

Water Vole Project Update: Spring 2024

For Wild Kernow
Business Supporters





At a glance

Water voles released: **200**

Release sites: **2**

River systems introduced to: **2**

Estimated length of river repopulated: **6-8km**

Since our first water vole release at the Trelusback Foundation conservation site in September 2022, we have made a further top-up to the population in June 2023. The water vole population has since survived a second winter and increased its range along both stretches of the River Kennall, reaching around 200m from the source of the river in the upstream direction and even further downstream to the point of the highest tidal watermark not far from Devichoys Wood.



Water vole burrow near River Kennall's highest point.



Pond system downstream from release site.

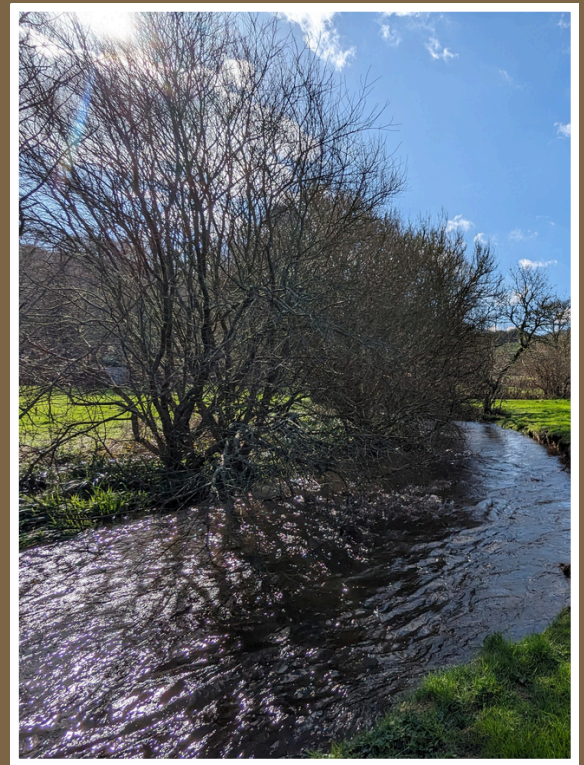
To make that journey, the water voles have worked their way downstream populating pond systems, swimming down fast moving roadside channels, and navigating the many cascades and rapids of the Kennall Vale Nature Reserve.



We have found evidence of burrows in several locations both upstream and downstream and signs that water voles have been breeding away from the original reintroduction sites.

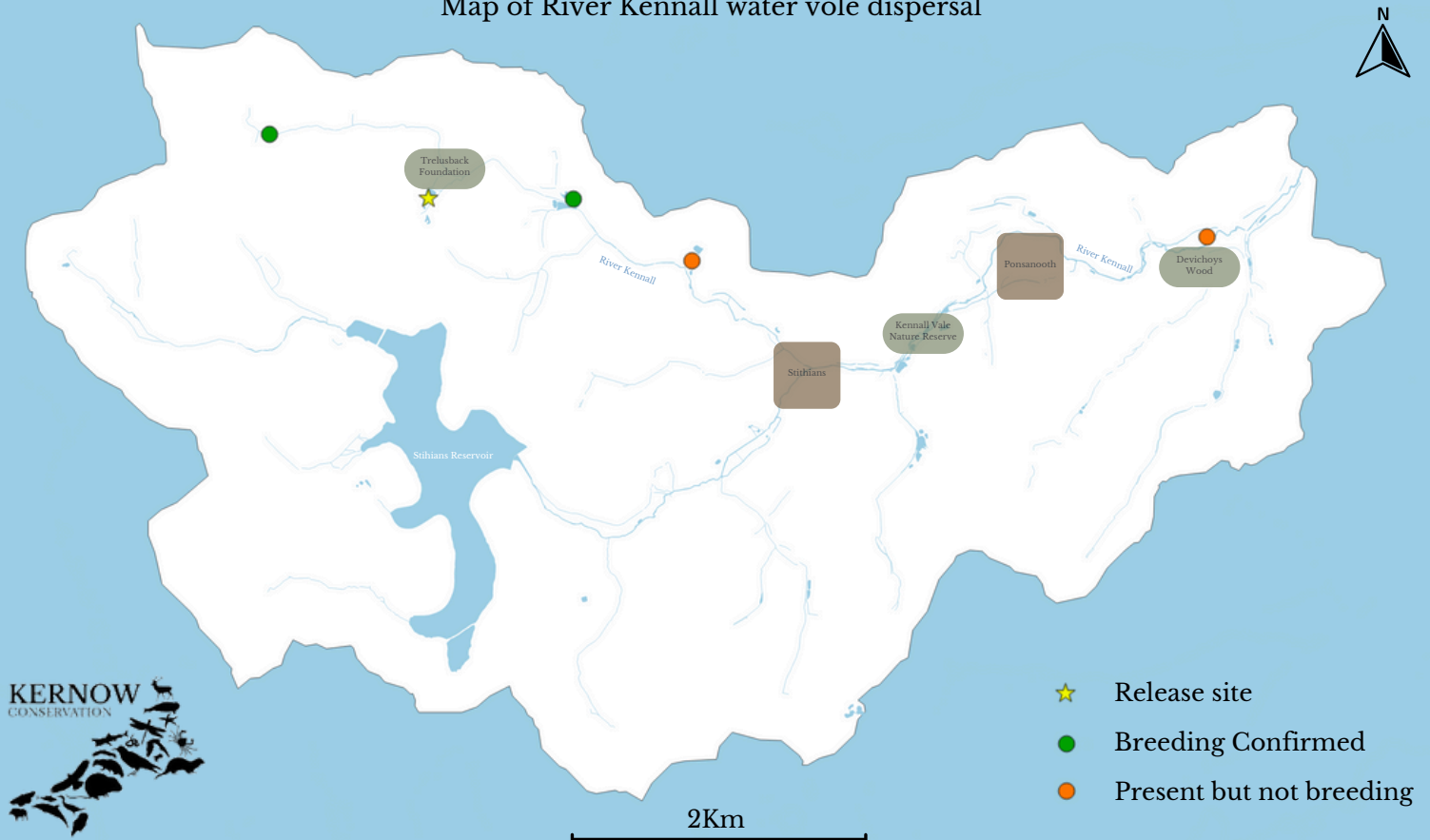
As for the sites further downstream, we are yet to see evidence of breeding, instead finding droppings and clear signs that water voles have been feeding by the river bank.

With voles now breeding at our original release sites on the Kennall and the Cober, we will monitor the population this year as it expands its territory for signs of breeding at these outlying locations.



Downstream from Ponsanooth –
futhest point of water vole dispersal.

Map of River Kennall water vole dispersal



With thanks to all our Wild Kernow Business Members
for supporting this project.



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