

Colne Water Salmon Fry

The news follows five years of the charity working in the Calder Catchment to remove barriers to fish migration, enabling salmon and sea trout to migrate from the sea to their preferred spawning grounds high up in the river system.

The trust undertakes fish surveys in the Ribble Catchment every summer and this is the first time their fisheries scientists have found salmon upstream of Padiham. The new locations so far include Colne town centre and Towneley Park in Burnley.

After years of work by the Environment Agency to improve the Calder's water quality, work began in 2010 on Padiham Weir with funding from the Environment Agency and others to make it passable to all fish species in all flow conditions. Subsequently, Ribble Trust worked on more barriers on Pendle Water and Colne Water using Defra's Catchment Restoration Fund.

Work also took place recently in Burnley town centre as part of the Urban River Enhancement Scheme (URES) funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Environment Agency and others. The work involved altering the artificial, fast-flowing, cobble lined river channel to create resting places for migrating fish, improving their chances of moving upstream through the town and reaching suitable spawning grounds.

Catherine Birtwistle, Office & Publicity Manager for the Trust, said: "The fact that migrating salmon used all of these restoration features and went on to spawn successfully is testament to the Ribble Trust's willingness to take on

innovative projects in their strive to improve our rivers for the people and wildlife living in the catchment."

Ben Bayliss, Environment Programme Manager for the EA, said: "Seeing the benefits of the fish passage work so quickly is fantastic news and is another great example of how hard work and dedication of everyone working together to improve the local environment can really pay off. This really helps prove how much the water quality has improved over the years."

Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, commented: "What wonderful news! Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, HLF has supported the Ribble Rivers Trust to enhance the ecological and historical heritage of the rivers that run through Burnley. The fact that salmon fry have now been discovered there is testament to the hard work of the staff and volunteers who are making this project possible."

Spurred on by this encouraging discovery, the Ribble Trust now turns its attentions towards enabling fish passage through the River Darwen catchment.

Notes to editors

The Ribble Rivers Trust (RRT) is a local environmental charity established in 1997 to protect and restore the rivers, streams and watercourses within the Ribble catchment and to raise public awareness of the value of our local rivers and streams. The Ribble catchment is the area of land that is drained by the River Ribble and its major tributaries; the Hodder, Calder and Darwen. It covers a varied landscape, from the rural hills of the Yorkshire Dales and the source of the River Ribble, to major urban areas of Lancashire including Blackburn, Burnley and Preston.

Further information

Tel: 01200 444 452 or visit the Ribble Rivers Trust website.

Efallai y bydd gennych chi ddiddordeb hefyd mewn ...

Burnley's river restoration to go ahead