**BART gives a presentation at the Angling Trust Coarse Fish Conference 2014**

On Wednesday 28th May 2014, Dr Mark Everard (Founding Director of BART) gave a presentation at the [Angling Trust Coarse Fish Conference 2014](http://anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=1019&sectionTitle=Coarse+Fish+Conference+2014), held at the South Street Arts Centre, Reading.

The event brought together a range of coarse fishery interests from across academia, angling clubs, regulatory organisations, Defra, professional institutions, Rivers Trusts and interested individuals. The Angling Trust event was well-attended, virtually filling the main hall of the South Street Arts Centre, a venue normally occupied by touring bands.

Morning presentations included:

* Welcome from Mark Lloyd, CEO of the Angling Trust
* The Catchment Based Approach, WFD and Fisheries – Arlin Rickard, Rivers Trust CEO
* Tributaries are the Key – Dr Mark Everard, BART and UWE
* A Catchment Approach to Avian Predation – AT Fishery Management Advisors
* Stillwater Habitat Improvement – Bruno Broughton

This pre-lunch session ran in parallel with a meeting, in an upstairs room in the same venue, of the new National Crucian Conservation Project. This new group kicked off the afternoon presentations:

* The National Crucian Carp Conservation Project – Martin Salter
* Creating a Fishery Improvement Plan – Barry Bendall, Rivers Trust
* Wide ranging Q&A – hosted by Martin Salter, Angling Trust

Mark’s presentation emphasised the importance of, yet our extensive lack of knowledge about and regard for, the headwaters and tributaries serving our larger river fisheries. Mark described the ways that fish move in rivers throughout the day and between seasons, and with changing weather and life stages, and consequently how tributaries can be vital for serving their shifting needs. Much of the stream network, perhaps the majority of its total channel length, may comprise headwaters. As they are not part of the routinely monitored ‘controlled water’ network, they therefore evade regulatory scrutiny. Yet many are vulnerable to arable run-off or else direct ploughing over, trampling by stock, road and other urban drainage, and extensive modifications particularly in the built environment.

These smaller streams may be of disproportionate value to our fisheries, as sources of pure water and food and for the recruitment of fish. Alternatively, they may be primary sources of contamination. They certainly appear also to be disproportionately overlooked in fishery and river management activities.