



Chelmer Canal Trust Newsletter

June 2025

Issue No 69



It's Summer! And therefore time for our Summer Newsletter!

We've packed this Newsletter with a heap of articles which we hope will appeal across the wide-ranging interests of our Chelmer Canal Trust membership. There are 14 pages of it for you to read and enjoy!

Thanks to everyone who has submitted an article for publication – we are very grateful. Of course, if you have an interest in something that you feel other Chelmer Canal Trust members might also find interesting, please send it to us (neil@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk).

What are you going to find in this Newsletter?

Well, Chas gives us a great description of the new Fish and Eel Pass at Langford while William muses over 'Adjacent Possibilities' (you'll have to read his article to get what that means). The theme of 'adjacent possibilities' is then continued in a description of two pieces of work undertaken in different places with a common theme – and it's not 'pennywort'! An interesting local development - Essex Waterways Ltd has become more independent from the IWA in forming The Essex Waterways Navigation Trust – read General Manager Dave Smart's message. Some interesting pics helpfully supplied by Chas and then a number of pieces on Pennywort (well what did you expect?!). Pennywort Patrol is back this year (sadly not quite the same as last year); our work parties continue with our scuba divers adding to our specialist equipment; and long-suffering coracleman Steve describes his Tedious Tidyings (your 'tidyings' are essential, Steve; please stick at it!). The Environment Agency are currently carrying out Fish Surveys along the Navigation and we've benefitted from 'hot off the press' news of their findings. Then there's 'Eels'. Who knew that there was a thriving commercial Eel Industry at Heybridge Basin for 40 years?! We aim to be as supportive of our CCT members as possible and, by popular demand, Agony Aunt, Aunty Bea Leigh, gives advice to a few members. And even hotter off the press, just as we were about to distribute this Newsletter, an Alert about another Invasive Species we could look out for - the Yellow-Seeded False-Pimpernel. (It's NOT scarlet!)

But there's nothing about Susan you say! The lighter Susan is safe and well and moored on the south bank at Heybridge Basin. Although she's been moving under her own power there's still work to be done. We've got most of the material needed to do some touch up work on her woodwork which is already being affected by the weather (anyone got an electric hand sander they can loan us?). And hopefully it won't be too long before the engine-installation is complete. And in the longer term she needs a cover to protect her from the worst excesses of the weather.

So, with that news of Susan hopefully having whetted your appetite for CCT news, please read on and enjoy!

Best wishes for the rest of the Summer from the Chelmer Canal Trust!

Neil

CCT Chair and CCT Trustee

Chas describes the Fish and Eel Pass recently installed at Langford

We need drinking water to exist, and much of it is extracted from our rivers. This is quite a challenge here in Essex, it being one of the driest counties in the UK. Rivers and pipelines are used to transport our water. Some of the water we use in Essex comes from the Ely Ouse via the EOTS system (Ely Ouse to Essex Transport Scheme). Water is pumped from the Ouse, eventually into the Rivers Stour and Pant, which flows into the river Blackwater. Using these rivers to transport our water saves having to install many miles of pipeline.

To ensure that there is enough water needed for extraction it is necessary to construct a weir to prevent it all going out to sea. The weir is a way of creating a reserve of raw water. Unfortunately this causes a problem for river life wanting to migrate upstream in the way that salmon do for example. This is not just fish, but more importantly in this area, young eels (elvers) that have drifted 4,000 miles here from the Sargasso sea, where they started their life.

In the last 40 years the eel population has declined by an estimated 98% and something had to be done. So, in 2009 new regulations came into force to address this problem. Essex and Suffolk Water, as part of its care for the environment, made plans to create a state-of-the-art fish and eel pass at Langford, near the Village Hall. It is one structure consisting of two channels allowing some of the river water to flow alongside the weir. One channel is for fish, the other one is for eels (young and old) swimming upstream. The work was completed in September 2024.



The channel for fish, on the right in the picture on the left, is an open one, with an enlarged area halfway along. The design of this is to form a pool of calmer water flow halfway up the slope, for the fish to rest there for a while should the need arise.

The other channel, on the left, for eels, is covered with a mesh to form a walkway to ease maintenance, but still open to the fresh air. There is no need for a rest area in this channel, because the flow of water is slowed down using peg tiles that the eels can negotiate by wiggling between the pegs while going upstream. (A peg tile is a plastic tile with pegs, much like fingers or sausage shaped bits of plastic sticking up).

At the top of the fish pass there is a camera, solar powered of course, for the Environment Agency to monitor the movement of fish going upstream.

Chas adds:

Many thanks to ESW for our visit on 29/4/2025. It's called the Ely Ouse to Essex Transfer Scheme and can transfer as much as 48 million litres of water per day between The Ely Ouse in Norfolk and The Stour, Colne and Blackwater Rivers in Essex. These in turn can supply the Essex reservoirs at Hanningfield, Abberton and Ardleigh, on which the inhabitants of Essex rely for their everyday water consumption.

William muses, maybe philosophically, about 'Adjacent Possibilities'.

It has been said that human progress is all about taking advantage of that which is close by, or the adjacent possibility. Most members of CCT and readers of this newsletter will either live relatively near to the Navigation, or have some sort of connection to the area, or perhaps fond memories of time spent beside the Chelmer. We value the Navigation, not just because of its inherent beauty, but because we can get to “there” from “here”.

But I am going to explore this concept of “adjacently possible” as an excuse for exploring a few otherwise unconnected musings. The thought for this article sprang from a comment from our Chair, Neil, reporting his adventures on social media. Someone had posted a report that on the Kennet and Avon canal, they used horses to pull the boats. “What a good idea.” To which he had responded about how common this practice had once been, including on the Chelmer. There was the celebrated horse Chelmsford Duke. In the days before the internal combustion engine, this was the sensible way to propel a canal boat in most places, and this was the way people thought it should be done. It is quite interesting to trace some of the first steps away from this model. Our own favourite historic vessel, Susan, represents the first attempt on the Chelmer. It is clear that those who commissioned her were not convinced that motorisation would work reliably enough. Her design included two large rudders and the provision to still be hauled by a horse. The inboard engine sits awkwardly in the middle of the boat, taking up valuable cargo space, and the propellor is not the easiest to clear of weed. Despite these design quirks, she did do the job. Once it had been established that engines were indeed the future, the next iteration of Chelmer lighters were very different beasts, with no rudders at all, and just a huge outboard motor mounted right on the stern, and much greater operational efficiency, but no possibility of being horse drawn.



Horse drawn barge at Beeleigh



Photo by Isla

If you are fortunate enough to visit the National Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port, you can see an alternative first step, as used on one of the other Essex waterways, the Lee and Stort. This was certainly an adjacent possibility - a literal “horse replacement”. A towpath tractor. This no doubt made perfect sense at the time. The man previously employed to lead the horse, could now drive the tractor, and no other changes would have been needed. It took another step in the thinking to realise that if the engine were moved from the towpath to the boat itself, the boat could be moved easily by just one person, rather than two, and there would be no tow ropes to bother with.

There is one canal in Norfolk which has never had a towpath at all. How could that have worked? You may remember in the last issue my report of visiting the North Walsham and Dilham Canal. This being connected to the Norfolk Broads, was plied by sailing wherries. The marshes around the Norfolk Broads would not have been suitable for horses, and it was probably not feasible to construct useable tow paths, so the same approach was taken with the canal, even when it crossed firmer ground. It remains the only canal in the country ever constructed as a “sailing canal”. This was their adjacent possibility; extending the range of the wherries already in use in the area.

You may also recall from the previous issue that, like the Chelmer, the North Walsham and Dilham Canal, is another navigation suffering from an invasion of floating pennywort. The Spring newsletter of their local canal trust describes efforts of volunteers to tackle and eradicate the invasive weed. It was interesting to read that their experience seems to be similar to our own a number of years ago.

“.... the Floating Pennywort seemed to be growing like a bramble, returning day after day. The channel from the Tonnage Bridge field to Smallburgh Junction was becoming blocked.”



A sobering reminder that we can't let our guard down when it comes to vigilance and bio-security, as the invasive weed is not far away and ready to return.

“When we first approached the great beds of Pennywort the succulent plant was standing high above a floating mat of 5mm thick rhizomes with vertical fine root hairs trailing in the water. We were harvesting three loads of Pennywort onto ‘SueB’ in a working day.”

They seem to be more cautious in Norfolk than we have been on the Chelmer with their removed weed.

“To store the weed securely we found a bank high enough that it would never flood to build a clamp some 15m long and 2m high. As I write the succulent clamp has collapsed to less than a metre in height.”

CCT was once told that any removed pennywort would have to be transported to a specialised hazardous waste facility, This turned out to be over cautious and impractical, but our approach of placing it beyond the reach of likely floods seems to have served us well.

There appears to be one other resource in Norfolk which in Essex seems elusive.

“The Trust was contacted by Liam Smith, Nature Recovery Officer of Norfolk County Council. His brief is to eradicate the Broads and adjacent waters of invasive species.”

The obvious question is, do we have an Essex Nature Recovery Officer? A quick internet search suggests that there should be one, but all the links eventually lead to a disappointing “404 Page not found” error on the Essex County Council website! Maybe this initiative has run into the Essex County Council bureaucratic weeds. In any event, the Chelmer will remain our own adjacent possibility, and our volunteers continue to be on the case. At the time of writing, the Navigation is sufficiently clear of Floating Pennywort, for now, to allow our volunteers to make progress with other adjacent possibilities, for protecting the Navigation's heritage which we care so much about.

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Maybe one of the Adjacent Possibilities referred to by William?

Our Chelmer Canal Trust Work Parties are generally aimed at managing Floating American Pennywort from the Navigation and its associated feeder streams and ditches. A loyal band of volunteers pitch up each month to remove Pennywort – as other articles in this Newsletter describe.

However, in mid-May, when considering the location for the June Work Party, it was clear that there wasn't sufficient need, anywhere along the Navigation, to run a work party (yes, very good news but how quickly things can change!). That gave us the opportunity to focus our efforts on other tasks that hadn't yet become top priority. And as it happened, a common theme, an adjacent possibility, emerged for two of them - ensuring that two people who were key to the ongoing existence of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation continued to be remembered. Richard Coates – the engineer who oversaw the construction of the Navigation. And Dudley Courtman, a true friend of the Navigation who did much to ensure it remained a valuable local asset.

Our plan had been to have two groups. One clearing the nettles around Dudley's bench and treating the wood: and a second group clearing vegetation from around Richard Coates' tomb.

But the best laid plan and all that. Torrential rain on the relevant Saturday morning meant that it would be futile to try to apply any wood-preserver to Dudley's bench. So that group's work was cancelled.



Leaving the two volunteers who were to do the work on the tomb at All Saints Church in Springfield Green, Chelmsford. It's two years since we last cleared the grave (which was a huge improvement in the 20 years it had been before that!) And mother nature had done her best to return it to its concealed state.

Whereas there was a very good reason to abandon the work on Dudley's bench, there was no good reason why waterproofs shouldn't be donned and work done in the All Saints graveyard.



So, despite the challenges of thick bramble and pouring rain, the task commenced.



The work progressed well with all sides of the tomb being smartened up and finally a much-improved view - and hopefully Richard Coates can be more easily recognised and remembered.

Not only had the weather improved, our volunteers were invited for refreshments with the church's own graveyard work party. Another lovely group of volunteers.



However, the story doesn't stop there! Our two volunteers who were to have dealt with removal of nettles around Dudley's bench, and treating the wood, were nothing if not loyal!

Within a few days of the cancelled work party one had returned to work on the nettles that had started to invade the area around the bench (and thanks to Essex Waterways for their help with transport and equipment). Here are the 'before' and 'after' pics.



Left. Before the cutting back of the encroaching vegetation.

Right. After it had been cut back. Looking good!



And what do you know, a few days after that another of our loyal volunteers, often to be seen walking around the Chelmer Valley, got busy with the wood treatment and the bench was transformed with two coats of the finest wood preserver.

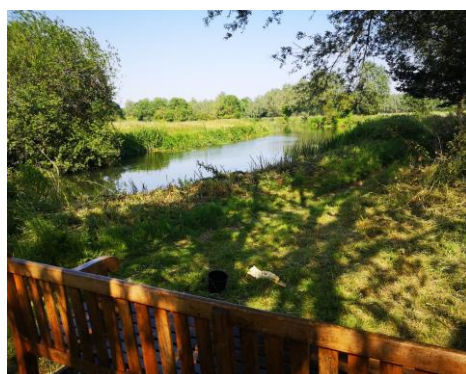


Before and after wood treatment

Looking even better!



Excellent work! And now, due to some vegetation clearance along part of the bank, there's a clear view down the Navigation towards Ulting Church. Please find the opportunity to walk up to Dudley's Bench from Hoe Mill Lock, sit on the bench, enjoy the view, and remember Dudley Courtman – A Friend of the Navigation. And maybe drop into All Saints Church Springfield Green, and say hello to Richard Coates.



An interesting development in the history of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation as Essex Waterways Ltd transforms into the Essex Waterways Navigation Trust.

Here's a recent email from David Smart, General Manager:

"I wanted to share a really important milestone in the evolution of Essex Waterways Ltd and the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. Thanks to the vision and drive of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) in setting up, supporting and owning Essex Waterways Ltd (EWL) over the last 2 decades, 2025 will see us celebrate our 20th Anniversary.

Having initially relied heavily on IWA for support in so many ways and for such a long time we have, over the last couple of years, been steadily migrating many of those business functions in-house to our headquarters at Paper Mill Lock. We have now reached the stage where we have become almost completely independent. As such we have taken the step to form Essex Waterways Navigation Trust (EWNT) as our own charity and the ownership of EWL has now passed to it. This effectively separates EWL legally and financially from the IWA.

EWL will continue to operate as the trading subsidiary, raising funds for the charity, whose remit will be to maintain the Navigation.

Daily functions within the organisation will remain largely the same, with most changes taking place in the background and administratively."

Chas can always be relied upon to come up with some interesting and relevant pics. Here are a few he's sent in recently:

Firstly, from around about 1930, pics of a Norwegian Cargo ship arriving in the Blackwater Estuary to offload timber onto a smaller vessel which would come into the Basin.



And from the 1970s, a pic of anglers fishing on the Long Pond just above Heybridge Basin. That first shed on the opposite side of the Navigation is recognisable today. Note the lighter loaded with timber.



Pennywort – yet again. It just doesn't go away!

1. Pennywort patrol

Pennywort Patrol in 2024 was hugely successful and probably accounts for why, to date, Pennywort has been at its lowest levels along the Navigation for many years. All of the indications were that, given the success of the project, we would also receive funding for Pennywort Patrol in 2025, allowing, again, a paid Coordinator to be employed. To our surprise, and that of several of the agencies we collaborate with, our funding applications to a specialist fund were turned down. Despite being given assurances that our applications were ideal for a new fund that was being set up, and to which we were encouraged to apply, at the time of writing that fund is still not open for applications. A HUGE disappointment.

However, volunteers from Pennywort Patrol 2024 weren't going to stop that lack of funding from being able to deliver such valuable work. And a rota of totally volunteer-operated Pennywort Patrols for 2025 has been created. Pennywort Patrol 2025 is underway!

Whereas Pennywort Patrol 2024 was a weekly event, the availabilities of volunteers has meant that it's been scaled down to one Patrol about every fortnight. Two volunteers patrol a stretch of the Navigation, picking out whatever Pennywort they can and noting any larger rafts that will need the attention of a work party.



This particular Patrol was looking good for the first few hours – Hoe Mill to Rushes Lock and down to Ricketts Lock. Nothing! But sadly, just as the threatening rain got worse, and thoughts of an earlier-than-expected return home came to mind, an area that had been cleared recently (see coracleman Steve's article) bucked the trend and there was enough emerging Pennywort to keep the Patrollers picking it out for a couple of hours! Damn! But that's what Pennywort Patrol is about.

Another recent Patrol was equally successful with valuable work being undertaken between Heybridge Basin and the Beeleigh Flood gates. Our plan is that Patrols continue through the summer months, the intention being to remove whatever can be done by Patrollers and inform the highest-priority locations for our monthly Work Parties. Thanks to our amazing volunteers! Let us know if you'd be interested in joining Pennywort Patrol.



2. Monthly Work Parties

A staple of our management of Pennywort – our monthly work Parties continue. Started by Dudley Courtman some 22 years ago, with very few cancellations and with the majority of Work Parties being about 'Pennywort work', volunteers at our Work Parties have played, and continue to play, a vital part in the management of the invasive weed. Numbers have varied, but we probably have about the same number of volunteers attending current work parties as we had at the first ones in 2003!



June 2003



May 2025

We've developed and refined our techniques over the years! Some will remember us throwing rectangles of wood with 6" nails in them over the top of rafts of Pennywort and hauling them in. Occasionally a volunteer would turn up in their own boat and tow Pennywort to a lock to be removed. We've been through any number of Keep Nets and probably some of our most popular additions have been our 'Red Poles' with grubber, rake and net attachments.



Now, thanks to one of the divers from Chelmsford Scuba Diving Club (who have become regulars at our work parties) there's a further new piece of equipment designed to hold the small strands of Pennywort that the divers tease from the bankside vegetation. We introduce the AndersonWeedHolder Mk 1! (on the right with its Inventor using it!)



3. Coracle Man Steve is a regular at our Work Parties and a regular contributor to our Newsletter. Here's Steve's 'Tedious Tidyings by Coracle' at Ricketts Lock

This seems to be a Pennywort (PW) nursery for the Long Pond. So, as the lead operative in the "Chelmer Canal Trust Coracle Display Team", it has fallen on me to remove all the bite-sized strands of weed from the weir to the lock. Not a great distance I know but it does take all morning to do it.

Thankfully Essex Waterways have been there and removed all of the aquatic vegetation using a back hoe. Looks extreme but so necessary, as the PW does like to hide away then multiply when you're not looking. Previously using a weedlifter on this part of the river the weed couldn't be totally removed from the water, so ended growing back down to its preferred habitat. "cunning stuff"

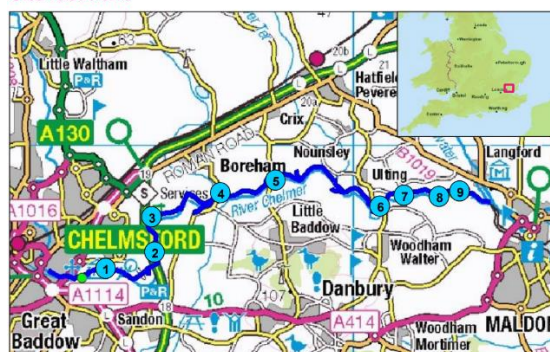


Now for a favour or plea - when you find yourself in Ricketts Lock, or any other lock for that matter, if you see some PW please remove it if you can. Just lift it out and throw it on the bank away from the water, it will soon rot down. No matter how small, "every little helps." I'm sure most of us do this anyway, the Navigation seems to be clear, but we need to keep on top of this menace.

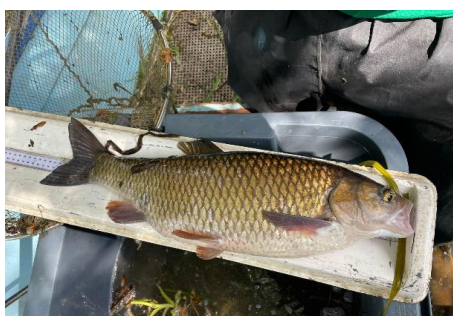
A colleague in the Environment Agency, Ben Norrington, has sent us this Report about the EA's routine fish monitoring surveys carried out in June 2025 on the Navigation.

This year the environment agency is conducting fish surveys on the Navigation, which gives not only detailed fish population data but habitat evaluation and the changes over many years. From this data we make informed decisions on the management of the river basin and analyse the ecological health of the rivers. Data is also used for angling, education and regulation.

Site locations

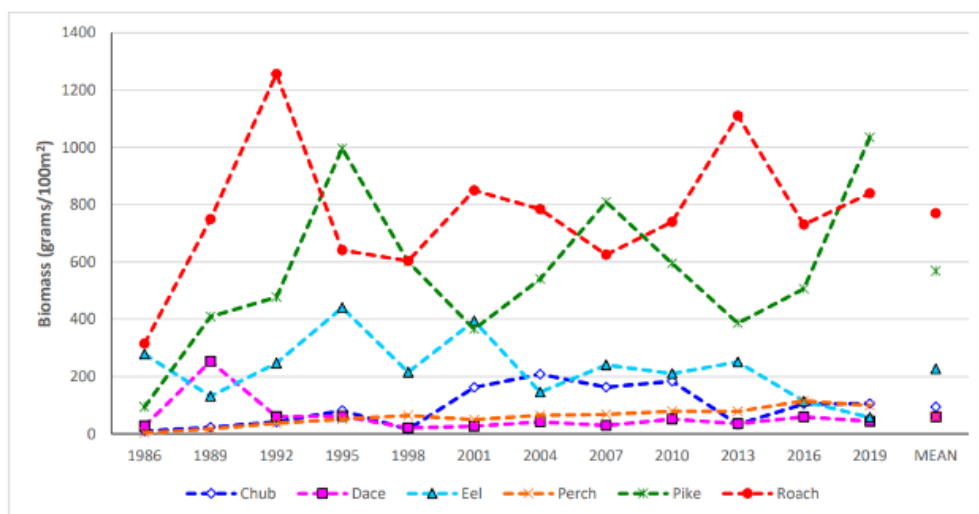


Above is a large Tench caught at Sugar Mill and below a Chub caught at Hoe Mill Cut



Survey method. All sites were surveyed using electric fishing methodology with a minimum of two separate passes at each site to measure catch depletion. The site is segregated by nets and are usually 100m long sections. The aim is to achieve a reduction of at least 50% in the total number of fish caught, per species, in the first pass. A third pass may be undertaken if a depletion is not achieved. The Carle and Strub (C&S) depletion method is used to derive population estimates for the surveyed stretch of river. This method is based on rate of catch depletion between the first and subsequent pass catches.

Fish population density and biomass estimates for all species: C&B Navigation (1986-2019)



Population biomass estimates (grams of fish per 100m²) across all survey sites since 1986.

2025 has started off showing similar trends to previous years but notably having extremely low numbers of Eels, again indicating why they are becoming endangered. Sites' plant life and available habitat is excellent and larger angling target species are prevalent across the surveyed sites.

The full reports for all our fish surveys this year will be available in Spring 2026. For the full reports from previous years please contact the environment agency.

Talking of eels...!

Eels have been mentioned several times in this Newsletter. They don't only crop up in articles here. Volunteers on our work parties will inevitably have ensured that elvers brought on board when we pull out rafts of Pennywort are returned to their watery home. Talks we give to ours and other groups often include pictures of the eel tanks that were once in Heybridge Basin, along with eels being put into bins to go off to the fish markets. There's even a tall tale one Trip Boat skipper tells about Elephant Corner (the sharp bend downstream from Paper Mill Lock) having been a corruption of the name of the place an event he claims once took place there – the eel event at Eel Event Corner!

So we have eels from two perspectives. Those that started life in the Sargasso Sea, naturally found their way to the Blackwater Estuary, climbed up eel passes into the Navigation, and which we see today, although sadly in declining numbers. And eels that came through Heybridge lock in ships during the days when there was a commercial trade in them.

The eel trade goes back a long way! An article in the Maldon Nub News in 2021 describes how eels for the Billingsgate Fish Market were supplied by the Dutch in the 1400s. In 1928 the Kuijten Company made Heybridge Basin a major centre for the import of eels. The company's two boats, 'Hans 2' and 'Helene', could each store forty tons of eels, transported live to keep them fresh. Of course they had to be taken to Billingsgate promptly and it is reported that a Mr Wakelin of Goldhanger Road would leave on the transport lorry, with the eels packed into boxes, at 3.00 am, and return back mid-afternoon. Eighty boxes formed each two-ton load.

With a decline in the availability of eels from Europe the company sourced eels from across the world including as far away as New Zealand and Australia. However, with fewer eels being available and costs rising the Kuitjen Company closed in 1968, ending a business that had employed many local people and which had been at Heybridge Basin for 40 years.

There's a fascinating piece of film footage that has been preserved by the East Anglian Film Archive. It gives even more detail to what has been described in the article above. Take a look at it by [clicking here](#). Those who know Heybridge Basin will recognise a number of views that remain to this day.



Having been so popular in our Winter Newsletter our own Chelmer Canal Trust Agony Aunt, Bea Leigh, has returned to give more free advice to members who have sent in emails and letters:

Dear Agony Aunt Bea. Please help. My husband goes out paddleboarding on the Navigation quite frequently. That's fine by me. But then, when he comes back, there's this long rigmarole of looking through everything, cleaning it all down - board and clothing - and then making sure it's all dried carefully. Is this fuss really necessary? Is he trying to hide something? Tania from Tolleshunt

Bea responds: Tania! It sounds to me like you've got the dream man! He's being serious about Check. Clean. Dry ([click here](#)), ensuring that invasive plants and animals don't get carried from one place to another on his kit. There are all sorts of seeds and little critters that can live for ages in the folds of damp clothing. Making sure they aren't able to be transferred elsewhere makes him a star man!

Dear Agony Aunt Bea. You were really helpful when I wrote to you about my husband's interest in Peregrine Falcons. Turns out it really was feathered birds he was out looking for! But now he's making this big fuss that he's heard some cuckoos in several places along the Chelmer Valley. Isn't that a bit over the top? When we were kids we didn't think twice about Cuckoos. Come April they were always there. Chloe from Colchester.

Bea responds: Chloe darling. Keep up with the facts. He's right to be pleased that he's heard cuckoos. Since the early 1980s Cuckoo numbers have dropped by 65%. It has been suggested that declines in its hosts or climate-induced shifts in the timing of breeding of its hosts could have reduced the number of nests that are available for cuckoos to parasitize. Another indication of global warming maybe? Stay cool, Chloe.

Dear Agony Aunt Bea. My girlfriend has become interested in sub aqua. That's ok with me. But some Saturdays she goes off to what she says are Work Parties. Sounds dodgy to me. Who has a party on a Saturday morning? Brian from Baddow

Bea responds: What a shame you seem to be mistrusting of your girlfriend when she's involved in such a worthwhile activity Brian. Take a look at the Work Parties section of the Chelmer Canal Trust website. You'll see examples of the brilliant work the scuba divers are doing on the CCT Work Parties, ridding the Navigation of Pennywort. Why not go along and give her some support. Spotters on the bank are always welcome.

Dear Agony Aunt Bea. I've just met a new chap. It all seemed to be going well until I overheard him on the phone chuckling with one of his mates and talking about going off to rub Willow! I don't know who she is. Should I confront him. Or what? Sarah from Springfield

Bea responds: Bless your funny little heart Sarah. My bet is that the Willow being referred isn't another woman but the willow trees planted along the Navigation. They are planted in the Spring as unrooted willow whips and after about 15 - 20 years they'll have grown big enough to be cut down to make cricket bats. In order to have long trunks with no blemishes the sideshoots are rubbed off to prevent them becoming side branches. Trust your man, bat on his side, and ask if you can go along and help!

This came in from the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat just hours before we were due to start distributing this Newsletter. You don't get much hotter news than this!

The GB Non-Native Species Secretariat is our 'go to' organisation for all 'alien species', including, of course, Floating American Pennywort.

They've asked for our help in looking out for and recording sightings of a 'new' species – the Yellow-Seeded False Pimpernel (*Lindernia dubia*), an invasive non-native species that is new to Great Britain and was recently detected in Pulborough, West Sussex.

Yellow-Seeded False Pimpernel is an annual plant of wetland habitats, that spreads along waterways via contaminated equipment (Check; Clean; Dry is so important) and could potentially be spread by waterfowl. It is already invasive in parts of Europe and poses a risk to native species and habitats. It could make a happy home along the Navigation!



The Non-Native Species Secretariat are keen to find out whether Yellow-Seeded False Pimpernel is found at any other sites in Great Britain, and are asking for our help in looking out for this species. If you spot it let us know and we'll get it recorded (neil@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk). Growth and flowering times are not known for certain, but plants may be seen from May and flowers from June to October. You can view and download the 'Alert' poster above by [clicking here](#). There's a useful ID sheet [here](#). Here's some of the info from the ID sheet:

Yellow-seeded false-pimpernel	
Scientific name: <i>Lindernia dubia</i> Also known as: Moist bank pimpernel Native to: North and South America Habitat: Riverbanks, tidal marshes, pond and lake margins, and wet meadows An annual herb growing an erect, branching stem up to 30 cm tall. Leaves are oppositely arranged, vary in size and shape, from lance-shaped to oval, toothed or not, and are under one to over three cm long. Flowers emerge from upper leaf axils. The flower is white to blue to purple, forming a tube shape ending in a pair of lips, with the lower lip having three distinct lobes. Only established in one location in Great Britain (GB). Invasive in much of Europe and Asia where it can proliferate in natural habitats and outcompete native species.	
Key ID Features	
Margin toothless or with few widely spaced shallow teeth Flowers borne singly on long stalks Palmate leaf veins Leaves stalkless, hairless, glossy	Blue/violet tube-shaped flowers Opposite leaves Flower has three distinct lower lobes

While we are talking about 'new' invasive species you've probably heard of the problems the Yellow Legged (aka Asian) hornet is causing, having moved into the UK in 2016.



Keep an eye out for this little rascal too! It's a highly effective predator of insects, including honey bees and other beneficial species. A single Yellow-Legged Hornet colony can produce an average of 6,000 individuals in one season. From July onwards they hover around the entrances to bee hives, catching honey bees as they return, removing the wings, head and abdomen, and returning to their nest with the protein-rich thorax to feed their brood. As of 27th June there have been 45 sightings of the Yellow-Legged Hornet in the UK in 2025.

Are you reading this Newsletter but not a member of the Chelmer Canal Trust?

If this Newsletter has helped you to learn more about the Trust, and about some of the things in which we are involved, and you are not yet a member, we'd love to welcome you. You can join online or by post. [Click here to get started.](#)

Are you reading this Newsletter in hard copy rather than electronically?

Please let us know if you could receive our Newsletters via email rather than snailmail. We are happy to keep printing and posting your copy, but it is considerably more expensive to do so than emailing it to you (especially as the Editor includes more and more pictures!)

Would you like more information about helping by becoming a Chelmer Canal Trust Committee Member?

We are always on the lookout for more people to help on the committee. If you think that might be something you could be involved in please email the Chair here: neil@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk

Are you interested in joining one of our Work Parties?

Contact Work Party organiser Neil: neil@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk

Would you be willing to write something for the Winter Newsletter?

We want to make our Newsletters as interesting and relevant as possible. If you have an idea for an article please get in touch. Contact the Editor: neil@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk

Do you want to contact us or keep in touch with us?

Visit our website: <https://www.chelmercanaltrust.co.uk/cct.htm>.

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Contact us

By Snailmail: c/o Windmill Pasture, Little Waltham Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 7TG.

By Email: enquiries@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk

