

Welcome to beaver country

SCOTTISH
BEAVER
TRIAL



Visit the Scottish Beaver Trial during your stay in the Heart of Argyll



What is the Scottish Beaver Trial?

The Scottish Beaver Trial is a unique and exciting conservation project taking place right here in the Heart of Argyll. Wild beavers have been reintroduced back into Scotland after being extinct in the UK for over 400 years. It is the first official project of its kind in Britain and a groundbreaking five year trial to explore how beavers can survive in Scotland and what effects they may have on the local environment and economy.

Four beaver families are now living in Knapdale Forest and visitors can explore this stunning woodland and spot the signs of beaver activity, including felled and regenerating trees, stripped branches (look out for teeth marks!) and a beaver dam.



Where is it?

Knapdale Forest is located 7 miles to the west of Lochgilphead, Argyll. The beavers have been released in four different places throughout this Forestry Commission owned area and there is one loch in particular where the activities of its resident beaver family are most visible; this is the Dubh Loch just off the B8025 (which heads towards Tayvallich). Sat nav details: PA31 8; Ordnance survey grid: NR790910.



What is there to see and do?

Start your day discovering more about beavers and their return to Scotland at the Barnluasgan Information Centre (located at the car park). Then set off on the Beaver Detective Trail and have fun with all the family spotting the signs of beaver activity. Look out across the loch from a floating pontoon and explore a 3 mile circular trail around beautiful Loch Coille Bharr.



Will I get to see a beaver?

Beavers are shy creatures and mainly active at night, but with some perseverance and a bit of luck it is possible to see one. Head down to the Dubh Loch early in the morning or during the evening and allow yourself plenty of time to quietly sit and wait.



When can I visit?

Explore the project site at any time of day, all year round. You can visit independently and entrance to Knapdale Forest is free. Evening guided walks around the Dubh Loch take place during the Easter holiday period and from May to August, with late spring and summertime offering the best chance of beaver spotting at either dawn or dusk.



How do I get there?

From Lochgilphead, follow the road to Oban (A816) for 2 miles. Take the left fork, through Cairnbaan and continue on this road for 3 miles, until you see the left turn for Tayvallich. Take this road (B8025) for a mile and then take the fork to the left. The Forestry Commission Barnluasgan car park is immediately on the left.

From here, it is a ½ mile walk down to the Dubh Loch where you can begin your beaver detective work! Turn left from the car park and walk on the right hand side of the road (please be careful of traffic) and then take the forest track on the right. Head through the gate and follow this track down to the loch. Once at the loch-side, the full 3 mile Beaver Detective Trail is signposted if you wish to continue further with your walk.

Knapdale Forest is a beautiful and rugged place with steps in places and some parts rough underfoot. You can cycle to the loch and throughout Knapdale Forest. Visit: www.forestry.gov.uk for more information.



What shall I bring with me?

Sturdy footwear as the paths can get muddy, waterproof clothing and of course midge repellent! Pack a picnic as there are plenty of spots to enjoy your sandwiches with a view. Binoculars may also come in handy as Knapdale Forest is home to lots of other wildlife, too. Please note that there are no toilet facilities.



Can I take my dog?

Dogs can be taken with you on the walk but should be kept under control at all times. The presence of a dog will limit your chances of spotting a beaver.



How can I find out more about the Scottish Beaver Trial?

Keep up to date with all the latest news, images and videos from the project by visiting our website: scottishbeavers.org.uk. You can also contact the Scottish Beaver Trial team on 01546 603346

Beaver facts....

Beavers are Europe's largest native rodent (the size of a tubby spaniel!)

Beavers were hunted to extinction for their fur and castoreum, a special secretion thought to have medicinal properties (particularly in medieval times)

Beavers do not eat fish! They are completely vegetarian.

Beavers are one of nature's top engineers and a keystone species.

They create wetland environments which attract and benefit other wildlife.



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The Scottish Beaver Trial is a partnership project between the Scottish Wildlife Trust, The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland and host partner Forestry Commission Scotland. Scottish Natural Heritage, appointed by the Scottish Government, is coordinating the independent scientific monitoring of the Trial.