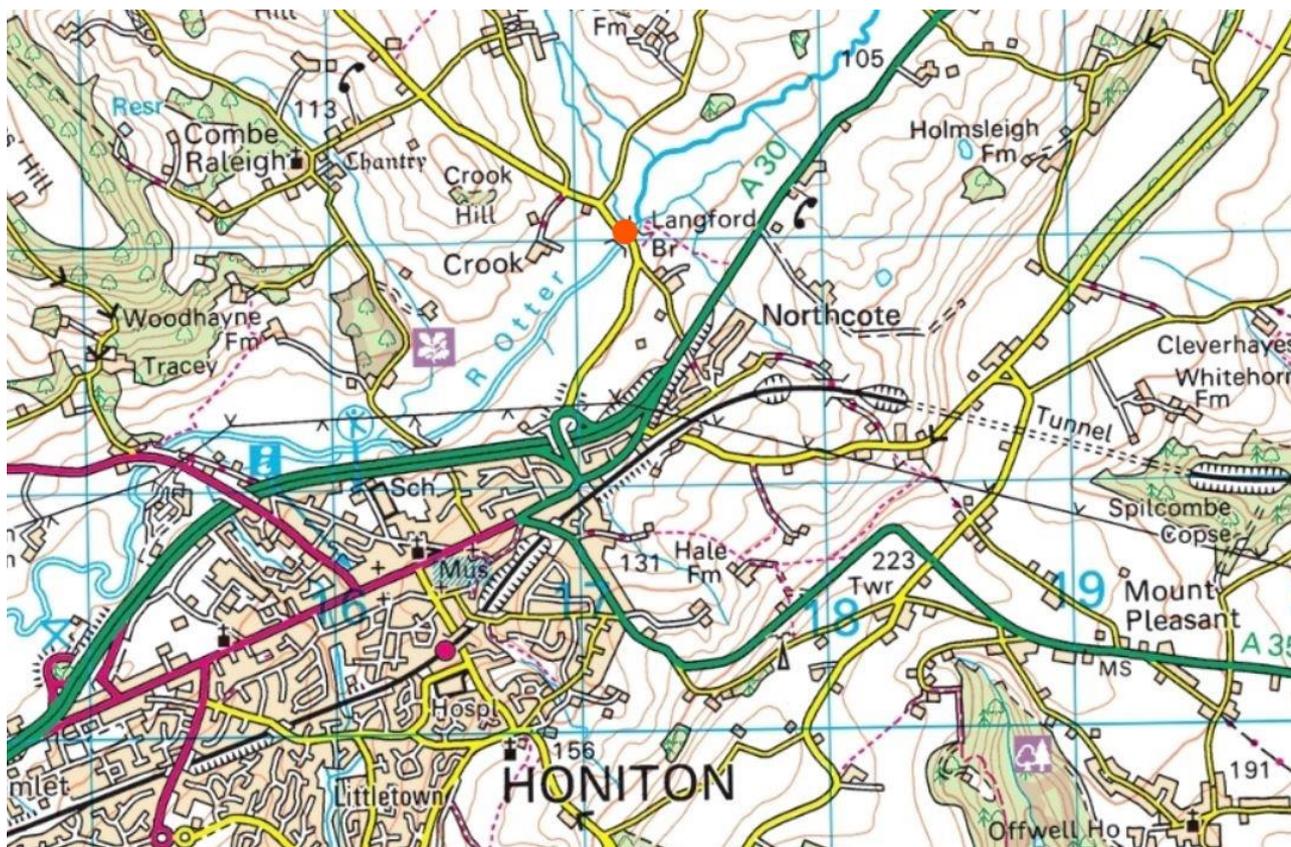


River Otter Beaver Trial

Beaver death: road traffic accident

March 2018

On the 26th March 2018 Devon Wildlife Trust received a phone message from an anonymous member of the public reporting the location of a dead beaver. The Field Officer visited the site and found a dead beaver in a hedge next to the road.



Map 1. The beaver was found in the hedge a few meters from Langford Bridge that crosses the River Otter. Location marked with orange dot.

The beaver had significant injuries to its head and one of its legs and had apparently been scavenged upon.

The beaver was taken to New Street Vets in Honiton and a post mortem was arranged for the following day. The vets had no cold storage space large enough for the animal, so it was stored overnight in an outbuilding.

River Otter Beaver Trial

Beaver death: road traffic accident

March 2018



Picture 1. The beaver was found on the south side of Langford Bridge, North of Honiton. The beaver was located to the side of the road, in the hedge, and had been scavenged upon.

The post mortem followed a methodology provided by Roisin Campbell-Palmer (Campbell-Palmer & Rosell, 2013). The post mortem identified the beaver by locating and scanning the PIT tag. The beaver was a four-year-old female, born in the catchment in 2014. She was trapped and re-released at the start of the River Otter Beaver Trial in 2015. The beaver weighed 19Kg. The female was in very good condition and was pregnant at the time of death. Part of one foetus was recovered and further analysis may provide the age of the foetus.

The road traffic accident had caused significant damage to the head and broken the right rear leg. The accident had also caused significant internal injuries. The internal organs had also been scavenged upon, so some samples could not be taken. There were no signs of any car parts on or near the beaver and no skid marks could be seen on the road.

References

Campbell-Palmer R, Rosell F (2013) Captive Management Guidelines for Eurasian Beavers (*Castor fiber*). The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, p75 – 77.