

British project helps save rare species

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Reclamation of 200-square miles of British coalfields is being credited for saving rare species of animals from extinction.

Adders, lapwings and otters are among the species starting to flourish again in parts of Britain's National Forest -- the nation's largest ongoing environmental project, The London Telegraph reported Monday.

Officials hope to increase the woodland cover of the area from six percent to more than 33 percent. So far, nearly seven million trees have been planted, covering about 16 percent of the land, the newspaper said.

Viv Astling, former chairman of the National Forest Company, said: "It's a great benefit to see the thriving wildlife and the return of species which were very rare in this country, to the point of them being endangered. One of the most exciting things about the whole project is that we won't be around to see it in its full glory.

"It will be handed down from generation to generation and in 100 years or so it will be completely established. How often in life can you say you've helped change 200 square miles of the country?"

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