

Devon and Cornwall fisheries to get a Christmas and New Year boost

For the third year running, the Environment Agency has restocked the River Culm in Devon, following a pollution incident in 2019. More than 6,000 fish have been released into the river this week, including dace, roach and chub, to boost numbers and give the river a helping hand to recover. The river will be monitored to see how these stockings have contributed to the river's recovery.

In the New Year, Fisheries Officers will also be stocking thousands more fish into fisheries across the area. More than 9,000 fish, including tench, bream, crucian carp, roach and rudd, will be introduced into a number of fisheries across Cornwall to enhance angling opportunities and to help fisheries to have sustainable and healthy fish stocks. Some Devon angling clubs will also be receiving fish in the New Year.

Every year, the Environment Agency's Calverton Fish Farm near Nottingham breeds coarse fish for release into rivers and still waters across England to help boost fish populations.

Callum Underhill, Environment Agency Fisheries Officer, said:

Devon and Cornwall has a variety of excellent fishing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy, from rivers and canals to still water venues. Sometimes they can benefit from a helping hand by adding excellent quality fish from our National Fish Farm.

The work of our National Fish Farm is funded by income from rod licence fees, so it shows how vital it is that anglers get the necessary rod licence when thinking of fishing, as all of these funds are reinvested back into angling and improving fisheries and the environment.

Restocking occurs in winter because water temperatures are lower and this minimises any stress on the fish during the stocking process, giving them the best possible survival rates.

Restocking is done where numbers are low, have been depleted following a pollution incident or to create new fisheries and opportunities for anglers.

Winter is a good time to introduce the fish, as it enables them to acclimatise to their new surroundings, ahead of their spawning season which usually begins in the spring and goes through to the summer for some species. Fish also play a critical role in sustaining a river's finely-balanced ecosystem, so the wider natural environment will also get a festive boost.

You need a rod fishing licence to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel with a rod and line in England. Get yours from <https://www.gov.uk/fishing-licences>.