

July 2010

Dear Survey Volunteer,

Thank you for offering to take part in this year's *Mammals on Roads* or for helping in past years' surveys. Enclosed is a survey form to record details of your journeys and the sightings along the way, together with an identification guide and an update of the survey.

*Mammals on Roads* celebrates its tenth year this year, a decade of recording that has built on the efforts of over a thousand volunteers nationwide, and timely recognition of the efforts of volunteers in recording schemes appeared last month in a scientific journal. The report pointed to the need for further 'citizen science' initiatives if we are to understand biodiversity change in the future. Conservation is a collective endeavour – thank you for taking part!

A few reminders about how to do the survey: only routes of 20 miles or more should be surveyed and, even if no mammals are seen, please include the journey in your records, as this information is as important as positive sightings. If you can resurvey journeys made in previous years, please do so, but remember that you should not record the same route more than once in any 30-day period. Journeys should be between the start of July and the end of September and whether you survey a single route or many, every record is valuable. If you require additional survey forms, the form may be photocopied. Alternatively, copies can be requested by calling the number above or can be downloaded from our website at [www.ptes.org/mor](http://www.ptes.org/mor).

Putting the recording online has been a challenge, and unfortunately one that beat us last year. This year however the website is up and running, with interactive maps to record journey routes and sightings. If you have access to the internet, please give it a go and let us know what you think.

The complete database of information from all the surveyors will be held by us and biological data shared with other environmental organisations in summary form at a later date, but I would like to stress that your personal details will not be passed on.

Thank you for all your help. I look forward to hearing from you in a few months time. If you have questions about any aspect of the survey, please do not hesitate to contact me, either by telephone or at the email address: [david@ptes.org](mailto:david@ptes.org).

Please take care on the roads.

Yours sincerely,



David Wembridge  
National Mammal Surveys Co-ordinator

## Frequently asked questions about the *Mammals on Roads* survey

### *Why record entries about the route every 10 miles?*

Ten-mile entries, or waypoints, are necessary so the route followed can be plotted on the map of the UK as accurately as possible. This allows us to assign your route, or parts of your route to a particular region.

### *Why is the milometer reading necessary?*

This helps us plot the position of mammal sightings and the route driven more accurately. It is used in conjunction with place names to plot routes and sightings.

### *Why survey only during July-September?*

This is the time of year when wildlife and people are particularly mobile – young animals may be leaving the parental home, and human families are setting off on holiday. This is important as large numbers of journeys are needed to ensure that counts give a true picture of mammal abundance along roads and that as much of the country as possible is covered.

### *Why record the time of day of sightings?*

The time of day when journeys are undertaken may influence the likelihood of mammals being seen. If we know the times of sightings, we can adjust for this possible effect when analysing the data.

### *Why only journeys of 20 miles or more?*

Shorter journeys are more likely to record no sightings than are longer ones, and these 'negative' records can be difficult to analyse. Restricting surveys to routes of 20 miles or more ensures that the proportion of those with no sightings is a minimum.

### *Why can't I record along the same route more than once in thirty days?*

This ensures that each animal is not recorded more than once.

## Health and Safety

Thank you for offering to help us with this survey. As a charity, PTES depends on your support to perform its work. However, as a small organisation we cannot give training on health and safety to every volunteer. Whilst we endeavour to provide up-to-date information and general guidelines, only you will be best placed to judge whether any particular circumstances are safe. If you feel that by joining in you will be placing either yourself or anyone else in danger, or you have any other concerns, please do not do so. We hope that you take part and thereby help increase our knowledge of mammal populations in the UK, but please remember that you are not obliged to do so. If you have any queries at all, please contact us during office hours on 020 7498 4533 or by email at: [mor@ptes.org](mailto:mor@ptes.org) and we will respond as soon as possible. If you become aware of any particular risks while carrying out the survey, we would be grateful to know of them to include in future advice.

Volunteering should be fun and we do hope that you will enjoy helping us in this important work.

## The Tracking Mammals Partnership

PTES is a member of the Tracking Mammals Partnership, a group of twenty-five organisations that carry out mammal surveys in the UK. By working together, surveys can be made more effective and will provide an overall picture of how many of Britain's mammal species are faring. Information about the Partnership and other mammal surveys is available at <http://www.trackingmammals.org>.