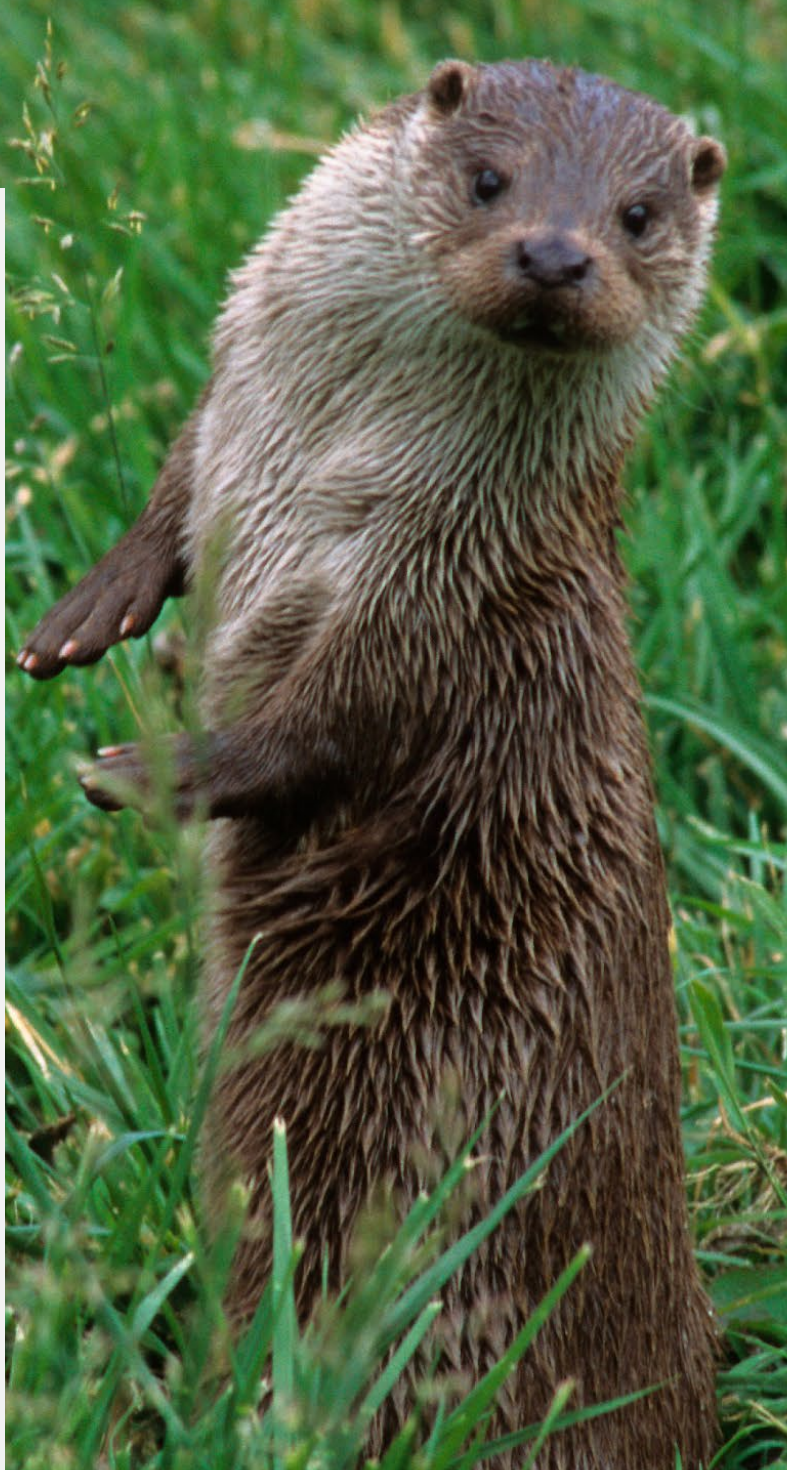


PREDATION: MAMMALS

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ANGLING TRUST
POSITION STATEMENT
Author: Stuart Singleton-White
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Background

Whilst predation is part and parcel of the natural world there is no doubt that any imbalance between predator and prey can have a serious long-term effect on fish stocks. Particularly when those stocks are already under severe pressure from other factors including pollution, over-abstraction of water and loss of habitat. The three most damaging predators impacting our freshwater fish populations are cormorants, signal crayfish and otters.

Here we look at the impact of otters and mink.



Why it matters

Now that otter numbers have successfully recovered across most parts of the country thanks to reductions in the use of certain pesticides, they are at times having an impact on some fisheries through the predation of stock. In the last few decades while otter numbers were low, still water fisheries stocked with large carp became widespread throughout the country and specimen-sized fish became a real prospect in our rivers.

With the return of otters to these areas, these indigenous and highly effective predators are presented with foraging opportunities that can come into conflict with angling interests, with numerous examples of expensive or highly-prized specimen fish being taken by otters. Of most concern has been the impacts on carp in still waters and barbel in smaller rivers, particularly where the fish have had no experience of sharing the water with otters.

The otter is a highly protected mammal with severe penalties in place for anyone seeking to harm the species.

Mink is an invasive non-native predator that has established itself in our rivers since the 1950s, mostly through releases and escapes. Being an opportunistic predator, often killing more than they require for food, mink have a devastating effect on our fish and native wildlife.

Mink can be legally controlled through trapping and shooting.

What is the Angling Trust doing?

Carp and still water fisheries at risk of damage by otters can apply for funding from the Angling Trust's Angling Improvement Fund (AIF). We have helped leverage and allocate over £2.6m of rod licence income in the past decade for the fencing and protection of these fisheries.

The Angling Trust is working closely with a variety of key stakeholders including Embryo, Otterstop, the Carp Society, the Predation Action Group, UK Wild Otter Trust as well as the Environment Agency to better protect fisheries.

The Angling Trust are part of Waterlife Recovery East, working at a regional level in East Anglia to undertake a strategic, large-scale eradication of mink from Norfolk and Suffolk. Working with a variety of different stakeholders, extensive trapping is occurring within Norfolk, Suffolk and the surrounding counties. Working with Cambridge University, as part of this project genetic information is being gathered to improve understanding of the dispersal capabilities of mink to inform ongoing control.

Our two Fishery Management Advisors can provide advice and support on predation matters. They can be contacted via email and phone.

Richard Bamforth: richard.bamforth@anglingtrust.net | 07904 041518
covers the North West, North East, Yorkshire and Humber, Lincolnshire, East Midlands, and West Midlands.

Jake Davoile: jake.davoile@anglingtrust.net | 07949 703206
covers the South West, South East, London, South Midlands, and East of England.

How can you help?

By joining the Angling Trust, you will be supporting the work of our Fishery Management Advisers. There is a raft of information concerning actions and advice on managing otters on still waters, and actions that fisheries and clubs can take to protect their stock.

Thank You!

TO ALL OUR TRADE
ASSOCIATE PARTNERS
FOR SUPPORTING THE
WORK OF THE
ANGLING TRUST



IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE ANGLING TRADE AND WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT OUR WORK, FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED BY EMAILING JOHN.CHEYNE@ANGLINGTRUST.NET



ANGLING TRUST

We are a not-for-profit organisation representing anglers, fighting for fish, fishing and the environment. We are recognised by the Government as the National Governing Body for angling in England and partner with Visit Wales and Natural Resources Wales to promote Fishing in Wales. We are a member-based organisation made up of anglers of all disciplines providing a united front to represent, grow and protect our sport. By becoming a member of the Angling Trust you are helping to protect the waterways you fish in and the fish which live within them, ensuring their health and protection for future generations.

[Click here for more information about how to join the Angling Trust](#)

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