# Tragic death of wild beaver highlights risks in saltwater areas



The recent excitement among locals at Saltash Passage turned to dismay following the reported death of a wild beaver that had been sighted near the River Tamar waterfront. The incident has prompted wildlife agencies to caution the public regarding the risks faced by beavers that venture into saltwater regions, such as the estuary of the Tamar, where they are exposed to potentially life-threatening conditions.

On April 5, staff members at The Ferry Inn pub observed a beaver swimming gracefully along the riverbank and shared a video of the encounter on social media. In the footage, the surprised filmer described the beaver as "looking pretty" and later exclaimed, "wow! that is huge," as it clambered onto a seaweed-laden ledge before returning to the water. However, it has since been reported that the beaver was found dead on the Saltash side of the river.

Chris Jones, manager of the Cornwall Beaver Project, confirmed the unfortunate news, stating that while beavers can be found throughout the entire Tamar river system—from Calstock to Tamar Lake, near Bude—they often face dangers when they stray too far. He explained that beavers, around two years of age, typically leave their home territories in search of new habitats. In this case, the beaver swam down a route that led it into saltwater, which can lead to severe health complications due to their kidneys not being equipped to handle seawater.

Jones emphasised the importance of quick reporting of such sightings to assist in potential rescues, noting that if the beaver had diverted back to the Lynher River, it would likely have been safe. As he stated, "If it had not come down so far, or it had turned away and found the Lynher River and swam up it, it would have been relatively okay."

In addition to the unfortunate demise of this beaver, the article outlines the ecological significance of these creatures. Beavers are known to build dams that create suitable living environments, positively impacting fish populations by maintaining river levels and facilitating the creation of new spawning pools. Their construction activities can lead to the formation of wetlands that enhance water retention, quality, and habitat for various wildlife species. They typically inhabit lodges made from timber and mud, which feature underwater tunnels for entrance.

This incident is not an isolated case; just over a year ago, there was a report of another wild beaver discovered at a Cornish nature reserve, which Cornwall Wildlife Trust believed had been improperly released. Furthermore, the presence of beavers has previously stirred up controversy among landowners, evidenced by a reported dispute over escaped beavers and accusations of "kidnapping."

The public is encouraged to report any sightings of wild beavers that may stray into hazardous areas by contacting the Cornwall Wildlife Trust or other relevant wildlife agencies. The beaver, classified as endangered in the UK and critically endangered in England according to the IUCN red list, remains a focal point of conservation efforts amid concerns over their safety in human-altered landscapes.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.iucnredlist.org/search/all/beaver> - This URL provides information on the conservation status of beavers in England and the UK, which is relevant to understanding why they are a focus of conservation efforts.
* <https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/conservation/beaver-projects> - This URL offers insights into beaver conservation and habitat management, which can help explain the ecological significance of beavers in the region.
* <https://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/our-projects/beavers-in-cornwall> - This URL provides details about beaver-related projects and conservation efforts in Cornwall, shedding light on the local context of beaver sightings and conservation challenges.
* <https://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/beavers> - This URL from the Environment Agency offers guidance on beaver conservation and management in England, highlighting the importance of responsible management and reporting of beaver sightings.
* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/non-native-beavers> - This URL provides information from the UK government on non-native beavers, which can help clarify policies and regulations surrounding their presence in certain areas.