

731 fishing licences checked last month across East Anglia

The campaign, [named Operation Lungfish](#), was launched on 23 July and ran until the end of August. The goal was to crack down on illegal fishing and poaching.

A total of 731 fishing licences were checked across Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire. This led to 31 offence notices being issued to anglers with no licences.

In Essex, a joint patrol took place with police and [Angling Trust volunteer bailiffs](#) at Hanningfield Reservoir. There, 41 checks were carried out and 4 offence notices were issued to anglers who were fishing illegally without a rod licence.

An Environment Agency's fisheries enforcement officer also worked with [Essex Police](#) to carry out a joint night patrol across Colchester, Maldon and Tendring districts. All anglers were compliant.

Environment Agency fisheries enforcement officer on a river bank in Essex.

In Norfolk, a week-long patrol with [Norfolk Police](#) on the Broads resulted in 5 offence notices being issued to anglers with no fishing licence. An unattended keepnet was also seized. A second joint patrol took place at Pentney Lakes and 3 offence notices were given to anglers with no fishing licence. Nar Valley fishery syndicate was also visited and all anglers were found to be fishing legally.

Patrols also took place on rivers, drains and still waters across Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. More than 100 anglers were checked, with 5 anglers found without a valid fishing licence.

Officers also visited 5 fisheries involved in rehoming sturgeon. Sturgeon are a non-native species and cannot be legally kept in any UK fishery. The fisheries continue to be under investigation.

A fisheries enforcement officer from the Environment Agency on patrol.

Lesley Robertson, Environment Agency enforcement team leader in East Anglia, said:

Our fisheries enforcement officers routinely work with partners such as police, local authorities and the Angling Trust across East Anglia, tackling illegal fishing. Operation Lungfish demonstrates

how effective this approach is.

Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting hot-spots and locations where illegal fishing is reported.

We urge anyone with information about illegal fishing to contact us on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Ian Hirst, Environment Agency fisheries team leader in Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire, said:

Rod fishing licence income is vital to the work to maintain, improve and develop fisheries.

Revenue generated from rod fishing licence sales is reinvested to benefit angling. Examples include tackling illegal fishing, protecting and restoring habitats for fish and improving facilities for anglers.

Before you go fishing make sure you have valid fishing licence.