



Cumbria Water Vole project update

Thank you so much for fundraising for the Cumbria Water Vole project. Your efforts are making important conservation work possible.

Work has been underway to protect the water vole in Cumbria, as beloved "Ratty" has become Britain's fastest declining mammal. Water vole numbers have plummeted in recent years as their habitats along river banks have been lost and North American minks have become a serious predator.

Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Eden Rivers Trust have been working together to support and expand the population of water voles in Cumbria. To boost numbers they have been breeding water voles with the aim of reintroducing them

to the wild.

This breeding programme has been successful and nearly 100 water voles were released on 9 March 2010. Initially the cages are left open and food provided, as the voles get used to life in the wild.

The release site was carefully chosen. Sandford Mire near Warcop, Cumbria is designated as a County Wildlife site, and work has been taking place to ensure that there is suitable vegetation for the new voles. Its waterways connect well and lead into the River Eden and beyond, making it an ideal habitat for them. The landowners are very supportive of the project, and predators such as mink will be controlled.

Staff will continue to monitor the water

voles over the next few months and years, learning valuable lessons about the voles and how they can be protected in future.



Thank you for your support!

