



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.

The Tweed Foundation is now part of [CaSTCo](#) (Catchment Systems Thinking Cooperative), which aims to strength citizen science across the UK. We are excited to be part of this community and look forward to growing our citizen science programme with the support of CaSTCo.

Thank you to all our volunteers for a great start to 2026.

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](#)

Dietary analysis

Understanding predator–prey relationships is a critical component of river management. As part of [our ongoing monitoring work](#), we identify and measure fish bones from the stomach contents of cormorants and goosanders to determine fish species composition

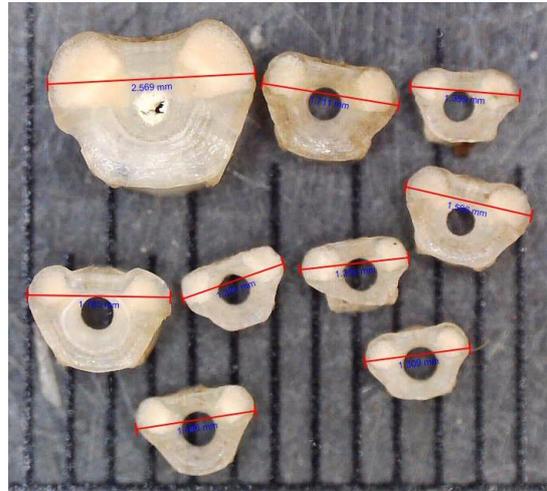
and size. The Tweed Foundation are running a dedicated bird dietary analysis training session focusing on fish bones:

Wednesday 25 February 2026
10:00am – 4:00pm

Ian Gregg River Academy, Tweed
Foundation Office, Drygrange

No previous experience is required. Full
guidance and supervision will be provided
by our scientific team.

Please [email](#) to sign up.



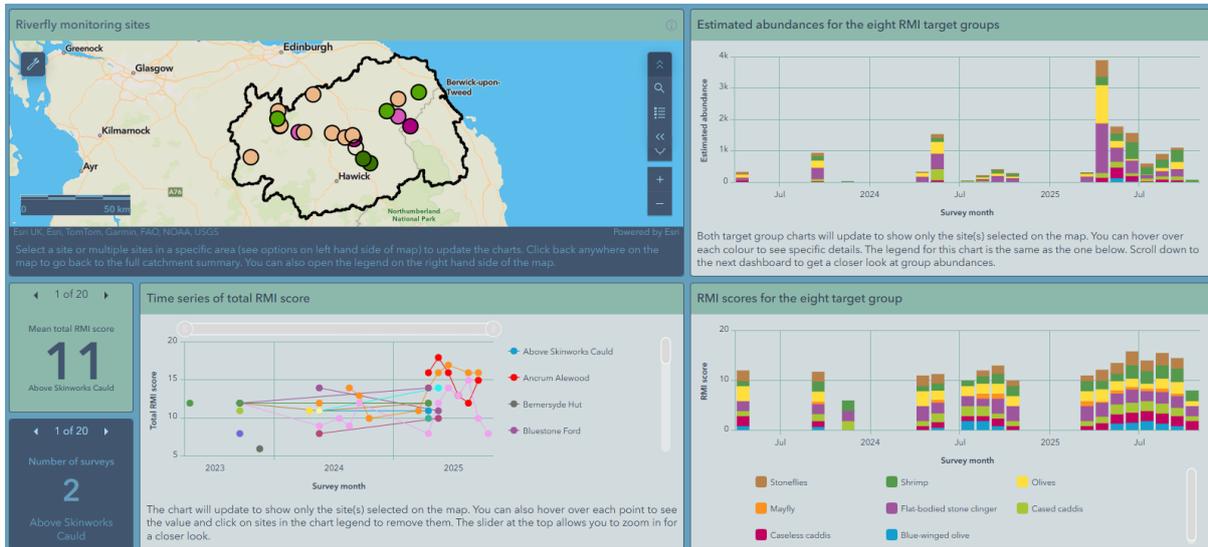
This month we also had volunteers assist with bird dissections, the first stage of the dietary analysis. A huge thank you to those who have taken part. We will likely be doing this again in April, so let me know if you would be interested.



Riverfly monitoring

Our [riverfly monitoring storymap](#) has been updated to include two new interactive dashboards. You can now get a closer look at the data from all our riverfly surveys, including RMI scores and abundances of each target group over time.

If there is anything else you want to see on the dashboards, please let me know.



Many of the sites shown on the map do not have an active monitoring group. Hopefully we will have more active groups throughout this season, but in the meantime, I would like to conduct one kick sample at as many registered sites as possible. To do this I would need a fully trained monitor to go with me, and then anyone else interested. Dates can be flexible. Please contact me if there is a site you would like to visit.

In March, we will be going through some preserved invertebrate samples from St Boswells burn and would love some additional help. This will be done at our office in Dryrange. Date TBC.

RMI theory training

Buglife have released dates for their March and April RMI online theory training (see registration links below). All riverfly monitors part of Guardians of the Tweed should complete a theory and practical training session. Dates for practical sessions are still being planned, but if you have not done so already, please let me know if you need the practical training, or are interested in a refresher or the extended course.

Day	Date	Time	Booking link
Thursday	12 th March	10am - 1pm	https://www.trybooking.com/uk/GAAN
Wednesday	18 th March	6.30pm - 9.30pm	https://www.trybooking.com/uk/GABG
Wednesday	1 st April	10am - 1pm	https://www.trybooking.com/uk/GABI
Thursday	30 th April	6.30pm - 9.30pm	https://www.trybooking.com/uk/GABN

Tree planting

We are currently making plans to plant trees near Fruid Reservoir and Coldstream. Details will be available once known.

Bird counts



We had a fantastic day for our January bird count. Many thanks to those who took part. You can find out more details about this work in our [story maps](#), along with the updated data.

Bird counts for 2026 will be on, or around, 2 April, 7 May, and 8 October. This involves walking a specific section of river, about 10km, counting goosanders and cormorants.

Scale reading

Tweed Foundation biologists have a large backlog of fish scales that need mounting and reading. This involves reading the rings (circuli) on the scales. From this work it is possible to determine a fishes age, how many years they have spent in the river and out at sea, and when they have spawned. Full training will be provided.



Volunteer story

Helen Dewberry

I had a tank on my windowsill containing pond life as a child. I was fascinated by the tiny water creatures, cyclops, daphnia, a hydra stuck to the glass, together with larger creatures, tadpoles and a dragonfly larva, so when I read about the Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (RMI) I was keen to volunteer. I found out there was a site in Peebles just before the Eddleston Water joins the Tweed – just 20 minutes' walk from my house.

I've now done 2 seasons. Each time we start with a sample it looks like there's nothing in it - until we look closer and spend a happy hour or two transferring tiny creatures from the sampling tray to the segmented tray.

Earlier this year our volunteer co-ordinator forwarded an opportunity to take part in the MoRPh Rivers Citizen Science Training run by Buglife for the Riverwoods project. I now understand that the stones etc on the bottom of the river and the vegetation in and on the banks of the river create micro habitats with different flows. I'm now learning how the habitats recorded in the MoRPh survey will affect the RMI counts.

This season I want to be trained as an Extended Riverfly Monitor.



Updates from our partners

Guardians of our Rivers: Next steps webinar



In case you missed it, you can access the recording from the recent Buglife webinar (<https://youtu.be/GUvXTyymcAY>). It aimed to provide a roundup of the 2025 season and we heard from a few different groups across Scotland.

The Riverfly Partnership have also released their [2025 riverfly summary](#), that covers all of the UK.



Fun facts

There are almost **200** species of caddisflies in the UK! These are some of the ones found by our Guardians of the Tweed in Peebles and Ancrum.



Thank you!

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



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