

Dear Friends,

Can you share your photos?

Do you remember the Wye brimming with water crowfoot? When the Wye was designated a site of special scientific interest in the 1990s, one of its special features was its beds of ranunculus. One of the assessors from that time told us that when they looked over nearly any bridge over the Wye in spring, they'd see a raft of the flowing green fronds with white flowers. Sadly a few years ago, most of the crowfoot disappeared, dramatically changing the ecology of our beloved river.

It's too easy to forget what we've lost. So we'd like to remind people of how the Wye looked even a few years ago.

Do you have any photos of the Wye showing water crowfoot? If so, we'd love to see them. Please send them to us and let us know where the photo was taken, when, if you're happy for the images to be shared and if you'd like to be credited for the image.

Below is a colourful photo of wild swimmer Angela Jones holding the water crowfoot at Ballingham just a few years ago. And a black and white shot of Will Bullough standing by the Wye at Breinton in 2000, glass in hand, with flowing ranunculus behind him.





Bathing in the Wye at the Warren - worrying test results

Last year we [won official bathing status for a spot on the Wye](#) at the Warren in Hay, becoming [the first river in Wales](#) to get this designation. This means that the regulator, Natural Resources Wales, is obliged to test the water for faecal bacteria during the bathing season.

We've now pulled together the results of tests carried out at the Warren in 2024 by NRW, as well as by Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and ourselves in a collaboration with the University of York.

Sadly, the results show **levels of faecal bacteria were above safe levels on 8 out of 29 days tested**. [You can see the full results on our website here](#) - with graphs showing the levels for both e-coli and intestinal enterococci, who conducted the tests and on which dates.

Separately, last week a local high school warned parents that students had reported stomach illnesses after swimming at the Warren this spring.

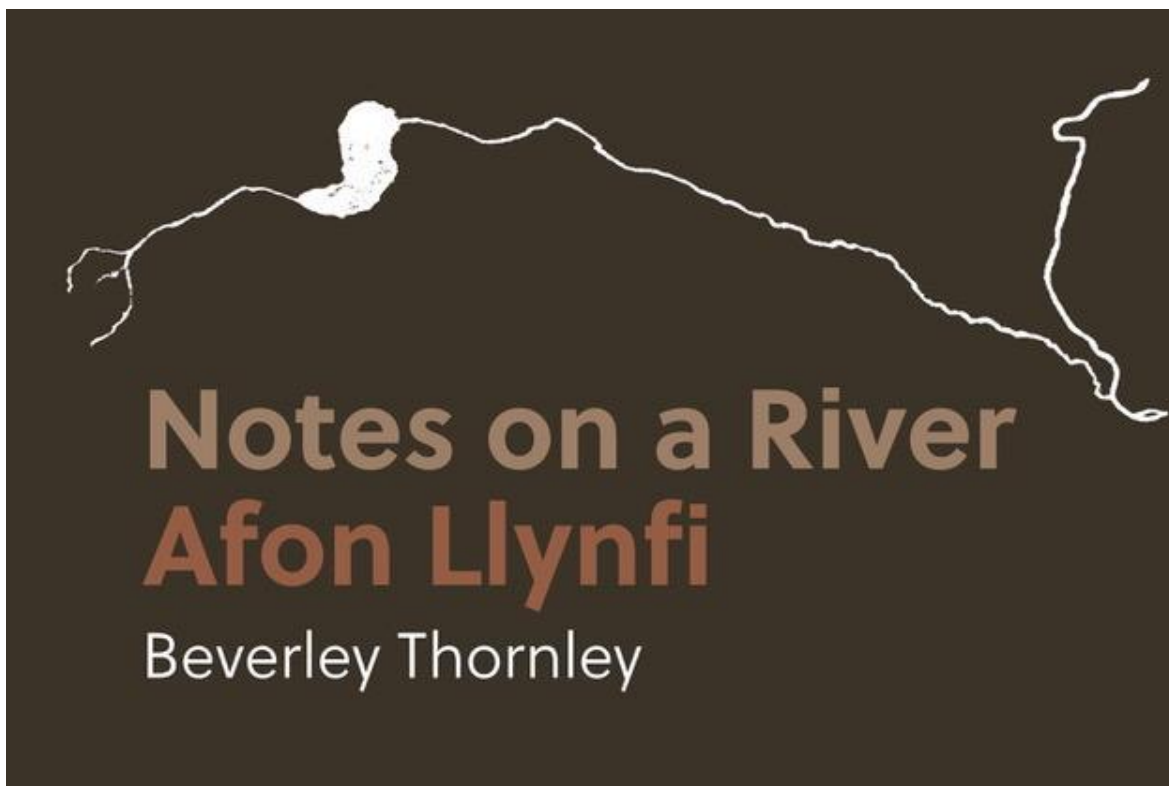
With the 2025 bathing season commencing, we call on NRW to tell us what they're doing to investigate the origin of any bacteria found (including whether it's of human or animal origin) in order to detect the source of this contamination.

A beautiful book for the Afon Llynfi

Artist Beverley Thornley recently launched her beautiful book *Notes on a River: Afon Llynfi* at the Talgarth Walking Festival.

The book documents, in words and paintings, her walks to explore the Llynfi from its source near Blaenllynfi to its confluence with the Wye in Glasbury. The river yielded stories of its history and environment and provided the materials – old red sandstone and alder cones - to make the ink used in her paintings.

Beverley is selling the book for £10 and kindly donating all profits to Friends of the River Wye. [Green Ink booksellers](#) in Hay-on-Wye already have some in stock!





News Round-Up

We joined River Action, Alison Caffyn, the Goddess of the Wye and others outside **court in Cardiff** last week for their vital legal challenge to Shropshire Council's approval of another intensive poultry unit in a catchment already overloaded with chickens. You can read [River Action's summary here and watch a video from the protest](#). We're expecting a judgement in the coming weeks.

We welcome the appointment of a '**Voice of the River**' to the Wye Catchment Nutrient Management Board and congratulate ecologist Louise Bodnar on winning the position. She joined the Nutrient Management Board at their last meeting on 16th April and spoke eloquently on behalf of the Wye. [You can watch Louise addressing the meeting](#), outlining her experience and approach to the role. She explained that sometimes she will speak 'as' the river, moving away from an anthropocentric view of the world.

We're deeply concerned about parts of the Government's new **Planning and Infrastructure Bill** which could remove important protections for nature. Please [read the Wildlife Trust's open letter and consider signing](#) it to add your voice.

EVENTS

Monmouth Citizen Science Event - Friday 16th May

Friends of the River Wye and Rotary Monmouth invite you to hear from local citizen scientists on the Lower Wye, Monnow and Trothy, including about the Haberdashers School Project.

Doors open at 6.30pm and talks will commence from 7pm, at Bridges and Drybridge House.

Whilst outlining the state of the local rivers, the evening will also be discussing the way ahead, hearing from our very own Citizen Science Manager Pat Stirling and someone from the Wye and Usk Foundation.

This event is free but ticketed, with tickets being allocated on a first come first served basis. You can [reserve your spot here](#).

Hay Festival - 22nd May til 1st June

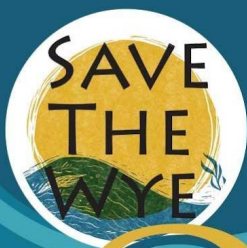
We won't have an exhibition on site this year, but there's still plenty of river and nature themed events to go and see - so do browse the programme.

We're looking forward to seeing [Robert Macfarlane discuss his new book *Is A River Alive?*](#) on Thursday 22nd May.

There's also a talk on Sunday 1st June exploring [how law can be used to protect nature](#), which will take up the River Wye as a case study.

Riversong at Ross on Wye - Saturday 24th May, 11am - 4pm

Finally, we're really looking forward to this day celebrating our river and all who love her, organised by Save the Wye. We hope to see you at the Hope & Anchor in Ross! We'll have a stall sharing our work.



Join us for a joyful day of
sunshine, song, ceremony
and celebration!



Riversong at ROSS

When

Saturday
24th May
11 - 4pm

Where

The Hope & Anchor Pub
Ross On Wye
HR9 7BU

Let's celebrate our beautiful river Wye and give special thanks to all of the river guardians, activists, campaigners and supporters, who work tirelessly behind the scenes, to protect her health and wellbeing.

Everybody welcome!

Free, family friendly event.
Beautiful riverside venue, stage performance area & plenty of outdoor seating!



100+ singers from the
Mass Climate Choir
with songs for the river



Ceremony & blessings with
The Goddess & Lady Wye



Social activities &
Information Hut
come & talk to us!

savethewye.org

