

AQUA - Aquatic Quality Award



- Pilot scheme – Now with additional APHA funding
- South West Water, South West Lakes Trust, APHA & Bristol Zoo
- Increased biosecurity efforts using stakeholders
- Bronze - simple – Signs, contact, website & publications
- Silver / Gold wash down stations & inc surveys

AQUA

The Aquatic Quality Award



Inspiring biosecurity best practice for waterway users

Invasive non-native species (INNS) threaten native biodiversity and cost the UK over £1.8 billion annually; biosecurity is a recognised method to reduce the spread of INNS. AQUA was a free regional pilot trial, set up by the Bristol Zoological Society, in conjunction with South West Water and the Animal and Plant Health Agency – part of RAPID LIFE, a 3-year EU LIFE project designed to help reduce the spread of INNS within the UK.

AQUA AIMS:

- Target waterbodies open to waterway users
- Help them increase their biosecurity efforts
- To combat the threat of invasive species
- To enable a 'Rapid Response' to new invasions
- Participants can gain their AQUA accreditation award
- Be recognised as a centre that is actively conserving their site
- To maximise native aquatic and riparian diversity
- Three levels of the award: bronze, silver and gold
- Accreditation assessment by independent review panel

Key criteria for each level of accreditation:

- Site Guardians appointed
- Biosecurity awareness-raising material displayed
- Biosecure behaviour of users encouraged
- Active engagement with site users: INNS & biosecurity
- INNS monitoring & reporting
- Criteria > stringent/complex as accreditation increases



Results of pilot AQUA scheme

- 45 sites in SW accredited: 40 Bronze, 5 Silver awards: angling, boating, diving and swimming
- Scheme is continuing as part of RAPID After Life – aiming to expand it beyond South West
- On-going evaluation is a key element to assess efficacy of scheme

Further information:
nonnativespecies.org/rapid
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Funders: we are grateful to the following organisations for their very kind support of this project:



AQUA - Expansion

- Yorkshire Water
- Severn Trent
- RYA
- British Canoeing
- Angling Trust
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
- Canal & Rivers Trust
- SupBikeRun



Thank you for listening- Questions?

STOP THE SPREAD

Invasive plants and animals can carry diseases that kill fish, and block waterways and banks interfering with fishing. They can be small and hard to spot so are easily spread on damp equipment and clothing.

Protect the environment and fishing you enjoy by keeping your kit free of invasive plants and animals.

Remember to check these places

- CHECK** Check your gear after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals or plant material. Remove anything you find and leave it at the site.
- CLEAN** Clean everything thoroughly as soon as you can, paying attention to nets, waders, and areas that are damp and hard to access. Use hot water if possible.
- DRY** Dry everything for as long as possible before using elsewhere as some invasive plants and animals can survive for two weeks in damp conditions.

Watch out for

- Algae
- Shellfish
- Fish
- Aquatic plants

For more information on invasive species, visit nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry

Contact me

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