



Virtual Fisheries Forum 30/03/2023 (Managing Invasive Species In London and the South East).

Q&A session

Q. Any news on Weevil trials to predate on Pennywort? - Are Biological control options now available?

A. (Neale) [CABI \(Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International\)](#) are the organisation undertaking/overseeing the weevil trials for pennywort which are still ongoing. It has currently been released at 13 sites across the south and north of England. Monitoring of these trial sites show successful overwintering in the south and some positive signs of being effective. The release in the north to the trial sites was slightly delayed last year so CABI still assessing the success of overwintering there. Please contact CABI directly about options of getting trials done in your geographic area.

Q. Will cleaning tackle/equipment with the net wash disinfectant solutions used at most fisheries assist in stopping spread of floating pennywort or is it only effective to stop fish disease?

A. (Emily) Ideally for floating pennywort the most effective means of preventing spread is washing down tackle/equipment with hot water. There has been research done of use of Virkon aquatic and other disinfectants to kill/prevent spread of aquatic plants & invertebrates. Disinfectants do induce mortality for some submerged invasive plants (e.g., invasive oxygenators) and some invertebrates, but they were shown to not be very effective against floating pennywort.

A. (Neale) The way to stop the plant spreading is to treat them with something which de-natures it and prevents it from seeding or growing but this is very hard to do whilst the plants are in-situ, so they need removing from the water and then treating. The best thing is to completely dry out floating pennywort once removed.

Q. On the hot water - how hot are talking? Tap hot, boiling hot? I assume not just luke warm?

A. (Emily) 45 degrees centigrade or higher applied for 15 minutes to de-nature the pennywort.

Q. Can Floating Pennywort survive being frozen?

A. (Neale) In the wild environment the plant stops growing at 0 degrees Celsius or lower, but this does not kill them in-situ. If someone was to take a pennywort plant and put it in their freezer overnight, then remove it the thawing process would likely damage/de-nature the plant, but this is unrealistic to suggest as a means of control as you need a license to carry/transport it due to its invasive species status.

Q. I understand the issue with non-native invasive species, but many clubs also have big issues with invasive native species which can choke a water just as badly impacting biodiversity and fishing access?

A. (Andrew) A good starting point is where this occurs, please do reach out and contact the [Angling Trust Environment Team](#) via either myself (south England) or Ian Doyle (North England). We are always happy to visit sites and offer guidance with managing such issues whether relating to invasive or native species.

A. (Emily) [The Institute of Fisheries Management](#) (IFM) do a really good free online workshop course on weed management each spring usually so that will be a great opportunity to highlight your issues and get qualified advice on weed/plant management.

Q. Can water hawthorn become invasive? In the Blackwater it tends to exclude other plants but is not spreading very fast?

A. (Neale) It is an invasive species and can dominate a waterway. If you remove the flower heads from it that will help prevent it spreading.

Q. Is there a nationwide programme to breed Water Vole in captivity?

A. (Josh) Reintroductions typically require Water Voles to be bred in captivity by consultancies.

Q. Is there a link between Water Vole introduction and resurgence of Mink populations?

A. (Josh) Mink can thrive providing there is a good food supply, which doesn't have to include Water Vole. If sufficient trapping is in place this will help keep mink numbers down regardless of if there are any Water Vole populations in the area which may attract Mink.

Q. Can you provide any information on mink predation on fish - what size do they take/prefer & what weight of fish per day?

A. (Josh) Like other Mustelids, Mink can stockpile their food and kill more than they need. Mink will have a go at most things, being opportunistic predators. Hard to quantify numbers of fish per day.

Q. Otter fences don't stop Mink. What fencing might prevent mink getting access to still waters & support vole reintroduction/population recovery?

A. (Neale) Electric fencing would be the best chance really trapping is the most reliable way to control mink as they will inevitably find a way in to a water regardless of fences.

A. (Andrew) I have seen it where a 2-strand electric fence has kept them out however I would advise contacting the [Angling Trust's Fisheries Management Advisors](#) to get specific fencing recommendations.

Q. Can clubs obtain Check Clean Dry signage?

A. (Andrew) Yes, if you are based in the south of England contact me with your address and how many you need and I can sort it. If you are based in the north than contact my colleague Ian Doyle who can do the same.

Q. Will the current round of the Angling Improvement Fund potentially provide money for Mink traps & Fencing?

A. (Emily) Yes it does. The predation round covers fencing. It is currently open and closes on April 28th 2023. Mink traps can be funded through the AIF invasive species round that will run from 14th April-26th May 2023. For more information and to apply please visit <https://anglingtrust.net/aif/>

A. (Josh) It is also worth getting in touch with [Waterlife Recovery Trust](#) if you require assistance with, or you are already trapping mink.

Key contacts from this forum meeting:

- Alex Clegg (Angling Trust National Angler Engagement Manager)
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