

Mammals reintroduced after 400 years now 'beavering' away at popular nature reserves

Eight beavers released at Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's Idle Valley Nature Reserve in November are already busy helping improve habitats to benefit other species.

The beavers, the largest number ever released at a site in England, are munching their way through scrub and felling small trees as part of the charity's long-term plans to enhance the wildlife value of more than 50 hectares at its largest site. Alongside the beavers, traditional breed cattle are making clearings and trampling vegetation to diversify the habitat for creatures from beetles and butterflies and birds.

The beaver release is the highest profile element of a trail blazing partnership between Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Severn Trent, designed to boost the UK's Nature Recovery Network. The partnership is set to enhance the natural environment and improve water quality across more than 290ha of habitat at the reserve, in the wider Idle Valley and across Nottinghamshire through targeted support for farmers and landowners.

Bringing beavers to the Idle Valley was also made possible thanks to generous donations to the Trust's public fundraising appeal which helped the Trust hit its £250,000 target. As part of the wider investment, sections of the site's drainage system are now functioning for the first time in a decade, helping to expose islands and muddy areas vital for wading birds as nesting and feeding areas.

Speaking about the impact of the project so far, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's Head of Communications Erin McDaid said: "Whilst the beavers have only been on site for a couple of months they are already having a positive impact as are the additional cattle. We're also really excited to be making real progress with sorting out the water levels to improve habitat for waders."

Anyone wishing to find out more about the beavers and the reasons they've been brought back to Nottinghamshire after an absence of at least 400 years can join a series of enclosure tours or beaver spotting sessions later in the spring. For further details, visit nottinghamshirewildlife.org

Photo options:



A beaver at the Idle Valley Nature Reserve - Photo by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust



Regular monitoring quickly found evidence of the beavers positive impact on the habitat within their enclosure. Photo by Elliott Kean



A released beaver heads into the water - Photo by Jim Connolly Photography