



PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO HEALTHY FISH POPULATIONS IN WALES

**(More Fish / Boosting economic benefit)*



A group of volunteers being trained in river survey techniques.

We have been working very closely with volunteers to equip them with the skills required to help safeguard the ecology of our rivers.

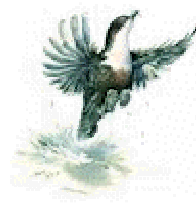
On the 27th of March, Environment Agency officers took the lead in training up 30 volunteers to conduct tributary walkover surveys. The group largely made up of volunteers from rivers trusts and angling clubs, were shown how to both identify and record factors which can potentially impact on fish, limiting their numbers, and affecting the ecology of local rivers and streams.

The event, hosted by Afonydd Cymru, was the first of two training sessions held across Wales. The day began at the Talbot Hotel in Tregaron before moving on to the Nant Rhydmaen, a tributary of the River Teifi near Lampeter. The practical afternoon session involved a 1km mapping exercise, providing an opportunity to conduct their own survey in the field.

We hope that by working together we can jointly identify areas for improvement and carryout works to the maximum benefit of fish populations and in-stream ecology. We are also working with the Wild Trout Trust to give further direction to volunteers (see next article overleaf). This partnership approach links directly with our corporate strategy* by working with people and communities to create a better place.

The Environment Agency, Afonydd Cymru and the individual rivers trusts have all secured funding support from the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure healthy sustainable fish populations in the rivers of Wales. If individuals wish to get involved then contact either Afonydd Cymru or if you are interested in the Carmarthenshire area then please contact the Carmarthenshire Rivers Trust.

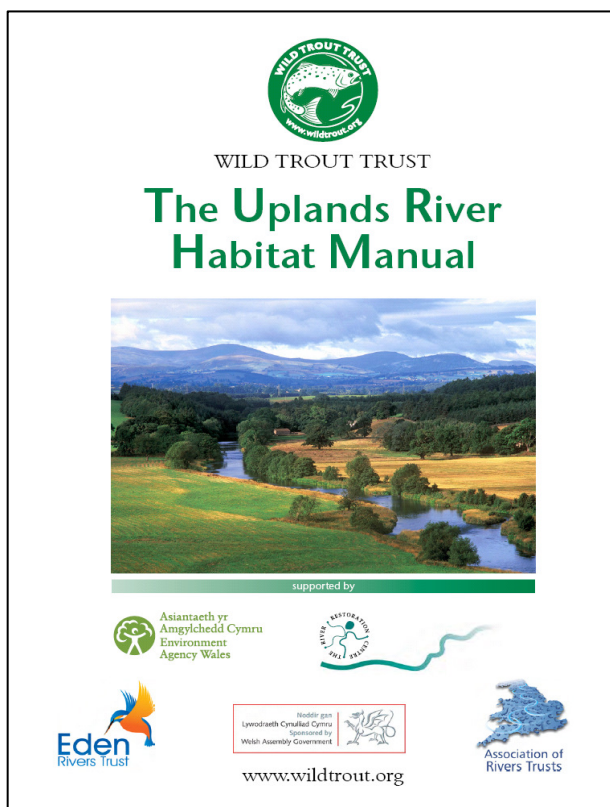
All improvement projects delivered will make a valuable contribution to our shared targets set out in the Water Framework Directive and our rivers attain “good ecological status”.



* Corporate Strategy – “Create a better place 2010-2015”

WILD TROUT TRUST'S – "UPLANDS RIVER HABITAT MANUAL"

*(More Fish / Boosting economic benefit)



Manual available in PDF format at - www.wildtrout.org

The Wild Trout Trusts' new exciting 'Uplands River Habitat Manual' was launched by Moc Morgan OBE on 27th March in Tregaron. The manual is intended to give direction to volunteers when planning and delivering fisheries improvement works on the ground.

Together, both the manual and the walkover survey method will provide comprehensive technical information to both identify and deliver well focused environmental improvements. The Environment Agency supported the

production of the manual with both funding and we also made a significant technical contribution to the production.

LIMESTONE SAND APPLICATIONS– A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

*(More Fish / Boosting economic benefit)



Limestone sand store – Delivered by EAW in support of liming initiatives. Work funded by Tregaron Flood Alleviation Scheme fisheries enhancement funding.

Tributaries of the upper Tywi and Teifi, including the Doethie, Pysgotwr and Nant Berwyn are subjected to episodic acidification. This is at least part due to man's influence. The catchments are naturally base poor however the land-use practices coupled with acid rain exacerbates the issue resulting in very low pH readings during periods elevated flows. This has a serious impact on the stream ecology and limits fish populations.

Pilot schemes have been carried out in the area over recent years (2006-2009) where we have introduced limestone sand into streams to help reduce the impact of these acid events. Results have been very encouraging and now in collaboration with Carmarthenshire Rivers Trust (CRT) we are embarking on a larger scheme to improve Water Quality on the Doethie and



fisheries newsletter

South West Wales – round up report for 2009/10 and a forward look.

April 2010

Pysgotwr catchments of the upper Tywi.

We have issued CRT with formal consent to introduce 68 tonnes of limestone sand into 12 identified sites throughout both catchments. We will also be taking the lead to ensure that both pre and post monitoring is sufficiently robust to allow for assessment of the benefits. We are also assisting in the overall sustainability of the scheme by delivering works required to store the limestone sand required for future introductions.

Water bodies within the Doethie and Pysgotwr catchments are currently classified as moderate failures under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). This collaboration is an example of where we can work effectively with external organisations who share in our WFD targets. Funding for the overall scheme has been provided by the Welsh Assembly Government via the European Fisheries Fund.

access to British Disabled Angling Association standard (BDAA);

A large fly casting platform has been constructed to accommodate up to 4 fly fishing participants at one time. The platform designed to BDAA standards also accommodates wheelchair access. The project has been brought together by the hard work of our collaborative partners and Roger Pratt (Fisheries Officer EAW).



"All ability" access to facilities

PUDDLEDUCK "ALL ABILITY" ANGLER ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

**(More People Fishing / All ability access)*

Puddleduck fishery is located half a mile south of Freystrop Village, near Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire. The fishery consists of two lakes, a trout lake of approximately 2 acres and a mixed coarse fish lake of about one acre.

Collaborative improvement works include construction of designated car park spaces for disabled anglers, pathways and ramps to improve access for anglers of all abilities. All surfaces and gradients have been made suitable for wheelchair



Angling platform specifically designed for tuition.

As part of the collaboration, the fishery will organise and host angling participation events during 2010/11 and beyond.

RUDD STOCKING IN CWM OERNANT RESERVOIR

**(More People Fishing / More Fish)*



An example of a Rudd

Cwmoernant Reservoirs in Carmarthen recently received a boost to the fish population with a stocking of 3000 juvenile rudd. The stocking is the latest step in a collaborative project to improving angling facilities at the site. The two small reservoirs have undergone a transformation in the past year through recent collaborative projects between the Environment Agency, Carmarthenshire Rivers Trust, Carmarthenshire County Council and a local volunteer group - Cwmoernant Pond Project.

New access paths and angling platforms have been installed, as well as disabled parking, tree management and weed cutting. The fish were part of an annual allocation of coarse fish which the Area receives to stock into local community angling developments from the Agency's Fish farm at Calverton in the Midlands. The fish farm rears eight species of native coarse fish and produces between 350,000 and half a million coarse fish each year to be stocked into rivers and lakes across England and Wales to compensate for pollution incidents and boost local angling facilities.

TREFFGARNE EDUCATIONAL FACILITY

**(More People Fishing / all ability access)*



Cabin style to be constructed at Treffgarne to incorporate "all ability access"

We have recently match funded a project in collaboration with the Pembrokeshire Anglers Association (PAA), at Treffgarne on the Western Cleddau.

Treffgarne Gorge is a game fishery that forms part of a 15 mile stretch of the Western Cleddau River controlled by PAA. The fishery is located to the North West of Haverfordwest and has an existing "all ability" fishing platform, which we funded, that is used regularly to provide access and coaching for disabled anglers. The angling platform also provides an excellent venue to coach junior anglers in a safe and controlled environment. Special events are organised at the venue by the PAA coaches and the Agency to introduce river trout angling to beginners, with the hope of attracting new anglers to the sport.

Improvement works will include: Providing a covered education facility, which includes a toilet and hand wash unit, suitable for all ability access.



The new facility will provide much needed shelter from the rain, greatly benefiting the programme of angling coaching and all ability access events.

The project has come about through the sterling efforts of Eric Williams (PAA) and Roger Pratt (Fisheries Officer EAW); both key members and contributors to the Pembrokeshire Rivers Trust. The project will be delivered in 2010 and will benefit prospective anglers and community groups for many seasons to come.

COMMUNITY FISHERY DEVELOPMENT AT PORT TALBOT DOCKS

**(More People Fishing / all ability access)*

Port Talbot Docks is a coarse fishery leased from the Port Authority by Mr Dave Morgan. The venue is ideally located in terms of its close proximity to the town centre, having the major advantage of being within easy reach of the community that it serves. The fishery is a working dock of approximately 5 hectares, with an interesting mix of coarse and sea fish present benefiting from a warm water discharge from the steel works. All this is set against a heavy industrial backdrop and skyline.

Improvement works funded by additional rod licence sales include: Provision of three large angling platforms, suitable for all ability access, and large enough to accommodate several fishing participants at one time.

In addition to the infrastructure works outlined above, the fisheries will also: undertake junior angling participation events between 2010 and 2012. The

Fisheries will establish links with local community clubs and organisations. To promote angling as a proactive inclusive sport to the local community and develop coaching programme that best compliment the opportunities presented by local organisations with the facilities present at the fishery.

By improving the infrastructure and angling experience, it is hoped that this will encourage increased use of the fisheries by anglers of all abilities and encourage junior anglers into the sport, improving the social and economic benefits for the local community.

FISH PASSAGE IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2010-11

**(More People Fishing / more fish)*

Restricted movements of migratory fish past barriers can have a serious effect on fish populations. So we are very pleased that we have been able to secure funding for the next 3 years from the European Fisheries Fund. We have 7 fish easement schemes currently in development for delivery this financial year! In total we have £150k of funding support for the Area this year which will not only deliver economic benefits derived from healthier fish populations but will also contribute to our WFD targets in each case. Specific easements include:

1. Cathan Brook (Loughor)
2. Ogwr Fach (Ogmore)
3. Ogwr Fawr (Ogmore)
4. River Amman (Loughor)
5. Dulais (Teifi)
6. Nant-y-Gwyddyl (Neath)
7. Abercraf (Tawe)



fisheries newsletter

South West Wales – round up report for 2009/10 and a forward look.

April 2010

We always try and focus on the most cost effective way of improving fish passage. Frequently we opt for easement schemes that are relatively low cost, technical solutions. In this way we derive the maximum benefit for the expenditure invested. We have developed experience in the technical design and planning that allows for delivery of schemes without expensive consultancy fees and internal project support.



Upper reaches of the Dulais, near Lampeter. Fish passage improvements planned for 2010.



Abercraf weir – modifications planned for 2010 as part of the “salmon for tomorrow” European funded program.

GET FISHING 2010 – NATIONAL FISHING MONTH

*(More People Fishing)



Happy angler at an event at half-round ponds, Swansea.



Confluence of the Nant-y-gwyddyl and the river Neath, improvement works planned for 2010.

Angling participation continues to be at the forefront of fisheries work with our partners for the coming year. We want even more people to try out angling, get hooked – and buy a rod licence in 2010.

But we can't do it alone. Working with partners such as; Pembrokeshire

Federation of Angling Coaches, Brynmill and District Angling Club (BDAC) and Carmarthenshire Youth and Children's Association we are helping to fund both one-day events and angling courses.

One such project currently getting under way in three schools across Swansea is a series of angling lessons aimed to teach young people enough about the sport to become competent anglers. The project is a collaboration between Swansea Police 'Something to Do' project, BDAC Coaches and Environment Agency Wales.

National Fishing Month

This year's event initiative has developed into a month long timetable - renamed **National Fishing Month** and will run from the 17th July to the 15th August. This year's dates should suit the needs of schools by allowing them to build in fishing activities for the final week of their summer term. The longer timetable should therefore result in more events, more new people actively taking part and more positive angling PR out in the market at key times.

We want to continue to build on the successes of the last few years and have lots of good quality events across the Area to attract new anglers and families to the sport.

Introduction events can be anything from a couple of hours to a whole day and help is at hand from the local Fisheries Team and from the National Fish Month website www.nationalfishingmonth.com.

So please consider running a 'Come and try fishing' event during National Fish Month and get in touch with Ida Tavner – Angling Participation Coordinator for the Area, who will be more than happy to help.

RIPARIAN HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

**(More Fish)*

Two fisheries habitat improvement projects on the upper Teifi catchment were delivered during summer and autumn of 2009/10. These projects resulted in over 2km of heavily grazed land being fenced on both banks.



Riparian Habitat improvement scheme at Pont Cae, afon Brefi.

The Pont Cae Fforest project is located at the top end of the River Brefi near Llandewi Brefi. The Brefi is an important spawning tributary on the Teifi and has, in the past, been subject to water quality issues arising from both acidification and sheep dip. The aim of the project is to protect the spawning and nursery habitat. The whole of the upper catchment is now being fenced out and stock are carefully managed to protect stream ecology.

The scheme will result in the creation of riparian tall herb cover, with patches of riparian woodland and scrub providing more cover and food for fish. By



fisheries newsletter

South West Wales – round up report for 2009/10 and a forward look.

April 2010

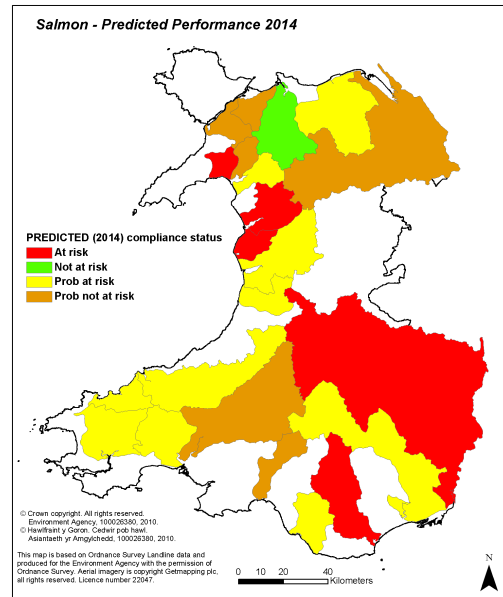
improving habitat in this way, it is expected that the number of juvenile salmonids will increase in the reach.

These projects link together with ongoing measures to improve water quality specifically with regards to acidification and potential sheep dip problems.

THE LOWEST ON RECORD? **(More fish)*

For England and Wales as a whole, 2009 wasn't good. Rod catches of both grilse (12,890) and larger salmon (3,770) were the lowest for over five years though the number of annual licenses sold was the highest since 1994. While fishing conditions weren't perfect, they weren't bad. We didn't have a 'barbeque summer' though catches were more like those in a drought year. We estimate that the number of salmon returning to our rivers and the number spawning were among the lowest recorded. In 39 of the 64 principal salmon rivers, stocks are either 'at risk' or 'probably at risk'.

Salmon compliance assessment.



What's more worrying is that the reduction in salmon abundance has occurred despite a huge reduction in exploitation by netsmen both in this country and elsewhere over recent years. Anglers have also been killing fewer salmon and, in 2009, almost 60 percent of their catch was released.

For those rivers that are predicted to be 'At risk' in 2014, applying the 'Decision Structure' means that those rivers that are predicted to be 'At risk' should have **zero exploitation** – 100% C&R is considered acceptable. Mandatory C&R is recommended on the Wye, Taff & Ely and Mawddach.

For those Rivers that are predicted to be 'Probably at Risk' in 2014

Applying the decision structure we need to encourage rivers to increase their C&R rates where appropriate. These should aim to be above the national average 60%.



Most of our rivers fall into this Category; Ogmore, Teifi, Nevern, Cleddaus, and Rheidol. Unfortunately the C&R rates with few exceptions are low in West Wales. Note that the Cleddaus, Rheidol and Ogmore are hovering on the at Risk borderline and in danger of having mandatory 100% catch and release.

The Tywi is the only River '**Probably not at Risk**'. Unfortunately the Tywi has slipped a risk category from last years assessment when predicted to be not at Risk. More work needs to be done to encourage greater participation in C&R.

Sea trout compliance assessment

The approach to assessing sea trout stock performance is still under development. It gives an early warning about potential problems and can assist with considering whether any further exploitation controls are required.

The approach used here classifies those sea trout rivers with catch return information. The methodology uses two criteria - trend in Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) in the last 10 years and current CPUE relative to last 10 years. The results have been put into 4 categories using the same terminology as for salmon - ie "at risk", "probably at risk", "probably not at risk" and "not at risk"

Those rivers that are predicted to be '**At risk**' include the Tywi whilst those considered '**Probably at Risk**' include Ogmore, Tawe, Loughor, Gwendraeth, E&W Cleddau, Nevern, Teifi, Aeron, Rheidol.

One of the voluntary measures that should be promoted is voluntary C&R, particularly where it is low – less than 70% Only the River Ogmore attains this level of C&R.

CELTIC SEA TROUT PROJECT

**(More fish)*



The Celtic Sea Trout Project is a groundbreaking, €2 million, multi-agency partnership investigation into the sea trout stocks and their associated fisheries of the many rivers entering the Irish Sea. It is part-funded by the EU INTERREG Ireland-Wales Programme with additional support from government agencies, voluntary bodies and private fishery interests in Wales, Ireland, Southwest Scotland, Northwest England and the Isle of Man. The active fieldwork programme will take place over three years from April 2010.

The project will require a massive commitment to collect the information for the different elements of the study:

- Collection of scale samples and capture details from anglers and netmen to support the genetic and life history studies for some 20 rivers.
- The routine electro-fishing in some 80 rivers to obtain fin-clips from juvenile trout to establish the genetic database,
- And experimental fishing with different types of net in estuaries, coastal and offshore waters to support the investigations into



fisheries newsletter

South West Wales – round up report for
2009/10 and a forward look.

April 2010

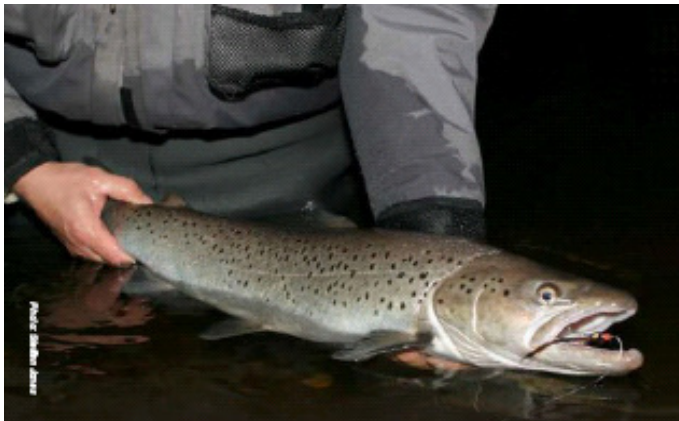
marine movements, feeding
behaviour and the river/region of
origin of captured fish.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The projects web-site
www.celticseatrout.com will be on-line
from 1st April 2010 and will contain more
detailed information and news about the
project and provide updates on progress.

SEA TROUT PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION

**(More fish)*



Sea Trout
Protection and Preservation

What is a Sea Trout?
English and Welsh rivers were colonised by sea trout at the end of the last Ice Age, and their descendants are the populations of brown trout and sea trout we know today (both *Salmo trutta*). Resident and migratory characteristics have developed within individual catchments, so that some fish now remain permanently resident (brown trout), some always migrate (sea trout) and others can do either, depending on circumstances. It is believed that both genetics and environmental issues, such as habitat and available food, play a part in whether or not a trout migrates to sea.

Environment Agency | WSTAA | SALMON & TROUT ASSOCIATION

The Environment Agency, Welsh Salmon & Trout Association and the Salmon & Trout Association have joined forces to produce a guidance publication “The protection and preservation of sea trout”. The leaflet provides surrounding information on the fish and its current social and economic value and also covers some of the pressures sea trout currently face. Importantly the production suggests what anglers can do to help fish populations by way of catch and release and also suggests where to go for further information. It is hoped that this publication will go out to all migratory salmonid licence holders..

ROD LICENCE SALES 2009/10

**(More fish)*

Rod licence sales in England & Wales grew by 12% in 2009, with over 1.46 million different licences sold, generating some £25.3 Million of income for fisheries. In south west Wales we sold just under 18,000 licences and in Wales overall 75,750. Sales of migratory salmon and trout licences were broadly similar in 2009 compared to 2008 across Wales, with 4,010 Full licences and 7,815 overall. The most significant increases were in sales in coarse, trout and eel licences with over 31,600 Full licences sold and 67 ,000 overall.



fisheries newsletter

South West Wales – round up report for 2009/10 and a forward look.

April 2010

Expiry
31.03.2011

Environment Agency

got your new licence?

You must have a valid rod licence*
Expect a big fine if you can't produce one

Rod licences expire on 31 March

There are three ways to buy or renew your rod licence:

- Online at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/rodllicence
- At any Post Office[®] in England and Wales
- Telephone 0844 800 53 86

Licences open 8.30am to 5pm, 7 days a week March to September. Calls charged at local rate.

Concessionary licences (now online), apply if:

- You are aged 16 or under (Junior)
- You are aged 65 or over
- You have a Blue Badge parking concession, or are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance

Coarse and trout		2010/11
Full		£27.00
Concession		£18.00
Junior		£5.00
8 day		£10.00
1 day		£3.75
Salmon and sea trout		2010/11
Full		£72.00
Concession		£48.00
Junior		£5.00
8 day		£23.00
1 day		£8.00

* Licence applies to those aged 12 years or older fishing for freshwater fish, eels, trout or salmon in England, Wales or the Border Esk in Scotland.

Remember – If you're coarse fishing with 3 or 4 rods, you'll need 2 licences

Environmental Crime Team has joined forces with 'The Campaign For The Protection of Welsh Fisheries' to help further combat poaching within our fisheries. This will form part of an intelligence gathering forum and is an extension of a pilot scheme developed by the campaign in the Clwyd area of North Wales.

The idea is that anyone can report any suspicious activity, information or intelligence concerning illegal fishing. This can be done anonymously, but it always helps if we can get back in touch and we treat all information in the strictest confidence. The information is automatically routed to an electronic post box to the appropriate Area Environmental Crime Team, North or South West Wales. It is hoped that there will be a better flow of information between the angling interests and the Agency.

The next task is to inform all the angling clubs that this facility is now out there to be used. However, it is essential that this is not used as a substitute for the Environment Agency's Emergency Hot **0800 80 70 60** for any ongoing incidents that need to be investigated immediately. The Campaign For The Protection Of Welsh Fisheries can be contacted on their web site, www.cpwf.co.uk

COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT

**(More fish)*



initiative carried out last year, the Area

JUVENILE SALMONID MONITORING IN SW WALES

**(More fish)*



Juvenile salmonid monitoring has been carried out in South West Wales since 1984 to monitor the status of salmon and trout stocks. The programme aims to collect data to provide information on the status of stocks.

Salmon results have been more variable than recent data, however, densities of juvenile salmon recorded in 2009 show a substantial improvement on recent years in the majority of catchments! Significant upward trends in juvenile salmon numbers were evident in the Gwendraeths, Nevern, Taf and Tywi.

Key areas of concern are the Cleddaus and the Neath where the numbers of juvenile salmon recorded in 2009 are somewhat below those recorded in recent years. The Loughor, Ogmere and Ystwyth also show a declining trend in juvenile salmon numbers, though this trend was not significant.

The results of the surveys also show a widespread improvement of densities of juvenile trout and salmon relative to 2008 results. This may be an indication of a better spawning year, however the poor densities of juvenile fish recorded in 2008 are also likely to be attributable, at least in part, to the high flow conditions and poor capture efficiency.

Nevertheless, the **longer term trend** in juvenile trout densities still remains a concern. Juvenile trout populations have been decreasing markedly in the last 8 years in nearly all the catchments in the Area. Declines in overall trout densities have been noted in the Aeron, Cleddaus, Loughor, Nevern, Ogmere, Taf, Tywi and Ystwyth over this 8 year period.

Surveys were also carried out in the Aeron, Afan, Loughor and Rheidol catchments during 2009. The results of these surveys give an indication of the distribution of juvenile salmon and trout within these catchments. Habscore data also provide an assessment of the quality of the habitat in these rivers.

A report detailing the full results of the 2009 monitoring programme is available on request. Please contact Leila Thornton for further details.

For information on articles featured or other fisheries issues please contact:

Dave Charlesworth

Sustainable Fisheries Project Manager

dave.charlesworth@environment-agency.gov.uk

01792 325619

fisheries newsletter



Asiantaeth yr
Amgylchedd Cymru
Environment
Agency Wales

South West Wales – round up report for
2009/10 and a forward look.

April 2010