

Hampshire – Small Mammal Days

Naturetrek Tour Report

September & October 2020



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Friday 11th September

The morning started with us meeting at the pub for our introductions, before we slowly moved off up the footpath alongside the reserve where we looked for feeding signs of some of the resident mammals.

Cutting into the reserve and the more open scrubby areas of the site, Robins were singing and several migrant Chiffchaff and Blackcap were moving round. The Council were on the reserve doing some scrub management on the Dogwood.

Heading into the first area which was made of thicker grass mixed with Greater Horsetail with Hawthorn, Oak and Dogwood scrub where we checked a round of traps. The traps being used were a combination of Longworth humane traps which were stocked with a bedding of straw, dried meal worms, mixed bird seed and of course Whiskers cat food (very particular small mammals on the Mill field!) and Sherman traps baited with seed. In this area we managed to trap a Wood Mouse.

We moved on down through the scrubby grassland which is made up of a mixture of Hawthorn, Dogwood, Blackthorn, Oak and Bramble with the odd Apple tree. Overhead the occasional Skylark and Meadow Pipit flew by.

The next areas we headed to were on the flood plain, the first being an area of lush, wet grassland with occasional areas of rush edged by the woodland. The other the other side of the stream was a mixture of reeds, rush and long grass and both areas held a number of Longworth and Sherman traps which proved very fruitful with another Wood Mouse, three Bank Vole including a 5 gram youngster, one Short-tailed Vole and a Yellow-necked Mouse. This record was particularly interesting as this species is rarely recorded outside of the woods so over all a very good trapping session. Between the two trapping areas we walked over the higher meadow which is an area of managed grassland where the local Goldfinch were vocal along the edge of the stream, while the local Red Kites drifted overhead with one or two Common Buzzards. Plant wise Devils Bit Scabious was flowering in the edge.

Once we finished checking the trap's we headed round the edge of the flood plain where we found signs that Harvest Mouse had been feeding on the Timothy grass. Amongst the wet grassland we did also note Rousell's Bush Cricket and Meadow Grasshopper as well as the stunning Wasp Spider that was having a particularly good year on the reserve, as well as Common Darter. We headed round into the woodland to check the first set of Dormouse boxes where we found the start of a Dormouse nest in one of the boxes and several mouse nests, while on the ground the group searched for feeding signs of small mammals, with plenty of signs of voles, mice and Squirrel and one or two Dormouse nuts. We headed back to the pub for a spot of lunch.

After lunch we took a wander along the river looking for signs of small mammals and saw the stunning Tythe Barn with its local Jackdaws sitting around, while on the old walls we saw Wall Bedstraw. Wandering back, as we reached the pub a Water Shrew was calling down by the bridge but sadly couldn't be seen. Heading back down the reserve we found Small Copper butterfly feeding on the Fleabane and Ragwort. We re-checked the traps but sadly there were no takers so we headed back round into the woods to try another line of boxes, spotting a Muntjac as we entered the wood.

We entered an area which sadly showed evidence that people had been partying during lockdown and not clearing up. The first box had the starts of a Dormouse nest - another little tease from this elusive little beast. Most of the group looked for feeding signs as I checked the second box, which soon changed as they were called over by a slightly excited and nervous me. The group assisted with the large bag for processing as I handled the box. As it emptied into the bag the group soon realised why I was a little excited as a lovely male 15 gram Dormouse appeared.

A very lively individual which was moved to a smaller bag for weighing before being released back to his box that had been put back up with his nest material inside, which he slipped back into on release. Checking the other boxes in the run we headed back out of the woods seeing Rabbit on way out before heading back round through the scrub grassland, seeing signs of where Badger had been feeding in a wasp nest before heading back and saying our farewells on such a lucky trapping day.

Mammals

Water Shrew: Heard

Dormouse: Boxes

Harvest Mouse: feeding signs

Wood Mouse: Two in Longworths

Yellow-necked Mouse: One in Longworth

Bank Vole: Three in Longworths

Short-tailed Vole: One in Longworth

Grey Squirrel: Feeding signs

Rabbit: seen and feeding signs

Muntjac Deer: seen

Fox: Spraints

Badger: Feeding signs

Butterflies

Small Copper

Small White

Green-veined White

Other invertebrates of note

Common Darter

Wasp Spider

Rousell's Bush Cricket

Dark Bush Cricket (heard)

Meadow Grasshopper

Birds

Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus a. argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>

Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybitus</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Common Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i> Heard
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Common Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
Eurasian Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
Northern Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>

Wednesday 16th September

The morning started with us meeting at the pub for our introductions, before we slowly moved off up the footpath alongside the reserve where we looked for feeding signs of some of the mammals on the reserve, while one of the local Grey Squirrels put in an appearance.

Cutting onto the reserve and the more open scrubby areas of the site where Robins were singing. A couple of the local Dunnocks were moving round and calling, while several migrant Chiffchaff and Blackcap were also present.

We headed into the first area which was made up of thicker grass mixed with Greater Horsetail along with Hawthorn, Oak and Dogwood scrub where we checked a round of traps. The traps being used were a combination of Longworth humane traps which were stocked with a bedding of straw, dried mealworms, mixed bird seed and of course Whiskers cat food (very particular small mammals on the Mill field) and Sherman traps baited with seed. The group got off to a good start with a Pygmy Shrew in one of the Longworth traps

Moving on down through the scrub grassland which consists of a mixture of Hawthorn, Dogwood, Blackthorn, Oak and Bramble with the occasional Apple tree, with the most noteworthy plant being Woolly Thistle - mainly over but one or two still flowering. Overhead the occasional Skylark and Meadow Pipit passed by, while one of the local Red Kites moved through.

The next areas we headed to were on the flood plain. The first was an area of lush, wet grassland with occasional areas of rush edged by the woodland. The other side of the stream was a mixture of reeds, rush and long grass, both areas holding a number of Longworth and Sherman traps which had caught a Bank Vole, Short-tailed Vole and another Pygmy Shrew which posed for the group on release. Between the two trapping areas we walked over the higher meadow which is an area of managed grassland where the local Goldfinch and House Sparrows were vocal along the edge of the stream. Devils Bit Scabious was flowering in the edge of the meadow.

Once we finished checking the traps we headed round the edge of the flood plain where we found signs that Harvest Mouse had been feeding on the Timothy grass. Amongst the wet grassland we did also note Rousell's Bush Cricket and Meadow Grasshopper as well as the stunning Wasp Spiders that were having a particularly good year on the reserve plus Four-spot Orb Spider and Common Darter. We headed round into the woodland to check the first set of Dormouse boxes where we found the starts of a Dormouse nest in one of the boxes and several Yellow-necked Mouse nests, with a good sized, beautiful female in one of the boxes. On the way out of the woods the group searched for feeding signs of small mammals with plenty of signs of voles, mice and Squirrel and a couple of Dormouse nuts around on the floor. We headed back to the pub for a spot of lunch.

After lunch we took a wander along the river and around pub back garden looking for signs of small mammals and saw the stunning Tythe Barn with its local Jackdaws sitting around while on the old walls we saw Wall Bedstraw. Heading back down the reserve we found Small Copper butterfly feeding on the Fleabane and Ragwort. We re-checked the traps but sadly there were no takers, so we headed back round into the woods to try another line of boxes in the wood.

We entered an area which sadly showed evidence that people had been partying during lockdown and not clearing up after themselves. The first box had the starts of a Dormouse nest with a couple more nests found in the boxes. We tried another run but sadly no Dormouse but found Deer slots crossing through the wet mud. We finished with a walk round the reserve seeing the feeding signs of badger where it had dug up a wasp nest. Finishing off back at the pub where we said our farewells after a good days surveying.

Mammals

Water Shrew: Feeding signs

Pygmy Shrew: Two in Longworth traps

Dormouse: Nests only

Harvest Mouse: feeding signs

Wood Mouse: Feeding signs

Yellow-necked Mouse: One in boxes

Bank Vole: One in Longworth traps

Short-tailed Vole: One in Longworth traps

Grey Squirrel: several seen and feeding signs

Rabbit: Feeding signs

Muntjac Deer: Slots

Fox: Spraint found

Badger: Feeding signs

Butterflies

Small Copper

Small White

Green-veined White

Other invertebrates of note

Common Darter

Wasp Spider

Four-spot Orb Weaver

Rousell's Bush Cricket

Dark Bush Cricket (heard)

Meadow Grasshopper

Birds

Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus a. argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Great Spotted	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Woodpecker	
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybitus</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>

Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Common Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
Eurasian Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>

Friday 18th September

The morning started by meeting at the pub and doing our introductions, after which we headed up the side track checking for feeding signs of small mammals before heading out on to the reserve, being welcomed by the local Robins singing and a few migrant Blackcaps that were pushing through the reserve. The general make up of the reserve is a scrub grassland with a great mix of scrub including Bramble, Field Maple, Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Dogwood as well as Oak. Heading over to the first traps we went to check them. The traps being used were a combination of Longworth traps which were bedded out with hay for bedding with a mixture of bird seed, dried mealworms and gravied “Whiskers” cat food, and the other traps were Sherman traps loaded with mixed seed as bait. Sadly the traps had not been triggered.

We moved on down the reserve towards the floodplain where the first line of traps were in the edge of the wood and thick grass, while the others were in the edge of the reedbed. Species trapped were two Bank Voles and a Common Shrew. Other things noted included Devil’s Bit Scabious and a few very smart Wasp Spiders, and also feeding signs of Harvest Mouse on some of the grasses. Heading into the woodland we checked the first run of Dormouse boxes where we found signs of Yellow-necked Mice in the boxes with nibbled nuts but no one home, so we headed back to the pub for a spot of lunch.

After lunch we headed along the river and up to the Tythe Barn where on the walls we found Wall Bedstraw, and carrying on through the village we checked the local church yard that has a conservation area. Once again we found feeding signs of Voles and Mice round the Hazels there. Also we noted feeding butterflies with Red Admiral, Peacock, Large White and a Clouded Yellow making a brief appearance.

We headed back through to the reserve to check the traps but unfortunately there were no takers in them. We went round and checked a couple of lines of boxes where we found signs of Dormice in the form of several nests in one of the runs as well as signs of Wood Mice. We headed back out into the reserve where we found old feeding signs of Badger as well as finding a Common Blue flitting round low in the grass. Finally we made our way back to the pub and said our farewells.

Mammals

Water Shrew: Feeding signs

Common Shrew: Longworth traps
 Dormouse: Nests only in boxes
 Harvest Mouse: Feeding signs
 Wood mouse: Feeding signs
 Yellow-necked Mouse: Feeding signs and nests in the boxes
 Bank Vole: Two in Longworths
 Fox: Spraints
 Rabbit: Feeding signs
 Grey Squirrel: seen
 Mole: Hills
 Muntjac Deer: Slots
 Badger: old feeding signs

Butterflies:

Common Blue
 Small Copper
 Small White
 Green-veined White
 Large White
 Clouded Yellow
 Peacock
 Red Admiral

Other invertebrates of note:

16 spot Ladybird
 Wasp Spider
 Four spot Orb Weaver

Birds:

Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas p.platyrhynchos</i>
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus a. argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>

Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Duncock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybitus</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Common Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>

Thursday 24th September

The morning started with the group meeting outside the pub where after our introductions we headed off along the side of the reserve, wandering up the footpath looking for signs of feeding small mammals, and finding signs of Wood Mice, Bank Vole and Grey Squirrel.

Moving out onto the reserve from under the canopy cover to open scrubland reserve where we moved through the mix of scrub Oak, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Field Maple, Dogwood and Bramble. Moving down into the scrubby grassland, we had Blackcaps “tacking” and Chiffchaff calling, while one very bold Grey Squirrel sat up on one of the Telegraph poles. Next we headed into the long grass and Greater Horsetail to the first line of traps along a dead hedge. The traps were a combination of Sherman Traps baited with mixed bird seed and Longworth traps which have a nice hay bedding with mixed bird seed and grained cat food (Whiskers - fussy local animals so only the best!). We started with a Wood Mouse in a Longworth trap.

We moved on through the reserve to the flood plain where we had traps set in several places around the area, the first along the edge of the woodland which produced a lovely Bank Voles.

We headed round to the next traps in the edge of the reeds which turned up a Short-tailed Vole and a stunning surprise with one of the Longworths holding two Harvest Mice (which was the first time the species had ever been caught on a mammal day) which were a male and female. Both were processed and released back into the top of the reeds and willowherbs and the group got to see how agile these little guys truly are. As we wandered round to the other side we noted signs of Harvest Mouse feeding on the grasses round the edges of the flood plain. We reached the next traps where we found a very lively and inquisitive Common Shrew.

Finishing with the traps for the morning we headed up into the woods to do a run of Dormouse boxes. The group looked round for feeding signs and checking the boxes we found signs of mice, soon finding the culprit in the shape of a female Yellow-necked Mouse.

After a great morning we headed back to the pub for a spot of lunch.

Once we had lunch we went and checked the back garden of the pub and we found signs of Water Shrew on the edge of the stream as well as fresh molehills on the lawn. Wandering along the river the group got great views of Grey Heron up in the trees along the edge of the river. Heading back out on to the reserve to check some more Dormouse we found one set with several Dormouse nests but sadly no one home. From heading round the boxes we went back out onto the reserve to check the traps and although there were sadly no more Harvest Mice we did turn up another Bank Vole which was a great finish to the day.

Mammals

Water Shrew: feeding signs

Common Shrew: Longworth trap

Dormouse : Nests only

Harvest Mouse: Two in Longworth traps plus feeding signs

Wood Mouse: Longworth trap

Yellow-necked Mouse: Dormouse boxes

Bank Vole: Two in Longworth Traps

Short-tailed Vole: Longworth trap

Grey Squirrel: seen

Rabbit: feeding signs

Mole: Hills on lawn

Fox: spraints only

Badger: old feeding signs

Muntjac deer: slots in the mud.

Reptiles

Common Lizard

Butterflies:

Small Copper

Small White

Large White

Green-veined White

Birds:

Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas p.platyrhynchos</i>
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus a. argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Duncock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybitus</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Common Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>

Friday 25th September

The morning started with the group meeting outside Barton's Mill pub, before we headed on up the footpath along the side of the reserve, which gave a nice introduction to looking for feeding signs of small mammals. We turned up signs of Grey Squirrel, Bank Vole and Wood Mouse. Drifting out into the reserve we moved through the scrub grassland which is a mix of Oak, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Dogwood and Bramble with long grass. We headed off into the undergrowth to the first set of traps along an old dead hedge. The traps being used were a combination of Sherman traps which were being used as bait traps with mixed bird seed while the other traps being used were Longworth traps which had been lined with hay, and fed with mixed bird seed, dried mealworms and gravied cat food (in this case Whiskers, local small mammals are quite fussy about their cat food!). These traps turned up a Wood Mouse and a cracking Pygmy Shrew which was a great start. In the scrub Firecrest and several Blackcap could be heard.

We moved on down the reserve checking around as we went coming to the flood plain. The first set of traps set along the edge of the wood turned up another Wood Mouse and a Bank Vole. Next we headed round to the next set of traps in the edge of the reedbed, seeing Devil's Bit Scabious in the higher meadow. The traps turned up a Yellow-necked Mouse, Short-tailed Vole and a fantastic Harvest Mouse. The group managed to watch this small but amazing mouse move off through the reeds, showing why they are so tricky to find. As we moved round to the other side of the floodplain to check the last set of traps we noted signs of where Harvest Mouse had been feeding on the grasses. These traps didn't turn up anything but considering the catch we had already achieved, we couldn't really complain. We headed up into the woods to check a line of boxes where we found a Dormouse nest and several Yellow-necked Mouse nests but sadly no-one home. We headed back for a spot of lunch at the pub.

After lunch we wandered round to the pub's back garden where we looked round for signs of some of the local mammals. The first things noted were the mole hills and then the harder to notice paddled down area of mud where a Water Shrew had been hunting, with a few droppings present but sadly no shrew. The group also found Common Darter, but even better we found one of the local Kingfishers which sat out on the lake for the whole group to see. We wandered along the Loddon for a look before heading back to the reserve to check some more Dormouse boxes. Checking two lines, both Dormouse and Yellow-necked Mouse nests were found but sadly no occupants. Once finished in the woods we headed back out to the traps for a final check. The floodplain was quiet but the traps in the scrub area turned up trumps with another Bank Vole and the final mammal of the day being another Pygmy Shrew which showed well for the group, giving us a great finish to what had been a fantastic day.

Mammals

Water Shrew: feeding signs

Pygmy Shrew: Two in Longworths

Dormouse: Nests only

Harvest Mouse: One in Longworth and feeding signs

Wood Mouse: Longworth

Yellow-necked Mouse: Longworth

Bank Vole: Two Longworth

Short tailed Vole: Longworth

Grey Squirrel: Seen

Rabbit: Feeding signs

Muntjac Deer: Slots in mud

Badger: old feeding signs

Butterflies:

Small Copper

Dragonflies

Common Darter

Birds:

Mallard	<i>Anas p.platyrhynchos</i>
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus a.argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybitus</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Common Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
Eurasian goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>

Friday 2nd October

The day started with the group meeting by the Barton's Mill Pub on what was the wettest morning of this year's Small Mammal sessions.

We headed up the side footpath searching for feeding signs of small mammals with the main find being Grey Squirrel with the occasional Wood Mouse and Bank Vole nut in the mix as well. Cutting on to the reserve which opened up into a scrubby grassland area with plenty of Bramble and Dewberry, we headed along the track where we could hear the local Robins and Jays with the occasional "tack" from a Blackcap. This area is covered with Field Maple, Oak, Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Dogwood and we left the track and ventured into the undergrowth where we checked the first line of traps in the rough scrub alongside a grown over dead hedge. The traps being used are a combination of Longworth humane traps kitted out with straw for bedding, dried mealworms and mixed bird seed with gravied cat food (Whiskers in this case as the local mammals quite fussy about their cat food!) and Sherman traps with a little mixed bird seed. This run turned up a Wood Mouse in one of the Longworths.

We slowly moved on down the site to check the traps in the flood plain but sadly no luck due to the weather, and in fact the rising water levels led to us removing some of the traps. As we headed round the site and before we went up into the woodland we found a cluster of Buff tip moth caterpillars. We then went to check some of the Dormouse boxes and as we checked round it was evident there was plenty of use by a mouse. As we checked the boxes we came across the culprit which was a beautiful female Yellow-necked Mouse. After processing her we headed back to the dry and a spot of lunch at the pub.

After warming up and drying off a bit we had a check round the pub back garden for signs of mammals where there were obvious signs of Molehills and along the water's edge a small puddled area with droppings which were of a Water Shrew but sadly the culprit was not around. After a look along the River Loddon we went back out on to the Mill field local nature reserve and headed towards another run of boxes, working along the run that was alongside a wet boundary ditch. An area of Hazel that had been laid to allow a corridor under the power lines for Dormice once again produced lots of feeding signs of mice and voles as well as Squirrel while there were Deer slots on the edge the ditch which we identified as being made by Muntjac Deer.

As we checked the boxes we came across one with a nest. Carefully getting the group ready with the bag we emptied the contents in and as we did the contents exploded out with a female Yellow-necked Mouse and her four "teenage" young bounding round in the bag. Once they had calmed down the process of processing them quickly got underway by first catching mum who weighed in at 36 grams then followed by bagging and weighing the youngster - three males and one female. Putting all the material back in the box they were given the chance to go back inside. The next box had a Dormouse nest, but no body home.

We headed round to another run of boxes where we found several Dormouse nests but sadly no occupants, so we headed out of the woods and collected up the traps which not surprisingly had no takers due to the weather deteriorating, so we headed back to the pub to dry out and then said our farewells.

Mammals

Water Shrew: feeding signs

Harvest Mouse: Feeding signs

Wood Mouse: trapped in Longworths

Yellow-necked Mouse: In Dormouse boxes

Dormouse: Nests found in boxes

Moles: Hills

Grey Squirrel : Seen and feeding signs

Rabbit: Feeding signs

Muntjac Deer: Slots found in the mud.

Moths

Bufftip : caterpillars

Cloaked Housemoth

Birds

Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas p.platyrhynchos</i>
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus a.argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybitus</i>
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