

Wetlands for Water Voles & People Project

Water voles were once a common sight throughout Britain's waterways, but unfortunately are now our fastest declining mammal with populations at less than 90% of the level that they were a decade ago. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, HMWT are co-ordinating efforts to conserve existing populations here in Hertfordshire.



Thankfully although number of water vole numbers have declined in Hertfordshire, they can still be found in a few strongholds around the county. Water voles have now been given national protection and have been identified as a priority species for action in both the Hertfordshire and Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plans.

You can still spot one of these marvellous mammals at [Purwell Ninesprings](#), [Tewinbury](#), [Silvermeade](#) (part of Lee Valley Regional Park) and [Frogmore Meadows](#) Wetland Havens. However, it is vital that we protect these remaining water vole populations if we are to ensure their survival in the future.



The Threats

Destruction of natural river banks and wetlands has resulted in the direct loss of water vole colonies and the isolation of remaining populations. Predation by American mink, a non-native species, is exacerbating this situation as they can wipe out whole colonies of water voles in only a matter of months. This has accelerated the rate of decline in the past few decades.

The Project

The Wetlands for Water Voles and People Project aims to:

- Provide people with a better understanding of water voles and access to wetland habitats.
- Survey, record and monitor water vole sites.
- Carry out practical conservation work in wetland areas to benefit the water vole
- Provide advice on water vole and wetland conservation to land managers and conservation groups.
- Develop educational and promotional programmes on water vole and wetland conservation.

We will be improving conditions for water voles and making it easier for you to watch them at the following wetland havens:

- [Purwell Ninesprings](#) Nature Reserve, near Hitchin (in the Purwell Valley).
- [Tewinbury](#) Nature Reserve, near Welwyn Garden City (in the Mimram Valley).
- [Silvermeade](#), near Broxbourne (in the Lee Valley).
- [Frogmore Meadows](#) Nature Reserve near Sarat (in the Chess Valley).
- [Cassiobury Park](#) Nature Reserve in Watford (in the Colne Valley).

How you can help

The Wetlands for Water Voles and People Project is committed to saving the water vole in Hertfordshire, but we need your help, which you can give in a number of ways:

- Let us know if you have seen water voles or their field signs (see [Fact Sheet](#) for identification signs, and survey form).
- Join us on one of our water vole survey training days and get involved with water vole surveys in your local area.
- Contact us for advice on making your pond (or river bank) water vole friendly.
- Join us for practical work on one of our wetland havens.
- Come along to one of our awareness events.
- [Join us today!](#)

For more information on how you can help contact:

Wetlands Awareness Officer
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Grebe House
St Michael's Street
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL3 4SN
Tel: 01727 858901
Email: water.vole@hmwt.org

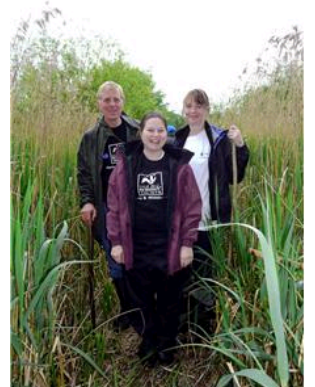
The Wetlands for Water Voles and People Project is an active partnership of the Wildlife Trust, [The Environment Agency](#), [Lee Valley Regional Park](#), [British Waterways](#) and the Herts Biological Records Centre. The partnership is supported by the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#).

[Vole-unteers pages](#)

Volunteers are a key part of the Wetlands for Water Voles & People Project. From water vole surveys to practical work on our wetland havens, volunteers enable us to keep track of water vole recovery in Hertfordshire and the Colne Valley and to ensure that water voles thrive in some of the best sites in the counties. Without the help of our team of volunteers this work would be impossible to achieve.

[Water Vole Sightings](#)

We know water voles are out there! Please let us know what you've seen.



[➤ Fact sheets, survey forms and leaflets](#)

Find out more about wonderful water voles, how to create better conditions for them and how you can help us in our work.

[➤ Partner Links](#)
