



Chelmer Canal Trust Newsletter

December 2025

Issue No 70



Our Chelmer Canal Trust Winter Newsletter – something that, we hope, will bring warmth to your life during the cold, dull, dark days of winter!

Yet again we've put together what we hope you will find is an interesting and varied set of articles that have relevance to the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, the Chelmer Valley and the Chelmer Canal Trust.

As always, 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, we'd love to hear from you.

So, what can we whet your appetite with that you will find later in this issue?

Firstly, David Williams took us at our word and responds to an article about the commercial eel industry at Heybridge, described in the last Newsletter, by telling us about the natural eels' lifecycle. Fascinating. And William reports on a Nature Recovery and Biodiversity Conference he attended on behalf of the Trust. It is important to us to keep in touch and network with others with similar interests. Coracle enthusiast and aficionado Steve, who has written about his own coracles in previous editions tells us about the annual Bures Coracle Regatta.

Having recently attended a meeting where it was reported that the Chelmer Valley is practically free of mink (what brilliant news!) gave us a great opportunity to invite Water Vole and Mink expert Darren Tansley of the Essex Wildlife Trust to give us the latest report on Mink Eradication in Essex. There are three more articles in this Newsletter that follow the same sort of 'pest' theme. The latest data on the increasing problem of the Yellow Legged Hornet – that's the nasty critter that threatens the future of honey bees. More about the Cuckoo. Not a pest but a bit of a predator. And for gardeners a number of reminders and tips about ways to prevent plants that should only be in gardens from escaping into the wild by being Plant Wise.

A CCT Newsletter wouldn't be complete without some pics from Chas. And in no way associated (well, we hope not), our own CCT Agony Aunt is here again. And we have to say, receiving some raunchy messages from CCT members.

Also, a personal reflection from me as I try not to let my blood pressure go too high when I hear some talk about the Navigation as 'The Canal'! Arrgghhhh! And we give up-to-date news on Susan.

Just in case you don't know who we are as CCT Board members, and what we do - and it's always good to put a face to a name - we've included something about the Chelmer Canal Trust as a Company and a Charity, along with the 'rogues gallery' of the Trustees.

As always, we hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter. We always appreciate feedback – what you like, anything you dislike, what else we could include – so please let us know.

Best wishes for the Festive Season, and for 2026, from the Chelmer Canal Trust!

Neil

CCT Chair and CCT Trustee

David Williams tells us about non-commercial eels.

In the July Issue of the Newsletter, the article entitled "Talking of eels" devotes itself mainly to the Dutch importing eels into Heybridge Basin, for 40 years, neglecting those eels that naturally found themselves in the Rivers Blackwater and Chelmer.

Brown or Silver Eels, *Anguilla Vulgaris* (*Anguilla* is Latin for "little serpent") were first found by marine scientists in 1922 breeding in the Sargasso Sea, off the East Coast of America.

The eels breed at a depth of some 1200 feet. The female eel is reputed to lay up to 20,000 eggs after which she dies. The eggs hatch into tiny, leaf-shaped larvae called leptocephalus, gradually ascending to the surface and drifting northwards in the Gulf Stream. Some proceed Northwest to the coast of America, and others across the North Atlantic to Europe. Upon reaching the European continental shelf, the larvae transform into transparent "glass eels". After three to four years these glass eels are 3 to 4 inches long, and they reach our rivers, where they turn black. At this stage they can swim upstream, and have the capability of swarming up the rough faces of lock gates, etc. In the early 1960's these could be seen at Langford, as a black shiny mass, in their many thousands. Living at Mill Cottage alongside the Langford Cut, from 1963 to 1967, I saw them each year. Those elvers found currently in plants such as Pennywort, indicate there are low numbers still reaching England

Eels that found themselves in the storage reservoirs at Langford were removed every 6 years when the reservoirs were drained to remove the silt. The water level would eventually be reduced to 18 inches and the eels would be caught and sold on. Eels were also unintentionally pumped in the raw water to Hanningfield Reservoir. From which, when mature, they would make their way down Sandon Brook, to the River Chelmer, and then the tidal river.

At that time, with large numbers arriving, there were no facilities built in to assist them. It was only after the number of eels visibly fell, from the 1950's, that assistance was built in, via eel-passes, to assist them.

In August 2013, when Chairman of Maldon District Council, I was informed of an organisation based upon the River Severn that trapped thousands of small elvers as they came up the river, and distributed them to schools around England for the children to release locally. I was invited to witness some 3000 elvers being given to the school children at Purleigh to release in a local lake. In 2021 some 150,000 glass eels were found trapped between barriers on the River Severn near Tewksbury



While in fresh water for 6 to 16 years males take 6 to 9 years and females 9 to 16 years to mature, dependent upon food supply. They are known as a brown eels, and when sexually mature turn silver. When in this condition the mature eel migrates back to the sea, mainly on stormy nights in the autumn, occasionally across fields to the river, back to its breeding ground. This journey can take six months as opposed to the two years it took as an elver to reach the rivers. Their diet is very wide ranging including other fish, fish eggs, worms etc. anything it can scavenge. A 2lb eel caught in 1891 adjacent to the Basin lock, contained in its stomach, nine small perch and a rat. The largest known eel arriving at Heybridge Basin weighed 8.75 lbs. There are very few things that eat eels in the wild, mainly herons, cormorants, and other large seabirds in freshwater, and large fish and seabirds at sea. Most eels are eaten by humans, in various dishes, such as jellied being the most popular.

William reports on a recent conference – “Nature Recovery, Biodiversity and your Parish.”

With CCTs increasing focus on the environmental aspects of The Navigation, it was felt to be important that The Trust was represented at the Rural Council Community of Essex conference on Saturday 13th September. Even having researched the RCCE online before the event, I was not entirely sure what to expect. The conference pack had listed the target audience as “Parish Councils, Village Hall Management Committees, Community groups/activists”. CCT falls into the latter category, and so with the warning of “Limited availability” there was no time to be lost in securing a place. Accordingly registered and with the fee paid, I turned up on the appointed date. However, the limit was not reached and the event was moved from the palatial Hatfield Peverel Village Hall, to the RCCE’s slightly smaller, though still impressive, offices in Feering. The event seemed nonetheless well attended with delegates mostly from parish councils across Essex. It was soon clear that CCT are comparatively focussed in our interest in the waterway environment, while probably covering a much wider geographical area than any one parish council.

After a brief introduction by RCCE Director, Nick Shuttsworth, the delegates were treated to an inspirational talk from Professor Jules Pretty OBE, University of Essex. He advocated strongly for the benefits of telling good stories for leading the way to real action to benefit the environment and our collective wellbeing, and cited many examples of how the stories we tell influence the actions we take. He challenged us all with a list of 30 possible actions we could take by 2030 to enable each of us to save one tonne of carbon emissions per year.

Tim Simpson of Essex County Council gave a presentation about the management of surface water and flood alleviation through sustainable drainage and green infrastructure. Essex has many challenges with the rapid increase in urbanisation, and the threats of both flooding and at other times drought. It seems that it is easier to get funding for capital projects, than it is to maintain the infrastructure once built. The focus today is on nature-based solutions rather than “hard engineering”. These can include tree planting, and local projects such as Community Rain Gardens. Green infrastructure has the potential to absorb water in times of high rainfall, alleviating the flood risk, and then releasing it slowly in times of drought.

Next was the first break out session. I had tried to choose sessions with a waterside theme, and this session was hosted by PACE Manningtree. Their acronym stands for Practical Actions for Climate and the Environment. It is impossible not to be impressed by this group. Based in an apparently small and out of the way corner of Essex they have assembled an impressive array of local environmental projects. Of particular interest to me was their testing and improving bathing water quality, through the use of biological surveys recording indicator species of environment health. But their work is much wider than this, also encompassing sustainable energy and transport, locally grown food and nature recovery. They are an example of what can be achieved when the right people come together and work with shared passion.



After a short break for lunch, the sessions resumed with Dr Simon Lyster’s presentation of the opportunities for local bodies stemming from the Essex Local Nature recovery Strategy. This includes new funding sources for local initiatives. There is a lot to digest here as the new thinking promotes the role of local groups in implementing the strategy on the ground, or maybe in our case, the water. Having a nature recovery strategy is a statutory duty on local authorities, but it appears that Essex wanted to be ahead of the curve, and in particular don’t want it to be a “council thing” but a response to local initiatives from parishes, local groups and farmers.

There were other break-out sessions, where local groups shared their experiences and insights, but sadly it was not possible to attend them all.

There were brief opportunities to chat with other delegates. It was noticeable that I didn't manage to meet many parish representatives from the Chelmer Valley. I was surprised and a little disappointed by this, but no doubt the pressures on parish councillors' attentions are numerous and diverse. Several delegates were interested to hear about The Navigation and our work, but the mild frustration of encountering surprise at the very existence of the Navigation was definitely a thing at this event. Maybe not so surprising with the wide audience from all over the county. This seems to place even more importance on the work of CCT covering the whole Chelmer and Blackwater conservation area crossing the boundaries of several parishes along the way.

There was much which was thought provoking, and attendance at this event led to a very short notice invitation to join the second online meeting of the "Green Essex Network Great Collaboration" which I did a few days later. It will take some digesting, research and, no doubt, discussion before we can know what will come out of this for CCT, but it seems to have been an interesting and worthwhile exercise to be involved in.

Coracleman Steve describes the Bures Coracle Regatta

This year was our 20th coracle regatta at Bures recreation ground on the River Stour. Which is quite surprising as we do not have a coracling tradition in East Anglia.

This picture is from the 2018 regatta which was one of the most memorable/hectic. There was a party on the bank opposite, canoes and coracle racing. A great time had by all. It might look mad but generally everyone is sensible and out to have a good time, whilst looking out for one another.



Sadly over the years some of the regular coraclers have passed. Some of them were also builders, leaving our numbers down. To be fair we keep the advertising low key as we only have limited resources to cope with crowds. The good news is that there is still plenty of interest, from young and old alike, in learning how to use coracles. I especially enjoy introducing the idea that anyone can make a coracle, and once they have the knack, can enjoy being afloat on the river.

The regatta is run by Catherine from the River Stour Trust and myself. It is a free laid-back event, with the focus on letting the general public have a go and meet local coraclers. Next year's event is on Sat 8th August. [Click here to go to the website](#) If anyone wants some advice on building one please get in touch with me through the Chelmer Canal Trust web site. Or [click here](#) to go to the Coracle Society's website.

Mink.

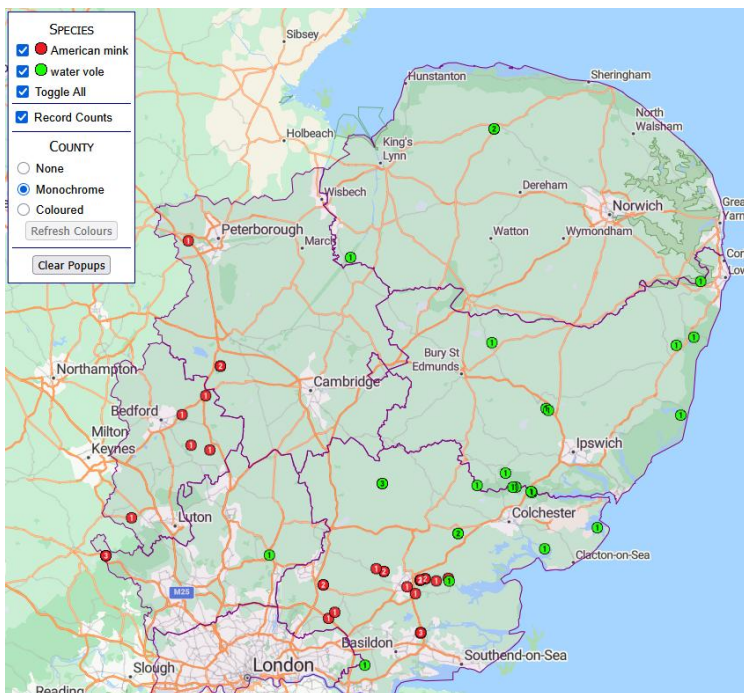
We often refer to the Invasive plants, and especially Floating American Pennywort, along the Navigation. But long before Pennywort had become established another American Invasive was on the scene. American Mink had established a wild population from escapes and deliberate releases by 'animal rights' protesters from fur farms in the 1950s and 1960s, and their numbers have spread throughout the country, including Essex of course. They are semi-aquatic and can be found along rivers, canals, and coastal areas, but will also live away from water where prey is available. They are a significant threat to native species, especially the Water Vole, which is under threat of extinction due to mink predation. They also prey on fish, birds, and eggs.

Here, friend of the Chelmer Canal Trust, Darren Tansley reports on the impressive success of mink eradication in East Anglia.

Since 2001 there has been a concerted effort across the Eastern Region to control mink for the benefit of native wildlife, especially the endangered Water Vole.



In 2021 The Eastern Region Mink Control Group wound itself up in order to set up an independent charity, Waterlife Recovery East, that could work towards a new goal of total mink eradication. Using smart rafts that don't require daily checks - because they text and email the coordinator when an animal goes inside - it became easier to roll out a 365 day-per-year trapping network at scale. Norfolk and Suffolk were chosen for the pilot and smart rafts installed with a plan to remove mink within 10 years. To the astonishment of all the target was achieved in just 18 months and with the area remaining mink free throughout the following year mink were finally declared extinct across the 6000km² pilot area in October 2023.



In 2024 Essex Wildlife Trust's Rivers & Landscape Team secured £0.52m for a five-year project to eradicate invasive mink in Essex and track the recovery of Water Voles. Co-ordinated by Lottie Lewis (Waterlife Recovery Trust) and Louise Dennis (Essex Wildlife Trust) the project achieved a phenomenal 92% drop in the mink population in just 18 months, moving us very close to our Regional goal of a mink-free East Anglia. Now we are starting to see the first signs of a water vole recovery. Water voles have been found this summer at Fordham and Chappel on the River Colne where there had been no records since the Covid lockdown halted our mink control efforts. And another water vole at Feering on the River Blackwater may be the first confirmed sighting there in 20 years.

If we follow the pattern seen in Suffolk and Norfolk over the past four years we may have Water Voles back along most of our rivers by 2030.

For now we are concentrating on the last population of mink in an ever-decreasing area of mid and south Essex. The River Chelmer has seen the most captures during the summer 2025 mink dispersal period, so the Navigation is still a priority. But with numbers dwindling to a trickle the job is nearing completion.

If you spot a mink on any river or lake then please report your sighting on the Waterlife Recovery Trust website [click here](#) or contact Darren Tansley at Essex Wildlife Trust darrent@essexwt.org.uk immediately so we can take action.

More 'Invasives'! This time the Yellow Legged hornet aka The Asian Hornet.

We've mentioned this little blighter before. The signs are not looking good! Another invasive species?

Nests of the yellow-legged hornet in the UK have increased significantly, with 161 nests confirmed in 2025 so far compared to 72 in 2023. This rapid rise follows a smaller increase from 2022 to 2023 and highlights the species' potential to become established in the UK despite eradication efforts.

- **2022:** Only 16 nests were discovered.
- **2023:** There was a sharp increase to 72 nests, mainly concentrated in the South East.
- **2024:** The number of nests was 24, and there were 71 sightings.
- **2025:** The number of confirmed nests has already reached 161 by November 21st, and 544 credible sightings have been reported.

This dramatic increase in 2025 and the first evidence of second-generation hornets being produced in the UK raise concerns about the potential for the species to become established.

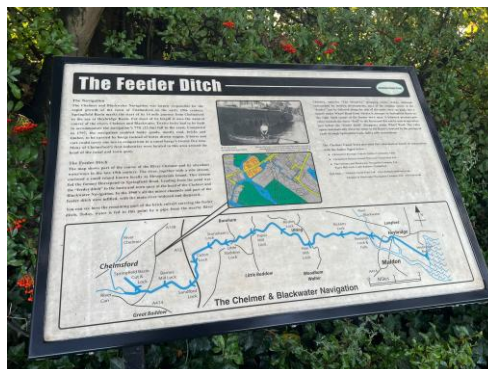
More information and details of previous sightings can also be found on the [website of the National Bee Unit](#). Consider downloading the Asian Hornet Watch app. It's available for both Android and iPhone.

A big shout out to Chas!

Some years ago we placed Interpretation Boards at key places along the Navigation, explaining local Navigation features. Some have been removed, some have disappeared. One that remains and receives a regular dose of TLC from Chas is the Feeder Ditch board in Chelmsford. Thanks for keeping it clean Chas!

Before Chas gets to work. Mucky birds.

And afterwards. Fresh as a rose!



And talking of Chas. Always to be relied upon for an interesting pic, here's one he's sent in – the Mill on the River Ter at Hatfield Peverel. Thought to be taken in about 1908 (Chas claims the photo wasn't taken by him!).



The Chelmer and Blackwater – River? Navigation? Canal? Neil's personal point of view.

There are several things that make my blood pressure rise from 'high normal' to 'severe hypertension'. Takeaway food containers being thrown out of car windows, especially when there's a bin nearby. People with no children parking in 'Family' spaces in car parks. Drivers in the middle lane of a motorway when the inside lane is clear. I could go on (I've only just started!) Here's one more 'blood pressure issue'. The Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation being referred to as "the Canal". (OK, I know I'm on dodgy territory here because I'm Chair of the Chelmer CANAL Trust. That's another irk but I'm parking that one for now.)

Tell me if I'm wrong, but most of the Navigation is NOT a canal. Please explain I hear you say. Well, here's some research I've done (thanks Google) which I hope underlines my take on the issue.

A Navigation is an existing natural water course that has been made navigable, often through the installation of locks and the modification of the original course. Navigations have variable flow rates and the water in them eventually discharges into the sea. We have the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, created from the two rivers in its name. There are of course others. For example, the Calder and Hebble Navigation, Lea and Stort Navigation, Wey Navigation, all named after the original rivers that were modified to create them. A Navigation fairly close to us is the Stowmarket Navigation, named after the town at the top of the Navigation and formed from the River Gipping. Not just close to us geographically, but also close to us in terms of the engineering. The Engineer appointed to overcome previous mess-ups was one John Rennie with his surveyor Richard Coates. Yes, they perfected the art of creating a Navigation in Suffolk before coming down to Essex to modify the Chelmer and the Blackwater rivers into The Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation (note: 'Blackwater' NOT 'Black Water'!).

A canal, on the other hand is an artificial waterway, created by humans, that has been located where no waterway existed previously and designed to facilitate transport and irrigation. Canals are engineered to meet human needs. Possibly the best-known canal in the UK is the 137 mile Grand Union Canal

The Romans created the first UK canals, such as the Fossdyke and Car Dyke, around AD 50, for purposes like irrigation, drainage, and navigation. However, the first widespread, nationwide canal network developed during the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, driven by industrial and commercial interests. The Sankey Canal was the first British canal of the Industrial Revolution, opening in 1757. The Bridgewater Canal followed in 1761 and proved to be highly profitable. The majority of the network was built in the "Golden Age" of canals, between the 1770s and the 1830s.

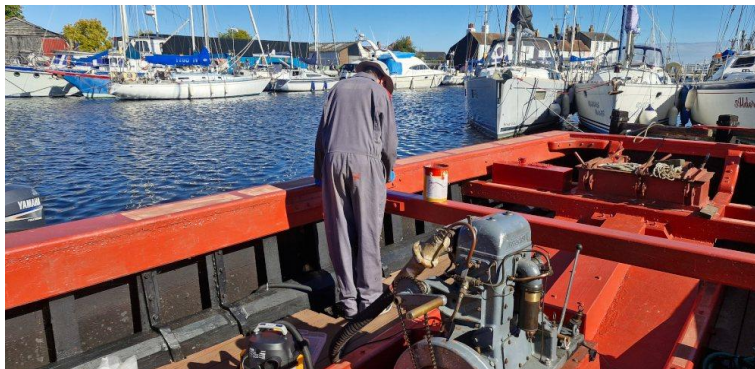
Canals have potentially presented greater challenges to make them navigable than have Navigations. Some amazing creativity has been shown in the ways obstacles have been overcome. For example, staircase locks such as Foxton Locks in Leicestershire where 10 interconnected locks lift boats 75 ft. The Anderton Boat lift. And the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, a 19-arched stone and cast iron structure carrying the Llangollen Canal 126 feet above the River Dee, It is the longest aqueduct in Great Britain as well as the highest canal aqueduct in the world. Eat your heart out Chelmer and Blackwater Chunkers!

Back to the C&B Navigation and a bit that I have to agree IS a canal. The River Chelmer flowed down through Fullbridge and out into the estuary. And the River Blackwater originally flowed through Heybridge into the estuary. Nothing flowed naturally around the north-eastern outskirts of Maldon and down to Heybridge. Famously dug across 'leaky' ground and needing to be lined with clay, taking for much of it a straight line, and with chunkers taking existing streams under the Navigation, this bit (but only this bit) is rightly called a canal. In fact 'The Long Pond' is potentially a corruption of 'the Long Pound', a pound being the name given to the stretch of water on a canal between two locks.

Darkened room. Ramipril. Controlled breathing. Back to 135/85.

Susan

Our CCT volunteers continue to work with The Susan Trust in order to keep Susan in fine form on the Navigation and ultimately to get her operational again. Duncan, our CCT rep on the Susan Trust ensures that we keep in touch with plans. This summer our loyal volunteers have repainted all of the inside of Susan, with the final sessions of the year involving creating anti-slip pads where there might be a risk of slipping on wet paintwork.



And engineer Grant has been busy, fettling the permanent installation of the engine and constructing the engine housing. One of several designs used over the years.



She's back! By popular demand our own Agony Aunt Bea Leigh has returned to help those members who have emailed in with their personal problems:



Dear Aunty Bea. Can you help, please. I'm not sure if its anything to do with a bit of fun I had in the tall grass on the Baddow Meads recently, but a few days afterwards I started feeling lethargic and as though I had the flu. Joint pains and a headache. Any idea what it might be? Flynn from Feering.

Oh Flynn, how horrible. You know I'm not qualified to give medical advice. But depending on what fun you had I'm wondering if you'd perhaps been lying in the grass and been bitten by a tick? If so you just might have contracted Lyme's Disease. Phone 111 immediately and get advice. Lyme's Disease can be serious and the sooner you get treatment the better. Good luck. (of course, there are other services that deal with other infections you might have picked up...!)

Dear Aunty Bea. My partner came home in mid August and told me he'd had been to see Susan and had a hot time. Well really! Whereas I can't claim to be entirely innocent myself (as recently I've been, how should I put it, 'familiar' with Albert). But that was too much information for me. Was I right to give him a good slap? Linda from Latchingdon.

Well Linda, it's open to interpretation. Maybe your worst fears were right. But maybe there's an innocent explanation. Is he a member of the Chelmer Canal Trust? If so maybe he'd been doing some work painting the lighter 'Susan'? They've done some impressive work in challenging conditions during this hot summer, getting her paintwork back to tip top condition and installing anti-slip pads. Let's hope your familiarity with Albert stems simply from you being a Skipper or crew member on the Trip Boat of that name?

Dear Aunty Bea. I recently fell into the river. I can't swim and panicked. Luckily some guys from a nearby CCT work party came to my aid, got me out of the water and helped me calm down. I spluttered a lot but eventually got all of the water out of my lungs and felt ok. But before my rescuers left they gave me advice about 'secondary drowning'. Is this really a thing? Dave from Danbury.

That sounds dreadful Dave. Lucky those volunteers were around. And you'd be wise to listen to their advice. Secondary drowning occurs when inhaled water causes inflammation and fluid buildup in the lungs, impairing lung function. These symptoms can be delayed and may appear hours after a person seems fine after a water incident. Prompt medical intervention is vital to ensure timely treatment and prevent complications. Bear that in mind if you fall in again!

Dear Aunty Bea. I was at Hoe Mill Lock recently and a group of American tourists approached me and said they were disappointed as they couldn't find a single Ho. I'm a bit deaf and didn't fully understand what they were talking about. Am I being a bit naïve? Betty from Boreham.

Hello my innocent friend Betty. Bless your pure little heart! If they were American and referring to 'Ho's then it's probably best that we don't go there. Similar mistakes are made about a lovely group of ladies at Heybridge Basin. They assure me that they are called The Basin Oars, not The Basin Whores. What a way to refer to pillars of the community. What sort of world are we living in?

Disclaimer! The Chelmer Canal Trust wishes to make it clear that Aunty Bea has no skill or training for the advice she gives. Readers are warned that following Aunty Bea's advice is done at their own risk (and is potentially foolhardy) (apart from the bits about Lyme's Disease and Secondary Drowning!)

If you are a gardener do you consider how you can protect the natural environment by being Plant Wise?

You can help to protect the environment by following three simple steps:



Choose the right plants for your garden, pond and water features. A free [guide to non-invasive alternatives](#) is available to help.



Keep your plants in your garden - don't plant them, or allow them to grow, in the wild.



Dispose of your unwanted plants, roots, weeds, seeds, and seed heads responsibly. Find out [which species can't be composted](#) and how to dispose of them safely.

Extra tips for pond and aquarium plants

- Try to buy new pond plants bare root. If you buy one potted in soil or compost, wash this off the roots over a bucket and give the whole plant a quick rinse before planting to remove any seeds or unwanted plant fragments.
- Use this, and any other waste water from your pond or aquarium, on your lawn or to water plants in your garden, in areas that are a good distance from waterbodies or drains that flow into them.
- If your pond is near to a wetland or waterbody avoid using any plants which aren't native to the local area and if any invasive plants appear, remove them before they spread.
- Add unwanted aquatic plants to your home compost or use them as mulch in dry borders, keeping away from waterbodies or drains.
- Protect pond life by leaving any plants you've removed on the edge of the pond to drain for a few hours before disposing of them to allow any wildlife to return to the water.
- Pond animals and fish should never be released into the wild either. They may not survive, and if they do they could harm native wildlife.

Cuckoos

If you spent time in the Chelmer Valley earlier this year the chances are that you will have heard cuckoos calling. Our bird specialist Keith has written about them in a previous Newsletter, referring to the fact that the Navigation is home to two species whose nests the Cuckoo likes to use - the Reed Warbler and the Dunnock. The cuckoo is a summer visitor, the males arriving in late April and leaving again as early as the first week of June. Some of us possibly remember the poem "The cuckoo comes in April, he sings his song in May, he changes his tune in the middle of June, and then he flies away". (back to Africa leaving some other poor soul to hatch and bring up the young!)



Cuckoo numbers are declining in Britain, albeit with much regional variation, and the bird's familiar two-note call has been lost from many of its former haunts. It is the populations in the southern half of Britain that have undergone the greatest decline, something that has been linked to the different routes used by migrating Cuckoos as they travel to and from their African wintering grounds. Since 1995 cuckoo numbers have decreased by over 30%. However, despite the decline in numbers nationally, in the Chelmer Valley we seem to have benefitted from a good number of visitors. Any ideas why?

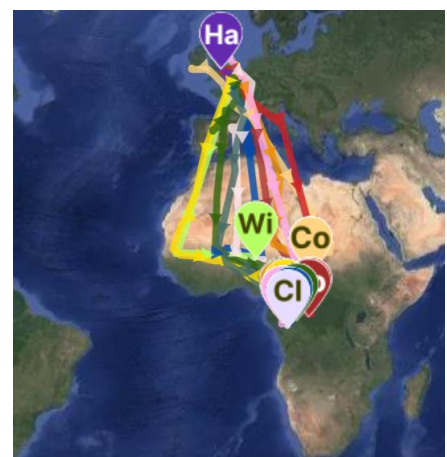
Since 2011, British Trust for Ornithology researchers have been fitting tracking devices to Cuckoos breeding in Britain and elsewhere as part of a cuckoo tracking project. This important research revealed the migration routes and wintering areas of British Cuckoos for the first time. While some birds migrate south-east via Italy, others take a western route. Interestingly, all of the birds winter in the same part of central Africa, and all of them return via the western route in spring. Here's what the scientists at BTO published in July about the migrations of five Cuckoos this year, along with a map showing routes to Africa.

Great news! 🎉 Five satellite-tagged Cuckoos have made the perilous journey across the Sahara Desert in Africa to reach their non-breeding grounds. 😊

🌍 Ashok, the first of our birds to reach Africa, covered over 1,864 miles in under three days and is now in Chad.

🌍 Arthur and Wilfrid are in Senegal. This time last year Wilfrid was still in Spain! Will he head to Angola to spend our winter months again?

🌍 Wingston is in Mali and has covered well over 1,553 miles in the last five days. Also in Mali is Jim, and our last signal shows him to be around 93 miles south of the ancient city of Timbuktu, close to Lake Korarou.

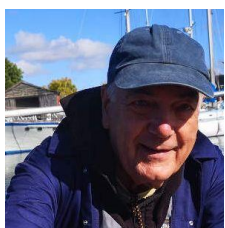


There's even more up-to-date information on the progress of tracked cuckoos on the BTO website. Just [click here](#). If you would like to get involved in the BTO's Cuckoo project take a look at their website.

Introducing the Chelmer Canal Trust Board of Management.....

If you've been to one of our evening events at Moulsham Mill you will probably have seen members of the Chelmer Canal Trust Board there. We thought you might like to know a bit more about the governance of the Chelmer Canal Trust.

CCT is both a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity. The members of the Board of Management are both the Directors of the Company and the Trustees of the Charity. They meet regularly throughout the year in order to deal with the Board business which includes: undertaking the tasks and duties placed on the organisation by Companies House and the Charity Commission, managing the organisation's finances and policies, making sure work parties, evening events and Newsletters are planned and delivered, ensuring that CCT's voice is heard and that we network with others.



Neil Frost. Chair; Work party Organiser; Minutes Secretary. A trustee of two other Essex charities, Neil bought a boat and brought it to the Navigation some 25 years ago. He soon became involved in CCT. Neil wants the Navigation to be known about and enjoyed, both for the recreational opportunities on and beside the water, and the for ecological value of the entire Chelmer Valley. Neil has developed an interest in Non-Native Invasive Species through his involvement in the management of Floating American Pennywort.



William Marriage. Treasurer; Company Secretary. From the moment he was lowered into a canvas canoe near Broomfield Mill at the age of 3 William was hooked and thenceforth took every opportunity to be on the water on anything that would float. Many years later he found himself in a meeting on Victoria volunteering along with Dudley Courtman to be a joint secretary of the about-to-be-formed Friends of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, which of course subsequently became the Chelmer Canal Trust.



Duncan Lumley. CCT rep on, and Trustee of, The Susan Trust. Twice the Mayor of Chelmsford, once when it was a Borough and once when a City, Duncan brings his knowledge and understanding of Local Authorities to the Board. His objective views as a 'non-boater' are valuable, as is his Trusteeship of the Susan Trust. Our annual income is enhanced by the submissions for Gift Aid that Duncan compiles and submits on behalf of the Trust.



Steve Miles. East Anglia Coracle Society Representative. Steve started coracle racing in regattas about 18 years ago, winning many races. After a few years he became involved in organising the regattas, setting up on the day and so on. Steve uses his coracle to good effect on Chelmer Canal Trust work parties, being able to get into shallow places that are otherwise inaccessible. And when he had his cloth-covered coracle, showing how quickly he can move when the cloth gets punctured!

We are always keen to welcome new Board members. We know we could do more if the workload was spread out between more of us. We are especially, but not exclusively, interested in those with Publicity and Note-Taking skills and experience, and those with specific interests in the Navigation.

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 so many 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 next 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://chelmercanaltrust.co.uk>. Follow us on Facebook: @ChelmerCanalTrust

Contact us

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

By Email: enquiries@chelmercanaltrust.co.uk

