



LODDON FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION CONSULTATIVE



PENNYWORT POST – Spring 2025

An update on the ongoing Yateley Pennywort project,
with reports on the rest of the Loddon catchment

The first update of 2025.

Mill Lane. No Floating Pennywort was found. The inspection was again carried out in conjunction with Adrian Bicknell from the Environment Agency. There is now a prolific recovery of indigenous plants on site, which does necessitate a careful inspection. However no Floating pennywort was found, and there is increasing confidence that elimination may have been achieved. There is less pressure on doing regular inspections, but one or two visits a year are not a big commitment, and continued recorded absence may motivate similar initiatives elsewhere.

Derby Green Pond. It is pleasing to report yet another zero incidence at this site.

Wyndhams Pool. This spring visit occurred at a time when early season growth of all plants on site was not particularly advanced. This greatly assisted the inspection but it was still very difficult to spot the small leaves of the 8 plants found. Careful work resulted in the removal of the rhizomes, which had to be extracted from amongst the roots of other plants. This operation was assisted by the soft boggy nature of the site, and the fact that the rhizomes tend to stay at a very shallow depth, little more than 3-4cm. As far as could be ascertained both ends of each rhizome were removed, the longest being close to one metre in length. It was impossible to establish if these were old rhizomes or the result of growth of fragments that were missed during 2024. The possibility that the growth of these plants is continuing to be suppressed by competition from other plants may still hold true, whilst it is hoped that the removal of these surviving plants should bring nearer a complete absence on site.



The challenge - before



and after extraction

Wystaria Lane. This site continues to record an absence, something which would have been a dream even for the more optimistic of us at the start of the initiative. Let us hope that it continues.

River Blackwater. No plants were seen in the river at Mill Lane, nor have there been any reports of incidents in the river

Further afield:

Basingstoke Canal – Fleet. A further check along parts of the towpath between the Reading Road bridge and the Gelvert Stream overflow was conducted. 19 small but viable fragments were removed from the towpath bank, but it was not possible to ascertain if there were further fragments along the opposite bank. The greatest density of plants occurred at the Reading Road overflow part of the Canal. This concentration could have been increased by the recent north easterly winds, countering the general easterly flow of the canal.



Typical viable fragment

The Basingstoke Canal Authority are continuing to lead efforts on the canal and their ranger patrols are looking out for pennywort.

Charvil. Efforts to deal with some rafts of pennywort found growing in the Borough Marsh Stream are currently planned for early May. The Borough Marsh Stream is actually a dis-tributary of the Thames that flows into St Patricks Stream and subsequently into the Loddon around 1.5km upstream of its discharge point back into the Thames. This incidence is thought to be the result of downstream drift of fragments from the Foudry Brook in Reading, a site that has received extensive attention over a 10-12 year period, described in the following link.

[Case study: RDAA / Lower Kennet » NNSS](#)

Finally our efforts around Yateley have received local recognition with an award from the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership. The success of the removal would not have been possible without the help and support of a number of bodies and landowners. This work would not have occurred if access to the sites had not been given, whilst the interest and encouragement of those not wishing to actually paddle around in the mud and water is still greatly motivating for those that do.



Martin