

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update –13/4/26

March 2026

28 March 2026: [Get ready for The Big River Watch](#): Are you ready for The Rivers Trust's next Big River Watch, which happens in a month's time between 24th and 30th April 2026? You don't need to be part of a river group to take part: all you need is 15 minutes to watch your local river and fill in a simple questionnaire. You can complete the Big River Watch at your favourite local spot, or get to know somewhere new. The survey will ask you about what you see, from wildlife and plants to any signs of pollution. Not sure what you're looking at? The in-app pollution and wildlife guides can help you make an identification.

- 10 April 2026: [Five warning signs that rivers are polluted - even when they look clean](#): In 2024 alone, raw and partially treated sewage was discharged in to watercourses for more than 3.6 million hours. With around 15,000 sites regularly discharging effluent, in addition to ongoing inputs from agriculture, transport and other industries, the 2025 results due to be published this year are not expected to show significant improvement. Given this, many people who spend time around rivers want to know how to identify pollution. Jess Neumann, Associate Professor of Hydrology, University of Reading, explains how to recognize five key signs: 1. Sewage fungus; 2. Algal blooms; 3. Murky water; 4. White foam; 5. Distressed aquatic life.
- 10 April 2026: [The Salmon Story: Why Atlantic Salmon Need Our Help](#): The Ribble Rivers Trust explore how habitat improve and river restoration are making a positive difference: "Salmon can recover when rivers are restored and given the space to function naturally. While there are many factors behind declining numbers of salmon, carefully planned projects can tackle several of these pressures at once, helping to rebuild the conditions salmon need to survive and thrive".

- 10 April 2026: [Ironbridge Coracle Regatta cancelled this week](#): Sad news that the Ironbridge Coracle Trust has had to cancel its annual autumn regatta -- a river-world fixture for decades that we try to promote every year -- due to a lack of volunteers.
- 10 April 2026: [Jo in the Water - at a cinema/library near you](#): A new East Devon documentary is sparking conversations about the environmental impact of sewage pollution. Jo in the Water, which follows Exmouth-based swimmer and campaigner Jo Bateman as she takes on South West Water over sewage dumping, is being widely screened across Devon at the moment (and hopefully further afield too).
- 10 April 2026: [Can Farming Save the Cleddau? Lessons from the Pembrokeshire Pasture](#): River Action's Chloe Peck and Ellie Roxburgh meet Ric Cooper of The Cleddau Project to see how more thoughtful farming is key to saving rivers like the Cleddau.
- 9 April 2026: [Wear Rivers Trust volunteers shift 15 bags of trash](#): Well done to our friends from the WRT, who've been doggedly clearing the River Gaunless and its floodplain this week.
- 9 April 2026: [Welsh Water's daily sewage spills declared "illegal"](#): Overflows at a Herefordshire sewage plant lasting more than a month were illegal and could lead to enforcement action. The Environment Agency (EA) has said: "We are actively investigating the situation and will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action." Well, erm, stop hesitating then... and take action then! David Gillam, chairman of Save the Wye Coalition, said: "It's not clear to us from Welsh Water's response how they mean to prevent the spillage.
- 9 April 2026: [Historic juvenile salmon found in river for first time](#): In a remarkable moment for the species, a juvenile salmon has been observed in a Midlands river for the first time on record. The tiny fish, discovered during a Trent Rivers Trust survey on the Bottle Brook, offers key insight into salmon movement and supports conservationists' efforts to promote their recovery across the Derwent catchment area.
- 9 April 2026: [Over 370 hectares of coastal wetlands enhanced and restored in Somerset](#): WWT, the wetland charity, has restored almost 400 hectares of wetland habitat across WWT Steart Marshes and Bridgwater Bay Somerset Wetlands National Nature Reserve (SWNNR). New scrapes have been created, existing ditches and saline lagoons have been enhanced, and a tidal inlet has been installed to help the reserves retain

water; benefitting nesting birds like avocets. An expansive boardwalk has been built to help visitors get up close to saltmarsh habitats and the wildlife that call it home.

- 9 April 2026: [Drinking water contaminated with 'forever chemicals' during pregnancy linked to an increased risk of childhood asthma](#): A new study from Lund University shows that children were more likely to develop asthma if their mothers were exposed to very high levels of Pfas (polyfluoroalkyl substances, aka 'forever chemicals') during pregnancy.
- 9 April 2026: [MCS: Good Fish Guide update shows some UK seafood staples under pressure](#): The Marine Conservation Society has updated its Good Fish Guide in line with new scientific advice. The latest ratings show growing pressure on some of the nation's most familiar seafood choices, including cod and scampi.
- 7 April 2026: [Welsh landowners urged to get river work right first time](#): Landowners in Wales are being urged to get expert advice before carrying out any work in rivers or streams to avoid costly mistakes, accidental damage and environmental harm that can be difficult to undo. Poorly planned work in rivers and streams, such as removing gravel, reshaping banks or straightening channels, can quickly create new problems including increasing erosion and flood risk as well as harm to wildlife. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) says many of these issues could easily be avoided if landowners checked with them before starting work. Getting the right advice to properly plan work can help landowners understand what permissions they need and how to approach the work effectively, sustainably and legally.
- 7 April 2026: [Birdlife on rivers, lakes and canals; top tips for paddling, watching and avoiding disturbance](#): Paddle Cymru have teamed up with the RSPB Cymru to raise the awareness of avoiding disturbance to birds when we paddle inland waters, with a new guide from RSPB Head of species, Julian Hughes.
- 7 April 2026: [Restoring Rivers and Supporting Healthier Communities](#): Severn Rivers Trust explain how their mission creates wider community benefits.
- 7 April 2026: [Worldview: Marine pollution will be a major legacy of Iran War](#): Think of oil spills and you naturally think of tanker spills like the Exxon Valdez, but incidents of that kind are puny compared to the vast amount of oil spilled during the 1991 Gulf War. Now, conflict in the Gulf 35

years on threatens marine catastrophe once more, as The Guardian reports.

- 7 April 2026: [London Rivers Photography Competition continues until May!](#): To mark London Rivers Week 2026, Thames21 launched a photography competition celebrating the vital role that rivers play in the life of the city. The competition aims to highlight the beauty, diversity, and importance of London's waterways, as well as the people and wildlife that depend on them. Entries close on 1 May 2026.
- 7 April 2026: [Worldview: Sea-level rise is a health crisis and we must hold polluters accountable](#): Writing in The Guardian, Christiana Figueres, former head of the UN climate change convention from 2010 to 2016, explains why sea-level rise is a present-day health crisis: "When saltwater intrudes into freshwater supplies, health suffers. When floods overwhelm sanitation systems, diseases spread. When farmland is inundated by king tides, nutrition deteriorates. And when people are forced to contemplate leaving the land of their ancestors, they face a painful mix of physical, financial, emotional, cultural and spiritual harm".
- 5 April 2026: [Without new volunteers, historic Chilterns watermill may fall silent](#): The Ford End Watermill Society, which operates and maintains the mill entirely through voluntary effort, says it urgently needs new people to help run, maintain and administer the operation. Without fresh support, the mill could fall silent. Possibly for good.
- 4 April 2026: [Postcode Lottery and the Wildlife Trusts: success for pioneering wildlife projects](#): "Postcode lottery" used to a disparaging term for the poor luck of the geographical draw; but, as the Wildlife Trusts report, the popular fundraising scheme of the same name has helped fund innovative national wildlife projects to the tune of £31 million.
- 3 April 2026: [More beavers for Studland!](#): Beavers have been successfully beavering away on the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset for a while now, as this report on their impressive dam-building progress at Studland makes clear.
- 2 April 2026: [Thames Water could dodge fines under controversial new Ofwat deal](#): Ofwat is preparing a controversial new deal with the UK's largest water company which would allow the beleaguered utility firm to avoid any new fines over the next four years in exchange for a commitment to invest new cash in the business.

- 1 April 2026: [More than 100 species set to go extinct in Britain by 2080](#): A new report from the Natural History Museum explores how "Climate change and habitat loss will see numerous plants, butterflies and birds lost by the end of the century".
- 1 April 2026: [Soil sampling for river improvement](#): Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust explains the science behind cleaning up a river landscape plagued by historic mine pollution.
- 1 April 2026: [Voice of the River Wye speaks](#): Ecologist Dr Louise Bodnar has been appointed as the 'Voice of the River Wye' to represent the river's interests and vote on its behalf. Friends of the River Wye explain: "Dr Bodnar finds herself as a pioneer in the wider movement of Rights for Nature, which seeks to encourage greater recognition of the natural world in both everyday actions and in law, and is showing what happens when you put Nature on the Board... she communicates a scientific and ecological understanding of the living world, whilst drawing on ancient indigenous wisdom."
- 1 April 2026: [New creative installations unveiled at Walkmill Community Woodland](#): The Wilder Walkmill project, led by West Cumbria Rivers Trust, has been in development and delivery for four years and uses set of creative installations to bring the story of the woodland to life.

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- [Freshwater Ecologist: Severn Rivers Trust](#) (12 May 2026)
- [Hampshire Avon Citizen Science Coordinator: For the Love of Water \(FLOW\) CIC](#) (8 May 2026)
- [Freshwater Adviser: NatureScot](#) (30 April 2026)
- [Catchment Resilience Project Officer: River Waveney Trust](#) (26 April 2026)
- [Newt Conservation Partnership Biodiversity Net Gain \(BNG\) Project Officer: Freshwater Habitats Trust](#) (24 April 2026)
- [Trainee Ranger: Cotswold Lakes Trust](#) (24 April 2026)
- [Agriculture Advisor: Wyre Rivers Trust](#) (22 April 2026)
- [Volunteer Coordinator: Tyne Rivers Trust](#) (19 April 2026)
- [Engagement Officer: WWT \(Caerlaverock, Dumfriesshire\)](#) (19 April 2026)
- [Catchment Restoration Development Officer: Sustaining Dunbar](#) (19 April 2026)
- [Partnerships Manager: Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust](#) (19 April 2026)
- [Project Officer \(Water Stewardship: The Rivers Trust \(Ireland\)\)](#) (17 April 2026)

- [Citizen Science and Community Engagement Officer: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust \(BART\)](#) (16 April 2026)
- [Agri-Environment Advisor: Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust](#) (17 April 2026)
- [Catchment Neutrality and Restoration Officer: Pembrokeshire County Council](#) (15 April 2026)
- [Area Manager \(West\): South East Rivers Trust](#) (14 April 2026)
- [Area Manager \(South London\): South East Rivers Trust](#) (12 April 2026)
- [River Restoration Project Officer: Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust](#) (12 April 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

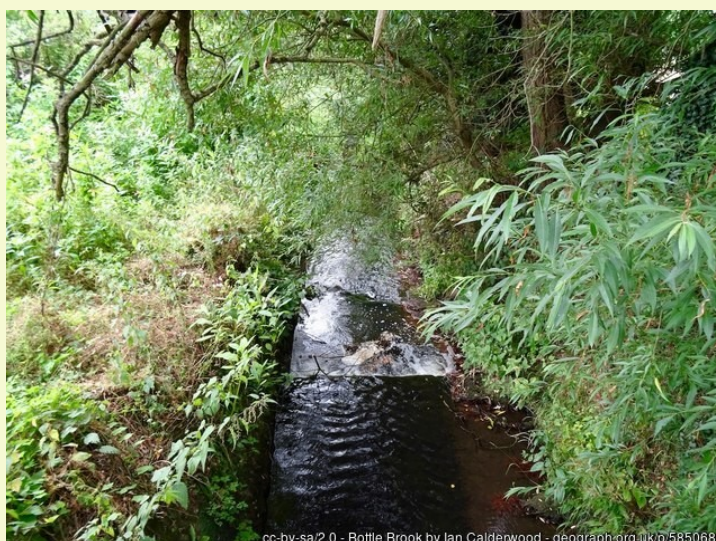
- [Trustee \(accounting skills\): Aire Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Education Officer: Wessex Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Learning and Engagement Volunteer: West Cumbria Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Trustee Director: The Open Spaces Society](#) (17 May 2026)
- [Trustee: Legal Expertise \(Bristol Avon Rivers Trust\)](#) (30 April 2026)
- [Paddle England Assembly \(12 members\)](#) (20 April 2026)

Other opportunities

The Rivers Trust has a useful page of [current vacancies](#) with the various trusts, including voluntary posts and openings for trustees.

River of the week

Bottle Brook, a tributary of the River Derwent, where a juvenile salmon has been observed for the first time on record, suggesting the fish may be more widespread in the catchment than previously believed. Photo © [Ian Calderwood](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.



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to your friends! *****

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