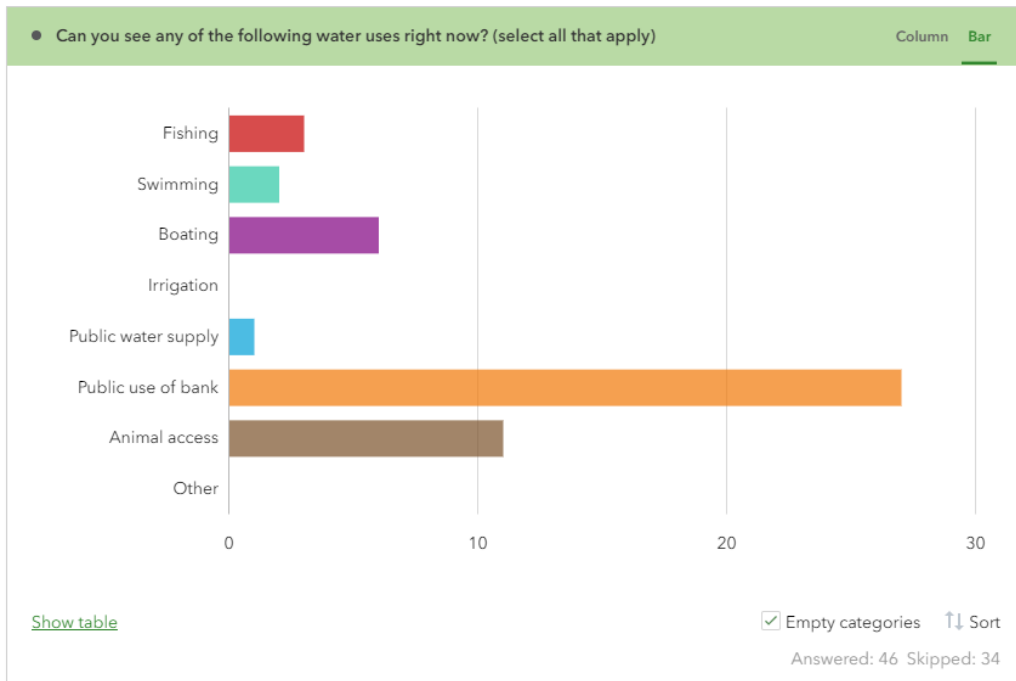


## Rockingham Forest River Wardens – The story so far...

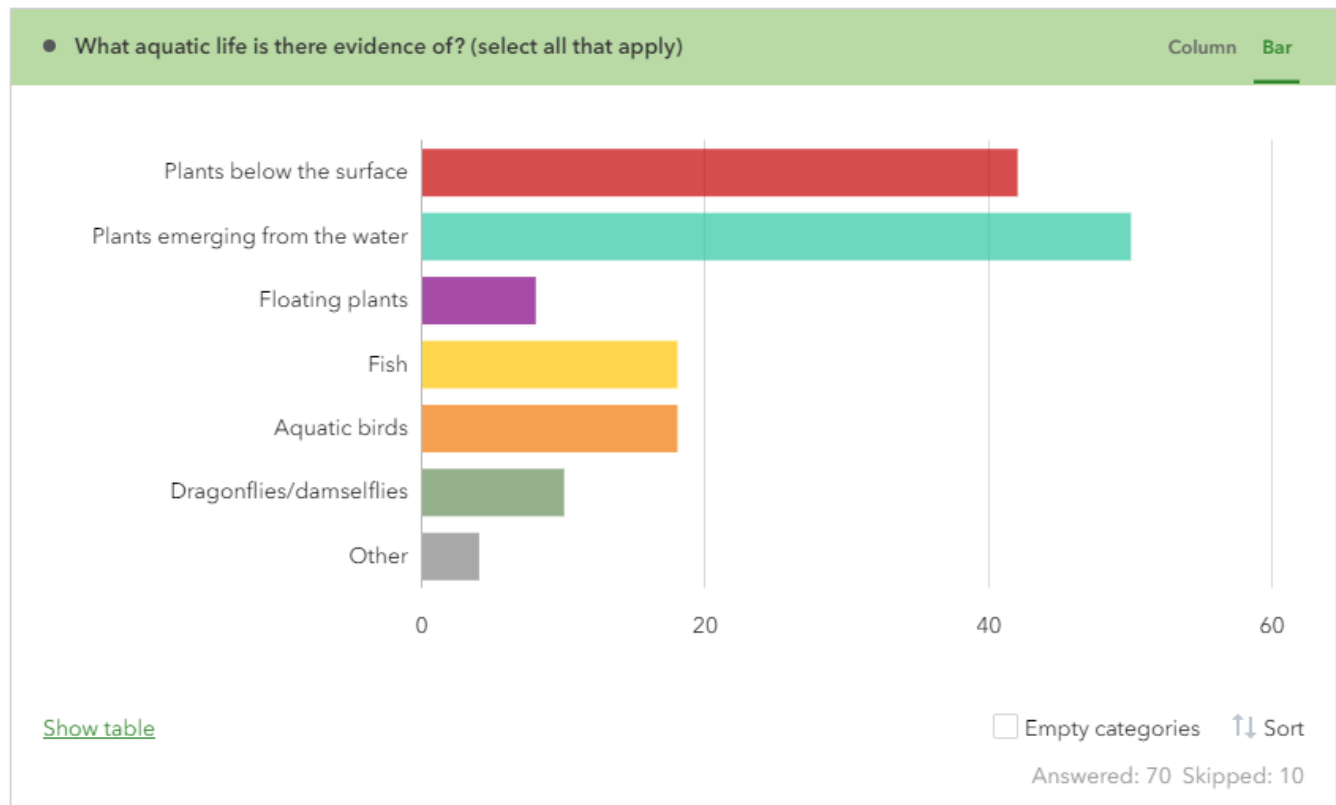
This is a summary of data collected by Rockingham Forest River Wardens using the FreshWater Watch survey. The data was collected between 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023 and 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024, as part of the Building the Links for Rockingham Forest Project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

- 33 people have attended River Warden training, and 19 sites are currently being monitored for water quality in and around the Rockingham Forest with a total of 80 surveys completed so far!
- Each survey is categorised by FreshWater Watch as indicating Very Good, Good, Moderate or Poor ecological status. This is the breakdown of the surveys to date:
  - Very Good – 17.5%
  - Good – 2.5%
  - Moderate – 46%
  - Poor – 34%
- Low levels of algae were reported in the surveys with 80% finding no algae present. This is a positive result as high levels of algae indicate very elevated nutrient levels and can lead to oxygen depletion.
- The turbidity (or cloudiness) of the water has been low with over 70% of surveys reporting <14 NTU (tube filled to top). This is a good sign as it shows low levels of sediment and dispersed algae in the water.
- The water's surface is generally clear of foam, oily sheen, algae or slurry, with 72% reporting nothing on the surface (foam in 10 surveys, floating algae in 8 surveys and slurry in 1 survey).
- 72% of surveys reported no litter, where plastic litter was present it had largely originated from recreational uses of the area but there were also three instances of fly tipping and 6 from overflowing bins.
- 49 out of the 80 surveys highlighted possible sources of pollution in the immediate surroundings - 27 from agricultural runoff, 9 from urban/road runoff and 4 others. No outfall pipes were recorded.
- There are a variety of land uses present near the monitoring points, with the majority in more rural/farming areas, with only one urban site. There is an equal split between surveys being carried out on the larger river and smaller streams.

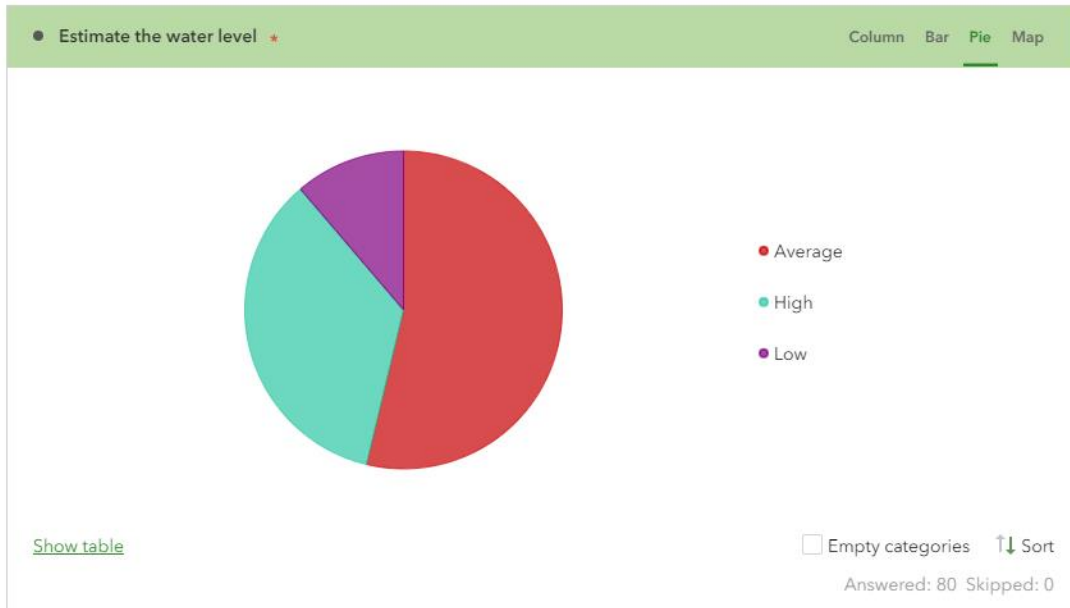
**Water Uses** – just over half of surveys reported a water use, in most case this was public use of the bank or for animal access, but boating, fishing and public water supply were also observed.



### Aquatic Life



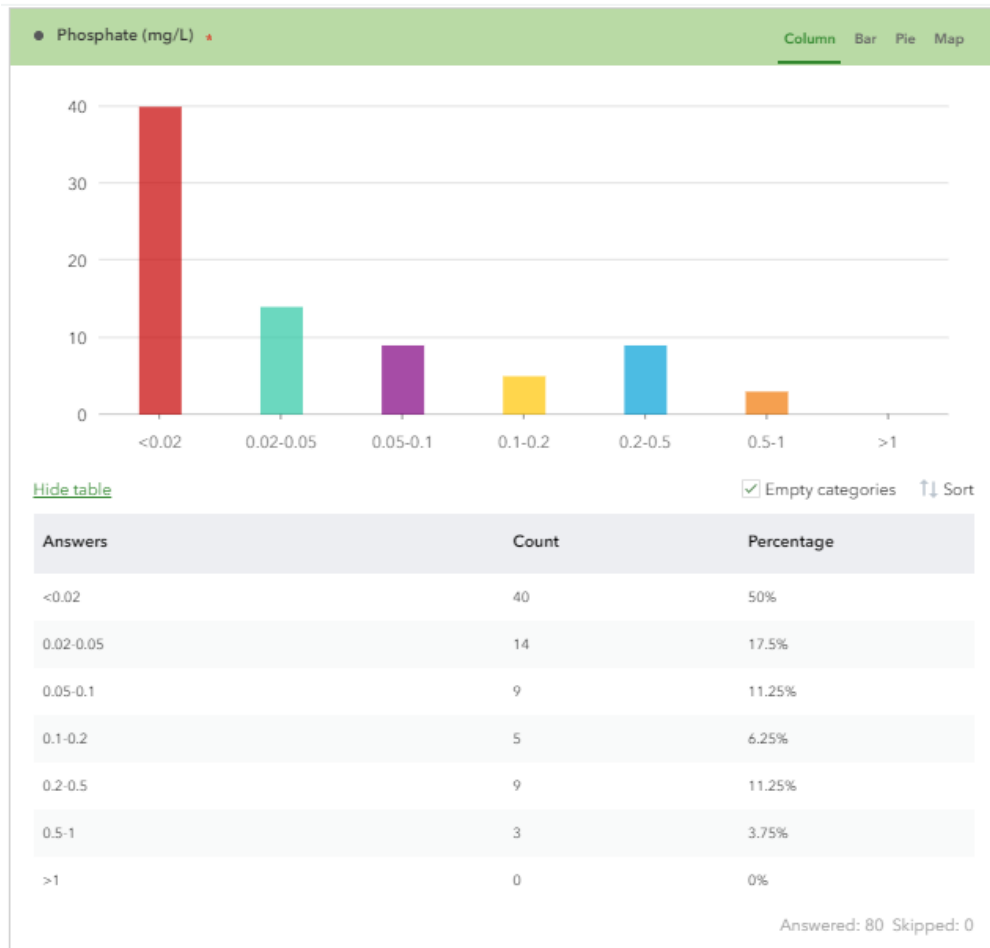
## Water Level



**Nitrates** – The nitrate levels were generally quite high, with 56% of surveys in the 1-5mg/l range which shows evidence of nutrient pollution, and a further 21% of surveys in the 5 to >10 range suggesting high nutrient pollution.



**Phosphates** – The test results show low levels of phosphates with 79% at levels which should have little impact on the ecological health of the river. 17.5% of surveys show evidence of some nutrient pollution (0.1-0.5mg/l) and 3.75% (3 surveys) indicate high levels of nutrient pollution.



*Thank you to all the volunteer River Wardens for collecting this data!*