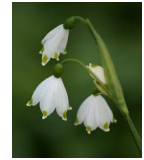




## LODDON FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION CONSULTATIVE



### **PENNYWORT POST – Spring 2026**

An update on the ongoing Floating Pennywort situation,  
for the Loddon catchment

We start this years update with a belated report on the final visit of 2025 to the Borough Marsh Stream at Charvil. One area had been awaiting attention and was tackled on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Prior to the visit this an area of approximately 5metres in diameter had been discovered behind a bed of Reed Sweet Grass (*Glyceria*) and Reedmace (*Typha*). However a surprise awaited us. It was found that the bed of pennywort actually consisted of a large number of floating leaves but with very little in the way of submerged rhizomes attached beneath. The bed had also noticeably moved 2-3 metres downstream and broken up, since being detected 2 weeks earlier. It was suspected that it had received the attention of swans or geese which may have eaten the rhizomes, which were presumed to be holding winter reserves, but left the less nutritious (?) leaves. This theory could explain the many free floating and fortunatley unviable leaves, accompanied by a very noticable lack of viable rhizomes. A further visit in the spring will certainly be required to check for regrowth.

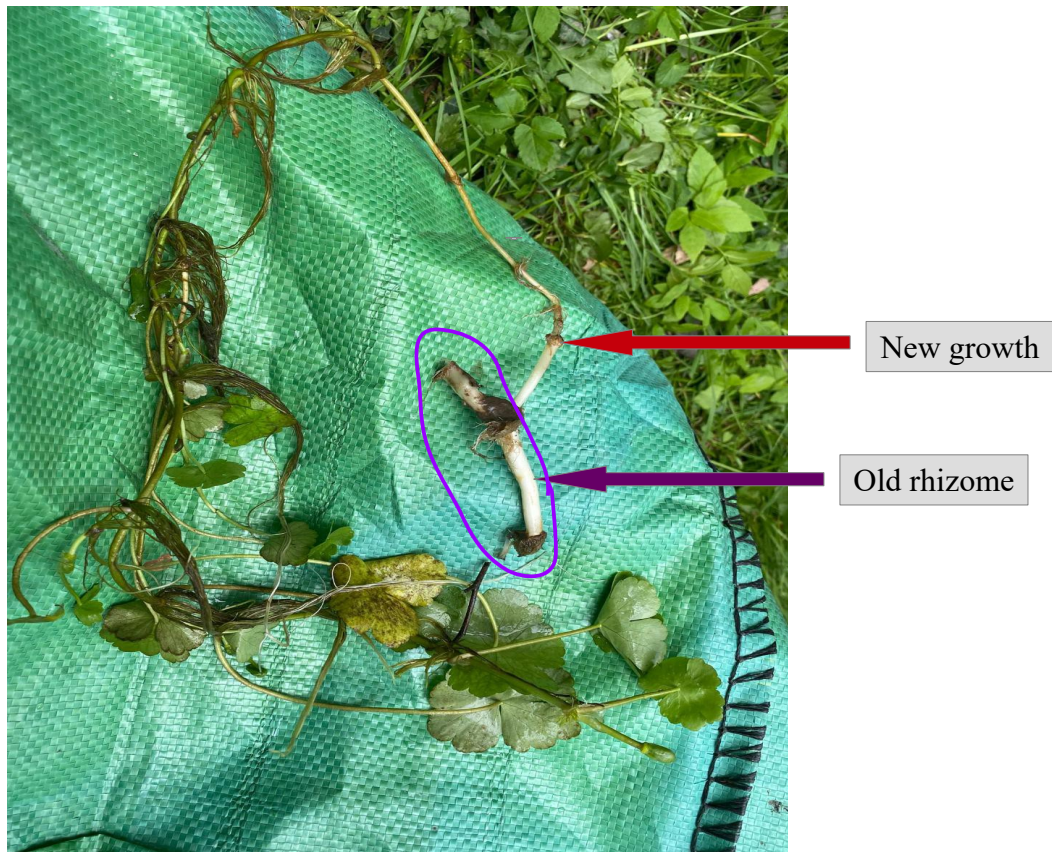


This occurrence could also explain the very noticable reduction in the pennywort beds that was observed in the early part of 2025. It is possible that some of the local water fowl have developed a taste for the plant. Although this could reduce the scale of the problem as far as the size of beds of FP is concerned it may be contributing to fragmentation of the plant and contributing to its downstream dispersal.

Subsequent discussions about the possible activities of water fowl have also received the ironic sugestion that Egyptian Geese (another invasive speacies) could be, at least partially, responsible

The follow up visit to Charvil took place on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The above area of concern was found to be totally clear. This location has certainly experienced high water levels during the winter and any fragments could well have been carried off downstream. The channel downstream does contain a large number of trailing willow branches. Fragments could have been trapped in these branches and further monitoring will be carried out this summer to check for any growths.

The remainder of the channels at this location were also checked. 7 very small fragments were found growing from the clay bank upstream, with a further 5 larger plants growing out from the bank of the 'moat'. It is highly probable that all these plants were the result of breakages of the rhizomes of plants removed during the last visit. It was evident that the old fragment of rhizome that remained from last time was significantly larger than the fresh growth, whilst in most cases dead ends were observed following removal. This should mean that no viable rhizome remained. (see following photograph)



## Yateley

The check of the usual sites at Yateley on 7<sup>th</sup> April was encouraging:

**Mill Lane.** No Floating Pennywort was found. Water levels were back to normal after the persistent rainfall of the start of the year. Growth of the marginal plants that have become well established following removal of the pennywort does make the inspection more challenging but no plants were found. The River Blackwater was also checked especially the debris dam approximately 40 metres upstream of Mill Lane road bridge.

**Derby Green Pond.** Yet another zero incidence at this site.

**Wyndhams Pool.** A careful inspection at Wyndhams produced only one plant which is the lowest recorded finding since work started on this site. It is hoped that we may be very close to achieving a clear visit, but as ever the growth of the other plants on site never make this an easy site to tackle with confidence.

**Wystaria Lane.** A further clear inspection, further lengthening the period since the last detection of any pennywort.

## Fleet

### Basingstoke Canal

A full check along the towpath between the Gelvert Stream overflow and the Fox and Hounds Public House was again conducted. Over 40 fragments were removed along the towpath bank, whilst 4 larger rafts were seen, out of our reach, towards the far bank. Smaller fragments along the far bank would almost certainly have been missed. It was difficult to surmise where the pennywort was originating. The theory that it could be discarded from a garden pond cannot be ruled out, but it could also be possible that the larger rafts may have grown behind a moored boat and released when it was moved. The smaller fragments that were seen could possibly have broken off the larger rafts during their probable slow easterly drift, either through boat disturbance or the activities of water fowl.

The canal authority are actively leading the monitoring and removal effort

Martin