

Edinburgh Zoo will become home to lynx captured in the Highlands

Experts from The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) have successfully captured two Lynx which had been illegally released into the Highlands.

Working alongside Police Scotland, staff from the wildlife conservation charity humanely trapped the cats overnight. They are now being cared for in quarantine facilities at Highland Wildlife Park before being transferred to Edinburgh Zoo.

The charity has condemned the illegal release as “highly irresponsible” and said it is likely the lynx would have died in the wild.

David Barclay, manager of the RZSS Saving Wildcats team, said, “We set live trail cameras near baited traps and it was a long night for our specialist keepers who were taking turns to monitor any activity.

“It was amazing to see the lynx being captured safely and humanely, which makes the lack of sleep more than worth it.

“Biosecurity laws mean the cats need to spend 30 days in suitable quarantine facilities, so we will transfer them from Highland Wildlife Park to Edinburgh Zoo, where we will further assess their health and welfare.

“Long-term, they may return to Highland Wildlife Park, which

is near where they were trapped, though it is too early to say for certain.”

RZSS Chief Executive David Field said, “We condemn the illegal release of these lynx in the strongest possible terms.

“It was a highly irresponsible act and it is very unlikely they would have survived in the wild due to a lack of adequate preparation.

“Their abandonment was reckless to the animals, public the community and nature.

“For now, we have named them ‘The KillieHuntly Two’ and thankfully they appear to be in good health.

“We are extremely grateful to all the residents, estates, farmers and conservation partners locally that provided information to us and the police. The team were ably assisted by Wildland staff on the ground and close working between all parties allowed for a swift and positive resolution in this case.”

Highland Wildlife Park is already home to two grown Northern Lynx, named Switch and Neon. The Northern Lynx is a subspecies of the Eurasian Lynx

We are appealing for anyone with information on how they came to be in the area to contact Police Scotland.

All photos courtesy of RZSS





