

MGLG Open Day Report.



1 Bernard Baverstock with a keen band of mammal hunters.

The small mammal trapping this year produced an unusually high number of animals for visitors to see.

Probably because the winter was so mild and spring came early, small mammals seem to have had the optimum conditions to increase their numbers. Add to this the gentler impact this year from the grazing cattle on the North shore and I should not have been surprised when we had so many full traps to deal with.

The traps are set for one night with the doors locked open, this gives the animals time to find the traps and food within. Saturday evening the traps are replenished and set to trap, on this evening I had a Pygmy Shrew in one of the still open traps.

Because of the length of time the animals can be left in the traps, I had to make an early visit on the Sunday morning to check they were all fine and top up their food, this took much longer than expected and, after a chat with the bird ringers, I got back to the display area as the first visitors were arriving.

The first trap had not tripped, although something had been eating the food, but the next three contained Bank Vole, Yellow-necked Mouse and Wood Mouse respectively. This set the pattern for the morning.



2 Wood Mouse

Wood mice were the most numerous species, we had 24 individuals, and they ranged from very young juveniles to large breeding males.



3 Bank Vole. Blunt nose and short ears.

Next were the Bank Voles with 7 animals, three of these were juveniles and did not have the bright chestnut colour of the adults.



4 Yellow-necked Mouse. Larger and more lively

Four Yellow-necked mice were trapped, with the one juvenile looking very much like a Wood Mouse but showing the band of colour across its chest that gives it its name.



5 Common Shrew. Long pointed nose.

The last species was Common Shrew, this individual had entered the trap between my early morning check and the public event which shows that shrews are active throughout the day and night, they have such a high metabolism that they need to feed almost constantly

It is good to know that there are lots of small mammals around this year and they will of course help to sustain the Barn Owls through the winter.

BB