

Fisheries officers release 10,000 fish into the River Thet

The dace, from the Environment Agency's Calverton fish farm, were part of a very large batch that spawned particularly successfully thanks to a heatwave when they were being reared.

In fact, the sheer number of fish that hatched meant space was at a premium – so the dace were released into the river 6 months earlier than usual, at 18 months old.

Kye Jerrom, Environment Agency fisheries specialist in East Anglia, said:

“Restocking our rivers helps boost fish populations, support a healthy ecology, and benefits anglers – and it's a key feature of the work we do to benefit people and the environment.

“This work is part of a whole programme of fish-restocking, which will see thousands of dace, roach and chub put back into the river to compensate for the fish lost to a pollution in 2018.”

One of the 10,000 fish which were restocked into the Thet.

Fisheries officers had completed the task within a few hours, making sure to closely follow social-distancing guidelines. Further restocking of dace, roach and chub is planned for the winter.

The restocking comes as part of a recovery plan following a pollution incident in Brackley, Northamptonshire, in 2018, during which thousands of fish died.

Since the incident, the Environment Agency has released more than 30,000 fish back into the river.

In addition to monitoring and improving fish numbers, Environment Agency's fisheries teams also help fish in distress, carry out fisheries enforcement activity, respond to environmental incidents, improve habitat and encourage new anglers to take up the hobby, working alongside angling clubs, wildlife trusts, landowners and other groups.

The fish being lowered into the River Thet.

Their work is funded by income from fishing licence sales.

You can purchase a fishing licence online at <https://www.gov.uk/fishing-licences>

Now is the perfect time to fish – and by buying a licence you are fishing lawfully and supporting the Environment Agency's work to boost and protect nature.