

People's Trust for Endangered Species
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people's trust for
endangered species
mammals

MTRACKING
Mammals
PARTNERSHIP

July 2008

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 findings to date.

Each year, *Mammals on Roads* draws upon the efforts of hundreds of volunteers nationwide and it is to new and longstanding volunteers alike that we turn again this year. The many thousands of records collected each year allow long-term changes in some of Britain's mammal populations to be followed, and by doing so, feed into efforts to better understand and conserve these species. 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 journey 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.

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 to any commercial organisation.

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.

Please take care on the roads.

Yours sincerely,



David Wembridge
National Mammal Surveys Co-ordinator

Health and Safety

Thank you for offering to help us with this survey. As a charity, MTUK 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 5262 or by email at: MoR@mtuk.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.

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.

Could grid references be used instead of recording place names and counties?

Most of us do not have detailed maps covering the entire length of journeys (standard road atlases are not detailed enough to work out accurate enough grid references). It would also be very cumbersome and time consuming to look up grid references for each ten-mile waypoint and sighting. This is why we ask for place names and counties to be recorded. These are used in a series of computer programs 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 have no sightings than longer ones, and restricting surveys to routes of 20 miles or more ensures the proportion of surveys with no sightings is truly representative.

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

This ensures that each animal is recorded only once and avoids duplication.

The Tracking Mammals Partnership

MTUK is a member of the Tracking Mammals Partnership, a group of twenty-five organisations that carry out mammal surveys around the country. 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>.