

NEW MATE FOR BEREAVED BEAVER IN FOREST OF DEAN

A new mate has been found for a bereaved beaver after his first partner disappeared.

The original animals were imported from Germany and released into an enclosure in the Forest of Dean in 2018.

But tragedy struck last summer when the female went missing, and after extensive searches ecologists concluded she was probably dead.

Forestry England said the new beaver from Scotland seemed to be settling well into her new Gloucestershire home.

A spokesperson said conservationists and volunteers had been initially unconcerned by the first female's disappearance at the Greathough Brook enclosure.

They believed she could have retreated into a lodge or burrow to give birth, but when she was not picked up on their trail cameras they began to fear the worst.

"We increased our monitoring on the site and the local team used beaver traps baited with apples to try and capture both animals to carry out a welfare check, weigh them and replace any ear



The two beavers have shown signs they are forming a pair!

tags that may have fallen off," the Forestry England spokesperson said.

But while the male was captured, there was no sign of the female.

Working with the Beaver Trust, Forestry England relocated a new female from Scotland to the Gloucestershire enclosure in October. 'Forming a pair'

The two beavers found one another quickly, and seem to be very happy in one another's company.

"Since their first meeting they have been busy working together, making another new dam, maintaining the

existing ones, felling trees and grooming each other - all good signs that they are forming a pair," the spokesperson said.

Beavers used to be commonplace in the Forest of Dean until about 400 years ago when they were hunted to extinction for their meat, fur and scent glands.

The decision to re-introduce them in 2019 was in the hope that their dam-building would reduce flood problems in the Lydbrook area and create an environment that would attract other wildlife.



New mine opens on museum site in the Forest of Dean



A new coal mine recently opened in the Forest of Dean as part of efforts to attract young people into the industry. The mine is located on the Old Hopewell Colliery site, making it the fourth in operation in the district. The Freeminers Association applied to the Heritage Lottery Funding to help rain people for the industry. Chairman of the Freeminers Association, Richard Daniels, said: "There's a whole generation who didn't get a chance and that's what we're trying to change."

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MOTOCROSS EVENT ORGANISERS & UPCOMING FIXTURES

Plans to force the organisers of motocross events in the Forest of Dean to give advance notice of their fixtures have been rejected.

The proposal aimed to give hospitality businesses the chance to warn visitors when they might face excess noise.

But local councillors raised concerns that extra regulation could force motocross meetings underground.

Councillor Jamie Elsmore said it could lead to youths “causing havoc” around the forest. The motion was tabled by Green councillor Nicky Paker, of Newnham ward.

Her proposals called for event dates to be published in advance on the council’s website. It would have allowed environmental protection officers to discuss the suitability of those sites with organisers and landowners.

Ms Paker said: “People travel from afar to enjoy quiet days or weekends particularly seeking peace and tranquillity perhaps even for meditation and similar serene pursuits.



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“Imagine how visitors feel to find they have travelled long distances to stay right next to a motorsports event.” She continued: “Businesses work hard to build up a reputation - it only takes a few adverse Tripadvisor comments about having to endure noise all day to severely impact a business long term.

“The spirit of the guidelines is to encourage cooperation between landowners and organisers and residents, local businesses and parish councils.”

The council voted to reject the motion by 16 votes against, eight in favour and one abstention.

Progressive Independent councillor Jamie Elsmore said if motocross events were restricted it would lead to “havoc” with youths riding their motorbikes in the woods. He said that when organised motocross events do not take place, walks in the forest are blighted by the noise of “young kids riding their motorbikes”.

Mr Elsmore warned against putting up barriers to such events with the hidden intention of stopping them taking place altogether.

He warned the consequence could be motocross riders taking “the law into their own hands and (causing) havoc around the forest”.

NEW WOODEN FOOTBRIDGE OVER RIVER LYD



£4500 raised

A new footbridge over a Forest of Dean river was recently officially opened, five years after an unsafe 350-year-old stone bridge was closed.

The new wooden bridge over the River Lyd at Upper Forge near Lydney has been built by Forest of Dean Ramblers. Members of the group raised £4,500 to pay for its construction by selling copies of a book of guided walks. It has also been made a Public Right of Way after it was discovered the well-trodden route had no official access.

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Fun Fact

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT THE FOREST ...

The Forest of Dean is one of the surviving ancient woodlands in England. A large area was reserved for royal hunting before 1066 and remains the second largest crown forest in the country.

LATEST ACTIVITIES & EVENTS AT SYDENMHAM HOUSE

Keeping the Home Fires Burning! ★

2023 may have got off to a cold grey start outside but in Sydenham House we “kept the home-fires burning” and hunkered down with a variety of warm and colourful Activities.

There’s nothing like a jigsaw puzzle to bring the family together, and with 500 irregular-shaped pieces many of us had seen nothing like this jigsaw puzzle before! It turns out we have some jigsaw puzzle buffs in our number, and their finely honed skills were much appreciated.

January contained a “Friday, 13th” and the date gave us a good excuse to share our superstitions and stories. Several of the Care staff turned out to be deeply superstitious, refusing to

cross on the stairs, step on the cracks in pavements or put new shoes on a table. Some personal and family-related superstitions emerged like “no peacock feathers” and even “no birds” in the house, and we learned of more unusual and regional superstitions.

The Lunar New Year brought a chance to remember the joys of a Chinese Take-Away as we tucked in to Chinese-style snacks and tried using chop-sticks. This proved a very popular activity – more Spring Rolls please, Lyn!

Then came Burn’s Night. Mary desisted from piping-in the Haggis or attempting to address the dish but

were delighted to feast upon Petticoat Tails shortbreads, Orkney Cheese and Scottish oatcakes, and partake of a wee nip of whiskey or a glass of IrnBru.

At last the days are lengthening and the temperatures are rising. We’re looking forward to walks out in the afternoons, seeing some buds bursting and early flowers in the garden, and of course, February brings Pancake Day!

Lyn



About Activities:

There’s always plenty to do at Sydenham House



Largest Woodlands soon to be Connected: PLUS: Planting Trees for 60 mile stretch ...

The two forests will be connected by a 60 mile corridor of hedgerows and woodland: Forest of Dean & the Wyre Forest ...

Two of England's largest woodlands will be connected by a new project.

The Forest of Dean and the Wyre Forest will be joined by a 60 mile (96km) corridor of hedgerows and woodland.

The 'Severn Treescapes' project will be carried out by Wildlife Trusts in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

When complete, it will form "a wooded landscape at a scale never seen in the region before," the Trusts say.

There are hopes that enough trees can be planted to reverse a trend that has seen a reduction in tree coverage in the space between the two forests.

The majority of the land there is used for farming, so the scheme will have to work with local landowners if it is to succeed.

It will be a legacy project of the Queen's Green Canopy, which marked the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

Dr Juliet Hynes, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's head of ecological evidence, said: "It will provide a fantastic

opportunity for local communities, landowners and farmers to build a closer relationship with trees.

"Trees and hedgerows can help to tackle the impacts of climate change - providing livestock with shade in the summer, fruit and nuts for birds and small mammals in the winter and increased water infiltration.

"What's more, the wellbeing benefits of being in nature and around trees are well-known and vital to our health and happiness," she added.



Planting trees for 60 miles!



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QUIZ CORNER!

Just for fun!

here's a little quiz - who would like to be Quiz Master?!

General Knowledge

- 1 What are moving staircases called?
- 2 What is the name of a horse's foot?
- 3 A fruit named Pink Lady is a type of what?
- 4 What comes out of a bottle that grants 3 wishes?
- 5 Name the Australian dog found in the outback?
- 6 What is a church bench called?

Inspirational Quote

“The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot.”

Michael Altshuler