



## The River Don Trust

Newsletter 4 July 2011

The River Don Trust is a charitable organisation established: To advance for public benefit environmental protection and improvement by conserving and enhancing the natural biodiversity associated with the freshwater environments of the River.

## Electrofishing Survey's underway

It's that time of year again where the Trust will be out across the whole catchment from source to sea carrying out its juvenile salmonid surveys. The Trust is trying to establish the current distribution of species, the range of species present and their abundance using electrofishing methods.

The programme is in its final year of data collection and over the winter the biologist will analyse the information and report on it the following spring. Much of this information will lead into the development of the second Fishery Management Plan for the catchment.

A wide variety of species have been caught to date, here's an image of one below, any guesses?



## Scale sampling reminder

Last year's scale sampling report is finally online, visit the website to download a copy.

Again we would urge those already collecting to keep passing in your scale samples to the biologist at the address below. We would also be delighted to hear from any anglers participating or willing to participate in the scheme who need more scale packets.

With the larger runs of salmon coming into the catchment over the next few weeks and months and the steadily increasing rain over the past few weeks fishing for sea trout and salmon should be improving, so keep collecting scales please!



Electrofishing with a backpack kit and hand nets in a tributary of the Don.

## Invasive Plant Control Training

The Trust has been working in conjunction with one of its neighbours the River Dee Trust and volunteers from the two catchments in a project funded by SEPA to control Invasive Non Native Plants.

The programme aims to control invasive plants by utilising groups of trained volunteers to control plants such as Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam. The control of these plants will result in improvements to bankside and in stream habitat, invertebrate abundance and access across the catchment.

Volunteers will be working together under the supervision of the Trust biologist and in this first phase will control these plants on the main River Don by Strathdon down to Alford. For more info contact [biologist@riverdon.org.uk](mailto:biologist@riverdon.org.uk)

If you would like a newsletter to be sent to you automatically please email me at [iaian@riverdon.org.uk](mailto:iaian@riverdon.org.uk)



## Salmon in the Classroom

All five Schools have completed the project for this year. The project was well received and the feedback from the children and teachers was very positive.

This year the Trust included a litter pick and invertebrate sampling in the programme to illustrate the impacts of humans on fish and their habitats and the food chains present in the river, respectively.



The Trust also filmed a short video of the project for use as delivery material to other schools and a unique selling point to funding bodies. A short clip will be available on the website shortly. Thanks once again to Bernard Martin for his help with the filming and production of this visual aid.



Thanks must also go to the Don District Salmon Fishery Board team for their help in delivering the project.

The project is always looking for support and should you individually or your company wish to support the project please visit this link "[sponsor](#)" or contact the biologist for more details. [biologist@riverdon.org.uk](mailto:biologist@riverdon.org.uk)

## Scottish Mink Initiative

The project aims to control and eradicate mink where possible in Scotland. Sarah Atkinson Mink Control Officer for Aberdeenshire is based in the Trust office at Cluny.

Sarah is currently spreading her coverage of mink monitoring rafts across the River Don catchment and is looking for volunteers willing to monitor a raft on a fortnightly basis. Sarah will meet with you and can provide all necessary equipment and training.

Mink have been known to predate upon fish, in particular salmonids and can have a devastating impact upon juvenile salmonids when mink population densities are high. The Trust is supporting this project to assist in the control of this invasive predator, why don't you by considering becoming a volunteer.

Contact Sarah from more information on  
Email : [sarah@rafts.org.uk](mailto:sarah@rafts.org.uk)  
Tel: 07825 180 319

## Quick Updates

**Goval Burn Obstacle;** The Trust continues to working closely with the developers to ensure that the best for fisheries and wider biodiversity interests are reached. Envisaged fish passage available now during 2012.

**Other Obstacles;** The Trust has recently received some obstacle assessments and will be applying for funding to ease some of these over the next few months.

**GS Disinfection;** Remember to get your tackle disinfected upon return from high risk countries! The Trust provides the service at the office for a small donation to the Trust.

**Please help us fund these initiatives**  
**Visit the website to donate or contact the Trust directly**  
**on the details below to discuss.**