

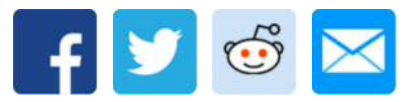
## Beavers return to north Essex as part of flood management scheme

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The Eurasian Beaver will make a remarkable comeback in north Essex Picture: RUSSELL SAVORY

Our bucktoothed friends, famous for their dam building, will be back in north Essex for the first time in four centuries.



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*The two beavers will settle on land near to the village of Finchingfield in north Essex Picture: ALISON CONNORS*

A pair of beavers will be heading to a new home in north Essex as part of a pioneering natural flood management scheme for East Anglia.

It is hoped the Eurasian Beavers will improve biodiversity and help to reduce local flood risk as they take to Spains Hall Estate, just upstream of Finchingfield village in North Essex.

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The two will have a lot on their paws but they will be a lot safer than their predecessors.

Beavers were previously hunted to extinction for its fur and was last seen in this region during the 17th century.



*Two beavers will be introduced to Spains Hall Estate near Finchingfield village Picture: RUSSELL SAVORY*

Archie Ruggles-Brise, whose family has lived on the state for 250 years, was excited to welcome the beavers to his land.

He said: "We have experienced first-hand the disruption caused by flooding in Finchingfield so we are excited to be able to contribute to this novel approach to reducing flood risk, an undeniable public good."



*It is hoped that the Beavers natural activities will help with natural flood protection in the area Picture: RUSSELL SAVORY*

“The added attraction of being able to pit nature against man to see who ‘does it better’ will be a rare chance to learn and adapt our approach.

“We hope the project will also focus a spotlight on our little corner of rural North West Essex, a hidden gem normally only enjoyed by those in the know.



*Wildlife expert Russell Savory will be recording their journey as part of a documentary due for release in 2019*  
*Picture: RUSSELL SAVORY*

“We are keen to welcome more people to the area so they can see for themselves what they might be able to do back home.”

Driven by the Environment Agency, with funding from several partners including the Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC), the project will see four hectares of territory given over to the beaver couple.



*Looks like one beaver is already hard at work Picture: RUSSELL SAVORY*

They will be the first of their kind to live in the area for 400 years.

Darren Tansley, river catchment co-ordinator for Essex Wildlife Trust, said:  
"Working with Government, other conservationists and a forward thinking landowner to reduce flood risk in Finchingfield is an ideal opportunity for Essex Wildlife Trust.



*Dam building is a hard business* Picture: RUSSELL SAVORY

“But the partners that eclipse us all are surely the beavers; natural engineers of our freshwater environment that we hope will trigger an explosion of biodiversity in their wake.”

Whilst the beavers have a vital task ahead of them they won't be relied on entirely for local flood defences.

Man-made flood management measures will be introduced on a separate strand of Finchingfield Brook on the estate.

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