

Taw Torridge Estuary Forum meeting 19.1.26 Devon Wildlife Trust activities : A brief summary of some contacts/updates in the North Devon Rivers and Estuaries areas

Local Reserves [Nature Reserves](#) | [Devon Wildlife Trust](#) Contact is Matt Boydell DWT Land Manager

Horsey no recent updates

Swanpool Marsh Some management work has taken place over the winter months

Marine/Coastal :

Coastwise North Devon has done intertidal surveys for the **Wildlife Trust Shoresearch project** at Westward Ho! Combesgate Woolacombe and Hele Bay. Surveys have also been done at Cheyne Beach. INNShore invasives surveys have also been taking place at Westward Ho! and Lee Bay. Dates are being planned for 2026

The Marine Strandings Network has a number of volunteers recording along the coasts. “**Do you know what to do if you see a marine stranding?**”

Is the animal alive? Please call **British Divers Marine Life Rescue** immediately on 01825 765546 (office hours) or 07787 433412 (out of hours). Keep your distance, and keep other people and dogs away.

If the animal is dead, please call **Devon Marine Strandings Network** on 07719 086531 or email strandings@devonwildlifetrust.org. Please include photos, a location and when you found it. Save the numbers in your phone and spread the word by [downloading our leaflet](#). “

For more details the Marine Engagement and Awareness Officer is Coral Smith

Save Devons Seas : The appeal raised more than £18000 towards Marine Conservation work in Devon

The DWT has had a campaign to help bottom trawling being banned in Devon’s Marine Protected Areas.

The South Coast Wildlife Trusts (from Cornwall to Sussex) have been recruiting three new members of staff that will be leading on the development phase of a marine, multi-trust project that will look at marine nature recovery across the South Coast of England.

For general information see [Wilder Seas](#) | [Devon Wildlife Trust](#) and/or contact Carli Cocciardi Nature Recovery Officer (Marine) ccocciardi@devonwildlifetrust.org

Planning Applications. The DWT Planning team are still sending in objections and responses to some local applications . Please see the following link for more information about responding to planning applications [Wildlife, planning and development | Devon Wildlife Trust](#) planning@devonwildlifetrust.org

The Planning and Infrastructure bill is being challenged nationally by the Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs eg the RSPB with petitions and lobbying to amend the bill .It is also being challenged by the Devon Wildlife Trust locally. This bill may make it even easier for planning applications to be approved piecemeal in the Taw Torridge area.

Barnstaple and District Local Group :

Have a series of monthly talks at Fremington Parish Hall until April 2026. A summer programme of walks is also being planned for April to September 2026 Please see the DWT Website events section for more information

[Events](#) | [Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

Land advice to landowners: Advice is continuing to be available to landowners and farmers in the area through the **Working Wetlands Project, Northern Devon Natural Solutions and Saving Devon’s Treescapes**. To find out more: www.devonwildlifetrust.org/working-landowners-and-farmers www.devonwildlifetrust.org/news/new-saving-devons-treescapes-award Saving Devons Treescapes also has some free Orchard trees available and every parish in Devon a native broadleaf tree for the Landmark Tree scheme

[Working Wetlands & Upstream Thinking](#) | [Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

[Northern Devon Natural Solutions](#) | [Devon Wildlife Trust](#). Volunteers from the Torridge Rivers Association have established a salmon hatchery where they are now raising young fish to help salmon numbers recover after decades of falling numbers. In Spring 2025 33,000 young salmon were put into favourable areas of the river Torridge.

Wilder Communities

This project is working in the North Devon area to engage with and support communities on a wide range of projects with advice on funding too. There is a Wilder Community award available to groups [Wilder Communities | Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

Sites for Nature : The DWT looks at a range of different designated sites and we have a number in the Taw Torridge Estuary area : Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protected Areas (SPAs) These are the top area of designation and protection ; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) these are the next tier of designation ; County Wildlife Sites (CWS) These are recognised for their county-level importance to Wildlife but don't carry the same level of statutory protections as the others above. There are other designations eg UNESCO Biosphere . DWT in partnership with Devon Biodiversity Records centre and the Devon County Council are hoping to survey as many as possible of the **Unconfirmed Wildlife Sites** (UWS) which are waiting to find if they qualify as County Wildlife Sites. For more information see [Sites and Habitats – DBRC](#) Volunteers are being asked for who may be able to help with the surveying. For more details contact volunteering@devonwildlifetrust.org

Beaver Project

DEFRA announced earlier in 2025 that Beavers can be allowed to live wild in England. DWT is managing and supporting projects. Populations already on the river Taw will be allowed to remain and expand naturally. Future beaver reintroductions will need to be managed under a licence system run by Natural England. For more information please contact Dr Matt Holden DWT's Beaver Project Lead. For more information see the link [Beavers | Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

Pine Martens project . Some have now been released on Exmoor please see [First pine martens released in Exmoor National Park in landmark nature recovery project | Devon Wildlife Trust](#) for more information

Devon Bat Survey : The 2025 Survey is complete with individuals having booked out bat detecting and recording information over the summer months. Local collection points included Braunton Countryside Centre and Northam Burrows . For more information see the link [The Devon Bat Survey 2025 | Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

Climate and Nature Emergency

Please see [Using natural solutions to combat climate change | Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

Corporate Membership

The Trust is relaunching the Corporate membership scheme for companies. For more information see the DWT website [How your business can help Devon's wildlife | Devon Wildlife Trust](#)

Debbie Frazer (DWT Barnstaple and District Group Volunteer)2.1.26