



# Derbyshire Mammal Group

# News

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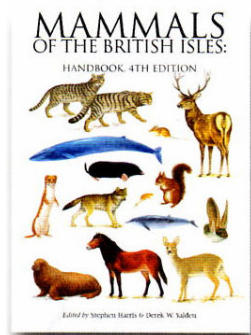
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## New Book

### Mammals of the British Isles

Handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Edited by Stephen Harris  
& Derek W. Yalden

The Handbook of British Mammals is a well established, classic reference source for all aspects of information on the mammals in Britain and Ireland. The third edition, dating to 1991, has long been out of press. Over 100 of the leading mammalogists, mostly members of The Mammal Society, have contributed to this revision. It presents an authoritative summary of our current knowledge for all who need it: not only students and academics, but also planners, conservationists and naturalists. It benefits from a superb collection of colour plates, especially commissioned from Guy Troughton, some excellent colour photographs of mammal behaviour, and a range of new maps and diagrams. Having collaborated with Blackwell Scientific Publications for the previous 3 editions, The Mammal Society is publishing this 4<sup>th</sup> edition itself.

Publication is due April 2008

## Otters in Derbyshire

Helen Perkins

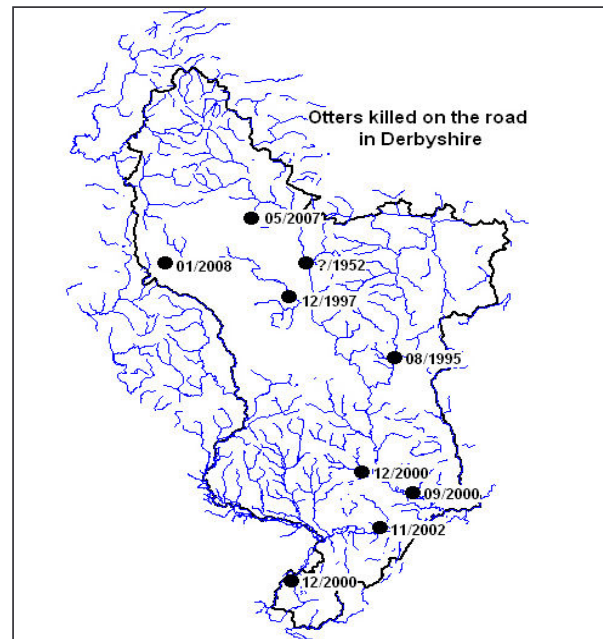
A summary of deaths on roads reported to Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Water for Wildlife Project.

Badgers, foxes, hares, rabbits, hedgehogs and polecats are all regularly recorded as road casualties in Derbyshire and one of the potential conservation benefits of the current DMG atlas project is that mapping may highlight accident black spots, enabling measures for reducing accidents to be considered where appropriate. To date, otter road casualties in the county are relatively few, but it's probably to be expected that as otters continue to recover and move into new areas, an increase in otter-road conflicts will be recorded.

Otters do not occur at high densities and they are neither long-lived nor very productive animals, so the removal of one otter from the local population is a considerable set back. The fact that two otters have been killed on Peak District roads in the last eight months is therefore something of a tragedy. One of the animals was found on the B6049 between Bradwell and Tideswell in May 2007 and the other was picked up from the A53 just outside Buxton in January this year.

Cars are a significant cause of otter mortality across the UK. A study of UK road casualties between 1971-1996 (Philcox, G.K., Grogan, A.L. & MacDonald, D. W. 1999) examined data on 673 otters and found that 56% were male. Post mortem analysis of otters undertaken at Cardiff University found that 63% of the 104 otters analysed in 2006 were male.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust holds data for nine otter road casualties. Three were clearly identified and reported but it was not possible to recover the bodies and gain further data. The remaining six were seen by people experienced at mammal identification and all were recorded as male. Four of the Derbyshire road casualties were sent for analysis at Cardiff University. The results of the Buxton otter are awaited, but analysis of the other three revealed that one was a sub adult male (weighing 4.4 kg), one was a very young male (weighing only 2.2 kg) and the third was a fully grown adult male (weighing 9kg). It's perhaps not surprising that in a county where otters are still recovering, the road casualties recorded to date have all been male. Male otters have larger territories than



females, young males often travel long distances before establishing territories and, as Derek Yalden suggested recently, males may have to travel long distances to find a female if populations are still at very low levels.

There doesn't seem to be any evidence that the timings of our local otter road casualties are positively correlated with either seasonal rainfall or river flow factors, which was the case in almost all of the incidents in the Philcox et al study. A cursory examination reveals that only the dates of the Swarkestone Gravel Pit and Bradwell otter deaths correlate with periods of very wet weather. Not surprisingly nearly all (91%) of the road casualties in the UK study occurred where a road crossed a watercourse. However, this only seems to be an obvious factor in five of the nine Derbyshire otters (though the very first record, dating from 1952 has no details attached to it). One was killed at the nearest point on the road between Swarkestone Gravel Pit and the main River Trent; an otter killed at Borrowash was found close to the road bridge that crosses the Derwent; one was found close to the point where the A38 crosses Markeaton Brook and one was found close to a road that crosses the Amber. Mapping suggests that the otter killed at Drakelow may have followed a narrow drain and crossed the road just over a kilometre from the main River Trent. The routes that the Bradwell, Bakewell and Buxton otters were taking when they met their untimely deaths are far from obvious.

Given the likelihood of more otters being killed on the county's roads it's important to ensure that accidents involving otters are thoroughly recorded and the sites investigated. Both the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency are committed to reducing the mortality of otters on our road network. Where new roads are planned measures can be taken to reduce risks, for example by maintaining continuous natural banks above the level of high flows by using either wide span bridges, over sized culverts or artificial ledges. On existing roads alterations to structures may be possible and in some cases otter proof fencing can help reduce road casualties where roads run close to watercourses.

I'm hoping to obtain and keep copies of all the reports that Cardiff University have carried out on Derbyshire otters to date. The national otter research initiative at the University, which is funded by the Environment Agency, has provided valuable information not only on the sex and stage of otter road casualties, but also on the health and genetics of otters in the UK. For more information about the Cardiff University Otter Project see: <http://www.cf.ac.uk/biosi/staffinfo/chadwick2.html>. A follow up piece on the results of the Buxton post mortem will hopefully appear in the next DMG Newsletter, but in the meantime please contact DWT or the EA immediately if you do see an otter dead on the road.

Grid ref	Road	Site	Catchment	Date	Comments
SK253722	A619?	Nr Baslow	Derwent	1952	Bred in land drain nr cricket field in 1952. One killed on road and other left area soon after.
SK386564	A615	Nr South Wingfield	Derwent	1995	Sub adult male, 4.4kg. Post mortem carried out by Cardiff University.
SK228666	A6	Nr Haddon Hall	Derwent	24/12/1997	Juvenile male, 2.2kg. Post mortem carried out by Cardiff University.
SK414338	B5010	Borrowash	Derwent	24/09/2000	Reported on Borrowash Road by man familiar with mink/otter, right hand side of road, approx 80m before Borrowash Bridge. Not found/collected.
SK337374	A38	Above Markeaton Rd nr Mark. Island	Derwent	19/12/2000	Reported by two separate people lying on central reservation of A38 nr bottom of slip road to Derby University. Not found/collected.
SK231191	Walton Rd, Drakelow	Drakelow	Trent	2000	Adult male, 9kg. Post mortem carried out by Cardiff University.
SK364280	Road n. Swarkestone GP		Trent	26/11/2002	(young?) adult male, 117cm nose to tail with obvious bruising to left shoulder and broken back leg. Not sent for analysis.
SK171798	B6049	Nr Hazlebadge Hall, Bradwell	Derwent	26/05/2007	(young?) adult male, body retained by finder.
SK04167225	A53	Buxton side of Spot Garage	Derwent?	29/01/2008	Otter sent to Cardiff University for analysis, results awaited.

### **KONIKS ON THE MOVE - Wild Horses moved to South Swale**

This article is reproduced from the Wildwood e-news September 2007 with the kind permission of the Wildwood Trust.

Wildwood's herd of Wild Horse is set to help Faversham team with Wildlife. In an innovative, new partnership between Wildwood Trust and Kent Wildlife Trust a herd of wild horses are being used to help breath life back into one of Kent's most important local nature reserves. The wild horses have been allowed to roam free on the south swale local nature reserve since September 2007.



Konik horses grazing  
Photo courtesy of Wildwood

Thanks to the horses, the site's internationally important biodiversity will be enhanced and protected. The wild horses that arrived from Holland last year are the closest living relatives of the extinct Tarpan, the wild forest horse that roamed Britain in prehistoric times.

Wildwood Trust & Kent Wildlife Trust have pioneered the re-introduction of these amazing animals to the UK in 2002. The two Kent based nature conservation charities brought the first ever of their breed to arrive in southern England and these horses and their offspring have been helping to restore some of the most precious national nature reserves in the UK.

The South Swale Nature Reserve covers 850 acres and is home to thousands of wildfowl and waders, including skylarks, reed warblers, breeding redshanks and sometimes bearded tits and marsh harriers. On the landward side of the sea wall, where the horses will graze, you can find many wild flowers like the tall, white, umbrella-like wild carrot and the short, pink, spiny restharrow. These and many more rare flowers will be conserved by the grazing action of the wild horses.

### **KONIK FOAL AT SOUTH SWALE - First wild horse foal for this new herd**

This article is reproduced from the Wildwood e-news March 2008 with the kind permission of the Wildwood Trust.

The South Swale herd has produced its first foal last month. This bold project to enhance the wildlife of the South Swale Nature Reserve was developed in a partnership between Kent Wildlife Trust and the Wildwood Trust. Thanks to the horses, the sites internationally important biodiversity is being enhanced and protected.

The foal was born on Wednesday 13th February 2008 to the conservation herd of wild horses which were moved to South Swale in September 2007 from Canterbury, where by the action of the wild horses natural grazing the site is being conserved as a haven for rare plants, animals and birds.



Konik foal  
Photo courtesy of Wildwood

The wild horses are part of a bold plan to re-introduce the wild horse to Britain, the horse imported are the closest living relatives of the extinct Tarpan, the wild forest horse which roamed Britain in Neolithic times.

"The birth of this foal is great news" commented Peter Smith Chief Executive of Wildwood Trust "and is part of the plan for developing conservation grazing systems to restore natural ecological processes to help Britain and in this case South Swale team with wildlife again."

### **WILD HORSES FURTHER INFORMATION**

It is always good to see new generations born to our herd when we consider they were nearly made extinct during the Second World War. Some of the wild horses' ancestors were stolen by Nazi genetic experimenters



under the patronage of Reichmarshal Herman Goering. The Nazis were bent on recreating a genetically pure 'Arian' wild horse.

Thankfully the Polish scientists who were looking after the wild horse herds were able to protect some of them. After the War the protected herds were allowed to repopulate the national parks of Poland under the Soviet occupation. Once Soviet occupation was ended, with the fall of the Iron Curtain, conservationists were able to transport the wild horses to national parks across Europe.

Wildwood Trust pioneered the re-introduction of these amazing animals to the UK in 2002. Wildwood brought the first ever of their breed to arrive in southern England and these horses and their offspring have been helping to restore some of the most precious national nature reserves in the UK.

The 'Konik pony' as they are sometimes known originated in Poland and Konik is actually the Polish word for small horse.

They are a highly unusual breed in that they directly descended from the wild European forest horse or 'Tarpan' which was hunted to extinction in Britain in Neolithic times. Tarpan survived in central Europe until the late 1800s when the last of their race were captured in the primeval forest of Bialowieza, Poland, and transported to zoos. When the last of these died in 1910 the pure race disappeared forever.

Since this time conservation grazing projects throughout Europe have used the Konik horses for wetland grazing projects. The former habitat of Tarpan was marshy woodland where their grazing activities help create ideal living conditions for a host of associated wildlife such as rare geese, spoonbills, bitterns and curlews.

The project to restore them to Kentish wetlands is a joint venture between the Wildwood Trust near Canterbury, Natural England, Kent Wildlife Trust, Canterbury City Council and Canterbury & District Enterprise Trust.

## **WILDWOOD TRUST**

Wildwood Trust is Kent's unique 'Woodland Discovery Park', a visitor attraction with a difference.

Wildwood is not only the best place to bring the family for a day out, but it is also a bold and innovative new charity, backed by the UK's leading wildlife

conservationists. As a new charity Wildwood needs everyone's support in its mission to save our native and once native wildlife from extinction.

Wildwood Trust's vision is to bring back our true 'wildwood', a unique new way of restoring Britain's land to its natural state. This involves releasing large wild herbivores and developing conservation grazing systems to restore natural ecological processes to help Britain team with wildlife again.

The Wildwood 'Woodland Discovery Park' is an ideal day out for all the family where you can come 'nose to nose' with British Wildlife. Wildwood offers its members and visitors a truly inspirational way to learn about the natural history of Britain by actually seeing the wildlife that once lived here.

Set in a sublime 38 acres of Ancient Woodland, Wildwood offers visitors a truly unique experience. Come Nose to Nose with our secretive badgers, experience what it is like to be hunted by a real live pack of wolves, watch a charging wild boar or track down a beaver in his lodge.

Wildwood Trust runs a highly successful programme of Conservation Projects - we are the UK's leading experts in rescuing and re-establishing colonies of Britain's most threatened mammal, the water vole. Wildwood Trust has pioneered the use of ancient wild horses to restore nature reserves. Wildwood Trust has been at the forefront of efforts to re-establish the European Beaver back in Britain where they belong. European Beaver have been proven to help manage water ways to bring back a huge range of plants, insects and animals.

### **Question**

Whilst horses (such as the Koniks) are hindgut fermenters other herbivores such as chevrotains, deer, cattle, antelope, gazelle and camels utilise the 'rumination' digestive process. The word 'ruminant' is derived from the Latin word *ruminare* which means 'to chew again'. Ruminants have a complex stomach with a number of separate sections.

How many separate sections are there and can you name them?

Answer: p10 (Ed.)

## Glis – The Incredible Edible Dormouse

Liz and Steve Lonsdale

In September 2007 Steve Docker organised another excellent weekend away for members of the Group, based around Tring in Hertfordshire. We began by meeting at the Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum, where we were given a tour around the mammal galleries by Paul Kitching (the Museum Manager). The museum is one of the old school – not too many buttons to push, but lots of galleries with fascinating specimens of all types of fauna from around the world. Most of us concentrated on the mammal specimens which included the full range of British land mammals, plus some fascinating extinct specimens such as the Quagga (a sub-species of the plains zebra), and the Thylacine (otherwise known as the Tasmanian Tiger), a species which survived until 1933.



Thylacine  
Photo by Steve Docker

On the Sunday we met at Dr Pat Morris' edible dormouse study site, in woodland a few miles to the east of Tring. There are 26 species of dormouse world-wide, of which two (the common dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and the edible dormouse (*Glis glis*)) are found in the UK. *Glis* looks like a small grey squirrel – it has a long, grey, shaggy coat, bushy tail, and a dark eye ring. Head and body are 12-20cm long, the tail 11-19cm. Adult weight is 70-250g, and may reach 300g or more prior to hibernation.

The natural distribution of *Glis* is through northern Iberia to Russia, and south to Italy, Greece, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Crete, and their preferred habitat is wooded and rocky areas, steppe, and gardens; they do not require a shrub layer. They have been found at an altitude of 2000m in the Pyrenees. *Glis* are omnivorous, eating mainly insects, worms, spiders, fruit, seeds, nuts, and eggs. Longevity in the wild is around 3-6 years, with the

oldest known one at Tring being 9 years.

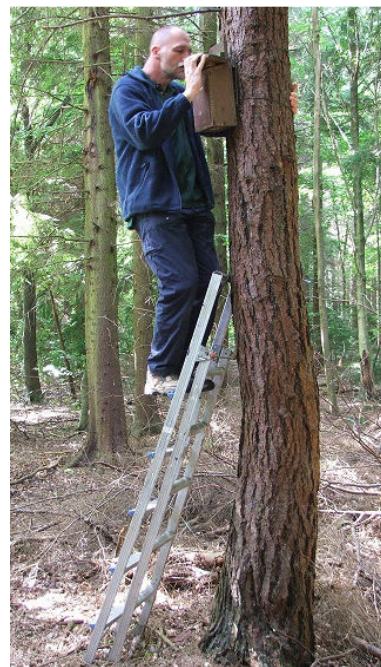
*Glis* are arboreal and nocturnal. They nest in the canopy close to the trunk, or in a hole or nestbox; the nest is globular and made of leaves, grasses, mosses, hair and feathers. Hibernation is at low level in a tree hollow or underground (up to 60cm deep). They may hibernate communally.

The Romans kept *Glis* in enclosures ('glirarium') or earthenware jars as a food source (hence 'edible' dormouse). Other names include 'seven sleeper' (as it hibernates for seven months), 'squirrel-tailed dormouse' and 'Fat dormouse'.

*Glis* was originally introduced in the area by Walter Rothschild in 1902 and there is now a thriving population centred on the woodlands around Tring (estimated at 10,000 animals). The species has become something of a pest, as it nests in buildings (one lady had 69 in her loft), and causes damage to buildings (e.g. gnawing holes in doors, eating fruit and electrical wires, falling into water tanks in lofts) and cars. Because they are a protected species, they cannot legally be killed, and because they are not a native species, they cannot legally be released – needless to say this causes a number of problems for property owners.

Pat and his team stressed that it was important for people to understand that the aim of their work is not to conserve the species, but to study it. 145 nest boxes have been erected throughout the study area (principally beech and

DMG member Ian Wildbur checking a *Glis glis* nest box  
Photo by Steve Docker





conifer woodland) and they are checked monthly throughout the summer.

The team checks all the boxes and records the numbers, sex and breeding condition (of the adults) weights (young are not weighed individually but as a group from each box) etc of the animals present. At the September check there were some 700 animals in the 145 boxes, and while we did not stay to see the final totals the vast majority of boxes we saw being opened contained adults and young.



*Glis glis* nest boxes ready for checking  
Photo by the 'Lonsdales'

Many of the adults were microchipped, and so were individually known; unchipped adults were chipped, but young will not be chipped until next year (mainly because they are too small, and also for cost reasons, as many young die during their first winter).



*Glis glis* being 'Chipped'  
Photo by the 'Lonsdales'

*Glis* reach maturity after their second winter; the young are born in late August, after a gestation of 31 days. Litter size at birth is 2-11, reducing to 2-6 (cannibalism is suspected), and two families (mother plus young) may share the same box. The young are fed on milk and regurgitated nuts. One of their main food sources is beech mast; interestingly, higher litter sizes occur in years with high quantities of beech mast, even though birth takes

place before the mast is produced; it is speculated that the litter sizes may be linked to the previous year's pollen cycle.

The study has been ongoing for some 10 years, and the team have learnt a number of lessons, not least that protective clothing is required when checking the boxes. The animals will bite, and so thick gloves have to be worn; they also wriggle, and have been known to run up sleeves and trouser legs (and bite up there as well). Fleas and mites are also common.



*Glis glis* in the 'hand'  
Photo by Steve Docker

As well as the regular surveying, an interesting study on vocalisation was also being carried out. *Glis* are vocal and can be heard making clicks, whistles, growls and chirps in the evenings. The male also calls when following the female. Ultrasound calls, especially by the young, are also being investigated.



Recording young *Glis glis* vocalisations  
Photo by Steve Docker

## **Biodiversity and Mammals**

Debbie Court  
(Biodiversity Project Officer, Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Partnership)

In the last few years work has been carried out on the revision of the list of habitats and species associated with the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Many organisations, including the Bat Conservation Trust and Mammal Society, were involved in drawing up the revised list of mammals which are considered to be under threat.

The original list was drawn up in 1994 and of the 351 species it included 6 species of bat, 20 species of cetacean (and 3 grouped plans for cetacean) and five other species of mammal – common dormouse, otter, water vole, brown hare and red squirrel.

The new list includes 1,149 species of which 18 are terrestrial and 14 are marine mammals:

<b>Water Vole</b>	<b>Hedgehog</b>
<b>Brown hare</b>	Wildcat
Red Squirrel	<b>Mountain Hare</b>
<b>Common</b>	<b>Pine Marten *</b>
<b>Dormouse</b>	<b>Harvest Mouse</b>
<b>Otter</b>	<b>Polecat</b>

Bechstein's Bat  
**Noctule**  
**Barbastelle Bat**  
**Soprano Pipistrelle**  
**Brown Long-eared Bat**  
Greater- Horseshoe Bat  
Lesser Horseshoe Bat

Those recorded recently in Derbyshire have been highlighted in **bold**  
(\* records received from the Vincent Wildlife Trust).

Work is being carried out at a national level to set UK targets for the new species, these are likely to be agreed and published by April 2009. Meanwhile at a local level within the Lowland Derbyshire Biodiversity Action Plan in the next 6 months I will be drawing up a small number of actions for each of the new species as well as bats, dormouse, brown hare and otter. Most of the actions will revolve around recording which DMG will be a key partner through the Derbyshire Mammal Atlas Project.

For more information on mammals and UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans visit the Derbyshire Biodiversity website [www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk), or [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk).

## **Extra Protection for the Water Vole**

DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS News Release (News Release ref :58/08) issued by The Government News Network on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008 <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2008/080226a.htm>

The water vole will receive extra protection, Joan Ruddock, Minister for Biodiversity today announced. The water vole together with the angel shark, roman snail, spiny seahorse, and short-snouted seahorse will gain protection against being killed, injured, or taken from the wild from 6 April. They will join the list of wildlife species such as the otter and grass snake that already enjoy protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. In addition, the possession or selling of the water vole, short-snouted seahorse, spiny seahorse and roman snail will become an offence. It will also become an offence to damage or obstruct the short-snouted and spiny seahorses' place of shelter or disturb them in their place of shelter.

Visiting the WWT London Wetlands Centre to see at first hand a project to protect water voles, Joan Ruddock said: "It is in all our interests that England's valuable wildlife is protected, and a lot of work has been done to ensure that the list of species being protected is comprehensive." As I have seen today, organisations such as the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust are committed to conserving animals such as the water vole. The additional protection we are providing for these creatures will ensure a more secure future for their species."

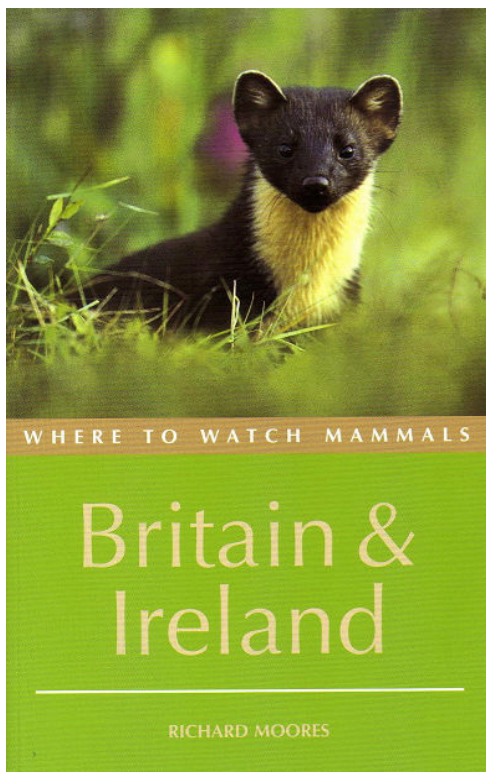
Alastair Driver, National Conservation Manager for the Environment Agency and Chair of the UK Water Vole Species Action Plan Group welcomed the announcement: "We welcome this announcement which is great news for water vole conservation. It not only serves to minimise deliberate persecution and accidental poisoning, but also clarifies the law for planners and developers. Water vole populations have declined by 90% since 1990 and this added protection will make a real difference to the work being done to conserve this charismatic species."

Stephanie Hilborne, chief executive for The Wildlife Trusts, said: "We're absolutely delighted water voles have finally been given this life line. Water voles have been lost from many parts of the UK, including significant areas such as Cornwall, but this excellent news will undoubtedly help our efforts to bring the water vole back from the brink. Full legal protection should ensure remaining water vole populations are not compromised during development works and that incidents of trapping and persecution do not go unpunished. Over the last 10 years, The Wildlife Trusts have worked closely with the Environment Agency, Natural England, water companies and others to ensure the water vole remains a feature of our rivers, streams, canals and other watercourses."



**Book Review: *Where to watch mammals in Britain and Ireland* by Richard Moores**

Roy Frost



This is a 296 page paperback, published in 2007 by A&C Black, price £16.99. I recall reading with great interest the first book on where to watch birds in Britain over 40 years ago. Since then there have been other guides to finding plants, butterflies and dragonflies, so a guide to finding mammals in the UK was overdue and welcome.

The introductory chapters deal with the reasons for watching mammals, conservation and relevant factors, and field craft and equipment. This is followed by an introduction to the various groups, with details of range and recent population estimates. Recently established, or re-established, species such as Chinese Water Deer, Edible Dormouse and Wild Boar are included, though I was a touch surprised to find no mention of the Chillingham white cattle. There are commendably up to date details of rare vagrants, so if you want to know when and where the most recent European Free-tailed Bat or Walrus was seen, the answers are here [Cornwall in 2003, and Shetland in 2002 respectively].

The main bulk of the book is given over to the site guide, which is arranged by region, ranging from 37 pages for Scotland to just 4 pages for Ireland. The sites vary in size from single churches and bridges to areas covering hundreds of square kilometres, such as the Cairngorms and Kielder Forest. Details of key species are given for each site, together with details of access and other relevant details and, in about a third of cases, a map. Some species, of course, are downright difficult and even armed with this book the reader is unlikely to serendipitously encounter, for example, Hazel Dormouse without local knowledge and the relevant licence. Nevertheless, the site guide seems generally excellent. For example, if you wish to see Red-necked Wallabies on their island home in Loch Lomond, the book tells you not only where to hire a boat, but how much you will pay for it. And I wish I had known how and where, exactly, to seek Lesser White-toothed Shrews on the Isles of Scilly a few years ago rather than vainly hoping one might cross my path.

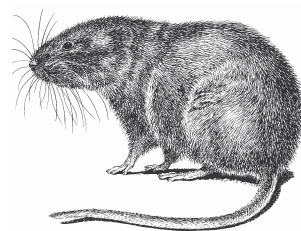
The local sites listed are a bit thin on the ground, however. Elvaston Castle Country Park is recommended for Daubenton's Bat, while those seeking Mountain Hare in the Peak District are directed to Long Gutter Edge, above Torside Reservoir. The final sections deal with Badger watches arranged by the Badger Trust, a monthly calendar of what to look for, and addresses of county recorders and county mammal and bat groups. This is an attractively produced book, scattered with pleasant vignettes, and the author has made a good attempt at covering a difficult subject.

ISBN 9780713671612

**Top Tip 1**

Water voles have a short, blunt nose and hairy tail; brown rats have a sharp pointed nose, prominent ears and a scaly tail.

Water Vole  
Drawing courtesy of  
Natural England



### Otter 'Sand Castle'

Steve Docker

I was out checking my regular otter monitoring sites along the Henmore Brook recently when I came across an unusual otter field sign. In fact, Helen Perkins and I were leading a training session for a group of six eager otter spotters! I couldn't believe our luck when, looking down at a sand bank, which I've looked at hundreds of times before, we saw some disturbed sand. A small 'sand castle' had been created with an otter spraint deposited on the top of it. Although I'd read about this behaviour I'd never seen it before!



Otter 'Sand Castle' with spraint  
Photo by Steve Docker

Obviously this is one otter that has read the same books as me!

### Top Tip 2

Carry a short ruler with your camera to place next to field signs.

### Top Tip 3

Badger hair is black/white/black, and when rolled between the finger and thumb feels ridged rather than round.

### Answer

Herbivores using the 'rumination' digestive process have a complex stomach with four separate sections. These are, in order: the rumen, reticulum, omasum and abomasum. (Ed.)

### Recorder Update

Debbie Court

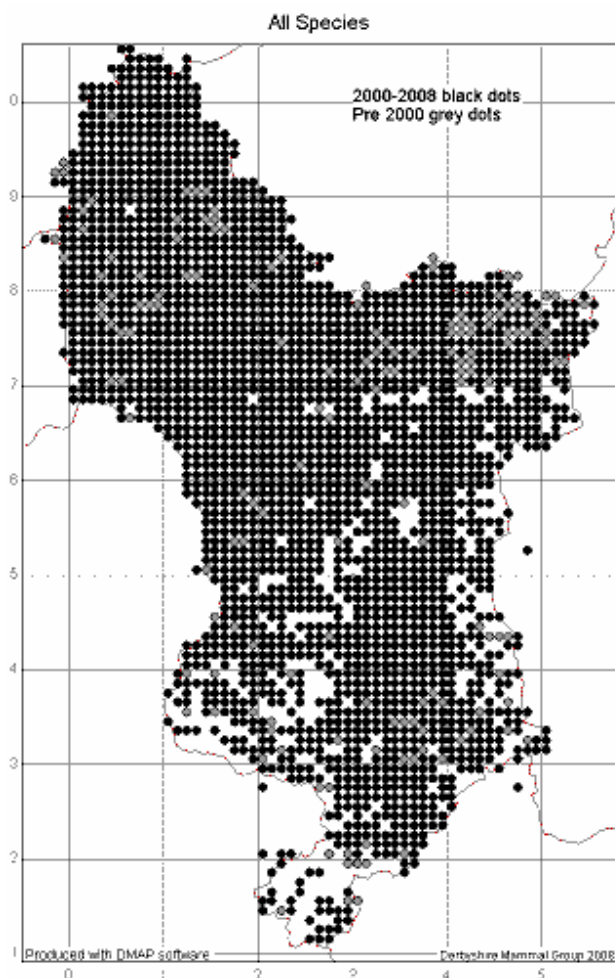
Following the DMG Atlas Meeting in November 2007 I took over from Derek Whiteley as the DMG Recorder. At the meeting it was decided to use an excel spreadsheet as the principle means to allow easy transfer of records from recorders to the main database. A recording excel spreadsheet along with a guidance sheet has been sent to all DMG members.

I received the master database in November which contained 8,903 DMG records, DWT Brown Hare records, DWT Mountain hare records from 2000 and 1,700 records from Derek Whiteley. Since then records have been received from many DMG members including Dave Mallon, Shirley Cross, Sue Crookes, John Bland and Sue Jones, Bill Cove, Ian Wildbur and Jo Bissell, Steve Docker, Mike Ashford, Steve and Liz Lonsdale, Malcolm Hopton, Debbie Court and Dave Alston. Records have also been received from other county naturalists including Chris Monk, Trevor Taylor, Shirley Freeman, Tim Brooks, Mike and Jenny Ellis as well as road casualty records from the Highways Agency and garden mammal records from the Pilsley Ladies Group.

We have also exchanged records with the Sorby Mammal Group and are in discussion with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to exchange otter, mink, water vole and brown hare records. Discussions over the exchange of records are also taking place with the Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group and Nick Moyes at the Derby Biological Records Centre.

Recording effort has also been boosted by the monthly 'square bashing' sessions to record mammals in under-recorded squares. The January session around Rosliston recorded in more than 10 squares and the February session around Golden Valley and Stonebroom recorded in more than 20 squares.

At the end of March 2008 the DMG mammal database has more than 17,300 records on it! See map next page. This is a fantastic boost to the Derbyshire Mammal Atlas Project. Dave Alston, DMG webmaster, has now mastered the DMAP programme and has put up interim species distribution maps for most species.



County map showing all mammal record at the end of March 2008.

These are updated on a monthly basis so you can see what effect your recording is having on the species distribution maps. These can be seen at [http://www.derbyshiremammalgroup.com/species\\_distribution\\_maps.html](http://www.derbyshiremammalgroup.com/species_distribution_maps.html).

A quick analysis of the data shows that while some areas are very well recorded such as nature reserves, others have only one or two records. So if you want to help with the Derbyshire Mammal Atlas Project choose somewhere slightly different for your evening stroll or a slightly different route home once in a while. If you want some inspiration to see the gaps look at the maps on the DMG website or contact me for some under-recorded squares in your local area.

When you are out and about don't forget to record signs of mammals such as droppings (especially rabbit, fox and badger), nibbled hazelnuts and pinecones (especially wood mouse, bank vole and grey squirrel), nests/burrows (squirrels, rabbits and badgers) as well as molehills. Mammal 'signs' are just as important as live sightings and records of dead mammals. Just under a third of the records on the DMG database are from mammal signs.

Please keep sending in your mammal records to:

61, Hillside Rise, Belper, DE56 1NH or [mammalrecorder@derbyshiremammalgroup.com](mailto:mammalrecorder@derbyshiremammalgroup.com).

or submit them online at <http://www.derbyshiremammalgroup.com/form8.html>.

The top 10 mammals recorded on the database are:

Placing	Species	No of records	Percentage of all DMG records
1	Mole	2,701	16.35
2	Grey Squirrel	1,943	11.76
3	Brown Hare	1,640	9.93
4	Rabbit	1,420	8.59
5	Badger	1,275	7.72
6	Fox	1,247	7.55
7	Hedgehog	1,203	7.28
8	Mountain Hare	838	5.07
9	Field Vole	519	3.14
10	Water Vole	519	3.14



### **It's a Boy!**

Congratulations to Anna and Ben on the birth of the latest DMG member. Owen Rhys was born on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (St Valentine's Day) and weighed 3.4kg (7lb 8oz).

### **The "Wild Ones Times Two" Quiz**

A written quiz sheet is on sale raising funds for the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. It features a mix of cryptic clues and puzzles and there are general knowledge questions many with the theme of "time", units of time, times of the day or dates on a calendar.

The closing date for entries is Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2008. To obtain a copy send SAE and cheque for £1 payable to "The Wild Ones" to The Wild Ones, 12 Chertsey Road, Micklegate, Derby DE3 0RA.

### **Badger Day**

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008

A nationwide day of fundraising in support of the Badger Trust.

### **Badger Trust Conference**

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2008

The Badger Trust Annual Conference, hosted by the Lancashire Badger Group, will take place at Lancaster University

Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group website:

[www.derbyshirebats.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirebats.org.uk)

### **5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Believe it or not the inaugural meeting of the Derbyshire Mammal Group took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2003 at the Whistlestop Centre, Matlock Bath. So much has been achieved in the first five years, surveys, reintroductions, visits, symposia and much more. (Ed.)

**A colour copy of this newsletter may be  
downloaded from our website  
[www.derbyshiremammalgroup.com](http://www.derbyshiremammalgroup.com)**

### **Useful Contacts**

#### **Mammal Society: (MS)**

Tel: 02380 237874  
[enquiries@mammal.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@mammal.org.uk)  
[www.mammal.org.uk](http://www.mammal.org.uk)

#### **Mammals Trust UK:**

Tel: 02074 985262  
[enquires@mtuk.org](mailto:enquires@mtuk.org)  
[www.mtuk.org](http://www.mtuk.org)

#### **Derbyshire Badger Groups:**

High Peak: Tel: 01298 269557  
Mid Derbyshire: Tel: 01773 852647  
Irene Brierton [irene\\_brierton@btopenworld.com](mailto:irene_brierton@btopenworld.com)  
North East Derbyshire Tel: 07711 506012  
South Derbyshire: Tel: 07754 094177

#### **Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group: c/o DWT**

**Sorby Mammal Group:** [mammals@sorby.org.uk](mailto:mammals@sorby.org.uk)

**Derbyshire Biological  
Records Centre (DBRC):** Tel: 01332 716655  
[nick.moyes@derby.gov.uk](mailto:nick.moyes@derby.gov.uk)  
Nick Moyes [www.dbrc.freemove.co.uk](http://www.dbrc.freemove.co.uk)

**Derbyshire Wildlife Trust:** Tel: 01773 881188  
(DWT) [enquires@derbyshirewt.co.uk](mailto:enquires@derbyshirewt.co.uk)  
[www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk)

Water Vole & Otter Projects: Tel: 01773 881188  
Helen Perkins [hperkins@derbyshirewt.co.uk](mailto:hperkins@derbyshirewt.co.uk)

**Lowland Derbyshire LBAP:** Tel: 01629 585611  
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Debbie Court [www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk)

Many thanks to all those who contributed to this issue of Derbyshire Mammal Group News.

Also, a special thanks to Liz Docker who helped with the layout and design, to Liz & Steve Lonsdale, Natural England and Wildwood Trust for their excellent photographs and illustrations and to AES Ltd for the use of their reprographic facilities.

Please send material, details of forthcoming events, comments etc to Steve Docker: Tel: 01335 345253 or email: [steve@busypeople.force9.co.uk](mailto:steve@busypeople.force9.co.uk)

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that material is factually correct opinions expressed are those of individual authors and may not represent the views of the Derbyshire Mammal Group.

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