

River Leven Lamprey Watch

L.L.A.I.A

Managed by Anglers, For Anglers



Get onboard!

We would like to invite you to help us gather important information about adult lamprey populations in the River Leven!

Sea and river lampreys live in the sea, but every year the adults stop feeding and start swimming, making an epic journey upstream into rivers, where like the salmon we are so familiar with, they spawn and die.



Photograph: H.Dawson, USFWS



Photograph: © Pat Morris, www.arkive.org

They need clean, well oxygenated water and like nice gravelly habitats in shallow reaches of rivers to spawn in. By monitoring their populations we can find out more about the quality of our rivers, changes in climate and events happening at sea!

What do we need to know?

We would like to know, the date, time and location where you saw them. Whether they are sea or river lampreys (see our fact sheet) how many there were and an estimate of their size. If possible send us a photograph or video. Send your findings and/or any other questions/information to: survey@lochlomondangling.com

You can help us to gather important information on these wonderful creatures and get to see them first hand!

Remember

Take care! There is no need to enter the water. If they are spawning in the area you will be able to see them from the river bank. Don't disturb them! Remember they have travelled far to be here.

Fact Sheet

Lampreys are eel-like creatures but you can tell them by the gill-holes behind their head. In the UK, we have 3 species of lamprey; brook, river and sea lampreys. We want you to look out for the migratory river and sea lampreys and below are some tips for telling them apart.



Photograph: www.as.uky.edu

The sea lamprey is the largest of the three species, it can grow to 90cm. It is yellow/brown and easily recognised by the dark brown mottling that covers the length of its body.

Its mouth is a sucker disc which it uses to attach to stones. It moves the suitable stones to make a large nest for spawning and you may get to see this in action!



Photograph: T. Lawrence, GLFC



Photograph: www.denbighshirecountryside.org.uk

The river lamprey is not as large and it typically grows to ~30cm. It has no mottled pattern and is dark grey or green-brown in colour. It uses its suckermouth in the same way as the sea lamprey and you may also be able to see them spawning.

The brook lamprey is smaller still and grows to around 16cm. It spends its whole life in freshwater and tends to be found further upstream although their habitats can overlap with river lampreys. They are similar in colour to river lampreys but can be paler and slightly translucent.



rabo001@web.de

River Leven Lamprey Watch Survey Sheet

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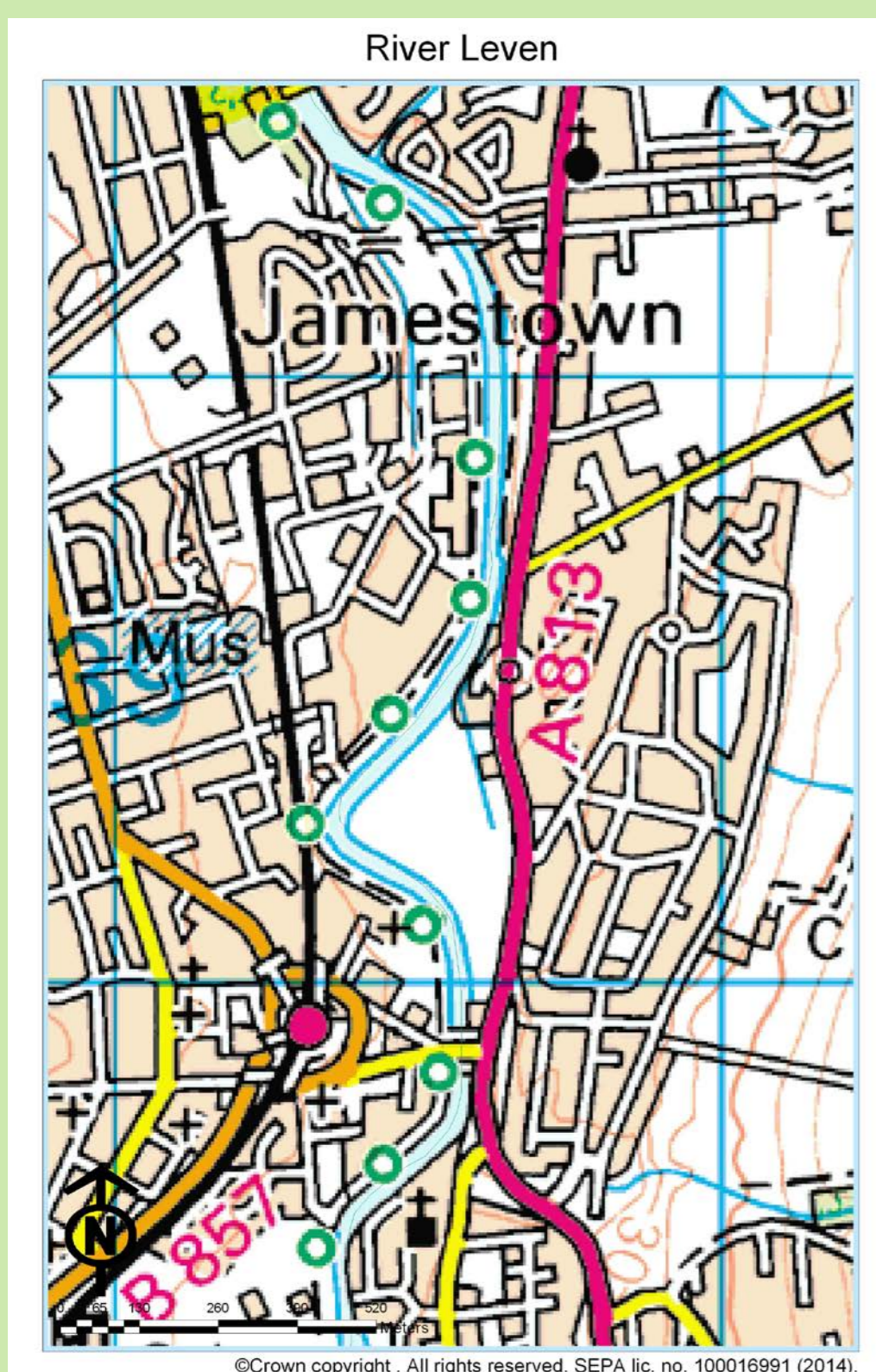
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If you fish or walk the River Leven and are out for a stroll along your local riverside in June you may be lucky enough to see these amazing creatures as they prepare to spawn. If you do then please let us know!



In recent years, lampreys have been spotted spawning in the River Leven, in various locations.



In the Leven they were spotted downstream of the foot bridge near Honeysuckle Lane.



In the Leven they have been seen near the factory Wall area above Bonhill Bridge.

The Leven may have Lamprey spawning in any area that has a good gravel bottom, so may be in other areas not listed



You may also be able to see them in the Leven in the Street Run just above the Renton Footbridge

Wherever you find them have a look around for a landmark or use the GPS on your phone to let us know the location!