Beaver Update

October 2026

Pete Short and Jonathan Willet (6 November 2026)

Beaver Population Summary – 13 releases to date

Year 1 releases – 18
Year 2 releases – 15
Year 3 releases – 7
Year 4 releases - 4 (a family with two female kits were released at Milton Loch, Boat of Garten)

2024 wild-born kits – 2 (from 2 families)
2025 wild-born kits – 18 (from 8 families)
2026 wild-born kits – 15 (from 8 families)

2026 mortality – 1 kit found dead in Loch Alvie on the 25 October. There was no visible trauma. It was frozen and is now with the Beaver Trust for a post-mortem examination. Occasional mortalities are expected in a wild population – this is the first known mortality in the Cairngorms.

Total of 78 (at least one beaver outwith the National Park boundary – Fochabers/ Spey Mouth).

8 breeding territories this year. 16 confirmed or suspected territories in total.

Release Site Activity

- Rothiemurchus (Lochan Mor/ Lily Loch): Beavers still active on the site.
- Kinrara 1: Beavers are still active on this site.
- Kinrara 2: Beavers are still active on this site.
- Kinrara 3: No beavers seen on site this month
- Kinrara 4: Limited activity on site.

- Glen Tromie: Fresh feeding signs seen, beavers caught on camera, the lodge has been added to, and a food cache is being built.
- Insh Marshes: Beavers still active on site and have explored nearly all of the reserve.
- Inshriach: Beavers are still active on the site.
- Loch Morlich 1: Beavers are still active on the site.
- Loch Morlich 2: Beavers not seen this month. It is thought they have left the site
- Aviemore area: very limited feeding signs compared to last winter.
- Kingussie Grazings: Some fresh feeding activity, a collapsed burrows was found on RSPB ground upstream of the confluence of the Gynack and the Spey. A site visit on the week beginning 9 November has been arranged.

Sites outwith Kingussie to Aviemore

- Cromdale beaver: Site presumed abandoned.
- Garmouth beaver: Presumed still in the area
- Laggan Bridge: Fresh feeding signs, a 15m poplar was gnawed and then blew over in the storms. Weekly visits to keep an eye on the two very large poplars there.
- Boat of Garten: Recent feeding on woodland downstream of burrow.
- Grantown between the A95 bridge and the Cairn Distillery. Site not visited this month.
- River Nethy beaver – single beaver seen on camera.

Monitoring and Mitigation Plan Actions

- Monthly patrols of release sites undertaken.
- Weekly patrols of high impact areas have been undertaken.
- Beaver dam removal site. No beaver activity this month.
- A meeting to discuss woody material in the lower Nethy, as well as fish passage, flooding and erosion has been arranged for January 2027.
- No more damming attempts at Loch Morlich inflow & outflow have been found.
- The dam on the Allt Dibheach (Loch Alvie outflow) was notched by the Park Authority beaver team under license on the 19 November. The water levels of Loch Alvie have dropped by over 90cm from the peak flood height of 26 October. A flow device is being installed this month to ensure a lower water level is maintained should the beaver repair the dam.

- Trees by the B9152 bridge (Loch Alvie outflow): Beavers have been feeding on trees by the Allt Dibheach and the shores of Loch Alvie in this area. Wildland Ltd have felled the Aspens closest to the road that the beavers were feeding on or were likely to feed on. Some of the mixed broadleaves on Oxygen Conservation's land have been felled with one falling on the road on the night of the 1 November, we were contacted by the police on the 2 November and news of the fallen tree made "The Strathy" and was reported on Facebook. The tree was cleared off the road by persons unknown. We are in discussion with the landowner about the best way forward to mitigate the risks of these trees falling on the road in the future.

Raising Awareness and Understanding

- Talk to attendees at the Beaver release at Milton Loch, Boat of Garten. 30.
- Beaver stand at Hill to Grill, Nethy Bridge. 109
- The beaver team visited staff at the Argyll Beaver Centre in Knapdale (the Scottish Beaver Trial site) to listen to their experiences of beavers and to see what 17 years of beaver activity looks like in an Atlantic Rainforest.

N.B. *If beavers are found in an area where the landowner was not previously aware of their presence, the Park Authority will contact that landowner. The Park Authority does not routinely contact landowners with general updates; this monthly update does that. There are WhatsApp Groups for landowners around releases sites and also in any high impact areas, which have beavers present e.g. Laggan.*