



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) - Appendix



Destruction of riparian buffer zones

Below are some further examples of the destruction of riparian buffer zones on a number of rivers. These not only demonstrate poor management but may also go against legislation and guidance issued. In most cases it has not been possible to ascertain why this work was carried out or by who.

Examples:

1. Warwickshire Avon, Marlcliff weir
2. Warwickshire Avon, downstream from Marlcliff weir
3. River Arrow, upstream of confluence with Warwickshire Avon
4. River Hull
5. River Severn, Coalport
6. River Dane
7. River Thames
8. River Arrow, Broome
9. River Dearne

Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

Example 1 Warwickshire Avon Marlcliff

This stretch of the Warwickshire Avon was picturesque with dense and diverse riparian habitat that supported a vast array of wildlife. The mature trees provided an ideal habitat for fish and protected the river from run off from the adjacent fields, provided shade and stabilised the banks.



Autumn 2016. Not just a nice place to fish but a fantastic habitat for fish and other wildlife.



The same view in 2020 nearly four years after the initial work. Hardly any growth. This stretch is now almost devoid of fish after being heavily predated by cormorants after the bankside protection was removed.

Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

January 2017 - Heavy plant and equipment was moved in and quickly removed the entire riparian buffer zone. The timber was burnt onsite.



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix



Further works undertaken at the same time raised the weir causing the river to rise over 300mm. This was done with no consultation or permission from the EA. At the time the EA told me that 'it would be fine and no action would be taken'. Winter 2020 the EA raise the level of the flood defence in Marlcliff as it had breached.

Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

Below Marlcliff weir

May 2020. During the lockdown. I was horrified to find a massive amount of work in progress removing bankside vegetation right at the time fish were spawning and birds nesting. Contacting the Environment Agency and the forestry Commission confirmed no permission had been sought. If it had it would not have been granted not least due to the time of year and nesting birds. The Environment Agency took no action aside issuing an ‘advice letter’. The Forestry Commission visited the site as soon as they were able. It was advised that despite what had been done being ‘quite horrific and unsympathetic’ possibly the only crime was a wildlife crime. Just because it is legal or a landowner can get away with it does not make it right and the huge environmental impact disregarding every piece of guidance This demonstrates why there must be legislation to prevent this and it must be enforced. This is the scene December 2020. The vegetation has still not grown back on the island. The boulders used to raise the weir can clearly be seen.



Below Marlcliff weir before the work was carried out

Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix



Below Marlcliff weir after the works were carried out



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

Example 2 Warwickshire Avon Below Marlcliff weir

A stunning, idyllic stretch of the river from below Marlcliff weir to the confluence of the river Arrow.



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix



May 2020 - The area now looks like this...



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Example 3 River Arrow, left bank

At the same time as the work below Marlcliff was carried out the riparian vegetation above the confluence of the Rivers Arrow and Avon was removed. The Forestry Commission reported this went all the way up past the B439 road bridge.



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

Example 4 River Hull

The most northerly chalk stream is a SSSI and is subject to restoration but also subject to riparian buffer zone removal.



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

Example 5 River Severn, Coalport

Two views of recent work carried out in the caravan park.



Example 6 River Dane



“In terms of some background, it started on a farm downstream. Here they pulled the willows stumps out too! It was rumoured to have been purchased by the owner of the plant hire company, seen in one of the photos, but a land registry search didn’t prove this? First reported to the Forestry Commission to see if a felling licence had been obtained? They showed little interest until the destruction went to a whole new level on the next farm upstream, again using the same plant hire company. When they saw the photos they were on site next day and took it further. The farmer wasn’t prosecuted, but they served him with a 10 year restocking order, which I believe means trees must be replanted and willow stumps cannot be removed. Reported to the local police wildlife and rural crime unit, as known bat roosts destroyed. Despite some correspondence, I’ve been unable to determine if they took it further and I suspect not, or they’d have put it in the public domain? Environment Agency were a waste of space. They said they could only get involved if it presented a flood risk or if the water course had been altered. Quite unbelievable considering they’ve spent millions downstream in Northwich and the tree removal serves to speed up the flow, pushing the water down to Northwich more quickly. Natural England were a waste of space too, I’m informed that they were contacted due to the bat roost destruction angle. Can’t fault the Forestry Commission, but the rest were a waste of space. Where is the deterrent?”

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Example 7 River Thames

The same place before and after. The first photo was actually taken to capture the otter!



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Recently removed trees on the River Thames at Newbridge. This work was allegedly to allow large boats to easily pass each other. A common reason cited on the Upper Thames at the present time is boating related.

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TADPOLE ANGLING CLUB



Admin



· 41 m · 🌐

EA doing their best to devastate all the fish holding features and the Kingfisher feeding trees, the far bank from the lock to peg 30 have been stripped.



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15 comments

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Example 8 River Arrow, Broome



Riparian Habitat Destruction (Further Examples) – Appendix

Example 9 River Dearne

