



Tweed Foundation Volunteer Newsletter March 2026

Welcome to the Tweed Foundation volunteer newsletter! A place where we can share what we have accomplished, give updates on what is coming up, meet our volunteers, and maybe learn some fun facts.

Thank you to all our volunteers for a great March!

Erica Chapman
Volunteer Coordinator

Updates & up-coming volunteer opportunities

To express your interest in any of the below opportunities, please e-mail me at echapman@tweedfoundation.org.uk

If you have not done so already, you can register to become a volunteer by completing our [Guardians of the Tweed volunteer registration form](#). This will allow me to keep you updated on specific activities that may come up between newsletters.

Dietary analysis



Since our last newsletter we have had volunteers assist with both bird dissections and sorting fish bones from bird stomachs. For more information on this work check out our [website](#).

Thanks to all your help we have cleared the backlog of birds to be dissected. Future dissection sessions will depend on when we get more birds, but this will likely be around Easter.

We have also made good progress on sorting through the fish bones. The next stage is now to measure them. This will give us an estimate of the sizes of fish that have been eaten. Sorting and measuring fish bones can be done as and when anyone with interest has time, so please let me know if you would like to get involved.

Riverfly monitoring

Thank you to the volunteers that have helped go through the 2023 invertebrate samples from St Boswells burn. These have now been shared with SEPA. We are looking forward to getting a [Guardians of the Tweed riverfly monitoring](#) group set-up in St Boswells, to catch any continuing or future pollution events, and hopefully record the recovery of the burn.



We have pencilled in a few dates to visit four registered sites around Peebles that do not have active groups (Eddleston, Redscarhead, Innerleithen, and Walkerburn). We will try and do one or two sites a day. If you would like to join us and are available on any of these dates (6 April, 20 April, 11 May, 25 May), please get in touch.

Similarly, if anyone is available in the afternoon on Thursday 9 April to join a sampling session near Heriot, please let me know.

RMI training

It has been great to hear that many new volunteers have already attending a Buglife online theory training session.

A reminder for anyone interested in becoming a Guardians of the Tweed riverfly monitor, you need to attend one of these theory sessions. Buglife have now released more dates throughout the summer. You can find them all on our [website](#).

The second stage of becoming a certified riverfly monitor is to attend **one** of the practical training sessions. These are currently scheduled for 10am-1pm on:

[Wednesday 29 April at Drygrange](#)

[Saturday 23 May in Peebles](#)

Save the date: Saturday 13 June in Berwickshire (location TBC)

Click the dates above to register. Please let me know if you have a group which would like a practical session done elsewhere or at a different time.

Tree planting

What an amazing tree planting day we had at the Fruid Water. We had a fantastic team of volunteers help the River Tweed Commission and Tweed Foundation plant over 800 trees.



Bird counts

Our next bird count is on 1 April. Future bird counts are scheduled for, or around, 7 May, and 8 October.

For something completely different

Whilst maybe not as glamorous and educational, as our other volunteering opportunities, we could use some help painting a storage shed. We are hoping to turn this shed into a more useable space to store equipment for our various volunteer activities.

Volunteer story

Ellen Feist

I started volunteering with the Tweed Foundation at the end of last year. I have recently gone back to university to do a biology degree and wanted to get some experience that I could relate to my studies, and the work with the Tweed Foundation seemed like the perfect opportunity for this. So far, I have had the chance to look through preserved water sample of macro invertebrates, helped with tree planting along the Upper Tweed and most recently participated in a bird dietary analysis which involved the dissections of cormorants and goosanders and then doing a bone analysis to see what the birds had been eating.

I have also joined my local Riverfly Monitoring group and hope to be able to contribute to our river's health by studying the Riverfly population there.

I have really enjoyed the work I have got to do so far and am looking forward to the next projects.



Fun facts

Most caddisfly larvae are herbivores, eating plants, algae and other organic matter, but some species are predatory, eating smaller freshwater invertebrates (e.g. other insects, tiny crustaceans and worms). Adults on the other hand, are non-feeders or only feed on liquids, as they do not have well developed mouthparts; equipped only to breed.

Thank you!

Let me know what you would like to see in future newsletters, if you want to share your story, or want to know about any upcoming volunteering or training



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