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Southern damselfly

Springs which bubble up in Devon's wet heathlands are crucial for one of our rarest damselflies. This insect declined by 30% from 1960 to 2000 and seemed to have been lost from DWT's Venn Ottery nature reserve in east Devon. So, we did two things: first, we ensured the heathland and freshwater habitats were in perfect condition for the southern damselfly's two-year life cycle. And then we re-introduced a population from a site in Hampshire. Ten years and several successful generations on, the southern damselfly is thriving in this Otter valley nature reserve once more. **But we need to continue the management of the site to ensure the streams are unshaded (for successful egg-laying) and there is abundant tussocky vegetation nearby for mating and feeding.**