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Introduction

This book is a guide to finding and identifying the mammals of Great Britain and Ireland. Its purpose is twofold. Firstly, it presents profiles on every mammal you can encounter in Britain and Ireland – including all the bats, seals and cetaceans recorded up to the end of March 2021, as well as established introduced or reintroduced species, and those exotic species that are known to have bred in the wild within the last fifty years. As well as providing details on identification, the species accounts also present information on sounds, signs, habitat, food, habits, breeding behaviour and population and status – so if you find a mammal anywhere in Britain and Ireland you will have the means to identify it and to find out more about its biology and ecology.

The second purpose of the book is to encourage people to go and look for mammals. At present, the number of mammal-watchers is far fewer than the number of bird-watchers, who must number hundreds of thousands. Although mammal-watching is still something of a niche activity, it is a growing one, as people are increasingly discovering the fascination of mammals and are keen to see them more often. If this book helps, even in a small way, to inspire more people to go mammal-watching, and ideally to contribute information on their distribution or biology, it will have been worth writing.

The Greater White-toothed Shrew is one of the most recent additions to the list of British and Irish mammals, being recorded in Ireland for the first time in 2007, when skulls were found in the regurgitated pellets of Barn Owls and Kestrels.



Index

This index includes the English and *scientific* (in *italics*) names of all the mammals in this book.

Bold text highlights main species accounts.

Brown figures indicate keys or comparison spreads/tables.

Green figures indicate illustrations of tracks and signs.

Italicized figures indicate page(s) on which other photographs appear.

Blue figures relate to the entry in the status and legislation table.

Regular text is used for alternative names, species that are not subject to a full account, and to indicate pages where other information may be found.

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