



---

PRESS RELEASE

11.01.2021

Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre, Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle

## Hunting for Cumbria's Harvest Mice

The harvest mouse is Britain's tiniest rodent and is extremely elusive. Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre (CBDC) is asking for help to find out where these creatures are living in Cumbria.

In the past the harvest mouse has been found across the county. However, since 2000 it has only been seen in South Cumbria apart from Derek's nest in the north! CBDC is asking wildlife lovers to search in long grass and look for harvest mice nests. The nests look like a ball of loosely woven grass about 5-10cm across.

**John Martin of Cumbria Mammal Group said,** "The harvest mouse lives in nests it builds in tall grasses and tussocks in fields, hedges and in reedbeds. At this time of year, it is possible to find the nests as the vegetation is dying back and leaves have fallen from hedges"

"Look for an area of grassland that has not been mown or disturbed, for example at the bases of hedges and along the edges of minor country roads. Try to spot last summer's nests woven around grass or reed stems or winter nests in grass tussocks at ground level. Carefully part the tussocks with gloved hands to find the low-level nests but be careful as they can contain live mice! If you find a nest please take a photograph and let CBDC know when, where and what you have found. Woodmice, voles and some small birds make nests similar to a harvest mouse; photographs will help distinguish what type of nest it is."

The Atlas of Mammals of Great Britain and Northern Ireland published in March 2020 shows that the harvest mouse has undergone a marked decline over the last 30 years. Some of this may be down to fewer people looking for it.

**Derek Crawley from the Mammal Society told us,** "In counties where training and surveys have been developed numerous records have been forthcoming. The society is happy to help CBDC in any way it can to find this elusive mammal. The Mammal Society is going to hold its own national harvest mouse survey in 2021-22 to establish the true UK distribution of the harvest mouse."

For further information about how to get involved visit CBDC website [www.CBDC.org.uk](http://www.CBDC.org.uk) and follow the links or post your photographs on CBDC's Facebook page.



**END**

NOTES TO EDITORS

**Image:** Harvest Mice photographed by Derek Crawley

**Image Credit:** Copyright Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust

**More information:** [www.cbdc.org.uk/wildlife-in-cumbria/harvest\\_mouse/](http://www.cbdc.org.uk/wildlife-in-cumbria/harvest_mouse/)

### **Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre**

Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre brings together, analyses and shares information on Cumbria's natural history, wildlife sites and habitats for education, research and to help people make sound decisions when planning to develop and manage land sustainably.

Established as the Tullie House Natural History Records Bureau in 1902 Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre is the one-stop-shop for wildlife, biodiversity and geodiversity information for the county and holds 2.4 million biological records. [www.cbdc.org.uk](http://www.cbdc.org.uk)

### **CONTACT**

#### **Harvest Mouse Survey**

**Jayden Glinka**, CBDC and Tullie House Student Placement

E: [javg@tulliehouse.org](mailto:javg@tulliehouse.org)

#### **CBDC**

**Deb Muscat**, Manager, CBDC

E: [manager@CBDC.org.uk](mailto:manager@CBDC.org.uk)



## **Cumbria Mammal Group**

Cumbria Mammal group is an informal group of members some of whom are interested in recording all mammals in Cumbria. The group shares information about Cumbria mammals and what has been seen on its Facebook page.

John Martin is the County verifier for all mammal records, ensuring that every mammal record is accurate before it being submitted to CBDC and the Mammal Society.

### **CONTACT**

Please contact CBDC above to be put in touch with John Martin.

## **The Mammal Society**

The Mammal Society is a British charity devoted to the research and conservation of British mammals. It has a membership of around 2000 mammalogists, ecologists, conservationists, both experts and enthusiasts, all working to develop greater understanding of mammals and the conservation challenges they face. The Society runs national surveys for mammals.

The Mammal Society is also working to address the problem that mammals in the British Isles are severely under-recorded, resulting in a lack of mammal conservation progress. The Mammal Society is determined to overcome this by creating a National Mammal Atlas to provide vital information on mammal distribution and abundance so that informed conservation decisions can be made for species in need. In order to achieve this they are collating national mammal data and records to gather up to date information.

### **CONTACT**

E: [pr@themammalsociety.org](mailto:pr@themammalsociety.org) | T: 02380 010983

## **Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery**

Set in the heart of Carlisle's historic quarter on the border of England and Scotland, the award-winning museum and art gallery is one of the region's most popular cultural attractions. Tullie House has one of the largest purpose-built art galleries in the north of England and hosts exhibitions of regional, national and international importance.



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust is the lead member of the Cumbria Museum Consortium, in partnership with Lakeland Arts in the South Lakes and the Wordsworth Trust in Grasmere. Together, the museums receive core funding from Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation. As well as enabling the museums to care for their varied and unique collections, this funding supports an ambitious programme of exhibitions and activity delivered with and for a wide range of people in the community.

- Winner of InCumbria Award Best Tourism & Hospitality Business 2019
- Winner of The Society of Museum Archaeology Best Exhibition, Display or Interpretation Project Award 2019



- Winner of The Society of Museum Archaeology Best Collections Research Award 2019
- Winner of the Carlisle Living 'Best Team' Award 2019
- Winner of the Cumbria Life 'Exhibition of the Year' Culture Award 2019, for Percy Kelly: Line of Beauty, A Retrospective.
- The Natural Science Collections awarded Designated Status by Arts Council England

Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery has been inspiring visitors for more than 125 years at Castle Street, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA3 8TP

Visitor information: [www.tulliehouse.org.uk](http://www.tulliehouse.org.uk)

## **CONTACT**

Caitlin Olney, Marketing Manager, Tullie House  
M: 07384 817960 | E: [caitlin.olney@tulliehouse.org](mailto:caitlin.olney@tulliehouse.org)