

Bradford Beck Bulletin 31.7.12

BRADFORD BECK PROJECT

Monthly Bulletin – 31st July 2012

1. Bradford Beck - Catchment Management Plan 2012

On July 19th the first consultation event for the Bradford Beck catchment management plan was held at Bradford University. The session was designed specifically for local ecology groups and institutional stakeholders such as the Bradford Council, Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. The consultation was very successful and showed some extremely interesting recurring themes across the different questions and activities that the participants worked with. One of the most fundamental aspects was the emergence of the social nature of the restoration of the Beck and how this rose repeatedly above other priorities. This was not an expected outcome and will be a key point of the resultant material as the project works on refining the material before the next meeting of the same group in late September. Other consultation sessions with the general public and other groups will be taking place across September in Bradford. With thanks to all participants, and our facilitator Richard Sorton from Icarus for making such a successful day.

2. Water Quality Programme 2012/13

The water quality sample programme to build up the bigger picture of the water quality issues for the Beck and its tributaries is on-going. Various graphs and maps will be produced as time goes by indicating what kinds of metal concentrations and other contaminants are present in the area. The next sample date for the Beck is Thursday 2nd August.

3. Invasive Plants Session 28.7.12

On the morning of Saturday July 28th Don Vine from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust presented an on-site session on invasive plants by rivers and the methods used to control them. The session was held by the Beck side towards the bottom end of Valley Road near Shipley. The main focus was on three of the main problematic invasive plant species, i.e. Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*). The workshop looked at how to identify them, their growth habit, life cycles and the means of controlling them as each have separate issues of their own i.e. the poisonous compounds from Giant Hogweed that can burn skin, and that certain invasives are treated as hazardous waste for their removal. Part of the workshop also showed participants the use of GPS devices to record positions of invasives. This information helps understand the spread of invasive plants and where their primary vectors may be on a catchment. Invasive plants have to be dealt with strategically on a catchment wide basis, so it is key to get as much of this information across a catchment before understanding how removing them might be approached.

During the walk various other plants and trees were identified with numerous species of grass present, Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), Rosebay Willowherb (*Epilobium angustifolium*), Elderflower (*Sambucus nigra*), Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*), Wild Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), Red Clover (*Pratense Trifolium*), Ragwort (*Senecio jacobea*), Bind weed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Mountain Ash/Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*), Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja spp.*), Cherry Tree (*Prunus spp.*), and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior L.*). Plus, curiously, at least three healthy looking fig trees (*Ficus spp.*) that were growing quite happily next to the Beck wall. In addition a special guest appearance was made by a curious stoat. It jumped out of the undergrowth by the hillside to have a quick look at us while we were gathered around a knotweed plant discussing treatment options. It then, just as quickly as it appeared, vanished, having jumped back into the undergrowth the blink of an eye - seemingly happy and satisfied that the humans were only checking out the knotweed patch! With many thanks to Don and all the attendees.

4. Riverfly Workshop & Litter pick events

On the 29th of September the ART will be hosting the specialist Riverfly training session, which looks at invertebrates in and around river systems. There are still a few places available for this workshop. Be quick to respond if you wish to attend as it is a high quality hydro-ecological training event yet is completely free of charge as part of the Bradford Beck project. If you would like to attend please email michael.canning@aireriverstrust.org.

5. Beck litter pick 3.8.12

The first Beck litter pick events is to happen on the morning of Friday the 3rd of August. This is happening in conjunction with Bradford Environment Education Services. If you're interested to attend please email Michael Canning (as above) before midday on Wednesday 1st of August.

6. Adel Dam - Bat Lecture & Guided Walk 31.8.12

The YWT is holding a special session on Bats on the 31st August - the cost is £10 including refreshments. Join in for a fun and informative evening to learn more about the bat species found in Yorkshire. During an indoor session at Marcure Leeds Parkway Hotel, the session shall look at the annual cycle of bats, through breeding, mating and hibernating to how local bats relate to their habitat. As the night draws in the group shall then venture out to Adel Dam Nature Reserve and Golden Acre Park with bat detecting equipment to listen to the nocturnal chatter of these mysterious creatures. If you're interested in attending this please call 01302 570 077.

7. Keeping Rivers Cool - Pilot projects in the UK creating riparian shade

<http://www.restorerivers.eu/NewsEvents/Newsupdates/tabid/2622/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/3002/Keeping-rivers-cool--creating-riparian-shade.aspx>

8. Restoration of the River Bronx in New York

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/22/arts/design/bronx-river-now-flows-by-parks.html>

**** The Bradford Beck project is a conjoint project undertaken by the Aire Rivers Trust and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust ****