

An Otter at Pickleridge

We know that otters are doing quite well in Pembrokeshire from studies of otter spraints.

Sometimes it is even possible to see one - Westfield Pill can be a good spot, so can the bridge over the Nevern at Newport. Recently however, there have been some excellent prolonged sightings.



Firstly there was the mother with two cubs which regularly provided excellent views from the 8-arch bridge over the lake at Bosherton last autumn. These animals even featured in Autumnwatch on BBC2 and can still be seen from time to time.

More recently there have been two sightings of a large dog otter at Pickleridge pools. The first occasion was at the end of January when the otter swam and fished the length of the pool in mid-afternoon taking no notice of dog walkers on the sea wall and an observer by the road. On the second occasion in mid February in the late afternoon the otter was actively fishing and was observed catching at least five fish each of which he then proceed to eat on the shore of a nearby island. This otter seems happy hunting by day and is not particularly bothered by observers. The same was also true of the otters at Bosherton.

The Mammal Society website has an excellent fact sheet on otters in which it quotes that "With the exception of parts of the West coast of Scotland, otters are generally nocturnal." So maybe our otters are behaving more like Scottish otters? We already know from studies of otter spraints that our local otters catch quite a lot of their fish in the sea, like Scottish otters do.

Whatever the reason for the daytime activity, it is good news for us, as it gives a chance of seeing an animal that is generally very difficult to observe in the wild. So keep your eyes open next time you go for a walk along the sea wall at Pickleridge.

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