

# The Dormouse Monitor

## Newsletter of the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme

Welcome to the autumn edition of *The Dormouse Monitor*. Thanks to all of you who sent in bodies of dead dormice to Ghislaine at Paignton Zoo and faecal samples to Jessica at London Zoo. We hope to bring you news of their findings as soon as we can.

Now is the time to send in all the results of your box checking this year, if you haven't already done so. The sooner we get them, the sooner we can get them onto the database, giving Paul and Fiona plenty of time to analyse them. We then have a better chance of reporting back to you in the spring edition with a summary of the overall picture for the year.


The number of people on the mailing list to

receive *The Dormouse Monitor* is rising all the time. We always have a few extra copies, so call Susan on 020 7498 4533 or email [susan@ptes.org](mailto:susan@ptes.org), if someone you know would like to receive one. We would especially like the landowners of the property you work on to get one, too. If you know that they are not on the list and you think they might like to be, give us a call. Would you like more than one copy, so that you can distribute them among your group of volunteers?

Have you any news you would like to share with other monitors? If so, do let us know and we'll print it in the next edition. It's your newsletter, so please keep in touch.


### 2002 Records Reminder



All through the dormouse's active period we hope you have been out in the field doggedly checking thousands upon thousands of dormouse nestboxes collecting data for the national database. Now, it's over to us to enter all that valuable information onto the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme database. 

So please send all your records, whether you found dormice or not, as soon as you can to:

Susan Sharafi  
PTES  
15 Cloisters House  
8 Battersea Park Road  
London SW8 4BG 

Every piece of data you collect is vital; it continues to help us to understand the changing status of dormice in Britain. We can then all make sure that we are doing all we can to help the dormice themselves. 





### 2002 Dormouse Releases

As part of the ongoing reintroduction programme, dormice were released into two woodlands this summer. The first release took place at a very picturesque site in the Peak District, owned by the National Trust. This woodland, although ideal for dormice, is on a steep hillside in a rather inaccessible spot, so isn't ideal for the volunteers whose job it was to regularly feed the animals. We are extremely grateful to them for their perseverance at what seemed, at times, a truly impossible task.

The other site was in Lincolnshire, a county not known for its steep hillsides, for which the volunteers were very grateful. A full report on this release appears below.

#### Finding sites in future

Every year, it's difficult to find suitable sites for reintroductions, which means that sometimes all the work on the ground, including recruiting the team of volunteers and getting the necessary permissions from landowners, has to be done in a very short space of time at the last minute. Paul Bright has always been very keen to look much further ahead and actually chose reintroduction sites, perhaps up to ten years, in advance. Not only does this make all the planning easier, but it also means that, if necessary, there's time to modify site management plans to make sure they meet all the necessary criteria as closely as possible.



Release day dawns for the dormice being reintroduced to the Lincolnshire site. Malcolm sets up the cages (below) in preparation for their new residents, with the help of a team of local volunteers. The dormice (left) spent 10 days in the cages acclimatising to their new woodland home.

confusion of passing motorists, they were transferred to my trusty car, for the long journey to Lincolnshire. Despite being unsure of the journey time, and a lorry load of spilt glue closing the A1, we all arrived safely and only a little late. The location of the site wasn't as secret as I had been expecting, however, as we were greeted by about 40 people in the car park, all looking very expectant! The reintroduction of dormice into Lincolnshire had clearly attracted some interest. There were two TV crews, local radio and newspaper reporters, as well as the volunteers who would be looking after the dormice during and after the release. Susan and Clare from PTES, who had coordinated the release, were there, too, to field the media questions along with representatives from the local Wildlife Trust, Forest Enterprise and Jim Alexander whose previous reintroduction experience later proved invaluable.

Once I had opened the door of the car I had my first experience of dealing with the eager press as they all naturally clamoured for the best shots and interviews. Once in the wood, they got their chance and, as I was being interviewed for local radio, the TV crews filmed nestboxes being carried along the path. The first

In order to do this, English Nature is funding several months work based at Royal Holloway, University of London, this autumn. By next spring we should have a very good idea, quite literally, of where we are going next.



### Lincolnshire Reintroduction

This July saw the reintroduction of dormice to Lincolnshire, and, as a welcome distraction from my MSc at Royal Holloway studying our other species of dormouse, the edible dormouse, I was called upon to take action on the day.

The day began in the early hours as the 32 dormice were paired and packed in 16 nestboxes by Julian at Paignton Zoo before being driven to a meeting point near the M25. It was here that, much to the

