

Riverwatch Launch Kyle of Sutherland

A Riverwatch launch was held at the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries office in Ardgay on 15th September. Ghillies, bailiffs and riverworkers from all rivers in the Kyle catchment were invited and around 25 people attended. The Riverwatch scheme covers the Oykel and Evelix SAC's for pearl mussels.

A presentation slide for the Riverwatch Scheme. The left side features a background image of a river with a large log. Overlaid on this image are several logos: the 'Life' logo (a blue square with yellow stars and the word 'Life' in white), the 'pearls in peril' logo (a blue square with a white wave and the text 'pearls in peril'), and the 'NATURA 2000' logo (a white square with a green landscape, a blue bird, and the text 'NATURA 2000'). The text 'Pearls In Peril' is written in large white letters, and 'Riverwatch' is written in smaller white letters below it. The right side of the slide has a dark blue background with the title 'Riverwatch Scheme' in white. Below the title is a list of bullet points in white text.

Pearls In Peril
Riverwatch

Riverwatch Scheme

- Aimed at combatting illegal activities affecting pearl mussels in Scotland
- Aims to raise awareness of the threat to the freshwater pearl mussel
- Works in collaboration with landowners, local communities, Police Scotland, Fishery Boards/Trusts and river users.
- Implements co-ordinated action to report and reduce illegal actions
- Kyle of Sutherland Riverwatch Launch

The Kyle of Sutherland Launch presentation

The Riverwatch launch was received positively with lots of questions asked and some ghillies even brought shells they had found in to ask whether any criminal activities might have taken place.

The Riverwatch was highly publicised before the launch and a press release appeared in The Scotsman, The Press and Journal, The Inverness Courier and on Radio Scotland and Moray Firth Radio.

Scheme launched to save Scotland's pearl mussels



A NEW national surveillance scheme is being launched to help safeguard Scotland's globally important freshwater pearl mussels.

Scottish rivers remain a stronghold for the critically endangered species, which has vanished from much of Europe in recent decades.

But even populations north of the border are on the brink of extinction as a result of water pollution, engineering works in rivers and over-fishing by pearl hunters.

Now a new scheme is being launched in an attempt to aid recovery of the river-dwelling bivalves, which have been protected by law since 1998.

Freshwater mussels are bigger and live much longer than their marine counterparts, with some specimens growing up to half a foot long and surviving for more than a century.

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Press release – The Scotsman



Kyle Lines

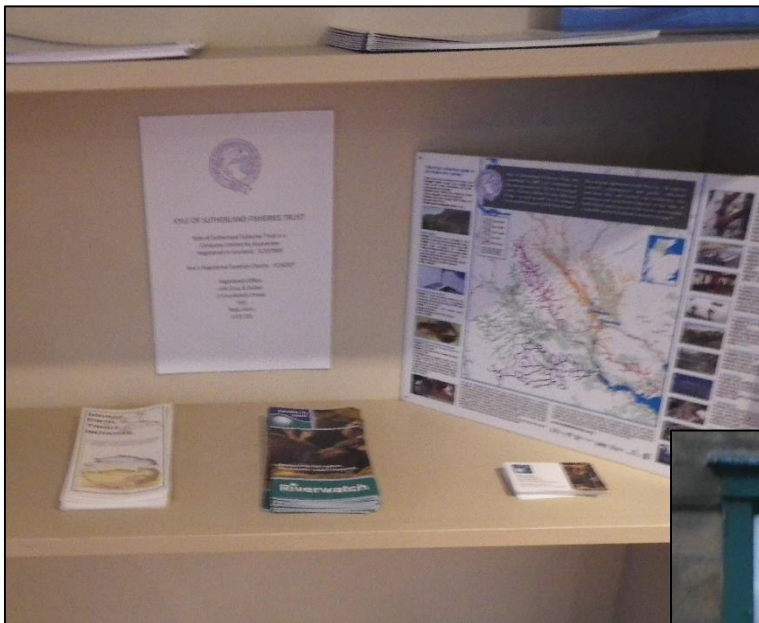


The Newsletter for Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries - October 2014

Elections and AGMs

Towards the end of what has been a very disappointing salmon fishing season the Trust's offices hosted a series of meetings. First up was the meeting of river workers at which we were joined by Natalie Young, Riverwatcher for the Pearls in Peril project. The meeting was the launch of the Riverwatch part of the project for the Kyle of Sutherland area. Natalie gave a very interesting presentation on the life cycle of pearl mussels and the many threats that they face. Any incidents relating to pearl mussels can be reported either to Kyle Fisheries or to Natalie on 01463 783505.

Kyle Lines – The Kyle Fisheries Newsletter.



Pearl mussel protection stepped up in Kyle of Sutherland

03 September, 2014

Surveillance of a Highland river system is to be stepped up as part of a national project to protect and monitor fragile populations of freshwater pearl mussels.

The Riverwatch scheme will launch in the Kyle of Sutherland area on 15 September.

Riverwatch schemes form part of the Pearls in Peril LIFE + project, a partnership set up to safeguard the future of the freshwater pearl mussel.

The scheme will focus on the Special Area of Conservation (SAC)-designated rivers the Oykel and the Evelix. It will, however, target other rivers in the Kyle of Sutherland area such as the Cassley and the Shin.

Natalie Young the Riverwatcher from the Pearls in Peril project, said: "The freshwater pearl mussel is critically endangered and the populations in Scottish rivers are globally important.

"Pearl mussels live on the river bed and feed by drawing in water and filtering out fine particles keeping our rivers clean. They are an important species ecologically as they keep water clean for other river wildlife like salmon and trout. And salmon and trout fishing is worth millions to the Scottish economy, so it makes sense to keep our 'river purifiers' fit and healthy for future generations."

The Pearls in Peril project aims to restore river habitats and protect freshwater pearl mussels from crime.

Chief Inspector Colin Gough of Police Scotland said: "Police Scotland welcome and support the Riverwatch scheme being launched in the Kyle of Sutherland, which can help to spread information to reduce crime against freshwater pearl mussels and encourage the reporting of illegal pearl fishing. Freshwater pearl mussels are an important part of a river's habitat and are protected by law.