with Leeds University and the Freshwater Biological Association, is researching on the tufa spring habitats where the species is found. These fragile habitats are home to unique faunal and floral assemblages.

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## A future with less water

Are water tables replenishing? Will some of our ephemeral chalk streams remain dry? The Environment Agency warns that our current approach to water resource management is unsustainable in '[The case for change – current and future water availability](#)'. Climate change and population growth threaten a future with less water than today. Persistent dry weather and decreasing groundwater levels and river flows have left Anglia, the south east and other parts of England officially in drought. See the [Environment Agency Drought management briefing](#) for more information.

## Nuts & bolts of river restoration

'Delivering River Restoration: Recipes for Success', [The River Restoration Centre](#) Conference, University of Nottingham, 19-20 April 2012. The conference will focus on the nuts and bolts of restoration and enhancement techniques, managing partnerships and projects, and money matters. The programme includes Defra update on their £25M Catchment Restoration Fund, and workshop sessions on monitoring guidance and sharing best practice. AMI Volunteer Coordinators interested to attend may apply to RP for funding support.

## Danger signals

Just launched by Buglife/DEFRA, the [UK crayfish website](#) covers the different types of crayfish that occur in the UK, what to do if you find a crayfish and how you can help conserve our endangered white-clawed crayfish.

AMI volunteers have reported that several Welsh still waters appear to have recently been invaded by American signal crayfish, *Pacifastacus leniusculus*. The isolation of these sites raises the question of how the introductions have occurred. Licensed trapping is being carried out to help manage the problem at selected sites to prevent the signals entering local river systems and impacting the invertebrate populations. Spokesman for Environment Agency Wales said *'The American signal crayfish is one of the biggest threats to our native White-clawed crayfish [Austropotamobius pallipes], and as such must not be moved from site to site. It is important that people are aware that our native crayfish are endangered. If anyone has information relating to the movement of American signal crayfish, please contact our incident Hotline on 0800 807060'*.

## Catchment Restoration Fund

The Defra [Catchment Restoration Fund](#) has been set up to support work that aims to: restore more natural features in and around waters; reduce the impact of man-made structures on wildlife in waters; or reduce the impact of small, spread-out (diffuse) sources of pollution that arise from rural and urban land use. Grants of £50,000 and above. Smaller organisations are encouraged to join their bids to a lead applicant to deliver an integrated approach to catchment management. Expressions of interest for the next round of applications due by 18 May 2012.

## Invasive species consultation

There is currently no comprehensive EU level instrument dealing with invasive species. The European Commission is currently running a consultation on a dedicated legislative instrument on tackling non-native species. Have your say [here](#).

## Are you a local group tackling non natives – funds available

Defra is inviting bids for funding from local action groups to support their work on tackling aquatic invasive non-native species in England, as part of funds allocated for delivering Water Framework Directive outcomes. For more information and how to apply for funding see the GB non-native species secretariat [website](#). Simple application form. Deadline for applications 17 March 2012.

## Flies on line

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

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## Diary of events 2012 – we hope to see you...

*Riverfly events and courses held by RP partner organisations are included.*

*RP holds no responsibility for partner events and courses.*

*Events are being added. Visit [www.riverflies.org](http://www.riverflies.org) for upto date listings.*

3 March [Welsh Fly Fair](#), Pontardawe Leisure Centre, Swansea. Visit Dai Roberts at The Riverfly Partnership stand.

10 March AMI workshop with the Rosset & Gresford Fly Fishing Club, funded by Awards for All. Coordinated by Howard Stevens.

10 March *The fifth Tayside Recorder's Day. The McManus: Dundee's art gallery and museum. Louis Kitchen will be discussing riverfly recording and the AMI.*

24 March AMI workshop with the Cromarty Firth Fisheries Trust on the River Pefferery, funded by Awards for All. Coordinated by Meryl Norris.

27-28 March [Freshwater Biological Association](#) (FBA) course: Identifying freshwater invertebrates, FBA Windemere, Cumbria. Tutor: FBA Director Mike Dobson, Cost: £210; early bird rate £195; FBA member £185. Tel. 01539 442468 or email [info@fba.org.uk](mailto:info@fba.org.uk)

24 April [Salmon & Trout Association](#) (S&TA) Annual Meeting of the membership. RP operates through the S&TA.

28 & 29 April AMI workshops with Carmarthenshire Rivers Trust, funded by Awards for All. Coordinated by Brian Jones.

28 April AMI workshop with the River Wharfe AMI Group on the River Wharfe. Coordinated by Rob Smith.

29 April AMI support day with the River Wharfe AMI Group on the River Wharfe. Coordinated by Rob Smith.

30 April – 4 May [Field Studies Council](#) course: Identifying freshwater invertebrates. FSC, Kindrogan Field Centre, Perthshire. Tutor: Craig Macadam (Buglife Conservation Officer, RP AMI Tutor & Coordinator of the Ephemeroptera Recording Scheme). Non resident £154. Accommodation available. Tel 01743 852101 or email [enquiries@field-studies-council.org](mailto:enquiries@field-studies-council.org)

5 May AMI workshop with the Cambridge Chalk Rivers Project in Great Abington. Coordinated by Rob Mungovan.

12 May [FBA](#) course: Entomology for anglers Level 1. FBA Windemere, Cumbria. Tutors: Stuart Crofts (RP AMI Tutor) & Andrew Dixon. Cost £50. Details as FBA above.

19 & 20 May AMI one-day workshops run by the John Spedan Lewis Trust for the Advancement of Natural Sciences. Open to those interested to set up, or join, an AMI Group. Cost: £35 per person. To book a place email: [gilchrist@our-home.me.uk](mailto:gilchrist@our-home.me.uk)

26 May [FBA](#) course: Entomology for anglers Level 2. FBA Windemere, Cumbria. Tutors: Stuart Crofts & Andrew Dixon. Cost £50. Details as FBA above.

27 May Big Nature Day. Celebrate nature and biodiversity at the [Natural History Museum](#), London. Join Louis Kitchen at The Riverfly Partnership stand.

12-13 June [FBA](#) course: Identifying caddis. FBA Windemere, Cumbria. Tutor: Ian Wallace (RP Tutor) Cost: £210; early bird rate £195; FBA member £185. Details as FBA above.

16 June [FBA](#) course: Identifying freshwater invertebrates: an introduction. FBA Windemere, Cumbria. Tutor FBA Director Mike Dobson. Cost £50. Details as FBA above.

21-23 June [National Moth Night](#). Date tbc - Join Ian Wallace at the Freshwater Biological Association, Windemere, for a moth trap event, with caddis the by-catch

23-24 June [British Fly Fair](#). Visit RP stand.

25 June - 1 July [National Insect Week](#) (NIW) organised by Royal Entomological Society. NIW/RP competition for the best riverfly photograph. RES welcomes all organisations to hold NIW events - email [NIW2012advice@aol.com](mailto:NIW2012advice@aol.com)

18-20 July National Science Meeting of the [Royal Entomological Society](#) Conference, Cambridge. RP stand

20-22 July [CLA Game Fair](#), Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire. Visit the RP on The Salmon & Trout Association stand

5 August AMI support day with the Esk Monitoring Group on the River Esk. Coordinated by Simon Hirst.

30 September AMI support day with the Derwent Fly Fishing Club on the River Derwent. Coordinated by David Rowley.

7 October Game Fishing & Fly Tying Festival, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire. Visit Stuart Crofts at the RP stand.

23 October [FBA](#) course: Organisms and their environment: an introduction to freshwater ecology. Location: FBA Windemere, Cumbria. Tutors: Alan Hildrew, Paul Raven, Allan Pentecost, Mike Dobson, Cost: £120; early bird rate £105; FBA member £95. Details as FBA above.

Visit [www.riverflies.org](http://www.riverflies.org) for AMI workshops and 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 Autumn e-newsletter. The ongoing and outstanding work of all involved in each AMI Group and the various activities of partner organisations is acknowledged.

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