



# Mercia Marinas Mammal group Newsletter

May 2017

Issue 5

## HEDGEHOGS

Last month we reported that we had had no luck with proving that there were Hedgehogs on site despite Footprint traps and reports of sightings. Well since then we had the camera out on the footprint trap in the woodland by FB1. Firstly, we had a cheeky Wood Mouse going into the trap, picking up a piece of bait and making off with it, then returning for another piece until he had removed all of it. Then, a Hedgehog ambled into view, snuffled around in the leaf litter and walked off. Hurrah!! Proof at last.



The Hedgehog Preservation Group, when reported to, were sure that if we had one, there would be others.

This proved to be the case as we have now had sightings from other areas of the Marina as well as more around FB1. Excellent news indeed.

## WHAT ELSE?

The camera trap was also elsewhere on the Marina where the second footprint trap was located. No Hedgehogs captured this time. But what a surprise! A badger came into view, not interested in the trap, but busy poking around the leaves. This was totally unexpected as there have been no reports of Badger here at all. Since then it has been recorded on the camera three times in one night going backwards and forwards at hourly intervals. It would seem that the wood is on its regular run. Badgers usually stick to the same route but the ground is not suitable for tracking it on. However, we have had reports that a Badger has been seen crossing the main road (not substantiated at the moment).

Another surprise was a Fox casually ambling by then stopping to have a look at the camera. We know Foxes

have been seen here for some time but we have never been able to catch a sight before.

This is really good news for our wildlife. As we are not actively feeding them it would seem to indicate that we have a good balance of prey and predator, which is how nature should be. Left alone they cause no harm, and allows us the rare privilege of living so close to nature.



## OTHER REPORTS

Our intrepid Mammal Group members have been at it again, well Nigel Hunt really. He presented us with a small package in a dog poo bag, slightly worried at this stage. However, it turned out to be a sadly, deceased Wood Mouse found on the new path to FB2. Not a mark on it so probably died of natural causes. How can we be sure it was Wood Mouse? Well, length of tail is a good identifier. Longer than a House Mouse, and this



was particularly long. Also, note the very large ears. Nigel, not content with this, then let us



know that he had seen some interesting poo by the steps over the canal. He was right. Neil went to look, and subsequently collected, what we are fairly certain is Otter.

It smells sweet and fragrant, has lots of fish scales and bones and is crumbly. All excellent indicators.

We can only say 'WHAT A DIFFERENCE A MONTH MAKES'