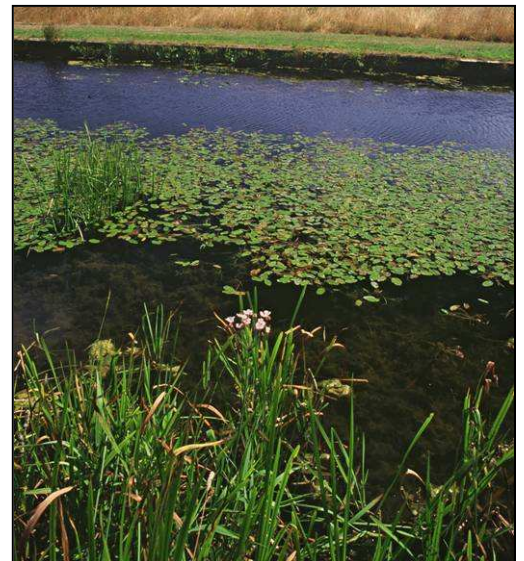


**Species Action Plan: Floating Water Plantain – *Luronium natans***

**Current Status and Importance**

- Floating Water Plantain is a scarce and localised freshwater plant that exists only in Europe.
- It is listed on Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive and Appendix I of the Bern Convention. It is protected under Schedule 4 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994 and Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- There is a regionally important population within the canal system in Kirklees.



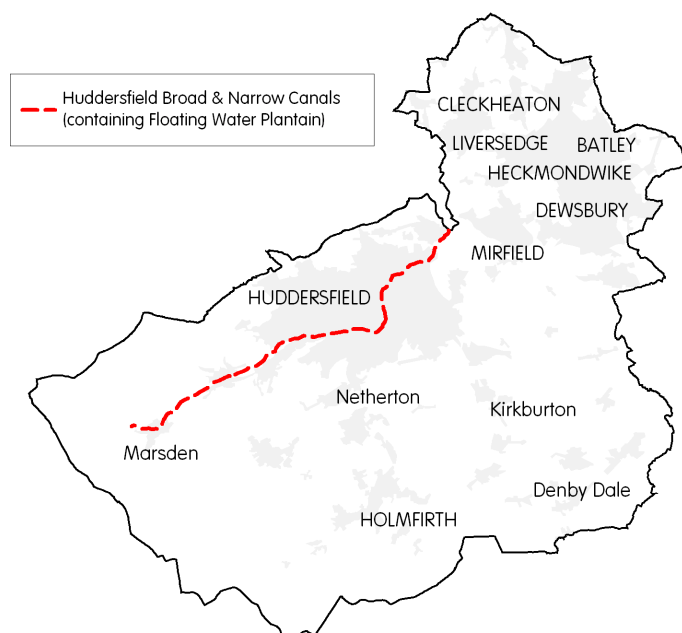
*Photograph copyright Peter Wakely/Natural England*

**Habitat**

- Grows best in relatively open water habitats and its survival is dependent upon some degree of disturbance, which reduces the competitiveness of other marginal plants.
- Although it may be visible, floating on the water surface during the summer, it can also remain undetected at the bottom of water bodies.

**Distribution**

- In the UK the plant's distribution has increased eastwards from upland lakes in Wales through the canal system, where half of the sites now occur.
- It is found in the Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canals and some of the ponds which lie within the Colne Valley where it often occurs in dense colonies. The Narrow and Broad Canals are Sites of Scientific Interest (SSIs) as is Lowestwood Pond.



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## Conservation Issues

There are uncertainties about the vulnerability and tolerance limits of the species. The following issues are relevant to this area:

- Within the canal system an increase in boat traffic may stir up sediments, reducing the clarity of the water and so the ability of the plant to photosynthesise.
- Competition from more invasive species of plants (eg *Typha latifolia*) appears to be leading to a decline of the plant in ponds and goits.
- General neglect of ponds can lead to their loss either through natural succession or ultimately, development.

## Objectives

- Protect ponds from loss through development or neglect.
- Maintain the present plant colonies and ensure no net loss or reduction in size.
- Restore plant colonies, which have been lost or reduced in size, particularly in ponds and goits (mill races/channels) alongside the canal system and identify suitable sites for introductions.
- Monitor trends at known sites.

## Target areas for habitat management and creation

- Canal system and ponds along the Colne Valley.

## Targets

- Maintain SSI sites in favourable condition.

## Key Links and Organisations

- Site protection: Kirklees Council; Natural England.
- Management and restoration: British Waterways, River Colne Project.
- Monitoring: British Waterways; Kirklees Wildlife and Landscape Advisory Forum.

## See Also

- [UKBAP Floating Water Plantain Species Action Plan](#)