

Mammals

Wood Mouse

(11 trapped and released)



The wood mouse is sometimes known as the long-tailed field mouse and is widespread; it is probably most common in woodland, rough grassland and gardens. It is mostly nocturnal and an agile climber. *Apodemus sylvaticus* will gather food stores of berries and seeds in the autumn, which they keep in underground burrows or sometimes in old birds' nests. Females have up to six litters a year of between four and eight young, and may even breed over winter if food is abundant. The wood mouse is golden-brown, with a pale underside, large ears and eyes, and a long tail. It is bigger than the harvest mouse, and browner in colour than the house mouse. They often fall prey to domestic cats, foxes and owls; in fact, tawny owls may not breed if wood mouse numbers are low as it restricts their diet.

Bank Vole

(2 trapped and released)



The bank vole eats fruit, nuts and small insects, but is particularly keen on hazelnuts and blackberries. *Myodes glareolus* are very active and agile animals, and are frequently seen. They live in shallow burrows, but may make grassy, round nests above ground if the soil is unsuitable for digging. They have three or four litters a year, each with three to five young. Bank voles do not hibernate. The bank vole is rich, chestnut-brown above, and white below. Voles have blunter, rounder faces, smaller ears and eyes, and shorter tails than mice.

Harvest Mouse

(1 trapped and released)



The tiny harvest mouse lives in long tussocky grassland, reedbeds, hedgerows, farmland and around woodland edges. It is mainly vegetarian, eating seeds and fruits, but will also eat invertebrates. *Micromys minutus* build a spherical nest of tightly woven grass, high-up in the tall grasses, in which the female will give birth to around six young. The harvest mouse has pale, ginger or yellow fur, and a white belly. Its tail is almost hairless and nearly as long as its body. This is the only British mammal to have a prehensile tail: it can use it like a fifth limb, holding on to grass stems with it.

Mole

(molehills)



Moles are very rarely seen as they spend most of their lives underground. *Talpa europaea* are stocky little animals, covered in black, velvety fur, with tiny eyes, a long, pink nose and two big, shovel-like 'hands' for front paws. They use their spade-like paws to dig tunnels and hunt for their favourite meal of earthworms. They also like to eat underground grubs that would usually feed off crops, so moles can help to control unwanted visitors!

Mammals

Badger

(latrine and runs)



With its characteristic black and white-striped face, grey fur and short furry tail, *Meles meles* looks like no other UK mammal. Stocky, powerfully-built creatures, they typically weigh 10–12kg, with a body length of about 90cm. This makes them the biggest land predator in the UK. Although omnivores, around 80% of a badger's diet is made up of earthworms – they can eat hundreds of them in a single night – but they also eat slugs and other invertebrates and fruit.

Otter

(spraints and runs)



The otter is a large member of the weasel family (mustelids) with an amphibious lifestyle. In the wild they are elusive, secretive animals living in undisturbed rivers, streams and estuaries. *Lutra lutra* have large lungs and can stay submerged under water for 4 minutes, often swimming 400 metres before resurfacing. They can reach speeds of 12 km/h under water and can outrun man on land. The males occupy large ranges, which may include up to 20 km of river bank and daily travel long distances along regular routes by the margins of the river.

Muntjac Deer

(seen on site, droppings)



Muntiacus reevesi is a small deer, growing up to 52cm high at the shoulder. They have a light red-brown fur, with a creamy white stomach. Their black facial markings are diamond-shaped on does (females) and V-shaped on bucks (males). Longer hind legs give the muntjac their characteristic hunched appearance. Male muntjacs have short, backwards-curving and unbranched antlers which are shed in late spring and regrow by late autumn. They also have a long pair of canine teeth that protrude from the mouth.

Roe Deer

(seen on site)



Capreolus capreolus tend to be solitary in summer, form loose groups in winter. They eat buds and leaves from trees and shrubs, as well as ferns, grasses and heathers. Males have relatively short antlers, typically with three points. A slender, medium-sized deer, up to 67cm at the shoulder, the roe deer has short antlers and no tail. It is mostly brown in colour, turning reddish in the summer and darker grey in the winter. It has a pale buff patch around its rump.

Red Deer

(Not on site but next door, decades ago)



Cervus elaphus is the UK's largest deer. Males have large, branching antlers, increasing in size as they get older. Red deer prefer moorland and mountainsides but also grasslands near to woodland. They can be seen in deer parks throughout the country. Red deer mainly eat grasses, sedges, rushes and heather. A lone female became abandoned by her herd in Dernford Fen and became known as *The Dernford Beast* many years ago.

Mammals

Hedgehog

(seen on site)



Sleepy, cute, truly iconic. *Erinaceus europaeus* are one of the UK's best-loved mammals and spend much of their lives asleep. These prickly critters rely on hedgerows and woodland edges for food and shelter. Hedgehogs are 20–25cm long and typically weigh up to 1.2kg. They have a distinctive waddling gait and are covered in characteristic brown spines. They have long snouts and no spines on their underbellies, faces or limbs.

Bats

(seen on site)



Bats are remarkably good at eating the flies that bug us during the twilight, which is when they come out too. There are three types of bats found across the UK – the Common, the Soprano and the Pipistrelle. This last one is the most widespread species in the UK is the one you're most likely to see. Brown in colour, with dark furry features, these bats feed on small flies and aquatic mosquitoes and can often be seen flying a few ten metres above the water while searching for insects.

Fox

(seen on site)



Vulpes vulpes is our only wild member of the dog family. Unfussy eaters who will happily munch on small mammals, birds, frogs, worms as well as berries and fruit. A male fox, called a dog fox makes a barking noise whereas the females, called vixens make a spine-chilling scream sound. Size of a medium domestic dog, the red fox is orangey-red above, white below, with black tips to the ears, dark brown feet and a white tip to the bushy, orange tail (known as the 'brush').