

Exmoor is a land of rivers. Clear, oxygen-rich waters such as the Exe, Barle and Lyn are home to some of our most important wildlife and have formed the deep Exmoor valleys known as combes.



The high ground of Exmoor with its heavy rainfall is the catchment area for Exmoor's main rivers and numerous tributaries. The rivers are clear and fast-running and support a wide range of species including the iconic otter, brown trout, salmon, dipper and kingfisher. The largely unpolluted waters provide excellent spawning grounds for salmon, who may return to Exmoor after years feeding at sea as far away as the waters off Greenland in the North Atlantic.

In the 1960s otters were on the verge of extinction in the UK and Exmoor's otter population was at an all time low. Today, thanks to conservation efforts and improvements in water quality these shy and seldom seen creatures are known to live on all of Exmoor's rivers and streams right up to the headwaters. The very name "Exmoor" is derived from the Exe, our largest river.

Some great places to explore Exmoor's rivers and streams:

Dulverton, Exford, Tarr Steps, Withypool, Simonsbath, Lynmouth, Watersmeet, Brendon, Doone Valley.

- 1 Sparrowhawk
- 2 Sand martin
- 3 Golden-ringed dragonfly
- 4 Heron
- 5 Kingfisher
- 6 Goosander
- 7 Grey wagtail
- 8 Otter
- 9 Dipper
- 10 Beautiful demoiselle
- 11 Salmon
- 12 Brook lamprey
- 13 White-clawed crayfish
- 14 Bullhead
- 15 Caddis fly larva
- 16 River jelly lichen

