

Video transcription with timings for Kielder Water Heritage Project

Mink Stories from the North Tyne: Brian Tilley, Deputy Editor, Hexham Courant

Time	Speaker	Discussion
0.00	Brian	But I remember the mink [was] such a problem that I did a meeting of Bellingham Parish Council where the vicar, the Rev. Geoffrey Charles, reported he'd been walking his dog beside the river and the dog had gone into some undergrowth and came out pursued by about, must have been a family of mink [0.21] , he said there were about 7 mink chasing his little dog and actually drove him off the, drove him away from the river altogether
0.29	Catriona	My goodness, must have been aggressive
0.30	Brian	Yeah, they were really fierce little things. I remember I was once fishing, not at the meeting of the waters, but further up the river and I saw one, a mink on the bank, and it saw me and sort of hissed at me. You know like arched his back and hissed. [0.49] So I had something in me pocket, an apple or summit, I think I threw the apple at it and it snarled again and disappeared into the water and about 3 minutes later I felt this tremendous bang on the back of me neck and I thought the little bugger's got me, so I dropped me rod and fled out the water as though the hobbs of hell were after me [1.08] and it turned out it was just a branch floating down the river, which had caught the back of me neck, so it was still a very shocking experience, I tell you
1.18	Catriona	Absolutely yeah
1.20	Brian	And in the past, and one day I'd caught, I'd been lucky enough to catch a sea trout which I'd placed on the bank while I carried on fishing and I went back after I'd finished fishing to get me sea trout [1.31] and it had gone and they were all mink tracks round in the spot where I'd left it, so they would just take anything, they were really effective predators
1.40	Catriona	Yeah
1.43	Brian	But now you seldom see them. I think they just cleared

		the riverbanks out of anything worth taking
1.51	Catriona	Yes, yeah
1.52	Brian	I know there was a big campaign with trapping etc
1.55	Catriona	Yeah
1.56	Brian	But I haven't seen one meself. I don't fish now, but I still walk down by the river quite a bit and where you would see one virtually every time you went down, you just don't see them now

Tyne Rivers Trust 

 **Forestry Commission**
England

