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Clubtail Count 2017

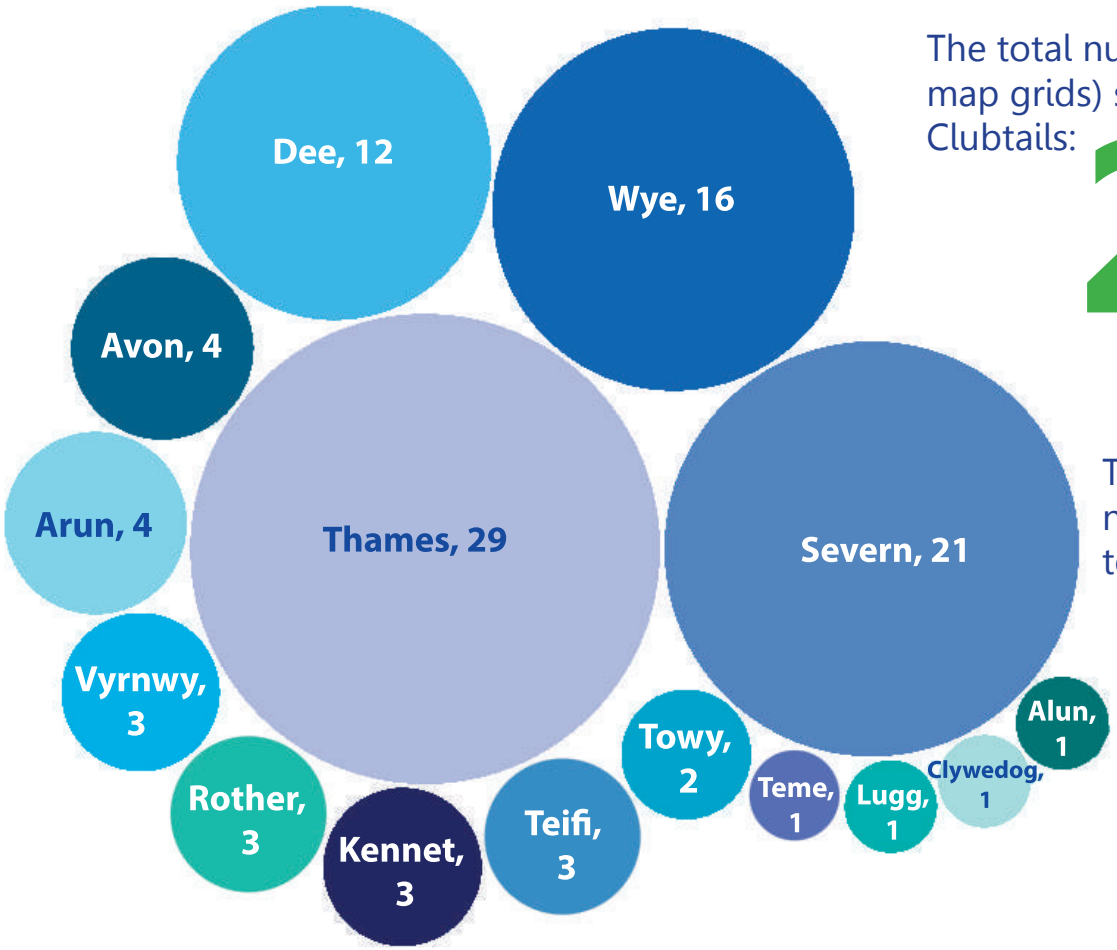
The Results

Thanks to the hard work of all the volunteers, we've had a fantastic number of records to gather and analyse from last year's Clubtail Count survey. And here are the results....

110

The total number of volunteers who submitted results to the first ever national, citizen science survey for the Common Clubtail Dragonfly.

Number of Volunteers per River



The total number of monads (1km^2 map grids) surveyed for Clubtails:

206

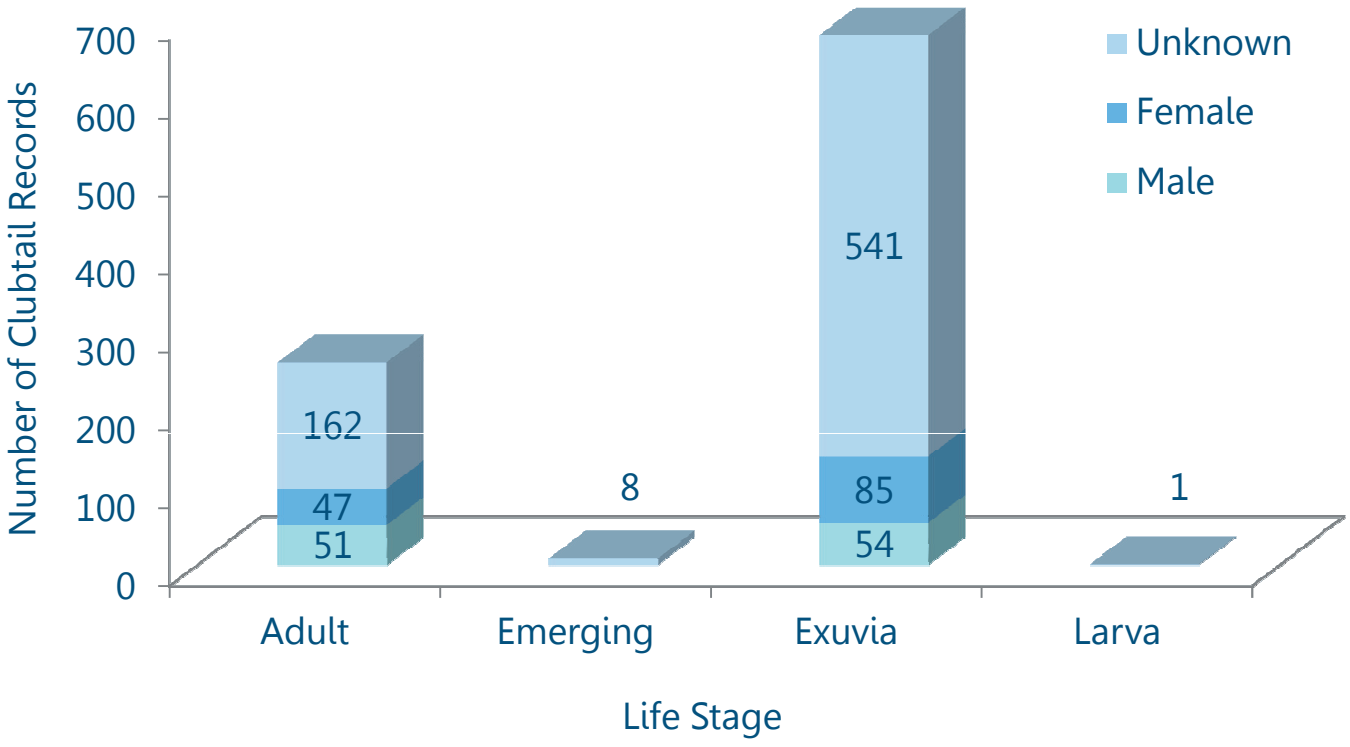
The average number of visits to a monad:

3

Common Clubtail Data Breakdown

954 The total number of Common Clubtail records made in Clubtail Count 2017.

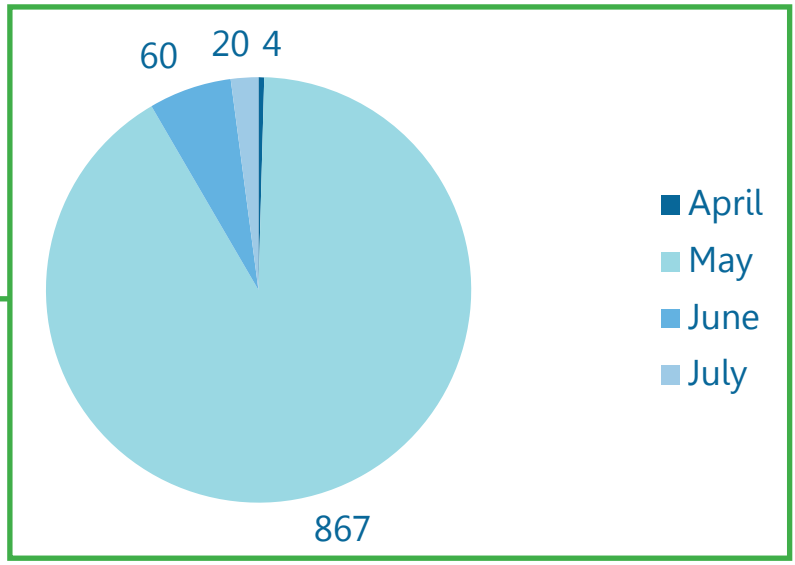
Clubtail Count Records by Life Stage and Sex



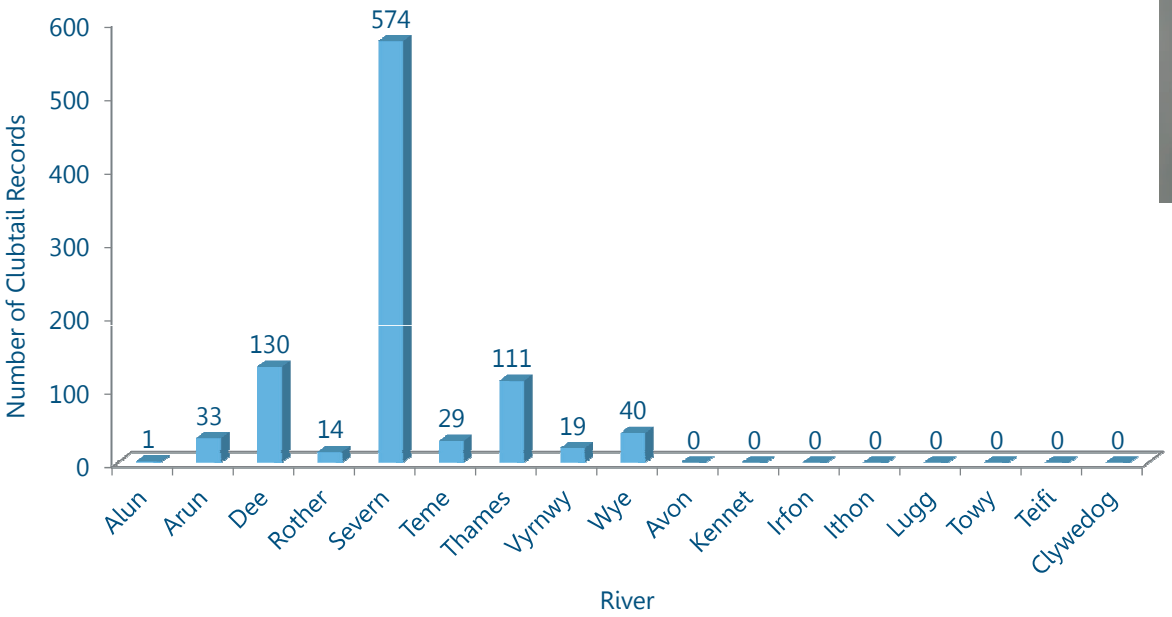
Clubtail exuvia © Dick Eastwood, Clubtail Count volunteer

72% of Clubtail records were of exuviae. This is the most useful type of record as it indicates the full life cycle was achieved at that site.

91% of Clubtail records were made during May. This is in keeping with historic records, with the species known to emerge en masse.



Clubtail Count Records by River



53%

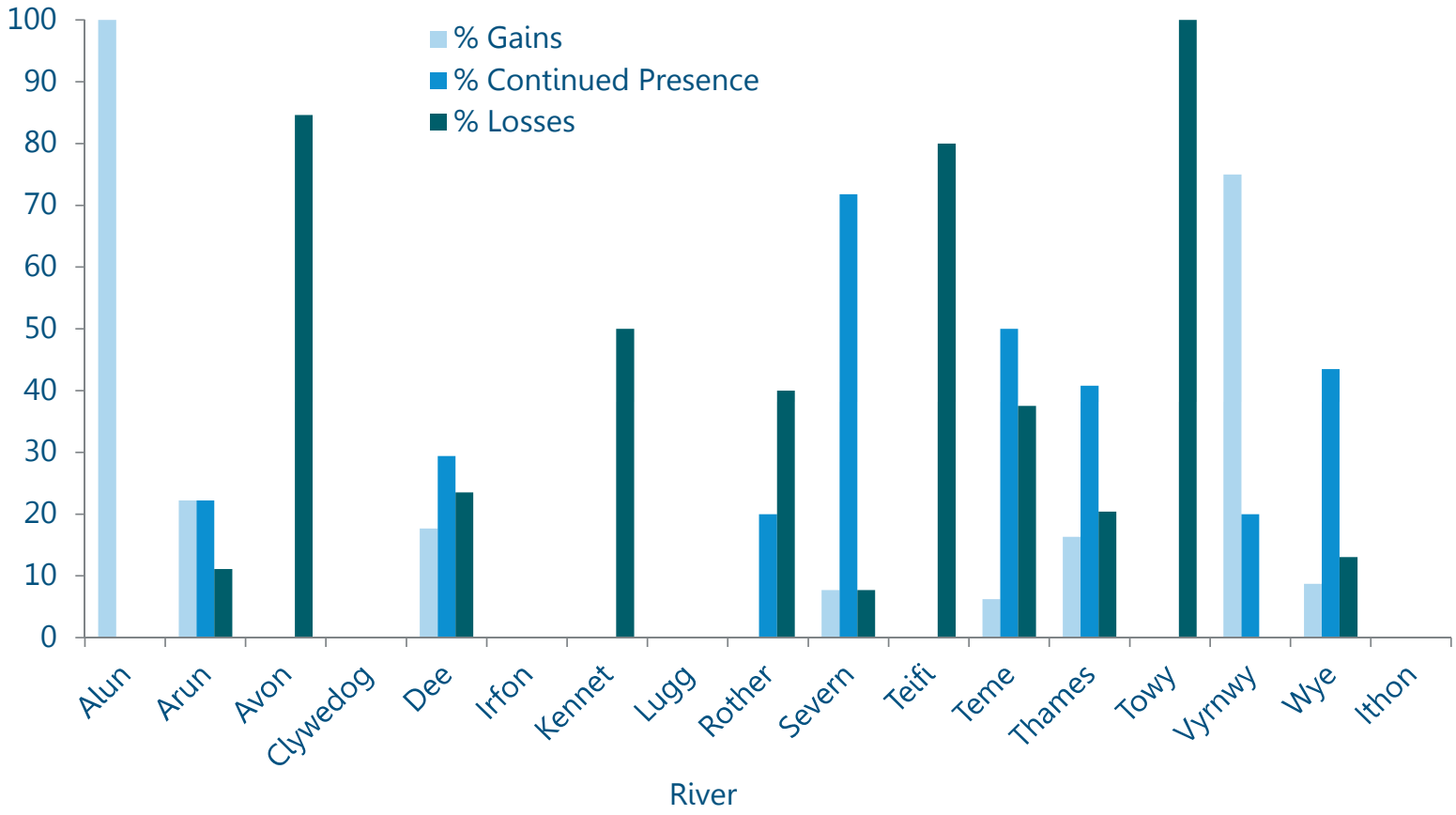
of all monads searched were found to contain the Common Clubtail.

Clubtail Count Monads by River

% Gain = monads which have no historic Common Clubtail records* but where Clubtails were found in 2017

% Continued Presence = monads with historic Clubtail records and where Clubtails were again found in 2017

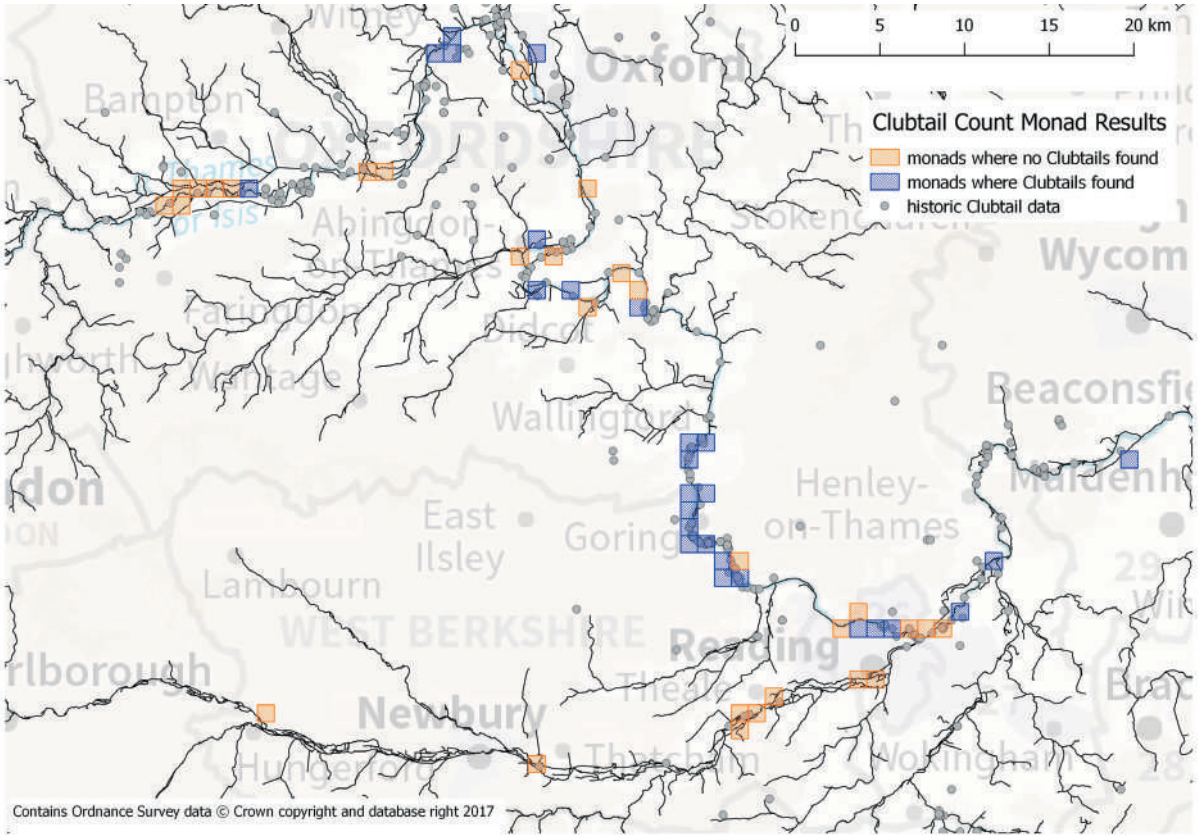
% Loss = monads with historic Clubtail records but where no Clubtails were found in 2017



*historic Common Clubtail records taken from the British Dragonfly Society Recording Scheme on NBN Atlas
Monads with continued absence, with no historic data and no 2017 data, have not been included here.

Monad Maps

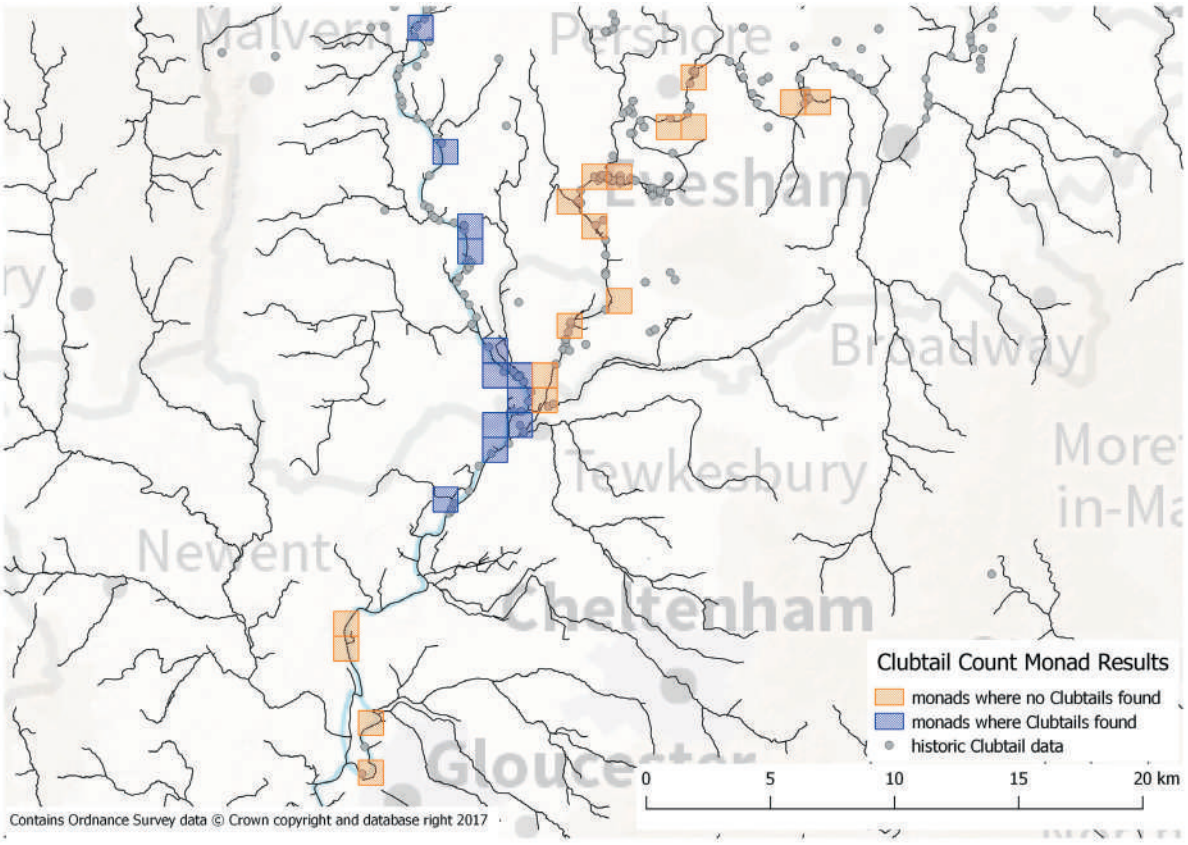
River Thames and Kennet



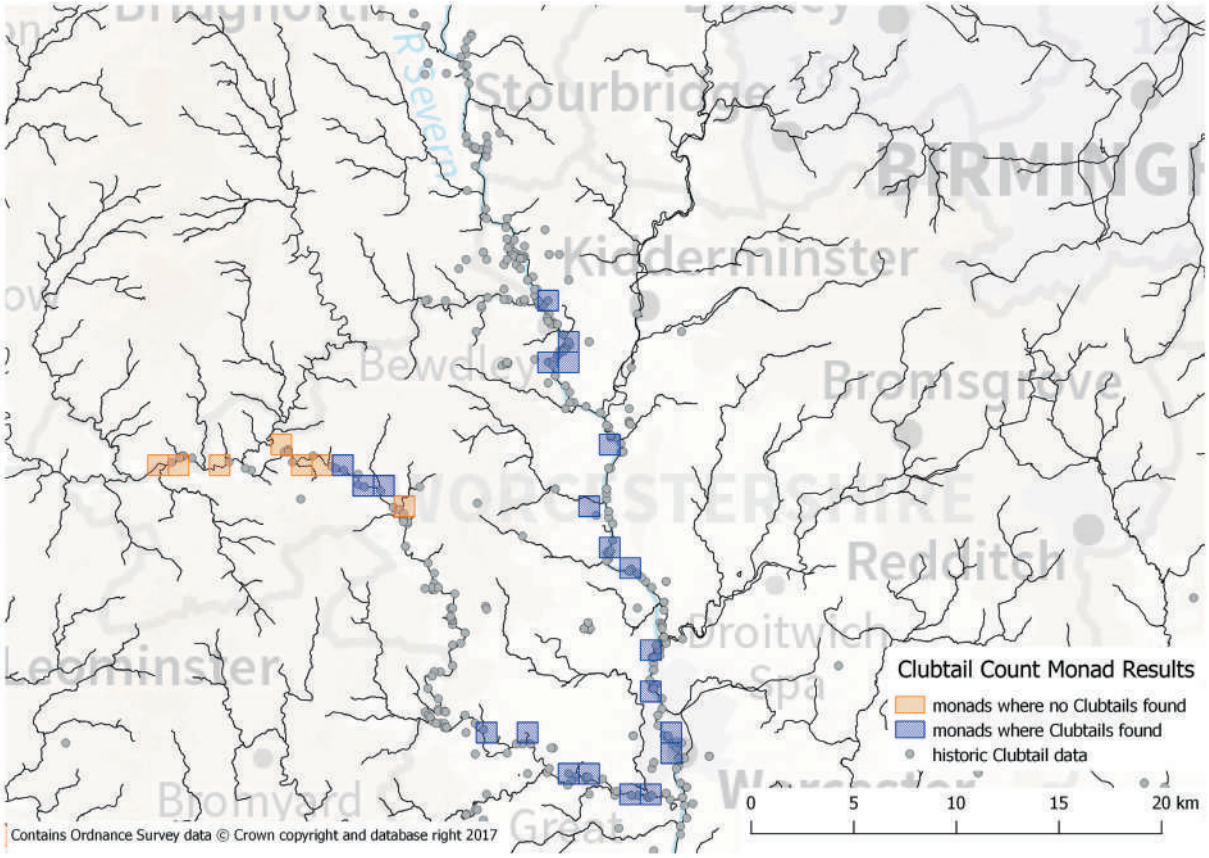
The river at Goring continues to prove a stronghold for the Clubtail. However, areas around Reading, Didcot and upstream of Oxford are a cause for concern, with few gains and a number of losses in 2017. No Clubtails were found on the River Kennet in 2017, despite historic records.

Lower River Severn and River Avon

While the Lower Severn was excellent for the Clubtail in 2017, with 75% of monads positive, the Avon had no monads with Clubtails in 2017. This river is of great concern to us and the situation requires further investigation.



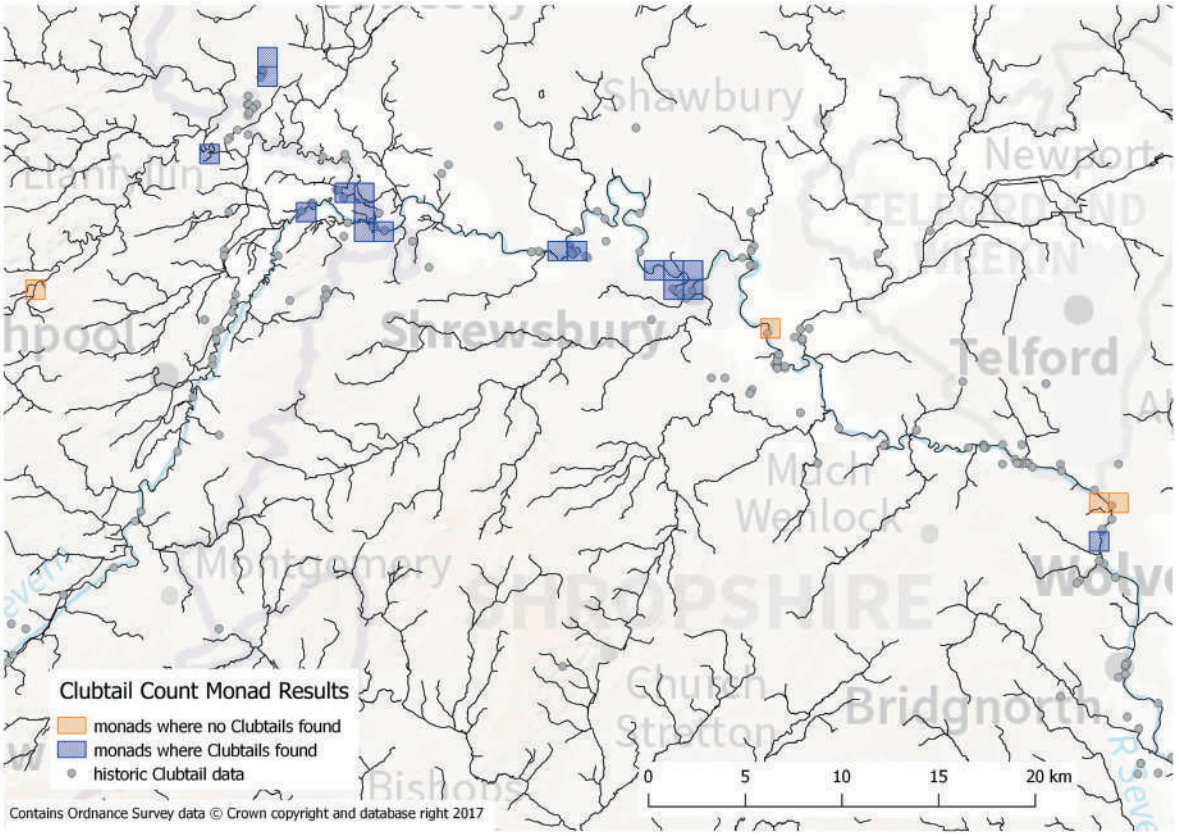
Middle River Severn and River Teme



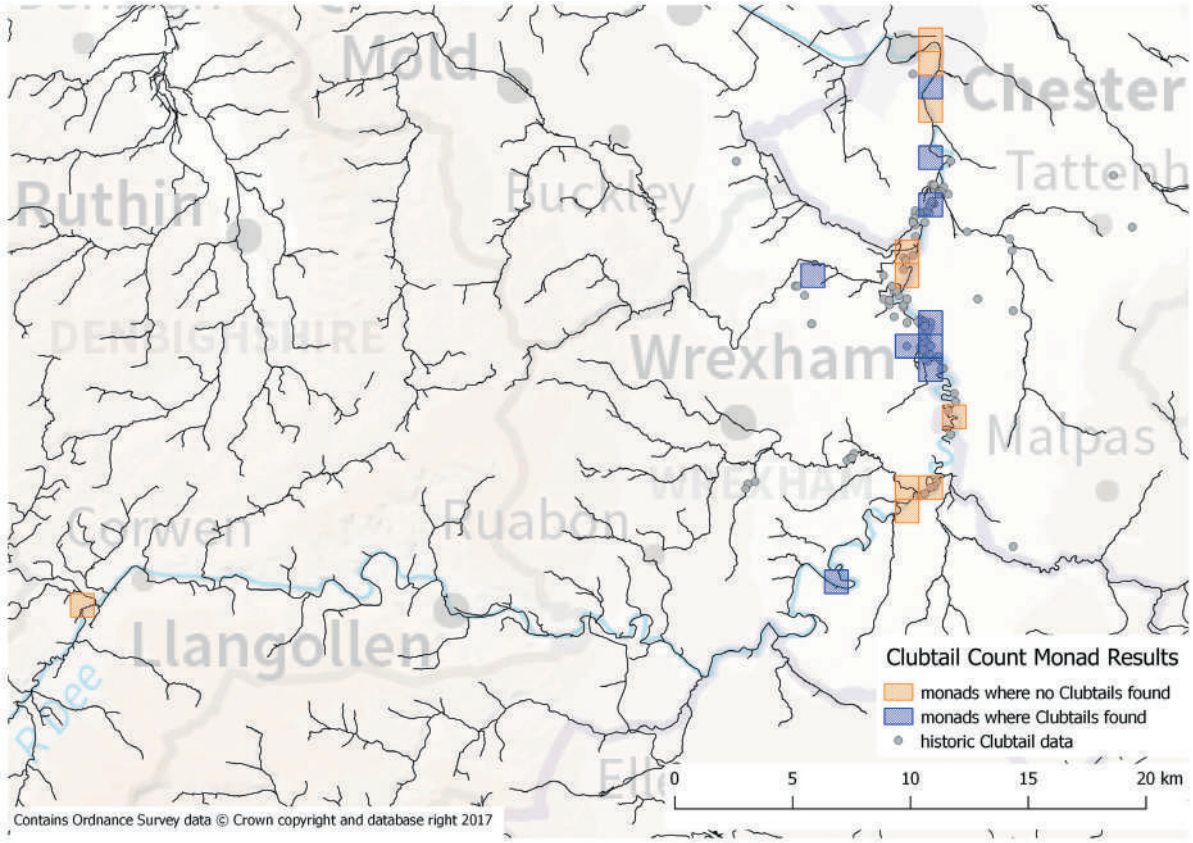
The middle Severn was also strong, with not a single negative monad. The lower River Teme had a good stretch of positive monads. Although the upper Teme was less positive, with a number of losses.

Upper River Severn and River Vyrnwy

The upper Severn continued strong, with almost all positive monads. In addition, 12 records of exuviae were made on the River Vyrnwy, the first ever breeding confirmation for the Clubtail on that river, with records made as far upstream as Llanymynech.



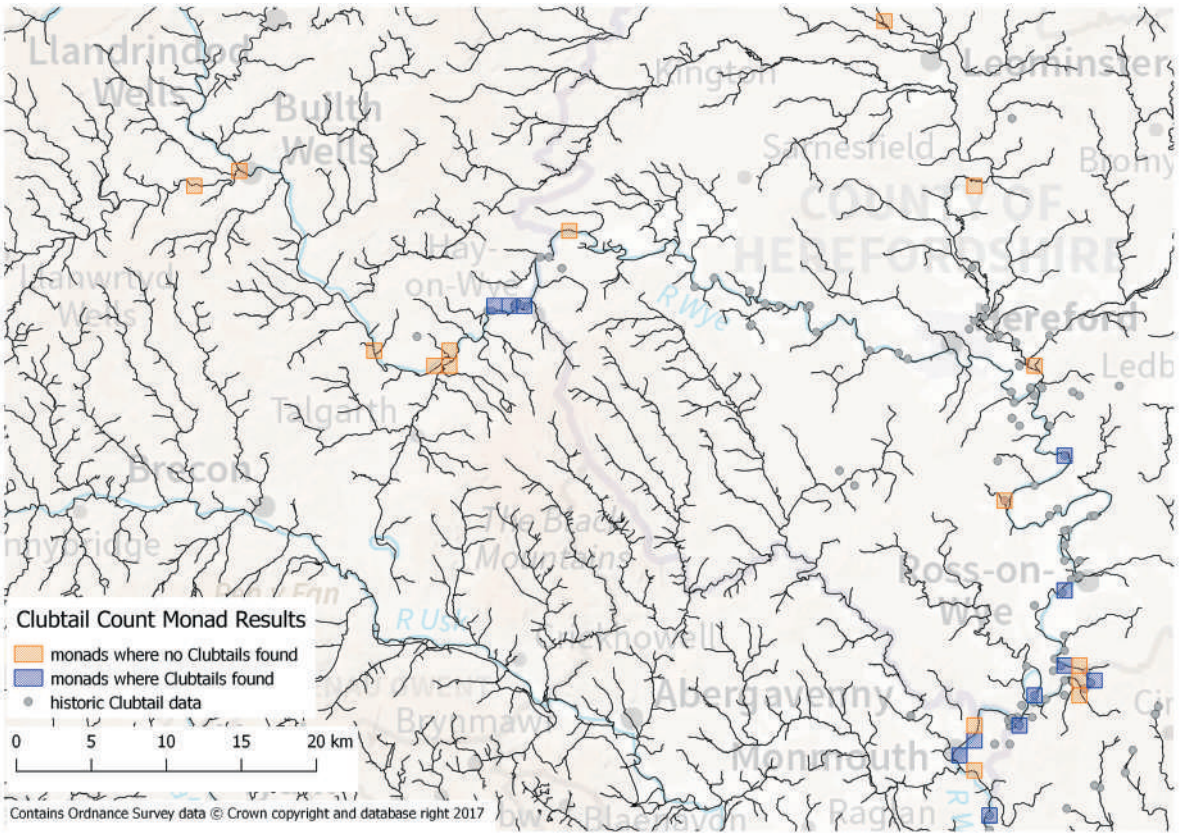
River Dee, River Alyn and River Clywedog



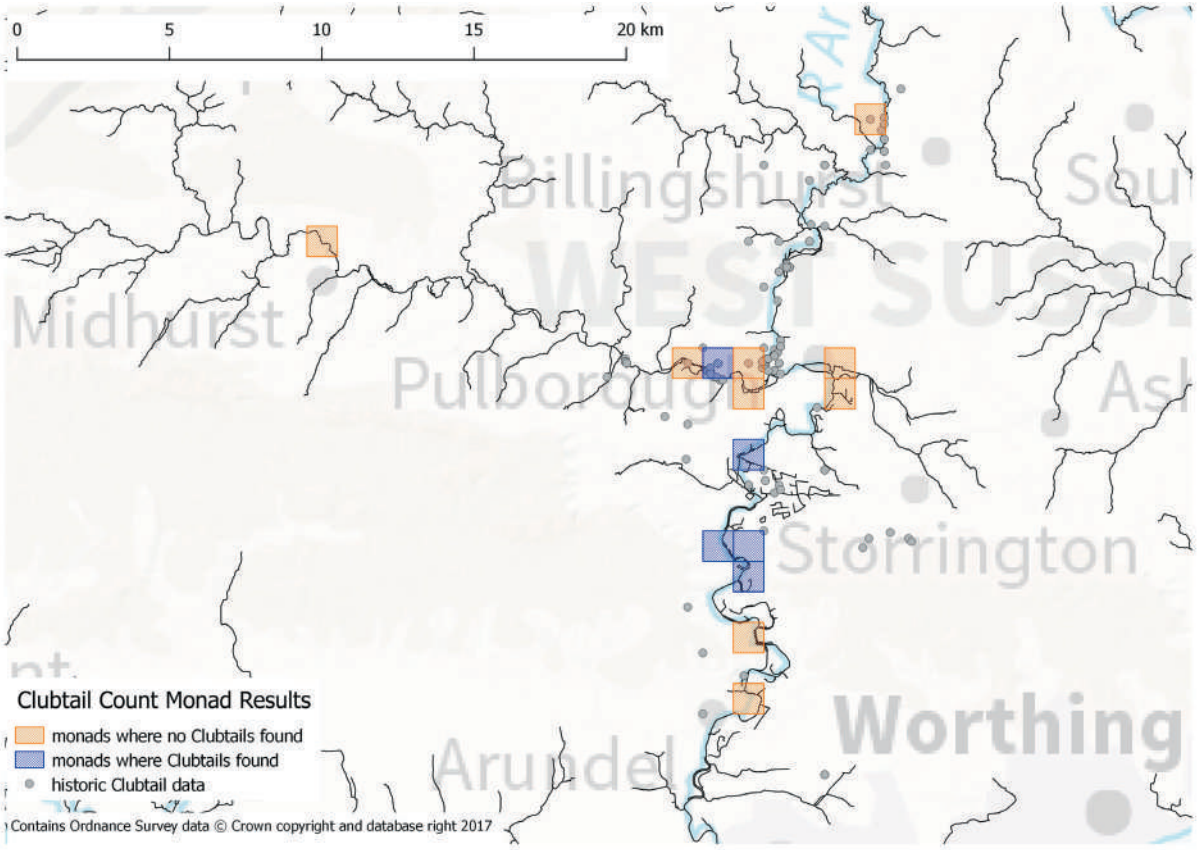
The majority of negative monads on the Dee were in areas without historic records. Additionally, the most upstream record ever for this river was made in 2017, near Overton. A record was also made on the river Alyn, however this was an adult so could have come from the Dee.

River Wye, Lugg, Irfon and Ithon

The River Wye was less well recorded than the other large rivers. However, the results from 2017 were positive, again with many of the negative monads in areas without historic records. No Clubtails were found on the rivers Irfon, Ithon or Lugg, where there are also no historic records.



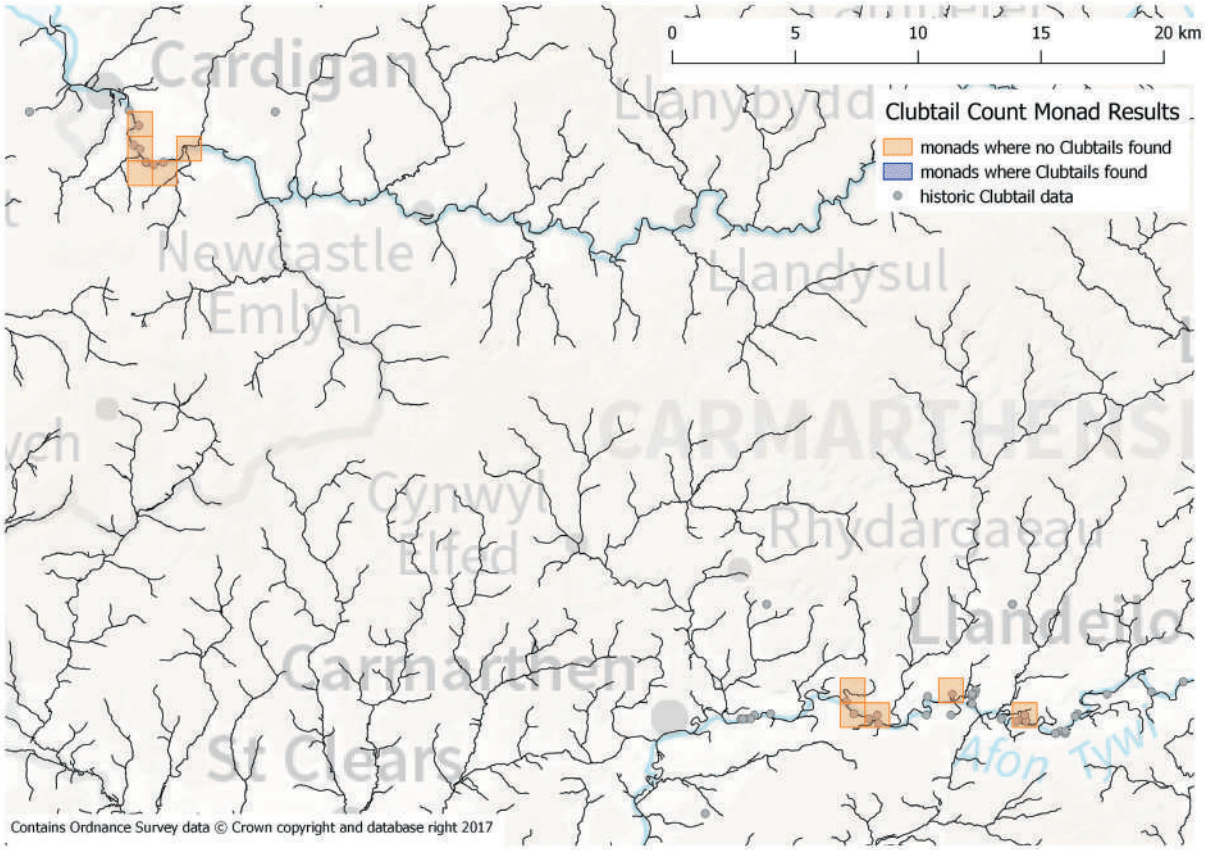
River Arun and Rother



The River Arun was less accessible than the other large rivers, leaving fewer monads covered. While new positive monads were found in 2017, a number of negative monads were also made. Clubtails were only found in one monad on the river Rother in 2017.

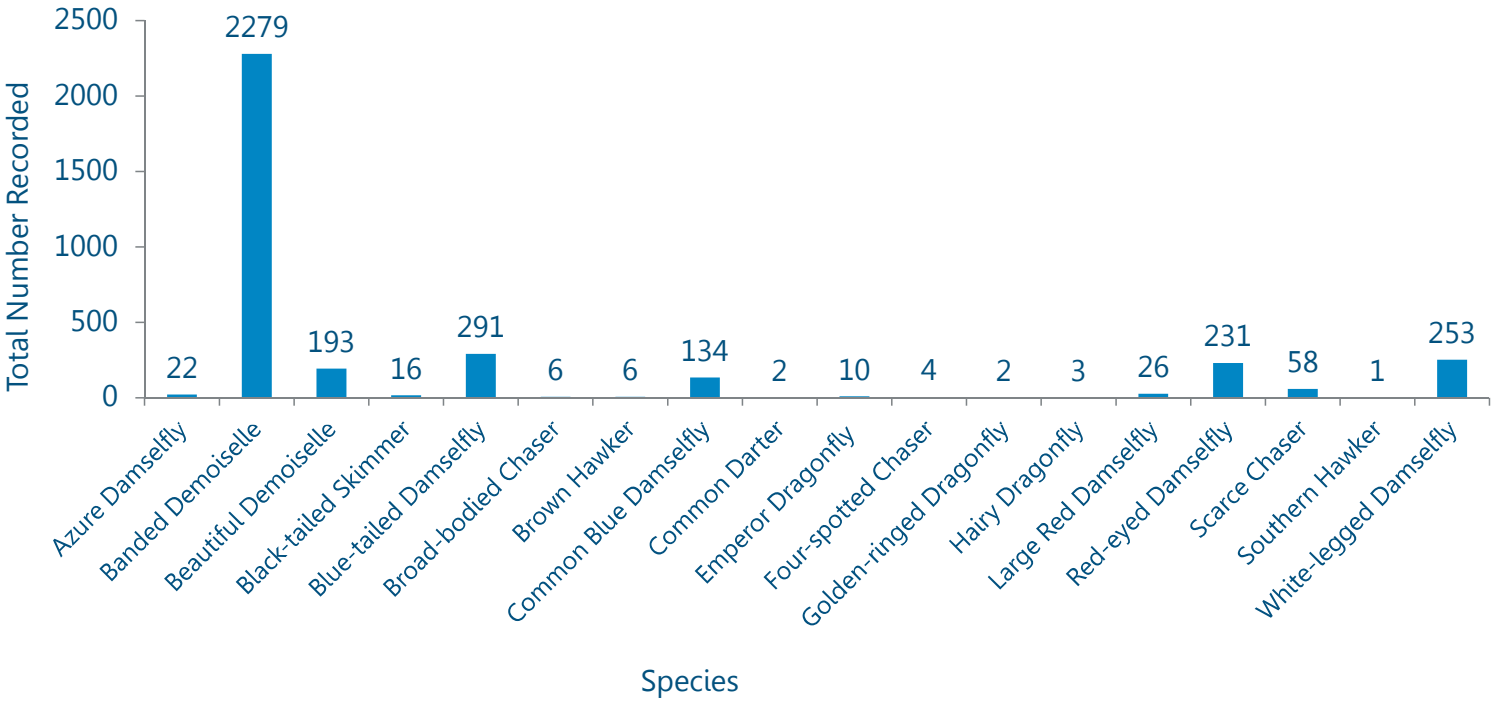
River Teifi and Towy

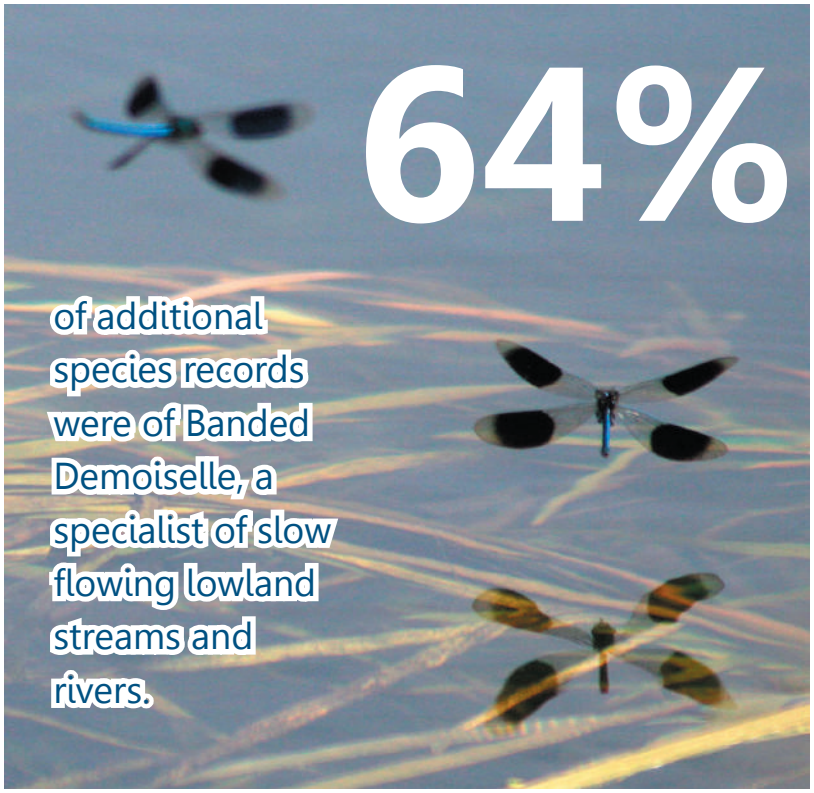
The rivers Teifi and Towy returned no positive Clubtail monads in 2017, despite a number of historic records. While this is concerning, access was difficult. Ideally, access would be sought via kayaks and canoes in future years.



Other Species Records

Many volunteers also recorded other dragonfly and damselfly species they saw while surveying their monad for Common Clubtail. This forms part of an important health check for the rivers in general and provides us with additional information on any distribution changes that are occurring.





© Val Perrin

7%

of additional species records were of White-legged Damselfly. This is a species of concern for the BDS, making these additional records important data.

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What's Next?

© David Tompkins

Trend data

In order to properly understand the populations on these rivers, we need data from monads for multiple years. This will allow us to look beyond annual variations and see the true picture. We need volunteers to cover the same monads as 2017 plus additional monads, focusing on those areas of greatest concern highlighted in Clubtail Count 2017.

New species

Historic records, plus those from Clubtail Count, indicate potential declines of some White-legged Damselfly populations. As another under-recorded species, we need more data to understand the situation. Therefore, we are launching the White-legged Damselfly Investigation.

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New county

In 2017, we had the first ever record of an adult Clubtail Dragonfly in Devon, recorded on the River Otter by Paweł Buczyński. This is a significant distance from any known populations, with the exciting possibility that this is a new breeding location for the species. Next year we need volunteers to look for exuviae to confirm this.