

BEAVERS IN THE ALTAI RESERVE

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In the 18-19 centuries beavers widely invaded the Altai territory. In the early 20th century, the number of beavers in Russia was severely disrupted, in Gorny Altai they were completely exterminated, the last beaver was caught on the river Lebed in the middle of the 19th century. Since the early 50s of the 20th century in the Altai region began the active re-acclimatization of the species.

In the 80s of the 20th century "reacclimatized" beavers from the upper tributaries of the Lebed river got into the basin of the Teletskoye lake and into the valley of the Kamga river (Northern part of lake Teletskoye).

The first signs of the vital activity of Beaver Ordinary (*Castor fiber* Linnaeus, 1758) were noticed in the reserve in October 1988 in the lower flow of the Kamga, about 100 metres from the mouth, there was marked a willow specifically nibbled by a beaver. The information obtained in 1993, 1994, 1999, 2002-2005, 2008-2014 revealed that in the valley of the Kamga beavers moved up to 6-7 km above the mouth. In January 2009 traces of beaver activity were found on the left bank of the river Kyga, 6 km from the river mouth. The beavers had made a dam with the length of about 200 meters, the height of 0.5 meters, which swamped about 50 hectares of forest, piled about 50 aspen trees and willows 5 to 40 cm in diameter. The animals gnawed the bark of aspen trees and carried branches under the ice of the lake formed. Everywhere near the dam there were footprints of beavers in the snow. This was the first report of beavers emergence at the beginning of the lake - in the valley of the Kyga (the southern part of lake Teletskoye). In 2009 traces of beaver activity were noticed in the estuary of the Kyga - specific nibble of trees and footprints in the sand. In 2011 the research staff examined the habitat of beavers in the Kuga valley. On the 6th kilometer from the mouth on the left bank of the river, 150-200 m from the bank into the woods, were found some traces of beavers: a built dam, a beaver lodge, specific nibble of trees. In 2013 the traces of beavers were noticed in the lower part of the Chulcha valley in about 50 kilometers from the mouth of the river Chulyshman.

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