

Mammal streak Sweden 2025

The new year has just begun, it's cold and grey (at least if you live in Northern Europe), no planned exotic mammal trip to look forward to, and you've already seen all the animals that occur in your area. That's when life as a mammal watcher isn't that much fun. A way to bring life back to your mammal watching can be to do a streak, a mammal streak. Runners and birdwatchers have long engaged in streaks, running a mile a day or spotting a new bird species each day.

Last year I tried doing a mammal streak in Sweden. It isn't the most species-rich country in the world, and with our total of about 75 mammal species (including occasional whales and bats), I thought a reasonable level of ambition was to see or hear a new species each week and see how long I could keep the streak alive. The rules (my own) were that I could only "streak" one species per week. If I saw two new species during the same week, I could only count one of them. The second one I had to try to find once more another week. Suddenly, all the common and "seen-thousand-times-before-species" became very interesting.

The year started out well, the species of the first week was **moose**. The second week was a boring snow-backlash-week and I had to settle for a simple red squirrel. In week number three, I visited a friend who happened to live right in a **wolf** territory, and after a few dark nightly hours we heard the whole pack howl. The fourth species was the **western barbastelle** during a winter count of hibernating bats. The next, the fifth species, was a real stroke of luck—a **common dolphin** suddenly appeared in Gothenburg's harbour. And so, the weeks rolled on, and new mammals were gradually added to the streak list. I thought I might make it to summer, around week 25. But during the spring and summer, I did three different week-long trips to Croatia, and to avoid ending "the streak" just because I wasn't in Sweden, I decided to allow three Croatian mammals on the list. Since you are "competing" against yourself, it's okay to design the rules as you wish 😊.

To be able to maintain a mammal streak for a longer time it's crucial "save" the easy-to-see species as long as possible, so that you can "use" them at the end when it starts to be really hard to find anything new. To find a **pine marten** or a **polecat** in Sweden can require several weeks of searching and quit a lot of luck, therefore it's good to still have easy ones like **red fox**, **roe deer**, or **bank vole** to tick if you don't succeed with your target species in a certain week.

Mammal streaking may seem rather silly. Why make it more complicated and harder by trying to see a mammal during a particular week? The thing with streaks is that you force yourself to go out mammalwatching every week, even when it's boring, the rain pours down or you only long for the couch. But by being out in the field so many hours, you also get loads of amazing wildlife and nature experiences, both the target species but also all the "just-by-chance observations". After hard work, many nights with the thermal, and a fair bit of luck, it was suddenly November and the streak was still alive. But now it was starting to get really difficult to find more targeted mammals. Despite intensive searching for a living **mole**, **pine marten**, **otter**, or a **weasel** (mustelids are really hard to spot on demand), I never managed to find them. The streak now relied only on "saved" common species which were ticked off quite quickly. Week 50 became the first week without seeing a new mammal, and a **European hare** (perhaps the easiest mammal to spot in Sweden) seen on Sunday, December 7 in week 49, became the last species in the streak.

For those of you who want to watch mammals at home in a new, a bit silly but fun and challenging way, I can really recommend doing a mammal streak. You set your own level of ambition depending on how challenging you want it to be and how many mammals are available where you're doing it. In northern Europe, I think one species per week is quite reasonable. If you streak in Borneo, maybe five, six or even seven species per week suits better

Good luck and a happy new mammal year!

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Some pictures from the year.



Wester barbastell, Karlsborg, Sweden 2025-01-24.



Common dolphin, Gothenburg's harbour 2025-01-30.



Natteri's bat, Lungnås, Sweden 2025-02-22.



Harvest mouse, Falköping, Sweden 2025-09-06



Northern birch mouse, Falköping, Sweden, 2025-07-30

My Mammal streak list 2025

| Species | Scientific name | Week | Country |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|---------|
| Moose | <i>Alces alces</i> | 1 | Sweden |
| Red squirrel | <i>Sciurus vulgaris</i> | 2 | Sweden |
| Wolf | <i>Canis lupus</i> | 3 | Sweden |
| Western Barbastelle | <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> | 4 | Sweden |
| Common dolphin | <i>Delphinus delphis</i> | 5 | Sweden |
| Mountain hare | <i>Lepus timidus</i> | 6 | Sweden |
| Reindeer | <i>Rangifer tarandus</i> | 7 | Sweden |
| Nattereri's bat | <i>Myotis nattereri</i> | 8 | Sweden |
| Wild boar | <i>Sus scrofa</i> | 9 | Sweden |
| Fallow deer | <i>Dama dama</i> | 10 | Sweden |
| Common shrew | <i>Sorex araneus</i> | 11 | Sweden |
| Harbour seal | <i>Phoca vitulina</i> | 12 | Sweden |
| Bank vole | <i>Clethrionomys glareolus</i> | 13 | Sweden |
| Field vole | <i>Microtus agrestis</i> | 14 | Sweden |
| American mink | <i>Mustela vison</i> | 15 | Sweden |
| Southern White-Breasted Hedgehog | <i>Erinaceus concolor</i> | 16 | Croatia |
| Red fox | <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> | 17 | Sweden |
| Stoat | <i>Mustela erminea</i> | 18 | Sweden |
| European polecat | <i>Mustela putorius</i> | 19 | Sweden |
| Daubenton's bat | <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> | 20 | Sweden |
| Yellow-necked mouse | <i>Apodemus flavicollis</i> | 21 | Sweden |
| Water vole | <i>Arvicola terrestris</i> | 22 | Sweden |
| Eurasian pygmy shrew | <i>Sorex minutus</i> | 23 | Sweden |
| European rabbit | <i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i> | 24 | Sweden |
| Stone marten | <i>Martes foina</i> | 25 | Croatia |
| Edible dormouse | <i>Glis glis</i> | 26 | Croatia |
| Noctule | <i>Nyctalus noctula</i> | 27 | Sweden |
| Soprano pipistrell | <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> | 28 | Sweden |
| Harves mouse | <i>Micromys minutus</i> | 29 | Sweden |
| Northern birch mouse | <i>Sicista betulina</i> | 30 | Sweden |
| Grey seal | <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> | 31 | Sweden |
| Hedgehog | <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i> | 32 | Sweden |
| Grey-sided vole | <i>Clethrionomys rufocanarius</i> | 33 | Sweden |
| European badger | <i>Meles meles</i> | 35 | Sweden |
| Harbour Porpoise | <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> | 36 | Sweden |
| Red deer | <i>Cervus elaphus</i> | 37 | Sweden |
| Water shrew | <i>Neomys fodiens</i> | 38 | Sweden |
| Dormouse | <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i> | 39 | Sweden |
| European beaver | <i>Castor fiber</i> | 40 | Sweden |
| Nathusius pipistrell | <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i> | 41 | Sweden |
| Wood lemming | <i>Myopus schisticolor</i> | 42 | Sweden |
| Wood mouse | <i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i> | 43 | Sweden |
| Brown long-eared bat | <i>Plecotus auritus</i> | 44 | Sweden |
| Parti-coloured bat | <i>Vespertilio murinus</i> | 45 | Sweden |
| Brown rat | <i>Rattus norvegicus</i> | 46 | Sweden |
| Roe deer | <i>Capreolus capreolus</i> | 47 | Sweden |
| Nothern bat | <i>Eptesicus nilssoni</i> | 48 | Sweden |
| European hare | <i>Lepus europaeus</i> | 49 | Sweden |