

# Week Six

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Week six started with a meeting with my old boss and project manager for the Cairngorms and NE water vole conservation and mink control projects Prof. Xavier Lambin. The aim of the meeting was to finalise the arrangements for my replacement and to establish the current situation of mink control across the Don catchment. At present the Don catchment is very thinly covered in terms of mink control in comparison to its neighbours the Ythan and Dee. The Don is now targeted for the next phase of expansion under Prof Lambin's mink control project. This is a great boost for the Trust as it not only offers resources and support from the project officer but it will enable the trust to quickly establish the extent of the problem and we will where possible assist in monitoring, controlling and spreading the word about mink.

The week was dominated by poor weather and as result very high water levels. This unfortunately is not good conditions for survey work and therefore I pushed on with office based work. Through the week I continued to work on the RAFTS project proposals, the Graphical Information System (GIS) database for the habitat and electro fishing surveys. I was also in discussion with the Biosecurity Officer from Rivers and Fisheries Trusts for Scotland (RAFTS) Dr Chris Horril, regarding the hosting of an Invasive Plant Identification Course by the River Don Trust. The course would be open to all Trusts and Fisheries Boards in Scotland and would be run free of charge.

As the week progressed it became clear that the Plant ID course organisation was going to take up more time than I anticipated. I spent the last days of the week on the phone to SEPA, Nigel Holmes (EA qualified instructor for this course) and various landowners, proprietors and farmers regarding suitable site locations, the access to these sites and the production of information for those travelling to the course for next week's course.

Next Week I'll be meeting with Chris Horril from RAFTS, Hosting and attending the Invasive Plant ID course on the Don and discussing the River Don trusts role in the Cairngorm National Parks Wetland Restoration programme.

Cheers Jamie