

# The Mammals of Barna Woods



## Small Mammals

Small mammals are an important element especially in woodland habitats. Not only do they add to the overall diversity of a site, but they may also act as predators providing top-down pressure on the invertebrate communities, thereby leading to different communities than would be present were they not there. They may also act as prey species for predatory birds.



A pygmy shrew *Sorex minutus* (photo courtesy of Niamh Quinn)

Pygmy shrews are small insectivorous mammals with a very high metabolic rate – they, therefore, require feeding every two hours. They occur in woodland habitats, particularly those with good ground cover.



A humane Longworth small mammal trap. Each trap was baited with oats (for the wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus*) and with minced beef (for the pygmy shrew *Sorex minutus*).



Fish remains likely killed by otter on mammal path

### The wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus*

Wood mice are herbivorous and usually prefer hedgerows or woodlands with good ground cover. They do not hibernate and they are not threatened or rare.

## Tracks and Trails of larger mammals...

Signs of badger, otter and fox have been recorded at Barna Wood.



Badger rooting traces



An active badger sett



A badger dung pit



Possible otter track.



Remains of small wader on animal track leading from the shore. The crushed bone and chewed appearance are indicative of fox.

### Bats in Barna Woods....

The Bats were surveyed using a Anabat SD-1 recording detector. This was placed at three different locations throughout the wood, over 3 nights and provides an indication of the species using the wood.



### Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri*

Natterer's Bat is a true forest bat, preferring to forage in mature woodland, or along tree-lined river corridors. Summer roosts are usually in old stone buildings, but they can also be holes in large trees, or in crevices in walls, bridges and tunnels. One colony often has a number of roost sites that it uses in turn during the summer. Winter roost sites are usually in underground sites like caves, icehouses or tunnels, but tree holes and bat boxes can also be used.



### Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*

The species is often found in broadleaved woodland, at woodland edges and by water. This is the commonest bat species in the west of Ireland, although the Common Pipistrelle is the most common in the east.