

CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP

Newsletter - September 2018

Chris Packham's BioBlitz comes to Derbyshire!



Over a period of 10 days in July, Chris Packham visited 50 sites all over the UK, with a BioBlitz taking place at each one where every species found in a 24-hour period was recorded. All forms of wildlife were investigated in this snapshot of the country's wildlife, from flies to fungi, mammals to moths and birds to butterflies to pinpoint the winners and losers in the battle for Britain's countryside. Waingroves Community Woodland, near Ripley, was chosen as one of the BioBlitz sites, and local naturalists (many from the Catchment Partnership) descended on the woodland prior to Chris's arrival. An amazing 462 species were found over the 24-hour period:

◆ 185 Plants / Trees ◆ 22 Fungi ◆ 45 Birds ◆ 8 Mammals ◆ 202 Insects (of which 122 were Moths)

"The UK is home to remarkable and beautiful wildlife and some wonderful habitats but it's also in big trouble, and in the case of some species this means we are fast approaching the last chance to make a difference.

"I want the [2018 UK Bioblitz Campaign](#) to be a detailed and complete wildlife audit, a ten day snapshot of the state of our wild places and what lives there. It will celebrate some conservation successes but also reveal some of its failures. It will show that nature reserves are not enough and it will prove we need a healthier wider environment. A healthier countryside."

Chris Packham 2018



[Waingroves Community Woodland](#) was purchased by local people in 2011 to save the land from development. Now the 13 acres of woodland is managed by a group of local volunteers elected from all those who donated, aiming to conserve and promote wildlife while improving usability for local people and schools.

EA tackles Himalayan balsam

Thanks to the Environment Agency's Derbyshire Field Team who spent a day of environmental leave clearing Himalayan balsam along the River Ecclesbourne at Turnditch.

This was a return to the site where they cleared acres of the plant with large machinery last summer, and the effects of their efforts were clearly seen a year on. Only strimmers were needed this year, and the work was much quicker and easier.



Local rain gardens on national TV



The Trent Rivers Trust's award winning rain gardens featured on national television when the BBC's Gardeners World visited Derbyshire. The presenters highlighted how these gardens help to reduce flooding and are a beautiful landscape feature. Arit Anderson spoke to Julie Wozniczka at the [Strutt Centre](#) in Belper, where the [Trent Rivers Trust](#) made a rain garden which forms a beautiful and environment-friendly feature.

"The opportunity to show rain gardens on primetime national TV was fantastic. Rain gardens are quite simple to create. By diverting rain water from our roofs into a concave flower bed, we can help to prevent flooding by allowing water to soak into the ground instead of running off into the rain water drains and gutters. Most people don't know that water would otherwise often go straight to the river, taking any pollution with it."

"A river starts wherever the rain falls, even if it's on our home, yard, garden or drive. If we can make water leave these areas more slowly and in a cleaner state, we are helping people living downstream who otherwise might experience flooding and we are also helping our rivers and the environment.'

Rain gardens can make a real difference to flood risk in residential areas but more can be done to encourage people to create one of their own; "It would make a difference if local landscape gardeners and builders could offer permeable driveways. We are covering the landscape in more and more hard, impermeable surfaces, raising the risk of flooding. Rain gardens are a real alternative and they look great."

Water Environment Improvement Funding (WEIF) for 4 sites

In August, 6 projects in the Derwent catchment were put forward for Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) funding, 4 of which were successful. The funding will allow willow spiling to be installed along eroded banks of the River Ecclesbourne (right), and will be used to install pre-established coir rolls and marginal woody debris in Markeaton Lake, at Darley and at Borrowwash Cutting. This will improve banks and reduce erosion, whilst enhancing the habitat and biodiversity of these areas.



Catchment Partnership Event - Thursday 27 September



For this year's Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership Event, we are teaming up with DerwentWISE to find out about the projects they have been delivering in the Derwent Valley and how this ties in with the vision for the Derwent Catchment.

The theme of the day is the past, present and future of the Derwent Catchment. The afternoon will consist of a series of talks and discussions about the history of the catchment and current projects happening to improve the landscape. In the evening landowners, land managers and farmers are invited to join us to look to the future and explore topics such as Brexit and diversification in farming, as well as helping shape our vision for the catchment – a catchment shared by all.

The event will be held at Sycamore Farm, Ashleyhay (near Wirksworth) during the afternoon and evening, and includes pie and peas. For more information, or to book a place, please contact [Scott McKenzie](#).

Surveying special birds to help protect their future

A head-count of birds that live on Peak District National Park moors took place this summer, for the first time in 14 years. It was last undertaken in 2004, and before that in 1990. The survey ventured across the Peak District including into the Derbyshire Derwent Catchment area.

The new review is being done to find out how factors including land use and management practices, as well as different habitat types on the moors, can influence bird populations. Part of this understanding will come from analysing survey results, and comparing them to the two previous studies. The analysis is currently taking place. The vast landscape provides a vital home to special birds. These include golden plover, curlew, merlin, twite, dunlin, short-eared owl, red grouse, skylark, and meadow pipit.

Kevin Shepherd was one of the surveyors carrying out the work. You may have heard of Kevin before. He's one half of the duo that devised the 'Brown and Shepherd' Upland Bird Survey technique back in the 1990s as a way to find out what birds lived on the moors. We had a chat with him to find out what makes him tick. Read Kevin's story here:

<http://www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/news/wandering-wader-watcher-a-chat-with-kevin-shepherd>



Signal Crayfish Removal Project (SCRaP) at Markeaton Park



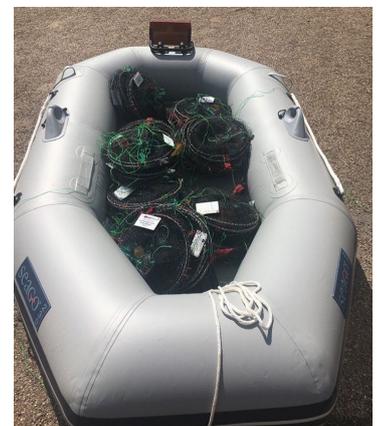
More than 900 signal crayfish were caught in Markeaton Lake over the summer, thanks to a National Trust led project aimed at protecting the white-clawed crayfish population at Kedleston Lakes.

Adam Turner and Nayara Gouvea, students from Derby and Nottingham Trent Universities respectively, carried out the work, helped by local volunteers. Traps were baited and lowered into the lake from a boat and then pulled out 24 hours later. Each crayfish caught was measured, sexed and other details (such as claw loss/regeneration) recorded. The aim is for different students to carry on the project next spring and summer.

Nayara next hopes to find out if or how far the signal crayfish have expanded up Markeaton

Brook and also where crayfish plague is present. Signal crayfish can carry this disease which they are resistant to, but it wipes out entire populations of the white-clawed species. Future conservation measures will also include the installation of a signal crayfish barrier to Kedleston Lakes and the creation of a white-clawed crayfish ark site upstream. If you would like to find out more or volunteer to help with this project, please contact [Carl Hawke](#).

The project has been supported and assisted by partners from Derby City Council, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency and Earl of Harrington's Angling Club.



Lathkill fish rescue



The Environment Agency Fisheries Team have undertaken a fish rescue to relocate stranded brown trout from stretches of the River Lathkill. Each year during dry periods (summer months) river water passes into underground soughs and mineshafts, which can cause sections of the river to dry up. Rescuing and relocating the resident fish is essential for their ongoing survival and recruitment. The fish were caught using electric fishing gear and moved

using an aerated tank to sections of deeper water downstream. The fish rescue was well received on Twitter and featured on BBC Newsnight.

Celebrating five years of DerwentWISE

As part of the ongoing DerwentWISE celebration events, the Heritage Lottery Funded project organised a number of activities at the “Love Parks” superhero picnic at Darley Park at the beginning of August.

The good weather ensured a great turn out for the event by local families. The focal point of the event was a “Big Top” that housed numerous DerwentWISE activities, including mini dry stone walling, mosaics, storytelling, and nature art.



As the River Derwent runs through the park, families were also invited along to river dipping sessions run by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust’s Living Rivers Officer, Scott McKenzie. Children were catching and identifying a range of aquatic invertebrates with great levels of enthusiasm, particularly after the first “lobster” (signal crayfish) was discovered!

This was a great way to engage with school age children and their families to highlight the importance of a healthy watercourse, the ongoing work in the catchment and the aquatic life that is right on their doorstep.

Funding links

[Funding Central](#)

[National Council for Voluntary Organisations](#)

[Heritage Lottery Fund](#)

[Landfill Communities Fund](#)

[Suez Communities Trust](#)

[Better Derbyshire Dales Fund](#)

[Veolia Trust](#)

[Tesco Bags of Help grants](#)

[WREN](#)

[Aviva Community Fund](#)

Catchment Partnership links



[Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership interactive map](#)



Follow the Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership on Twitter at [@DerbysDerwRiver](#)

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust hosts the Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is a local charity working to protect and conserve the natural environment, raise awareness of wildlife issues and inspire people across Derbyshire and beyond.

[Derbyshire Wildlife Trust](#), Sandy Hill Park, Main Street, Middleton, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 4LR.

Please email information for the next update to [Scott McKenzie](#).

Photo credits: DerwentWISE, Environment Agency, Ashley Franklin Nayara Gouvea, Kevin Shepherd, Kath Stapley, Trent Rivers Trust.

The Derbyshire Derwent Catchment

