

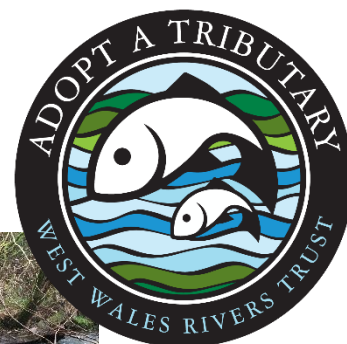
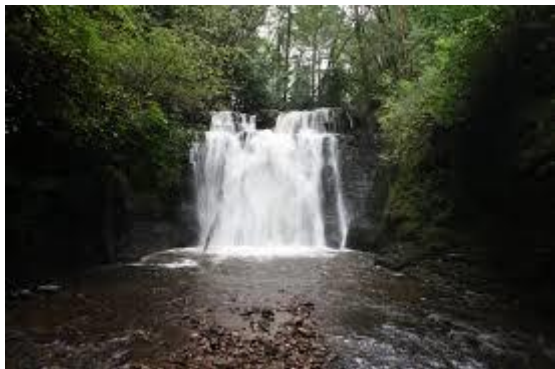


WEST WALES RIVERS TRUST

YMDDIRIEDOLAETH AFONYDD
GORLLEWIN CYMRU

River habitat issues

Natural barriers



It is useful for us to be aware of the presence of natural barriers. These include:

1. Bedrock barriers (of any size)
2. Log jams (accumulations of wood). Most of the time these are not an issue, but sometimes they can build up to an extent where they block the movement of fish upstream and downstream.

Artificial barriers



Examples of artificial barriers include fords, culverts, weirs and dams. We would appreciate any records of these and if possible, notes on a few characteristics including:

1. Approximate height
2. Construction (i.e. concrete, boulder weir etc)
3. Condition (whether the structure is in good condition or in various forms of disrepair)
4. Purpose of structure (if any is evident, e.g. hydropower)

Livestock access

When livestock enter rivers, they cause bank erosion which destroys bank habitat and causes silt from eroded banks to smother riverbeds. They also contribute to an increase in nutrients in the water from faeces and urine.

WWRT work with landowners to fund fencing and alternative water provision to exclude livestock wherever possible. This allows a buffer zone to establish along the river, protecting the bankside, filtering pollutants from the land and providing a wildlife corridor and fish cover.



Bank modification



Bank modifications remove valuable bankside habitat and fish cover and often disconnect rivers from their floodplain.

These works require consent from the local Council or Natural Resources Wales (depending on whether the watercourse is classified as main river). Please report any new bank works of this type to NRW, but we would also be grateful to receive survey responses for these and for historic bank modifications.

Gravel extraction

In-river works, such as gravel removal or alteration of a channel, can be an offence unless the work is carried out under an appropriate permit or consent.

These operations cause damage to wildlife, including aquatic invertebrates, fish spawning grounds and nesting birds.

It also risks spreading seeds/ fragments from invasive non-native species such as Japanese Knotweed to other locations and can result in damage to neighbouring property through increased erosion or deposition.



Removing gravel from rivers is only permitted under certain circumstances and where it is demonstrated to be absolutely necessary to do so. For example, to alleviate flood risk from nearby properties.

Please report this to NRW if observed, but we would be grateful if you could record it on the app.

Riverbed health



The condition of the riverbed is as important as the health of the riverbanks. If safe to do so and visible from the bankside, please look out for silt smothered or algae covered riverbeds. These are detrimental to river invertebrates and spawning fish. Please record presence of excessive algae and/or sewage fungus on the survey form.



Any questions, contact admin@westwalesriverstrust.org

Thank you to Natural Resources Wales and Dwr Cymru for supporting the Adopt a Tributary Project.