# Wildfires devastate rare UK wildlife and habitats in 2025



Wildfires raging across the United Kingdom in 2025 have had a devastating impact on some of the nation’s rarest wildlife, with conservationists warning the crisis could push several species closer to extinction. Among those suffering are birds such as the hen harrier and golden plover, as well as the water vole, now recognised as the UK’s fastest-declining mammal.

The National Trust has described the current wildfire epidemic as “the worst year ever for these human-caused fires across the country.” In Powys, Wales, ongoing blazes at Abergwesyn common are believed to have destroyed the last remaining breeding habitat for golden plovers in the area, representing a significant setback for the conservation of this distinctive upland bird.

The scale of destruction is considerable, with 110 square miles of land—an area larger than the city of Birmingham—having been consumed by fire across the country so far this year. Wales has been particularly affected, with fire crews responding to nearly 1,400 wildfires, prompting emergency services to urge the public to “act responsibly” and report any suspicious activity.

Ben McCarthy, head of nature conservation at the National Trust, expressed deep concern about the situation, saying: “We're extremely worried, this is looking like it's going to be the worst year for seeing our wildlife going up in flames.” He highlighted contributing factors including record dry spells, unusually high temperatures in March, and a build-up of vegetation due to a relatively quiet fire season in 2024, creating "a dangerous cocktail for disaster."

The wildfires have impacted a range of habitats. In Wales, a rare Celtic rainforest at Allt Boeth near Aberystwyth—a habitat considered more threatened than the Amazon—has been scorched, resulting in the loss of protected bluebells as well as irreplaceable lichen and fungi species. Similarly, in West Yorkshire's Marsden Moor, thousands of newly planted trees have been destroyed by fire. In Northern Ireland's Mourne Mountains, reptiles and invertebrates have suffered devastating losses, being "simply torched alive," according to reports.

McCarthy described the ecological ripple effects, stating: “That then cascades through the food web because without the invertebrates you don't get the birds who are reliant on them for food.”

Conservation charities are calling for increased government support to upland farmers and land managers, particularly to aid the restoration of peat bogs. These peatlands not only help in fire prevention but also serve as important carbon stores, mitigating climate change.

The water vole, once a familiar sight across the UK but now critically endangered, is facing a particularly precarious future. Rob Parry of the Initiative for Nature Conservation Cymru (INCC) warned: “They’re the fastest-declining mammal ever. Their last foothold [in Wales] is in the uplands so when those sites are burned it is awful for that particular population, but from a UK point of view we are one step closer to the extinction of an entire species.”

The INCC is closely monitoring the status of five breeding pairs of barn owls in the Amman Valley, whose survival is now precarious following the fires. Parry explained the challenges these birds face, noting: “A few weeks ago they had all of this area to find food for their chicks and suddenly they don't have that any more. I don't know how they are going to cope. A wildfire just makes that habitat disappear overnight.”

Highlighting the broader environmental crisis, Parry remarked: “We're one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world and wildfires every spring at the worst possible time is a burden that wildlife and the environment just can't cope with.”

The situation remains a critical concern across multiple regions including Wales, Northern England, and Northern Ireland, as efforts continue to manage the fires and protect vulnerable wildlife populations. The combined impact of climate factors and human activity has created a challenging year for conservationists and emergency services alike. The Daily Star is reporting.

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

## References

* <https://newsinterpretation.com/wildfires-in-uk-push-rare-species-closer-to-extinction/> - Corroborates the devastating impact of wildfires on UK wildlife, including species like the water vole and birds such as the golden plover and hen harrier. It highlights the large scale of destruction across the UK and the significant role of human-started fires.
* <https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2025-04-16/charities-warn-of-devastating-effect-of-wildfires-on-nature> - Supports the claims about the devastating effects of wildfires on wildlife and nature across Wales, including the destruction of habitats critical for various species.
* <https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2025-04-07/why-so-many-wildfires-have-happened-already-in-2025> - Discusses the widespread occurrence of wildfires in the UK, particularly in regions like Cornwall, and their impact on local wildlife and ecosystems. It touches on the role of climate change in increasing fire risk.
* <https://www.discoverwildlife.com/environment/why-wildfires-are-becoming-more-common-in-the-uk-and-the-science-thats-helping-to-prevent-them> - Explains how wildfires affect UK wildlife differently compared to other regions and highlights efforts to prevent them, such as using grazing animals to manage vegetation.
* <https://www.noahwire.com/> - The source article mentions Noah Wire Services as a potential source of information about the devastating impact of wildfires on UK wildlife, although direct content wasn't available in the search results.