

## PENNYWORT POST - July 2023

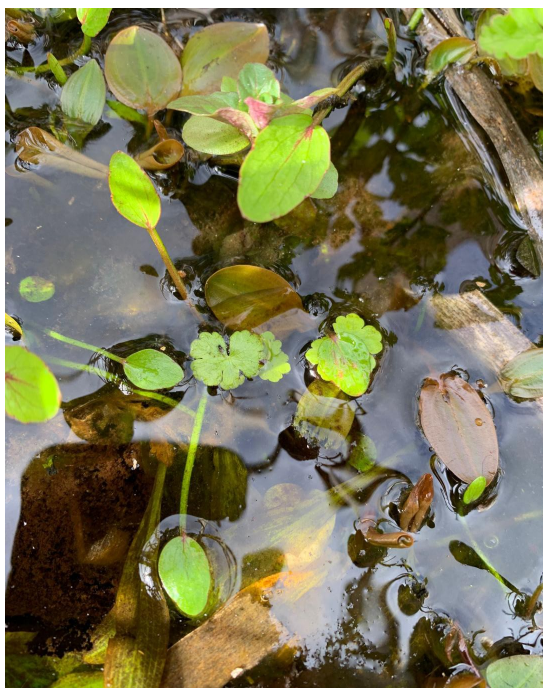
An update on the ongoing Yateley Pennywort project.

There have been a number of brief inspections carried out around the sites this year, so far with encouraging results.

**Mill Lane.** No Floating Pennywort has been found. The inspection was carried out in conjunction with Adrian Bicknell from the Environment Agency. Water levels were slightly higher than ideal, but extra attention was paid to those parts of the site that had produced the plants that were last found. Early season growth of other plants was well underway, but there was high confidence in the thoroughness of the inspection.

**Derby Green Pond.** This site was checked and no floating pennywort was seen. Although there have been a great number of negative visits to this site, and it is probable that no floating pennywort is now present, it is felt that inspections should be continued. They will build on the certainty of successful removal and due to the size of the pond are not a big commitment.

**Wyndhams Pool.** There have been 2 visits - a brief assessment and a more thorough check. Little more than 20 plants were removed and these have all been very small with the majority of the leaves being less than 10mm in diameter. The size of these plants has made detection challenging, whilst great care needs to be taken to remove the whole plant when found. The reward should be an even greater challenge to finding plants on subsequent visits! As with the past experience on other sites it appears that fresh growth is restricted to one or two 'hot spots' within the site which does assist with focusing efforts during the visit.



Floating Pennywort  
'hiding' amongst the native  
vegetation



Not a great picture but it gives  
an indication of the size of leaves  
that we are looking for, beside a £2 coin

**Wystaria Lane.** A further blank visit. This is again building confidence that eradication may have been achieved. However the possibility remains that there could be viable stolons hidden in the silt. The disturbance of this silt by water movement, wildlife or indeed wading during inspections does increase the possibility that these stolons could be exposed to conditions that will result in the growth of an active plant. The increase in negative visits is providing extra confidence that such fragments are no longer present.

**River Blackwater.** Yet again no incidents have been reported. The short section at Mill Lane was checked and nothing seen

Further afield:

**Basingstoke Canal – Fleet.** There was a concerted effort in mid April with a significant team from the Basingstoke Canal Authority being supported by two Environment Agency staff and a couple of extra volunteers. Two boats plus a canoe were used on the water with extra spotters on the towpath. A significant amount of pennywort was removed, varying from small drifting fragments to a few larger clumps that were 'hung up' along the margins. It is conceivable that many of the smaller fragments could be pieces that have broken free from the larger clumps. Pennywort is edible and if grazed, by water fowl, fragments will undoubtedly break away, whilst wind action and boat movements are also likely to cause this dispersal. Although it appeared that more material was removed than during last years visit, this could be a function of the size of team and their undoubted motivation. There have been further checks by the canal rangers since this day and they are extending their efforts to check outside the main area of focus – fingers crossed that they will not come back with bad news!

As ever, thanks to everyone who is supporting these efforts

Martin