

Newsletter: September 2024



Overview

Hello Birmingham's River Champions, thank you for taking the time to check at our latest newsletter on:

- Our new **web application**;
- Our work with researchers asking **volunteers** to tell their **stories** on the River Cole;
- Key findings on the **ecological** health of rivers;
- **Upcoming** work and events.

People's stories on the Cole

We have teamed up with social scientists at the University of Birmingham to understand people's **knowledge** and **perceptions** of their local river. Researchers have undertaken "**walking interviews**" with the Hall Green's Keepin' It Clean and Friends of Trittiford Mill Park and Pool groups, who monitor the Cole. By telling their **stories**, volunteers allow academics to understand what aspects of rivers **are, or aren't**, important to local communities. This will feed into future workshops alongside the Environment Agency and others with the view to helping inform future management plans.

The new web application

Communicating citizen science results back to volunteers is key – we want you to know what **your efforts are working towards!** So we've developed a web application that lets you see updates, access resources and visualise data – click [here](#) to see!


In 'Your Data', you can see Urban Riverfly and invasive species records. It would be great to see more **invasive species** sightings, and you don't need other surveys to record these within our [survey form](#). With more data, we'll aim to update options for water chemistry and Urban Outfall Safari.

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Key information

 [Survey form](#)
Follow this link to upload data on all **four** techniques used in the Birmingham River Champions



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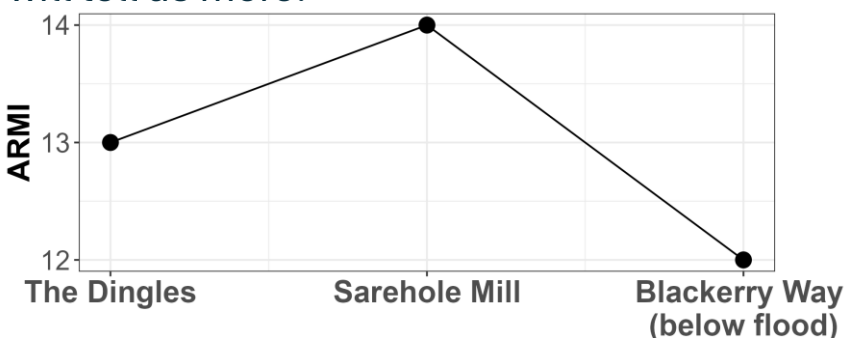


Urban Riverfly data in action

Earlier this month, a burst water main on the Stratford Road, Springfield, caused significant local flooding. This occurred next to the River Cole - on a stretch monitored by the Hall Green's Keepin' It Clean group.



The day after, the project team took Urban Riverfly samples here and at two points upstream to monitor potential impacts. The Anglers Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) score - a barometer of ecological health - slightly declined below the flood. Here, the 'blue-winged olive' mayflies (pollution sensitive) were absent and leeches (pollution tolerant) were abundant. While other factors may have caused this and more evidence is needed, it does show how these samples can help detect the impacts of such events - and continued monitoring will tell us more!



'Funky' macroinvertebrates

We've now had nearly 50 Urban Riverfly records submitted and have had various confirmed species of interest sampled. This includes (left-right below) the 'stone clinger' mayfly in Trittiford Park (Cole), which need good water quality conditions. We've also found a 'water scorpion' in the Dingles (Cole) and 'water crickets' in Cannon Hill Park (Rea) - both usually prefer ponds!



Upcoming events

We now have the water chemistry kits and will provide training on this alongside Urban Riverfly on Saturday 19th October in Cannon Hill Park. We will also run a brief refresher on these in Kings Norton Park on Friday 4th October - please email for more information on these!



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