Oxfordshire Mammal Group

Wood Mouse

Apodemus sylvaticus

Description: Sandy brown fur with pale grey underside and a long tail. Protruding eyes and large ears. Tail dark and hairy. Does not have yellow V-shaped collar across the neck which distinguishes the yellow-necked mouse, but may have a smaller neck-tie of yellow that does not reach all the way around. Head and body length 8-11cm, tail length 7-11cm. Adults 13-27g.

Field Signs

Nest: Often underground but occasionally in nest boxes or tree cavities. When fresh, the nests comprise a loose mass of dead brown leaves that becomes reduced to an untidy carpet in the bottom of a nest box or tree hole.

Hazel nuts: Woodmice leave teeth marks both on inner rim of the nut (like the edge of a pound coin) and also on the surface, around the edge of the hole.

Peter Newbold

Droppings: Rounded in section; usually brown-black but vary with diet. Hard when dry (doesn't crumble). Slight smell of ammonia. Less uniform and regular than voles.

Footprints: Forefoot approximately 10mm, hindfoot up to 20mm.



Diet: Seeds, buds, green plants, fungi, fruits and invertebrates. Will cache food.

Habitat: Woodland, hedgerows, gardens, farmland, grassland and scrub.

Lifespan: Up to 2 years.

Breeding: Litters of 2-11 young from February to October, although can continue overwinter if suitable food sources. Babies born blind and hairless and weigh about 2.8g.

UK Conservation Status: Native. Common and

widespread.

Oxfordshire: Common and widespread. Legislation: Not currently protected.

Don't confuse with:

Harvest mouse: Much smaller than wood mouse. Golden-brown on top with pale grey-white underside.

Yellow-necked mouse: Longitudinal yellow band around neck (main distinguishing feature). Slightly larger than the wood mouse, with proportionately slightly larger eyes and ears. Paler grey underside than wood mouse.

House mouse: Grey-brown fur all over, usually no contrast between top and underside. Wood mice have larger ears.

Dormouse: Orange-yellow coat on top with yellow underside and white on throat.

Voles: Voles have a more rounded muzzle than mice, with smaller eyes and smaller, more subtle ears that are often covered by fur. Mice eyes and ears are large. Voles often have shorter

