

## MAMMALS of the GRASSLAND and WOODLAND

### **BADGER** *meles meles*



**Recognition:** Black and white striped face. Body is grey, with black fur on legs. Some badgers are white or ginger. Nocturnal and shy

**Head/body length:** about 750mm, tail 150mm

**Weight:** average 8-9kg in spring, 11-12kg in autumn.

**Diet:** A badger can eat several hundred earthworms every night but may also eat berries, beetles, roots, bulbs, fungi and small mammals.

**M:** Boar **F:** Sow **Young:** Cub

**Habitat:** Badgers are social creatures and live together in large underground setts of up to 100m of interlocking tunnels with nest chambers, toilets and several entrances. They inherit these setts from their parents, while always expanding and refining them. The resulting huge tunnel systems are, in some cases, centuries old.

Nitrogen in badger droppings supports the growth of nettles and elder near latrines.

**Names :** Brock.

### **Common pipistrelle BAT** *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*



**Recognition:** Pipistrelles are the commonest and most widespread of all British bat species. There are two very similar species, common and soprano pipistrelle. They appear fast and jerky in flight as they dodge about pursuing small insects which the bats catch and eat on the wing. Medium to dark brown in colour, the face and around the eyes is usually dark.

**Head & body length:** 35mm – 45mm **Forearm length:** 30mm – 35mm **Wingspan:** 200mm-235mm **Weight:** 3g – 8g

**Diet:** A single pipistrelle can consume up to 3,000 insects in one night! Insects are caught by echo location.

**Young:** kit or pup

**Habitat:** Trees are used for roosting sites where they can give birth to their young where it is protected and sheltered and in winter where they can safely hibernate in deep crevices.

**FOX** *vulpes vulpes*



**Recognition:** Reddish orange fur, small dog sized; thick bushy tail in winter

**Head/body length:** average 67-72cm for males; 62-67cm for females; tail about 40cm

**Weight:** average 6-7kg for males; 5-6kg for females.

**Lifespan:** Foxes generally do not live very long; although they have been recorded up to nine years old in the wild, most survive only one or two years.

**Diet:** Foxes have a very wide and varied diet. On salt marshes they eat crabs and dead seabirds, while in upland regions carrion may be important, particularly during the winter months. In lowland rural areas small mammals, especially field voles and rabbits, are the major source of food, with earthworms, beetles, fruit (particularly blackberries) and small birds also being eaten.

As well as having excellent vision, smell and touch they can produce 28 different calls.

**Home :** den, earth **M.** Dog **F.** Vixen **Young** Cub

**HEDGEHOG** *erinaceous europaeus*



**Recognition:** Hedgehogs are the only British mammal with spines which are adapted hairs. The face, legs and undersurface are covered in hair.

**Weight:** Hedgehogs need to weigh at least ½ Kg. to survive the winter. They can weigh up to 1.5 kg.

Hedgehogs are usually [nocturnal](#), although, depending on the species, they may be more or less active during the day. The hedgehog sleeps for a large portion of the daytime either under cover of bush, grass, rock or in a hole in the ground. All wild hedgehogs can hibernate but not all do; hibernation depends on temperature, species, and abundance of food.

**Diet:** Hedgehogs are almost omnivorous feeding not only on insects but also snails, frogs, snakes, carrion, fungi, grass roots and berries.

**M.** Boar **F.** Sow **Young** Hoglet

**MOLE** *talpa europaea*



**Recognition:** Short usually black fur. Spade-like forelimbs. Pink fleshy snout and tiny eyes.

**Head/body length:** 113-159mm. Tail: 25-40mm.

**Weight:** 72-128g. Males usually larger.

**Lifespan:** Most moles don't live beyond 3 years but can live up to 6 years. Their main predators are tawny owls and buzzards; stoats, cats and dogs, also vehicles kill some. Humans also kill many as pests of agriculture.

**Diet:** Earthworms are the most important component of the mole's diet; an 80g mole needs 50g of earthworms per day. Moles also eat many insect larvae particularly in the summer, though earthworms dominate the winter diet.

**M:**Boar **F:**Sow **Young** Pup

Fur can move both ways to facilitate movement in tunnels.

**Wood MOUSE** *apodemus sylvaticus*



**Recognition:** Sandy brown fur (darker towards the spine) with white/grey underside, protruding eyes, large ears, long tail. Juveniles are greyer overall, but still have much longer ears, hind feet and tail than house mice

**Head/body length:** 81-103mm; tail 71-95mm.

**Weight:** 13-27g.

**Lifespan:** Few adults survive from one summer to the next.

**Diet:** Wood mice eat seeds, green plants, fruits and animal foods. In a mixed deciduous woodland they eat acorns, ash and sycamore seeds for most of the winter, buds in early spring, caterpillars, worms and centipedes in early summer and blackberries and fungi in the autumn.

**RABBIT** *Oryctolagus cuniculus*



**Recognition:** Long ears without black tips, long hind legs; sandy, less reddish than brown hare and smaller, with a bobbing gait, rather than the loping gait that hares have.

**Head/body length:** up to 40cm.

**Weight:** 1.2 - 2kg. Male usually heavier than females.

**Lifespan:** Rabbits don't often live for more than 3 years. Over 90% die in the first year of life, and most of these in the first three months.

**Diet:** Rabbits eat a wide range of plants including grasses, cereal crops, root vegetables and young shoots of meadow plants. They will eat tree bark especially when snow covers other food sources.

**M.** Buck **F.** Doe **Young.** Kit

**Common SHREW** *sorex araneus*



**Recognition:** Tricoloured: dark brown, pale brown and whitish, dense velvety fur, with a long pointed nose, tiny eyes, small ears and red teeth.

**Head/body length:** 48-80mm, tail 24-44mm; tail less than 3/4 length of head and body.

**Weight:** 5-14g

**Lifespan:** In comparison with mice, shrews have a very short life-span and it is uncommon for a shrew to live for more than 12 months.

**Diet:** Their main food source is insects but they will also eat earthworms, small slugs and snails

**Grey SQUIRREL** *sciurus carolinensis*



**Recognition:** Silver-grey, agouti (speckled) coat, with a brownish tinge on feet, face and along the back, especially in summer; fringed white. Much larger than the red squirrel, which has uniform reddish-brown (not agouti) fur. Lacks the ear tufts that red squirrels have in winter.

**Head/body length:** 24-28.5 cm. Tail length: 19.5-24 cm.

**Weight:** males 0.44-0.65 kg; females 0.4-0.72 kg (about twice red squirrel).

**Lifespan:** females live on average slightly longer than males, up to 5 years (or exceptionally 6.5 years), and males live around 2-3 years.

**Diet:** Large seeds of trees such as oak, beech, hazel, sweet chestnut and walnut. When these supplies run out in early summer grey squirrels turn to a variety of flowers, buds, shoots, pine cones, fungi, peanuts from bird feeders, birds' eggs and young.

**M.Buck F. Doe Young Kit Home Drey**

**Bank VOLE** *myodes glareolus*



**Recognition:** Reddish-brown fur above, creamy-grey fur below, rounded snout, less prominent eyes than mice and ears completely covered with fur; more sleek appearance than field vole, and rather longer, bicoloured (black above, white below) tail.

**Head/body length:** 79-117mm; tail 33-48 mm, c. 50% of head and body.

**Weight:** 20-35g

**Lifespan:** The average life span of a bank vole is less than a year so population turnover is rapid.

**Diet:** It feeds on a range of berries and seeds, leaves of herbs, shrubs and trees and some animal material (snails, insects). Soft fleshy fruits and leaves of shrubs are preferred.

