

# Disease prevalence in wild beavers (*Castor fiber*) in Britain

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# Disease screening of beavers since 2019:

- Licence by NatureScot & Natural England
- **323** Beavers examined to date:
- **295** live beavers in quarantine for translocation
- **28** at post-mortem

## Live beaver health screening under anaesthesia currently includes:

- Full physical examination & dental examination
- Microchip identification
- Haematology & serum biochemistry
- Faecal parasitology and bacteriology
- 6-lead ECG & cardiac ultrasound
- Abdominal ultrasound exam
- Radiography (x-rays) as required
- Disease screening, as per Disease Risk Analysis (DRA)
- Investigation of any suspect infections or wounds
- Biobanking of blood , fur, faeces, saliva, and foot swabs



# Disease screening of beavers since 2019:

## Wild beaver population appears in excellent health:

- 8 beavers required euthanasia due to pre-existing trauma (fractures, etc)
- Adult beaver post-translocation **survival** to one year is **91.4%** (95%CI 86.3-96.5%)
- While 29.1% of beavers had coccidia oocysts in their faeces
  - none had any clinical illness
- *Appears to be minimal infectious disease impact on wild beavers*

## Disease risk to humans and other animals:

- 2.2% of tested beavers had *Leptospira* spp. antibody titres > 1:1600 indicating likely recent infection (WOAH guidelines)
  - none had any clinical illness
- Giardia (“Beaver Fever”) prevalence of only 1.83% in live beavers
  - none had any clinical illness
- No beavers tested were positive for Salmonellosis, E. coli, or *Mycobacterium avium paratuberculosis* (Johne’s disease).
- Other zoonosis (*Yersinia*, *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidium*) had low prevalence <1%





## In conclusion:

**British beavers appear minimally impacted by infectious diseases, & appear to pose a very low infectious disease risk to humans & other animals**



*Our sincerest gratitude to all the many individual collaborators  
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# Thank You

