

# # MAKE FUR HISTORY



## IMPACT ON BIODIVERSITY

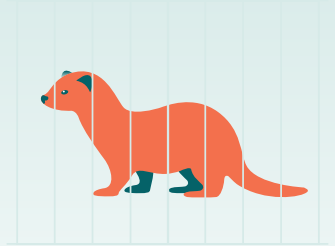
Fur farming has been an important pathway for the introduction of invasive alien species (IAS), which can cause significant damage to native biodiversity.

Historically, the fur trade has had a severe impact on biodiversity and is responsible for the depletion and even extinction of several furred species, including the sea mink.

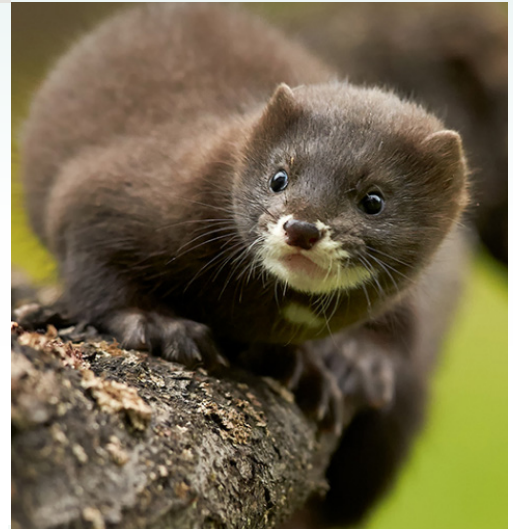
The traps used to catch wild animals are notoriously indiscriminate which means that for each target animal trapped at least one non-target species is caught accidentally, some of which are endangered or threatened. Trapping therefore puts serious pressure on populations of animals that are already imperilled.

The American Veterinary Medical Association reports that 'non-target animals' can account for up to 67% of total catch.

American mink, raccoon dogs, muskrats and coypu - species that were originally introduced for the purposes of fur farming - are placed on the list of 100 worst invasive alien species in Europe.<sup>1,2</sup>

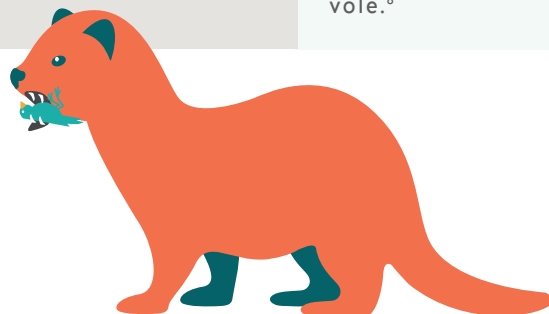
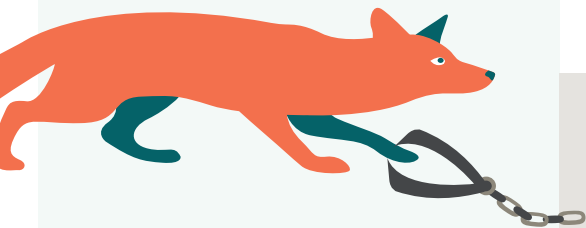


The American mink has the greatest impact on native European species of all alien mammals.<sup>3</sup> Feral populations of American mink are found in more than 20 European countries and the numbers are increasing.<sup>4,5</sup>



Through competition for resources, American mink have been implicated in the displacement of the native European mink and European polecat.<sup>6</sup>

Through predation escaped and feral American mink can have a severe impact on ground-nesting bird populations, rodents and amphibians.<sup>7</sup> In the UK, predation by the American mink has been identified as the main cause for the serious depletion of the water vole.<sup>8</sup>

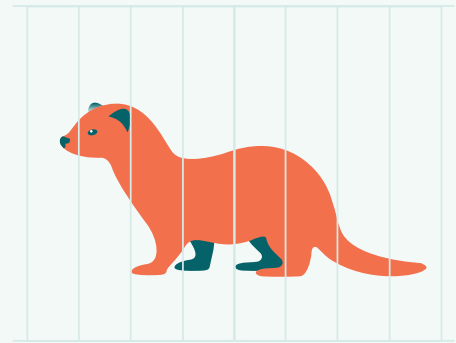


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The **economic costs** associated with the removal of American mink from the environment or the reduction of their impact are substantial.<sup>9</sup>

It is important clear EU guidelines to be developed for Member States on the management of invasive alien species, placing emphasis on humane or non-lethal control methods, which avoid or minimise pain, suffering and distress.



## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- American American mink must be included on the list of Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern;
- a strict permitting regime must apply to existing commercial operations and no new mink farms must be permitted in Member States that still allow fur farming, or new mink farms be established in Member States where no fur farms presently exist, to prevent new sources of introduction and further dispersal of this highly invasive species;
- strict rules must be applied with regard to containment measures and biosecurity on mink farms authorised under the terms of Regulation (EU) 1143/2014;
- non-lethal methods should be used as measures to manage IAS populations

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4. Bonesi, L. & Palazón, S. 470-483.
5. Hegyeli, Z. & Kecskes, A. (2014) The occurrence of wild-living American Mink *Neovison vison* in Transylvania, Romania. *Small Carnivore Conservation*, 51: 23–28.
6. Maran, T., Skumatov, D., Palazón, S., Gomez, A., Põdra, M., Saveljev, A., Kranz, A., Libois, R. & Aulagnier, S. (2011). *Mustela lutreola*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2014.3.
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8. Rushton, S. P., Barreto, G. W., Cormack, R. M., Macdonald, D. W. and Fuller, R. 2000. Modelling the effects of mink (*Mustela vison*) and habitat fragmentation on the water vole. - *Journal of Applied Ecology* 37: 475-490.
9. Roy SS, Chauvenet ALM, Robertson PA. Removal of American mink (*Neovison vison*) from the Uists, Outer Hebrides, Scotland. *Biological Invasions* 2015.