
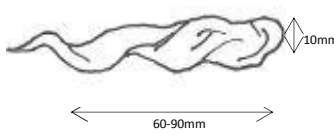

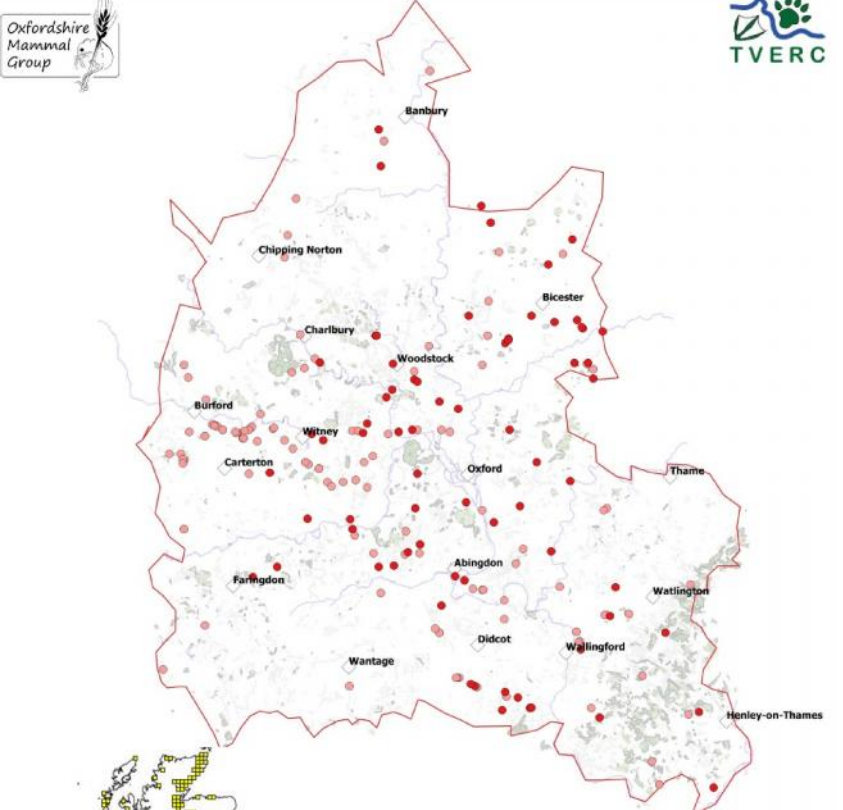





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| European Polecat | <i>Mustela putorius</i> |  <p>Derek Crawley</p> | |
| Description: Blackish guard hairs and yellow under fur on the body, giving 'black and tan' appearance. Banded "bandit" face: pale muzzle, ear tips and 'eyebrows', with a broad dark band around the eye. Darker legs and belly with a short fluffy tail. The size of a ferret. Sexually dimorphic - head-body length of males 33-45cm, females 32-39cm. | | Field Signs Droppings: Droppings deposited singularly and often contain hair or bits of bone. Blackish in colour, with a foul smell (rotten meat). Deposited in prominent places.  | |
| Footprint: Footprints rarely seen. Easy to confuse with mink. 25-40x30-35mm.  | | Diet: Rabbits in summer, rats in winter, will also take birds and frogs. Habitat: Urban and gardens, deciduous woodland, grassland, mixed woodland and arable land. | |
| Lifespan: Up to 5 years. | |  <p>KNOWN RECORDS</p> <p>Oxfordshire:</p> <p>1995-2005 Present = pink</p> <p>2005-2015 Present = red</p> <p>Great Britain and Northern Ireland:</p> <p>1995-2015 Present = yellow</p>  | |
| Breeding: 5-10 young born in May-June. They reach adult size by autumn and breed at one year old. | |   | |
| UK Conservation Status: Native. Common and widespread. Oxfordshire: Common and widespread. Legislation: ♦ Section 41 NERC Act 2006 | | | |
| Don't confuse with: Polecat can hybridise with feral ferrets, resulting in polecat-ferret hybrids which are often (but not always) paler overall with less distinctive markings. | | | |