

NATURAL
ENGLAND

WATER VOLE RECOVERY PROJECT



Leicestershire & Rutland
Mammal Group

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**Leicestershire
& Rutland**
Wildlife Trust



BIODIVERSITY FIRST
Finding Natural Solutions



STATUS AND DECLINE

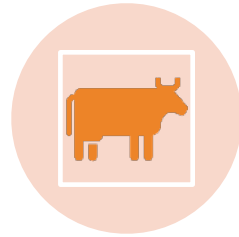
STATUS: ENDANGERED – extinct in 10 years



LOSS OF HABITAT FROM
DEVELOPMENT
PRESSURE



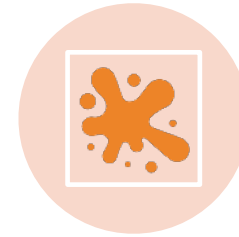
RECREATIONAL
PRESSURE – DOGS,
NARROW BOATS,
CYCLING, WILD
SWIMMING



INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE
PRACTICES –
PESTICIDES,
HERBICIDES,
FERTILISERS; LIVESTOCK
DAMAGE TO BANKS,
PLOUGHING TO WATERS
EDGE, DREDGING AND
DRAINING WETLANDS



POOR OR
INAPPROPRIATE
MANAGEMENT – “NEAT
AND TIDY” – CUTTING THE
GRASS OR LACK OF
MANAGEMENT –
SCRUBBING OVER



POLLUTION – EXCESSIVE
SEWAGE, PHOSPHATES,
CHEMICAL SPILLAGES

PREDATION

- Status largely unknown across much of UK
- Research shows Mink can devastate local Water Vole populations
- WaterLife Recovery Trust success with smart mink rafts in East Anglia and Thames to Lincolnshire projects – includes Rutland and now parts of Leicestershire

'Smart' trap trial raises hopes American mink can be driven from UK

Conservation groups target 'impossible dream' of eradicating invasive predators after success of East Anglia trial

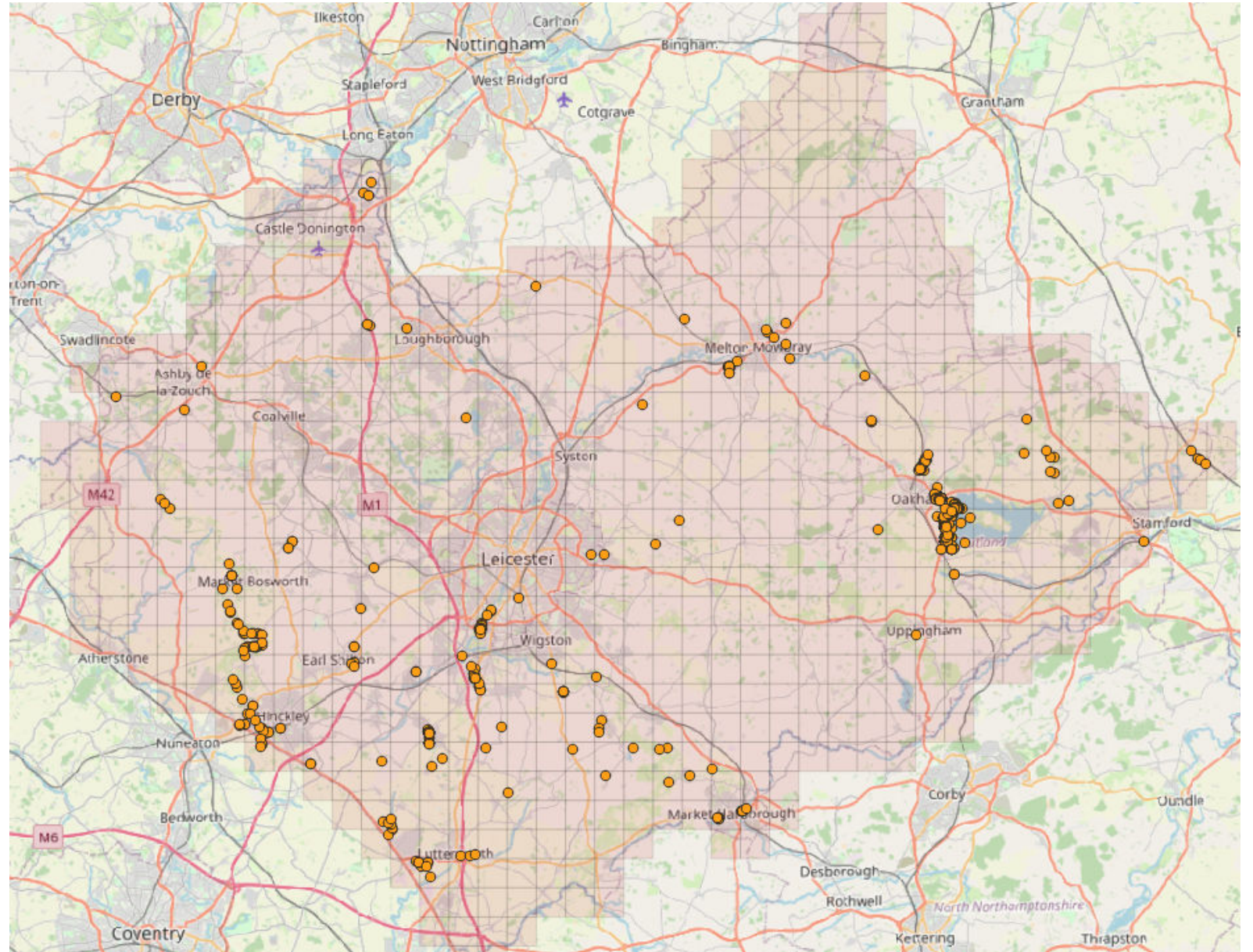


📷 American mink have decimated populations of water voles and other native birds, fish and amphibians in the UK. Photograph: blickwinkel/Alamy

VC55 COUNTY AREA

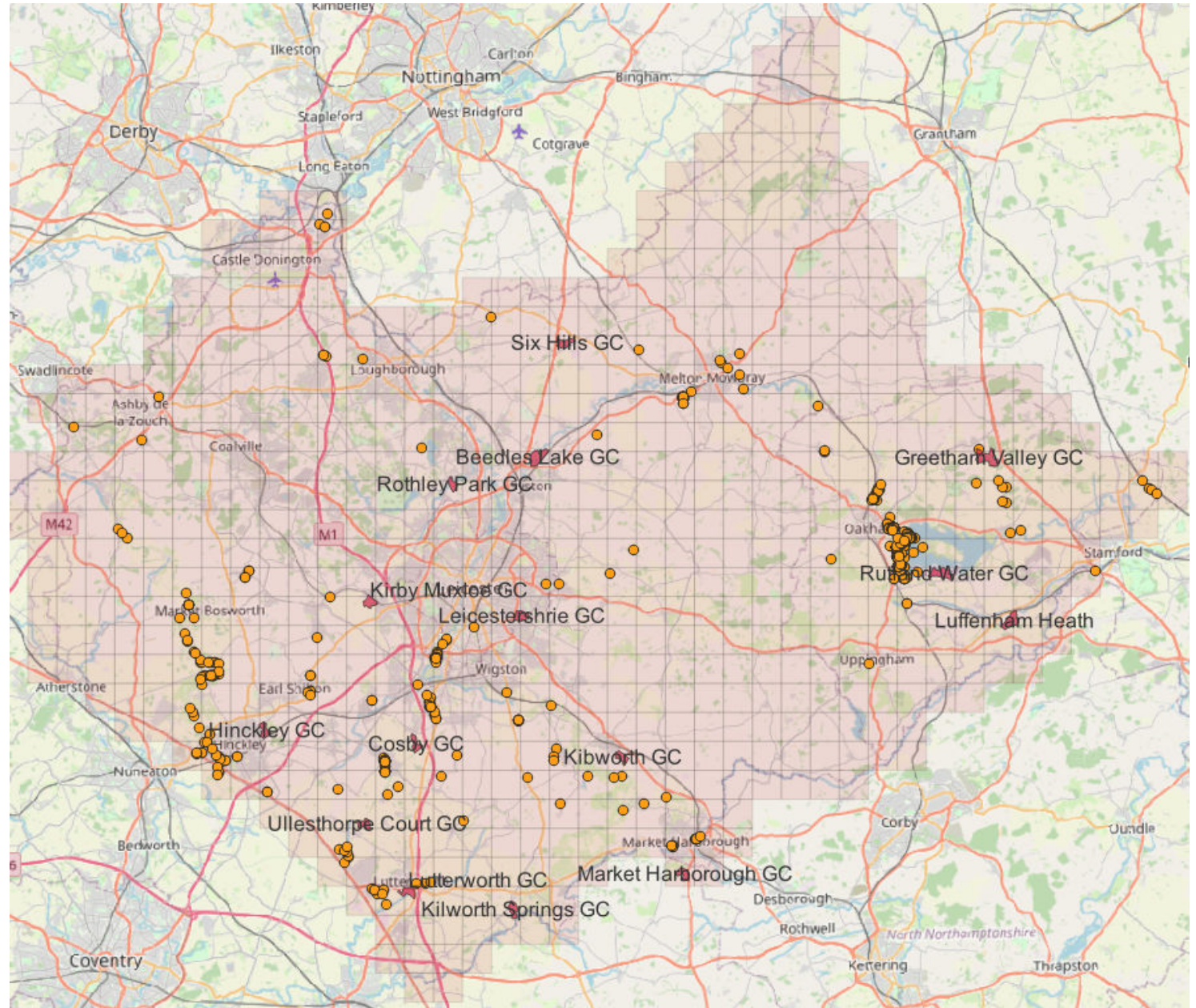
Water Vole Records

2011 - 2023



GOLF CLUBS CONTACTED

Greetham Valley
Luffenheath Heath
Rutland Water
Six Hills
Beedles Lake
Rothley Park
Kirby Muxloe
Leicestershire
Kibworth
Market Harborough
Kilworth Springs
Lutterworth
Cosby
Hinckley



PRESENCE OF WATER VOLES

- Water Vole seen or heard
- Field signs – droppings, piles of chewed grasses, burrows, prints

Evidence found at:

- Hinckley GC
- Opposite Luffenham Heath
- Downstream of Greetham Valley



HABITAT CONDITION

- Assessed streams and ponds or lakes
- Habitat condition – GOOD, MODERATE OR POOR

No buffer between pond and play

Bank edge vegetation sparse

Low diversity of vegetation - rushes

Disturbance





No buffer between stream and play

Banks regularly disturbed from mowing

Low food source — diversity and plants



Buffer between play and water

Graded earth banks for burrowing

Dense continuous diverse vegetation



No or little shade

Earth banks for burrowing

Good buffer between
pond and play

Aquatic food source

Good water quality and
little disturbance

GOOD HABITAT

Dense continuous bank
edge for food and cover

MINK CONTROL

- Mink traps set up by Waterlife Recovery Trust at Greetham Valley, Beedles Lake and Market Harborough Golf Clubs
- Placed in discreet areas and activated by a “smart” phone to send messages by email and text to the monitors.



NEXT STEPS

- Complete assessment plan for each site visited
- Provide recommendations to help Water Vole conservation
- Continue to support Mink control and expand into other areas with help from WRT.
- Share details with LRWT for staff to take forward in future work planned for Greener Golf Network





NEILL ROBINSON,
HINCKLEY GOLF CLUB

GONE BUT NOT
FORGOTTEN