

Thank you to everyone who took part in the 2014 Riversearch. The results will be published in our two-yearly Riversearch Report in Feb 2016 along with this year's results. Initial indications are that otters are still expanding their range whilst water voles are absent from many rivers but doing well in the North and East where the Water Vole Recovery Project is in operation.

Riversearch 2015 - New surveyors

If you have never taken part in Riversearch before then please book yourself on to one of the training days (see overleaf) so we can teach you how to look for otter and water vole signs. You will be able to sign up for your survey stretches on the day of the course. Otter surveys can be undertaken at any time of year but water voles can only be surveyed for between April and October.

Riversearch 2015 - Existing surveyors

Please contact me now to let me know what surveys you would like to be allocated in 2015 (The list is available to download from the Riversearch webpage). Even if you do the same ones every year it helps me to work out where the gaps are as we have had a couple of years where we have not completed all our surveys. Where we are having difficulty in finding surveyors we will try to get staff out to complete the surveys.

Online Recording for 2015

We are still happy for you to send in your records by post or email using the downloadable survey form on the Riversearch webpage, however we are also programming a new online recording form for Riversearch. Here you will be able to enter your records as well as any other species you see such as kingfishers or invasive plants. Once the system is up and running I will contact you all with an invite to get your own login to start entering your wildlife records directly to our database.

Essex Wildlife Trust Volunteer River Wardens Scheme

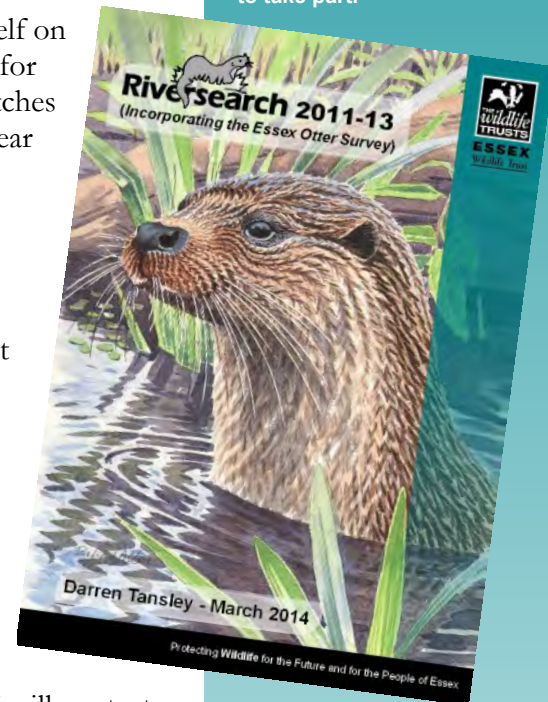
We now have a network of more than 80 River Wardens in the county who keep an eye on their stretches of river and are offered training in various skills such as river corridor survey, species ID, pollution monitoring and Riverfly water quality surveys. River Wardens also have access to extra online resources via the Essex Rivers Hub. If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a volunteer River Warden then please contact us via the Essex Rivers Hub:-

essexrivershub.org.uk



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The previous Riversearch report is downloadable from the Riversearch webpage along with a list of survey points, recording forms and all the other information you need to take part.



River Warden training day on the River Chelmer near Great Dunmow. If you are interested in becoming a River Warden then please get in touch.

Riversearch Events and training days

Otter and Water Vole survey training

Choice of sessions:

Fri April 24, 2015 9.30-12.00

Fri April 24, 2015 13.00-15.30

Sat May 16, 2015 9.30-12.00

Suitable for: New Riversearch surveyors, EWT River Wardens or existing Riversearch surveyors wishing to refresh their field skills.



These training days may involve entering shallow water so wellies and suitable clothing will be required. The meeting point will be the Woodland Trust car park off Ponders Road, Fordham. The Grid ref is: TL 926 277. Nearest postcode: (Row of houses on opposite side of road) is CO6 3LY. The course lasts approx 2 ½ hours and will require walking on uneven ground with some slopes. We will train you to find the field signs of both otters and water voles, a little bit about their ecology and how to use a floating monitoring raft.

Fingringhoe Wick water vole relocation – April 2015

Chance to see live water voles being handled.

We are looking for volunteers to help our professional ecologist check water vole traps at Fingringhoe Wick during April 2015. This is the first stage in moving the water voles from the borrow dyke which was overtopped during the 2013 storm surge. If you can spare 2-3 hours during the week or weekends to look for water voles in the cages then please let me know which mornings or afternoons you are free.

River Colne Water Vole Project meeting, Mon March 23, 7.30pm

Volunteers are required to check monitoring rafts on the River Colne as part of a catchment-wide community-based project to protect the reintroduced water vole population. If you are interested in learning more then please come to our Water Vole Project Meeting at Chappel & Wakes Colne Village Hall, Colchester Road, Wakes Colne, Colchester, Essex, CO6 2BY on Monday March 23. Refreshments at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start.

Thank you again for your support and if you have any queries please contact:-

Darren Tansley – Water for Wildlife Officer

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To learn more about mammals and their field signs check out the new Mammals of Essex. Available at all Essex Wildlife Trust visitor centres.

