

Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust



Autumn 2014

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A Member of the Rivers
Trust



The Chairman's Page

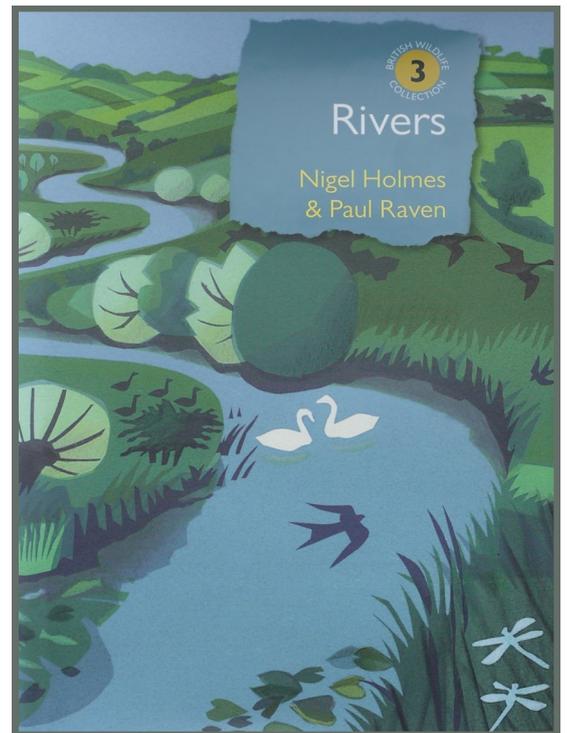


A kayak takes the rising tide on the Adur to the A281 bridge near Shermanbury.

The Normal Tidal Limit (NTL) for the Adur is a further third of a mile (ca 500m) upstream, thirteen miles (21 km) by river from the sea at Shoreham, and nine miles (14m) for the crow.

On the Ouse the NTL is at Barcombe Mills, twelve miles (14km) from the sea.

A book which might be of interest to members is **Rivers**. *A natural and not-so natural history*, by Nigel Holmes and Paul Raven (2014). It is the third volume in a new and very well received series by British Wildlife Publishing. The book was written for a lay audience by national experts. One is the River Restoration Centre founder and the other is Head of Conservation and Ecology at the EA. It is an up-to-date analysis of what lives in and by our rivers, the problems they all face and the remedial actions being pursued – many of them are familiar to OART members. The book is profusely illustrated and it is a perfect guide and introduction.



On 24 July a group of volunteers from RSA Insurance Group, Horsham spent the day with Sam St Pierre and Hew Prendergast on the Bevern at Hurst Barns Farm, East Chilton. They did sterling work on removing Himalayan balsam and raking gravel beds for sea trout on a now unimaginable baking hot day.

A feature of OART we perhaps take for granted is the very fact we have members. Some of our fellow organisations in the Rivers Trust movement do not and just comprise a board of trustees. I am in no position to make comparisons in terms of pros and cons but surely our members are a GOOD THING !

Although more of us are Ouse-ites than Adur-ites and a better balance is needed; it does seem that we have lots of eyes and ears along the watercourses. There are lots too to take part in events and Task Force practical management activities and the monitoring of water quality and sea trout.

I wonder what it is that first drew us all to OART. Was it fish and fishing; a bad pollution incident; the simple pleasures of walking beside moving water ? Are some of us farmers and land-owners who want to look after the land through which water passes at some stage by ditch or stream or our rivers on its way to the sea?

You will remember reading in a previous newsletter Robin Pepper's review of the book **To The River** by Olivia Laing. It is an account of a walk down the length of the Ouse from its source. I have recently read this book which has made me think a bit wider about the role of rivers in our lives. For example, the literary connections that are one of the book's threads. As an organisation do we do enough to attract those whose interests in the rivers are wider than, say, conservation, action and research ? If not, what do we do about it ? Like all the Trustees, I would welcome your thoughts on this and other matters.

Hew Prendergast



La Sortie Au Le Havre !



In September, Sam St. Pierre and I were joined by Simon Lohrey from South East Water at the invitation from the University of Brighton School of Environment & Technology to attend a conference on the Channel Catchment Clusters (3C) project.

The conference was held in Le Havre, northern France and united projects focusing on water quality in the Channel region including groundwater, catchments, rivers, estuaries and the sea.

The Channel catchments support a population of 19 million and input over 61 million tonnes of water per day to the channel. The projects discussed had been funded through the European INTERREG IVa programme and provided information on ecosystem service mapping, Non Native Species on the Channel coast, water resources in the French aquifers, environmental monitoring and endocrine disruption in fish species. Endocrine disruption is caused by chemicals in the water which disrupt the reproductive system of species and can cause imbalanced sex ratios, intersexuality and imposex.

The University of Brighton presented on their projects RiskMANCHE and AQUAManche, details of which are available at <http://about.brighton.ac.uk/aquamanche/>.

This was a fascinating experience and a great opportunity to build closer relationships with scientific research institutes both at home and abroad and see how large scale projects are put together and funded. We hope to be able to build on this experience and work closely with the University of Brighton on similar projects within our catchment. Our thanks must go to Huw Taylor, Dianne Larribeau, Paul Gilchrist and Christine Sinclair from the University of Brighton for hosting us throughout the trip.

Peter King



Sea Trout Watch



Each winter, OART organises a sea trout and redd identification exercise to monitor the spawning activities of both sea trout and brown trout in our catchments. This involves volunteers going out from November to February at about fortnightly intervals, (depending on water conditions), to record the presence of redds and any fish seen.

We welcome new volunteers and if you don't know what to look for, an experienced member of one of our teams would be pleased to show you the ropes.

For the River Ouse catchment please contact Sam St.Pierre on 01273 400093. For the Adur catchment please contact John Whiting on 01273 492439. Thank you.





Pepper's pot pourri

Water, water everywhere



A recent article in *The Ecologist* warns of the huge amounts of water required for fracking. Apparently the average well uses 20m litres over its lifetime and this can take a heavy toll on groundwater levels and water flow in streams adding to the build up of silt and damage to aquatic wildlife. But didn't we know that already and if so why was an exploratory well allowed in Balcombe? What is just as alarming is that the companies involved are unwilling to disclose some of the chemicals used in the fracking process. Without this information the job of monitoring the operation becomes a whole lot more difficult.

The alternatives to fracking, apart from the nuclear option, are photovoltaic cells and wind turbines but a report issued by the European Parliament warns that the supplies of eight significant metals involved in their manufacture are in short supply. Any increase in demand will have to be met almost exclusively by the extraction of virgin raw materials, which will have major implications including large emissions of greenhouse gases, which would be counter productive.

Another article, this time by the BBC Environment correspondent, Roger Harrabin, also tells us something I thought we knew only too well already. It centres on the government commissioned Pitt Report led by Sir Michael Pitt. Recent investigations suggest that part of the UK's problem with flooding is self imposed by building in unsuitable places, i.e. on floodplains. Between 1884 and 2013 there has been an upward trend in reported flooding. This coincides with an increase in the UK's population from 38.2m to 59.1m and an increase in the number of homes from 7.7m to 24.8 m. Even more building is still necessary and some of this will have to be on floodplains but there are measures which could be taken to lessen the impact. New developments should be designed so that rain water from roads and roofs is allowed to seep into the ground and then drain into ponds and ditches before entering the watercourses. It should not be allowed to enter sewage systems which become overwhelmed in times of high rainfall. The now common place practice of paving over gardens which then allows the water to drain into roads and hence into the sewers should be outlawed. The water should be allowed to soak into the ground. Pitt recommends that the same system should be adopted in car parks. Governments should not give way to pressure from developers who always want to reduce their costs.

Recent rainfall patterns are likely to continue and more will have to be spent on flood defences. In the interim it is suggested that homes in flood risk areas should not rely on sandbags to stem the flow of water but should use close fitting flood boards across doorways instead. Cementing the ground floor area and raising electric power points above floor level are other measures that should be considered. These actions would reduce the damage caused by the entry of water into homes.

Flooding seems to be a problem that some people will have to live with but there are measures that they should take for themselves. Meanwhile, in our part of the world we also have to contend with droughts.

Knepp Castle River Restoration – River Adur

Over two wet days in October ,OART, the Wild Trout Trust (WTT) and Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) joined forces to undertake some woody debris work on the newly meandered channel on the River Adur through the Knepp Estate. We were joined by volunteers from the Arun & Rother Connections project, TrUck, WWF and the Environment Agency (EA). A number of in-channel features were created including flow deflectors and a brushwood berm. In addition, trees were translocated from the edge of the floodplain to the river banks. This is required as smaller trees would be browsed by the free roaming deer and cattle populations on the estate. Approximately 500m of river had new features installed by the end of the three days. These small, low cost interventions are hugely beneficial to the river providing flow diversity and a mosaic of fish and invertebrate habitat.

A huge thank you to Andy Thomas (WTT), Fran Southgate (SWT) and Damon Block (EA) without whom this would never have happened and to the volunteers who came along and created a very enjoyable and beneficial two days. Also to Charlie Burrell at the Knepp Estate for the use of materials and permission to undertake the work – for more information on the Estate and its re-wilding project please visit <http://www.knepp.co.uk/>.





Managed Realignment As a Method of Sustainable Flood Defence on the River Adur Estuary

The River Adur, like many of the lowland Sussex Rivers, is a heavily engineered environment. The full tidal stretches of the River Adur are contained within high earthen embankments, installed over the last few centuries to reclaim land for agriculture and to minimise tidal flooding. As a result the estuary lacks much of the natural intertidal habitat such as salt marsh and mud flats that should be present which has a significant effect on local biodiversity and ecology. Despite the embankments mitigating flood risk from tidal sources the limited connectivity between the river and its floodplain significantly delays the drainage of the floodplain during times of high rainfall causing seasonal water-logging of the floodplain. There is therefore an increased flood risk from surface water for nearby homes and businesses in Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding.

This Thesis, undertaken as part of an MSc in Water and Environmental Management at Brighton University, was undertaken to evaluate the potential for a managed realignment scheme being implemented within the area. Managed realignment is the process of removing or breaching existing embankments and realigning them further inland. It is a method of flood defence that offers significant potential to coastal engineers and planners as it allows flood risk to be reduced by allowing the river and its floodplain to interact naturally. It increases storage capacity for flood waters and improves drainage as well as allowing for the restoration of habitat within the realigned area.

The study involved collecting tidal data on salinity, depth and turbidity across various tides at two locations upstream and downstream of Beeding Bridge. Depth data, when correlated with tidal charts and Environment Agency river level data at Beeding Bridge allowed a full tidal range for the river to be determined. When combined with LiDAR elevation data for the floodplain, suitable sites for a managed realignment scheme were identified through the use of GIS digital elevation modelling. These results were combined with data collected on tidal parameters and it was concluded that there were two feasible options for a managed realignment scheme. A large scale site to the north of Bramber on the east bank would significantly increase storage capacity for floodwaters mitigating flood risk for Upper Beeding and Bramber. Smaller scale sites downstream of Bramber would have less effect on mitigating flood risk. However, it would offer considerably more potential for salt marsh restoration. Such a scheme would provide a more sustainable form of flood defence thus reducing the need for costly maintenance and improvement of existing embankments.

Christopher Tupper
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Peter King - Project Officer's Report

As well as completing the Twineham project (see separate report) on the River Adur I have been working with an MSc student from the University of Brighton on a dissertation project looking at managed realignment within the catchment as a means to reduce flooding. Other works on the Adur have included landowner visits to the river at West Grinstead, a project in partnership with the Sussex Wildlife Trust and Wild Trout Trust to install large woody debris and other features into the new meandering channel at Knepp Castle. Additionally I have commenced a mink control programme with our first two mink rafts out and being monitored by professional gamekeepers.

Further discussions are being held with the South Downs National Park to extend this programme across the wider catchment. So plenty is happening on the Adur with more in the pipeline in the coming months including a floodplain woodland creation scheme and large woody debris installation.

Work on the Ouse has been continuing with the Shortbridge and Longford Stream walkovers having been completed. This leaves 4 further tributary surveys to be completed before March and once again I thank all the landowners for their co-operation and support throughout this project.

The eel trap at Clappers Weir has been switched off until the start of the new elver run in Spring next year. Unfortunately we caught no elvers this season; probably due to numerous teething problems with the pass and trap arrangement installed (we know there were elvers at Clappers Weir as we saw two climbing the front of the weir structure). These have all been fixed and we are looking forward to giving this another go next year – thanks to all the volunteers who have dedicated their time to checking this trap.

In partnership with South East Water and the Sussex Wildlife Trust we have been doing a series of farm visits on the Cockhaise Brook to look at issues around surface water runoff into the water course. To date five farms have been visited with five more planned in the coming months. This is a really good opportunity to collaborate with the above organisations and work with landowners to make small changes which make a big difference to the ecology of the stream. This is being done as part of the South East Water Ouse Upstream Thinking (OUT) project.

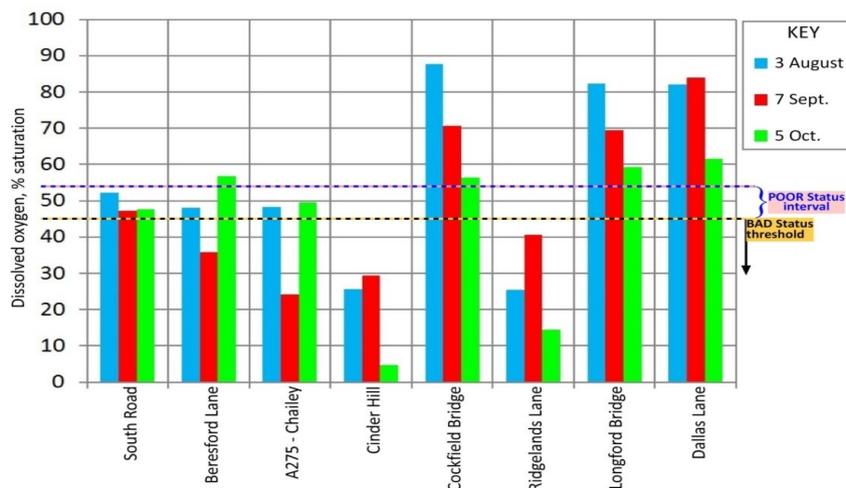
Finally, over the past few months the work has been completed at Buxted Park to restore the SSSI grassland which was disturbed as a result of the weir removal project. The area has been cleared of all weed species and the soil de-compacted and re-sown from locally sourced seeds. This sees the end of the MORPH project at this site and allows the first phase of the project to be signed off as complete.

Looking forward to the coming months there is lots to be done with further walkover surveys being undertaken along with the development of proposed projects on the Bevern Stream, Clayhill Stream and the Cockhaise Brook. In addition we are finalising the details on a large woody debris project around Hempstead and a larger scale in and out of channel habitat creation project near Barcombe Mills. Last but by no means least we are working in collaboration with the Sussex Wildlife Trust to deliver two further Water Fairs (similar to the Steyning event in March) during this financial year. These are proposed to be in Lewes and Uckfield and more details will be forthcoming as the planning progresses.

As always thanks for your continued support and I look forward to reporting back in the next newsletter.



Figure 3 Dissolved oxygen levels in Longford Stream: comparison of samples taken on 5 October with those taken on 3 August and 7 September 2014



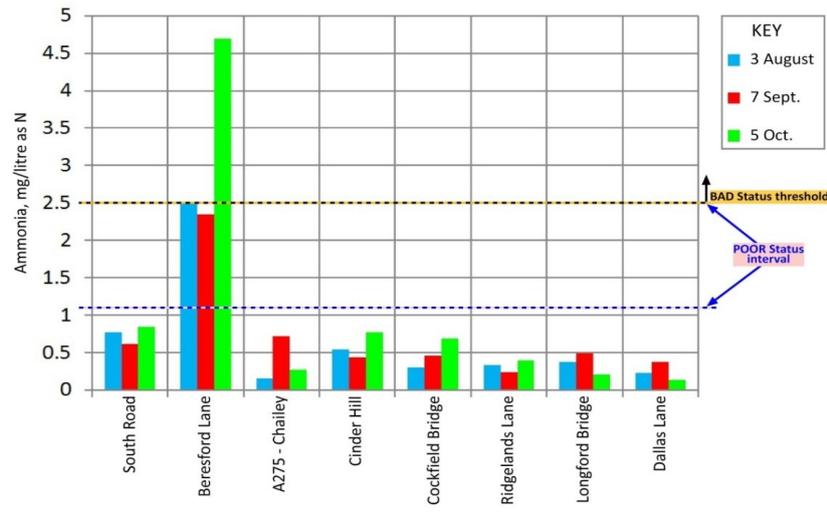
Nitrate levels were, again, low this month with A275 Chailey having a Moderate ranking and the remaining sites a Good ranking. Values for turbidity, conductivity, and pH were all within normal parameters, although the conductivity at South Road remains significantly higher than readings at other sites. So, yet another poor set of results this month, with extremely low DO readings and extremely high orthophosphate readings. Although, as aforementioned, the results may have been affected by low-flow conditions, the slurry pollution in the upper reaches and autumnal decay we have had similarly poor results for nutrients earlier in the year. The impounded nature of the stream at Cinder Hill and Ridgelands Lane undoubtedly contributed to low DO levels here, especially when combined with recent low-flow conditions. We can only hope that a high rainfall total for October and resulting high-flow conditions will help to flush out the 'dead' water in the impounded stretches.

Water Quality Testing: October 2014

The dry/mild conditions during most of September and the first few days of October resulted in very low flows throughout the month. There was a short period of rain on the day before sampling but EA river-level data showed a small rise in river levels and a quick return to previous low levels. Samplers reported very low flows but clear water. On 23 September, the Environment Agency reported a significant pollution incident at South Road resulting from spillage of slurry into the stream. Although twelve day earlier than the sampling date, the low-flow conditions and impounded nature of parts of the stream may have resulted in some retention of slurry nutrients and reduced DO levels until sampling day.

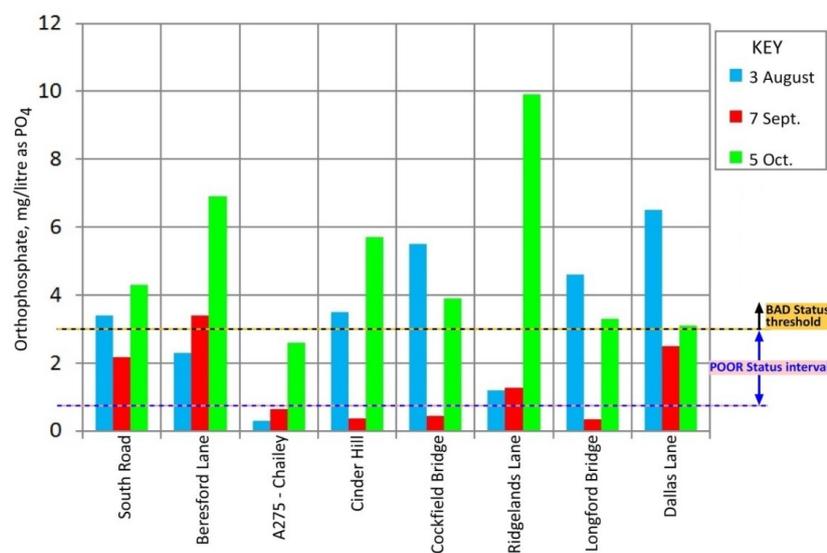
Ammonia levels were acceptable with the notable exception of Beresford lane, which was firmly in the BAD category. Values for South Road, Cinder Hill and Cockfield Bridge were MODERATE, while the remaining sites had GOOD or HIGH status. The cause of persistent high levels of ammonia at Beresford Lane is not known.

Figure 1 Ammonia levels in Longford Stream: comparison of samples taken on 5 October with those taken on 3 August and 7 September 2014



Orthophosphate levels were extremely high this month with all but one site recording levels at BAD status – the remaining site at A275-Chailey recorded a POOR status for orthophosphate. The highest values were at Beresford Lane, Cinder Hill and, especially, Ridgelands Lane.

Figure 2 Orthophosphate levels in Longford Stream: comparison of samples taken on 5 October with those taken on 3 August and 7 September 2014



Dissolved oxygen levels were very low this month with none of the sites recording HIGH Status and one site only, Dallas Lane, recording GOOD Status. Values at Cinder Hill and Ridgelands Lane were extremely low, being firmly in the BAD category. DO levels at South Road and A275 Chailey were POOR while the remaining three sites were MODERATE.

Jim's Diary

End of July to Mid-October 2014

JULY

There was a change in weather patterns on 28th. July when we had a heavy summer thunder storm with hail and rain. I suspected that such a storm could cause run-off problems. Sure enough the next day a pollution incident with dead fish was reported at Clappers Bridge on the Bevern. The Environment Agency acted promptly to restore the oxygen levels which had become very low. The flow had been very low before the thunder storm. There was some fish loss but this could have been worse if the EA had not acted so quickly. Thank you to the Agency Team for your action. I walked the main Ouse from the Mills for some distance down river and found no dead fish but the river did not look right. No doubt the slug of polluted water was passing through the main Ouse towards Lewes. It was by now diluted but it smelt heavy like sewage.

On the 30th. July I walked the main Ouse from Isfield to Hamsey. The slug of polluted water seemed to have passed through. On the way down, at the Mills, I found numerous bags of dog mess bags thrown down, put behind fence posts or hanging from branches ! Later that evening I returned to check the river. The water company intake was operating so I supposed the water was back to normal. I spent the rest of the evening until dusk clearing up the litter which totalled 26 polythene bags of dog mess plus other litter. People who persist in leaving others to clear up their own litter or their dog's mess cannot have any respect for the countryside or the river environment. What can be done ?

The 31st was my birthday but I thought that I must check the river first. I found no signs of dead fish in the Ouse below the Mills. It was a warm and sunny day and I returned to a surprise. It was a birthday cake with candles which I blew out so thank you to my host and thank you all for the cards I received. Later on I went out for an excellent meal.

AUGUST

On a warm and humid day I walked along the banks again just checking as the flow was again so low through the Mills. Several butterflies were about which made me think perhaps they were having a better year of it this year. I saw three Kingfishers at different places along the Ouse and the Red Kite was near Hamsey again.

There was a walk along the Bevern on 3rd from the Laines to Chilly Wood; the area affected by the pollution. There was some foam on the water but no dead fish on the affected stretch. The flow was low again. Below Oak Tree field a Barn Owl was hunting. I counted three Buzzards overhead and many butterflies around me but I also found a Ragwort plant covered with Cinnabar moth caterpillars. Ragwort is their food plant and they had stripped the plant bare. On arrival at Barcombe Mills plenty of shoals of fish including Roach, Bream, Dace and Chub were responding to bread being thrown in.

The next day I returned to the Mills to clean up yet again. The upside of the morning was the sight of Swallows and House Martins feeding above the sweet corn fields and butterflies enjoying the Hemp Agrimony flowers in the sunshine. Just above the Mills and under some trees in the shadows I saw a shoal of Carp just beneath the surface.

Wednesday 6th. saw heavy rain during the early hours until breakfast time. I went out for a quick clear up around the village. I collected all the usual rubbish thrown from cars and quite a lot of glass bottles. At least these can go to re-cycling but people are so uncaring that they seem to think it acceptable to just throw them out as they speed through the lanes. They even totally ignore people wearing high visible jackets. Speeding vehicles take a toll on the local birdlife and yet again I found several dead birds on the road that day.

On Saturday 9th. I walked in the lower Ouse valley along the banks from Southease to Lewes where I saw two Egrets and shoals of Mullet in the river. A mink ran over the bank and disappeared into the Delf Ditch reeds where there was a lot of bird activity. I had disturbed it feeding on a Gurnard which is a sea fish that must have been washed up from the trawler berths in the harbour at Newhaven. As the tide turned at the Pool Bar more Mullet shoals showed themselves. In the nearby fields the harvest was coming in well. The next day, Sunday, I attended a local very pleasant barbecue. Monday 11th. was windy with rain showers about. There was a reasonable flow in the Ouse and I saw a pair of Kingfishers at Sharp's Bridge at the rock ramp. A Cormorant was sitting by the Anchor weir and down at the Mills the Himalayan Balsam was full of Honey Bees and Bumble Bees too. I removed some plastic bags from a field where cows were grazing. These bags can be very dangerous to cattle. So many wild flowers have been destroyed by Man but despite this there was a wonderful display of Orchids on the side of the A26 again this year.

I called in to the Lavender Line to say thank you to them for pulling up and burning a large amount of Ragwort that I had asked them to destroy if they could pull it up. Hopefully this will stop it spreading to local farmland. This was a job well done by good local co-operation and volunteers. The next day as I headed up the road I spotted a dumped box of bottles and cans and a carrier bag of rubbish which included broken glass. This had been left at the double gates near to Lodge Wood. I cleared it away and walked into Isfield with a large bag of rubbish that I was able to dispose of in a local person's bin. Many thanks to the bin owner for allowing me to do this.

There was heavy rain all day on 25th which would help the low river conditions. The next day it rained until mid-afternoon which totalled 1½" as recorded at Herstmonceux. This would all go to help the rivers, fish and wildlife. The next day I spent a very good time attending Shoreham Air Show in perfect weather conditions. I watched the Lancaster fly in over the Adur flyover in front of the backdrop of Lancing College and also a Typhoon flew in to the show from Hurn.

SEPTEMBER

A former parish councillor and I started off the first day of the month at 9.00 am with a clear up at the northern end of the our parish starting at Beeches Road to our parish boundary with Uckfield then up Darvell Hill from Short Bridge. At this point we removed a large amount of litter from the parish boundary with Fletching. We sorted out the cans and bottles for re-cycling but it was a most disgusting mess. We continued via Buckham Hill and Lodge Wood down to Isfield finishing at 1.30 pm. The dreadful thing is that we have to do this at least three times a year.

A colleague and I attended a funeral of an old friend on Friday, 5th. in West Sussex. It was reported to me by some anglers that cattle had been seen in the river. It all ended well with no mortality thankfully.

I walked the lower Bevern and on to the Mills and then back to Isfield on 13th. I saw Kingfishers and there were numerous butterflies about. High in the blue sky Buzzards soared and cried. There was bee activity on the Ivy flowers at Chilley Wood. The next day I watched large numbers of House Martins on the move. I expected that the Martins which nested on my house had managed two broods. It is always a marvel to me when I compare a plane flying down to Africa and these little birds doing the same thing. They arrive in spring to nest in the same nest left behind in the autumn when they fly thousands of miles back to Africa.

The 16th. dawned with a misty foggy start. I walked to the Mills along the Ouse to clear up yet more rubbish there and then at the Anchor. I am hoping this will be near the last clear up this year. I just cannot understand why the parish council has taken away the litter bins at Barcombe Mills car park. They were well used and are much needed because of the numbers of visitors and amount of dog mess bags.

On the 18th. there were several groups of people angling at the Mills under the supervision of minders and committee members of the Ouse Angling Preservation Society. I was not there myself but was told that the anglers, who were from St. Dunstan's, enjoyed their time angling on the Ouse. It is nice to be able to help such people.

I walked around the Mills again on 21st. There were some good Roach being caught and the trees were starting to show signs of autumn colour. It was early morning with few people about on this warm and sunny day. I could hear an odd noise coming from a field of sweet corn which turned out to be a Badger munching on a corn cob. I had disturbed his breakfast. He saw me and quickly made off towards the reservoir.

Tuesday 23rd started with mellow mistiness. The Horse Chestnuts showed signs that the conkers were getting ripe and some had already fallen. The Acorn crop did not seem so prolific this year. I watched a skein of geese very high up moving westwards. They were too high and a distance away so I was unable to identify them. There was a foggy start to Sunday 28th but the temperature soon rose to 70°F ! I walked the lower Ouse from the Hamsey area and watched large dragonflies in the ditches. A seal was in the river below Hamsey old lock and some agitated Mullet. The chalk quarries of upper and lower Bonnie Scotland showed up well in the sunlight. I disturbed a sleeping fox which ran off into the marshes and a Kingfisher flashed by on the chalk pit entrance.

On 30th I took a walk along the Uck. There was a misty start to the day with a little wind. At Isfield weir I saw a pair of Kingfishers and a shoal of small Carp among the lilies in the river. Then, for the first time on the Uck, I saw an Egret. At the Eye Plantation stood a large Fallow deer buck plus four others which soon ran off into the shadows of the woodland. Blackberries were still plentiful as were the soaring Buzzards overhead but I cannot say the same about the water flow which was very low in the Uck. At the industrial estate in Uckfield the skips behind the industrial units were reasonably tidy and I hope they stay that way because they are positioned right on the river bank.

OCTOBER

On the 1st., with one month of the Sea Trout season to run, I decided to take a rod out with me on my walk and had a go but only caught a small Pike ! The flow was very low. It was a pleasant walk along the Ouse banks with few people about and just a few spots of rain falling.

Saturday 4th arrived which meant time for my annual flu jab plus shingles from which I am pleased to say I suffered no ill effects. It was a very wet morning but I went to watch some steam traction engines arriving for the vintage weekend at the Lavender Line. The next day I met up with some old friends at the vintage weekend and saw more steam engines and rollers and a lot of old cars. I also saw the 'Thumper' a fully restored DEMU (Diesel Electric Multiple Unit) that used to run on this line before its closure. It was a very pleasant day all round.

On the 10th there were heavy thunderstorms and around 5pm some very heavy rain. On my return from Heathfield the roads became like rivers so my thoughts turned to whether the sewage works would cope with the local flooding. The next day I looked at the Ouse at the Mills but there was no sign of any dead fish. The water was very dirty and the sluices were open. I also checked the Uck at Isfield sluice and no dead fish there either. Both rivers smelt of an earthy smell with foam. The Task Force meet at Springles Barn on 12th had to be cancelled due to the high flow and very muddy water. I walked the Ouse and Uck again and hoped the high water had flushed away any pollution and it would make it easier for the Sea Trout to get to their spawning grounds.

This year has gone by fast but Nature has provided a lot of berries which are being taken already by the Blackbirds and the Teasel heads have been receiving close inspection by the charms of Goldfinches. This morning I saw a Jay gathering acorns and a squirrel taking beech mast for their winter stores. I watched the Red Kite again and heard a report of a seal at Piddinghoe. I have not seen as many Mullet in the Ouse as I did earlier on in August. It will be interesting to see what sort of winter we get so I hope for the farmers that they have been able to get on with autumn sowing before the recent deluges hit. The nights are drawing in fast and I will end this diary with my usual good wishes to all members, farmers and landowners and thank you for all your help and co-operation and a very happy Christmas 2014.

Jim Smith—Field Officer OART



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