

Newyddion gan / News Release

## **Loving Our Lake**

05 November 2012

### **New life for Llyn Padarn**

Arctic Charr have been released into the Afon-y-Bala to help boost numbers and protect the population in Llyn Pardarn, Llanberis. The Arctic Charr is a unique and rare species in the UK, found only in deep, cold lakes. Numbers of Arctic Charr, known locally as Torgoch, in Llyn Padarn, have been in decline in recent years.

A survey in 2007 of the Arctic Charr, as they migrated along the Afon-y-Bala to spawn, prompted concerns over low population numbers. "During our surveys we have noticed a steady decline in the numbers of fish we monitor year on year so this is just to boost the population and give them just that little bit of extra help to enable them to survive," said David Edwell, Environment Agency Wales area manager for North Wales.

Nearly 2,000 Arctic Charr have been released into the Afon-y-Bala since October 2011. A back-up population has also been established in Llyn Crafnant, near Trefriw, in the Conwy Valley to act as a population safety net.

"We captured the Arctic Charr here, using fyke nets, in early December 2011. The fish eggs from the captured fish were taken to the Environment Agency Wales' Mawddach Fish Hatchery near Dolgellau. We have recently released 666 Charr, they are 10–11 months old, ranging in size from 5 cm to 15 cm and in fantastic condition," said David.

Recently Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water has announced a £15m project to upgrade the local pumping station to divert all waste water discharges away from Llyn Padarn. They will install a 5km (3mile) pipeline to a new 'state of the art' treatment works in Brynrefail. This work will remove the inputs of phosphate into the lake, which were a contributing factor resulting in the toxic algal bloom which threatened wildlife, such as the Arctic Charr and the local economy in 2009.

The upgrade to the sewage treatment system is expected to take up to 3 years to complete, but in the meantime everyone can play their part in reducing phosphate inputs into our lakes and rivers by switching to phosphate free dishwasher detergents such as Ecover and ensuring that septic tanks are emptied every 1-2 years. This is the message of the 'Loving our Lake' project, which has been developed and delivered by Snowdonia-Active, a social enterprise based in Brynrefail, with the support of the Environment Agency and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water.

“Our behaviour has a direct impact on the health of the lake and therefore the survival of the Arctic Charr. Simple changes to some aspects of how we live and work can make a big difference to Llyn Padarn now.” said Dr Emma Edwards-Jones, ‘Loving our Lake’ Project Manager.

More information on why we should love Llyn Padarn and the ‘Loving our Lake’ project is available online at [www.loving-our-lake.org](http://www.loving-our-lake.org).

*Diwedd / Ends*

Teitl Llun / Picture title

(RtoL) Walter Hanks and Pierino Algieri, Fishery Technical Officers at the Environment Agency Wales.

On the Afon-y-Bala, near Nant Peris

Photo credit ‘Ray Wood © 2012’

Mrs Jo Quinney MCIPR Ymarferydd Achrededig / Accredited Practitioner

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**Nodiadau i Olygyddion / Notes to Editors:**

WHO:

For those who live, work and holiday in the Llanberis valley, Llyn Padarn is a significant feature. The livelihoods of many people in the area are closely linked to the well-being of the lake.

WHY:

Many aspects of how we live and work have a direct impact on the health of the lake. Simple changes to some aspects of how we live and work might make a big difference to Llyn Padarn.

WHAT:

Over the next 12 months, support and advice will be provided to residents and businesses with the possibility of joining the ‘Loving our Lake’ project.

**SNOWDONIA-ACTIVE:**

‘Loving our Lake’ is run by Snowdonia-Active. Based at Caban in Brynrefail, they are a social enterprise established in 2001, working to support and develop the outdoor sector and sustainable tourism in North West Wales. At Snowdonia-Active, they believe a sensitive and imaginative approach to environmental management can deliver benefits to the local economy, the wider community and the environment.