



# Badgers and Other Mammals Group Newsletter

*Issue 1  
August 2009*

## Annual Meeting



This year we are going to Dunwich where we shall be updating our skills on otters and water voles in the reedbeds and grazing marshes. Also finding out about the pony grazing initiative in the forest, looking for deer and maybe even something about badgers!

Put the date in your diary: **Saturday  
7th November 2009**

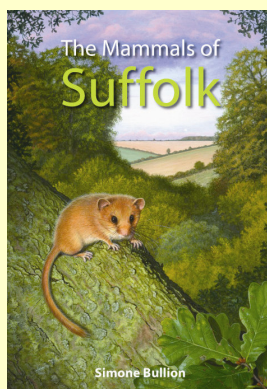
## The Mammals of Suffolk

By Simone Bullion

A comprehensive, illustrated account of the status and history of mammals in the county of Suffolk

£20 -All proceeds go to Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the Suffolk Naturalists' Society

Ring 01473 890089



Its been a very busy year so far regarding Suffolk Badgers. After a very quiet January, badger casualties suddenly jumped up with 25 in February, and then in March, we had a new monthly recorded high of 32 deaths. To date we have had a total of 115 which unfortunately is looking like we are going to hit an all time high for reported casualties. There is some good news to be taken from these statistics in that people are becoming increasingly aware of the need to report any sightings and this has in turn lead us to having had reported deaths in areas previously unknown to be occupied by badgers. This gives our dedicated band of surveyors something of a challenge in following up and locating and recording new setts. This year alone we have already had 35 new setts recorded compared to 18 in total for 2008. New members to the Suffolk Badger and Other Mammals Group are continuing to show an interest in the groups aims and play an active part in protecting Suffolk's wildlife.

If you see a dead badger on the roadside, please let Adrian know:  
cazandade@hotmail.com  
but don't attempt to move it

## Badger Hide Report

Visitors to the hide have been very lucky to see at least three adult badgers making a show on regular occasions.

A considerable amount of activity has taken place to the right of the hide where the badgers have been making use of the alternative entry /exit to the sett. This can be frustrating to some visitors as the badgers occasionally nip off to the back and across the fields without coming to the front of the hide to feast on the peanuts sprinkled by the visitors.

The area supports a varied assortment of wildlife including a fox which uses one of the badger's sett entrances, tawny owls, shrews and rabbits which gives the visitors something to watch while awaiting the arrival of the badgers.

The visits have been fully subscribed for this year; hopefully if the badgers breed then the public will have even more badgers to watch next year!

Judith Last & Matt Fidler

## Suffolk Wildlife Trust Harvest Mouse Project



The harvest mouse (*Micromys minutus*) was once common in lowland England. Its name is developed from the times when many were seen at harvest as a result of disturbance. It has suffered a 70% decline in numbers since the 1970s due to land use changes and habitat loss, and is now listed as a UK biodiversity action plan species.

This new and exciting project has been launched to find out the distribution and population

hotspots of harvest mice in Suffolk. It is one of the first projects of its kind and is only made possible due to the great success of the Barn Owl Project.

Barn Owl Monitors are in the process of collecting owl pellets from their boxes, which will be analysed by volunteers to look for harvest mice remains. The results of this will be used to locate harvest mouse hotspots and record whether particular land use benefits the mice.

The final phase of the project will be to deliver pro-active, site-based landowner advice and training on how to encourage the mice.

As well as finding harvest mice, the project will help identify the presence and distribution of other mammals (eg. water shrew) and also to learn in detail the diet of barn owl at different times of year and in different habitats.

### *Tasty treat has a sting in it's tail!*

The wasps' nest below was unearthed by hungry badgers at the badger hide who got more than they bargained for in an attempt at having a tasty meal of wasp eggs and larvae!



Incidents contravening the 1992 Badger Act have unfortunately increased this year with 3 out of a reported 4 cases still ongoing. Unfortunately it's getting the evidence and proving a history of activity at a sett which is proving to be a stumbling block in getting convictions. If you think that a well known sett near to you is recorded, please drop me a line so that I can confirm that it is actually recorded and that its activity status is as up to date as is reasonably practicable. You never know until its too late when someone could decide to block, gas, or bulldoze your favourite sett!

-Adrian

