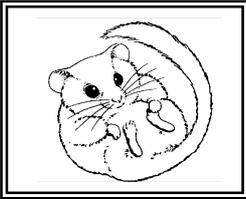


WARWICKSHIRE DORMOUSE CONSERVATION GROUP  
'providing homes for dormice'



Newsletter No1 December 2009



**WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT WARWICKSHIRE'S DORMICE** - the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) records eight sites (see [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/biodiversity](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/biodiversity)) but we know there are more, including a recent record of four hibernating individuals and a reintroduction by People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) in June 2009 '*somewhere in Warwickshire*' (see article attached to email).

**AIMS OF THE GROUP** – to support the objectives and targets of the Common Dormouse Action Plan by enabling some of our members to carry out fieldwork involving:

- a) assisting with the '*key monitoring of populations at all known sites*'.
- b) carrying out '*surveys of woodlands not covered by the 1999/2000 surveys*' for quality of habitat and the presence of dormice, with a view to recommending a site or sites for further reintroductions by PTES.
- c) providing advice on the '*active woodland management of all known sites*' and the management of new sites.

**WHO OUR MEMBERS ARE.** Many thanks for all the information you sent me. In order to keep the newsletter compact I have omitted some detail and members' addresses; please refer to my email if you need to contact anyone.

- **Eddie Asbery** is Woodland Project Officer for the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and, as lead officer for the Princethorpe Project, has a keen interest in the group since the dormouse is a focus species. He works part-time so cannot commit to site visits and recording in woodlands outside his project area but is keen to gather as much data as he can about the current status of dormice therein and should be able to commit some time to this.
- **Freddy Brookes** works in the Ecological consultancy sector for Parkwood, based just outside Stratford-upon-Avon. Although not licensed to disturb/handle, he has done some dormouse surveying using tubes and boxes and will certainly bring lots of enthusiasm.
- **Coventry Parks Service Rangers** aim to promote Coventry's parks and open spaces to the wider public by encouraging involvement and participation, organising free open access activities and working with schools, residents' groups and other local organisations. Our contact with them is **Michelle Tyrntania**.
- **Coventry City Rangers** cover any council-owned parks and open spaces. Our contact with them is **Corinne Muir**.
- **John Daw** has been working for Middlemarch Environmental for 2 years as an ecological consultant. He has past experience of working with dormice and received his handling licence from working at Exmoor National Park. He carried out a survey in Brandon Wood in 2008 but did not find any dormice; he has also been looking for the tell-tale hazel nut shells in various woods with past records of dormice (no success yet though). He would be very interested in helping undertake nest box surveys.
- **Stacey Dunn** is a Coventry University student particularly interested in the ecology of dormice and understanding why they live outside the supposed perfect habitat. She would like to work towards a licence and will carry out research for a dissertation reviewing the status of dormice in Warwickshire and recommending potential sites for more reintroductions.
- **Warwickshire Museum Field Services** – all the staff of the Ecology Unit, which includes the Warwickshire Biological Record Centre (WBRC), are members. The unit holds the dormouse records and can be contacted for information and advice; our contact for them is **Michelle Eaton**.
- **Richard Hayden** is a Wildlife & Conservation Ranger for the Forestry Commission. He has been monitoring the dormouse in Weston & Waverly Wood since undertaking a dormouse training course in May 2000 with the Somerset Wildlife Trust, obtaining his licence shortly after.
- **Bernie Higgins** is ecologist for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. She would like to help with fieldwork and get a handling licence too.

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### 'providing homes for dormice'

- **Keith Higginson** is Country Parks Manager for Warwickshire. He was very much involved with a reintroduction programme to Bubbenhall Wood in 1998.
- **Andrew Ireland** is the Woodland Manager for the Friends of Brandon Wood, a group very supportive of efforts to promote the spread of dormice and hoping for signs of them in their 73ha wood, but none so far. The group is currently coppicing a neglected 1ha of hazels, the start of a rotational coppicing plan which will slowly improve conditions to attract dormice.
- **Lisa Kerlake** has a handling licence so is happy to help where she can, other commitments permitting. She also has a possible source of dormouse nest boxes which are both better made and cheaper than the commercially available type (her dad makes them!).
- **Jennie Lloyd** has a keen interest in mammals and has been involved in mammal recording in Birmingham, Warwickshire and more recently Derby. She is currently employed by the National Trust at Calke Abbey, South Derbyshire but, as secretary of the study group for Sutton Park NNR, she records various aspects of wildlife in the Warwickshire countryside and would love to be included in this project.
- **Helen Miller** (CEnv, MIEEM) has been a professional ecologist for over 10 years, specialising in woodland ecosystems, green infrastructure and ecological interpretation. She is fully licensed (England and Wales) for dormouse handling and has been regularly carrying out assessments and surveys for a number of years.
- **Ruth Moffatt** was LBAP coordinator from 2003-8 and now works from home, volunteering for various organisations. She is aiming to make 200 nest tubes out of Tetrapak cartons to test for the presence of dormice in woodlands that have been identified as potential dormice sites, as a precursor to installing nest boxes.
- **David Moffatt** has always helped Ruth to help wildlife!
- **Jane O'Dell** is Biological Assistant at the Warwickshire Museum. As warden of Oldberrow church she manages the churchyard as a Local Wildlife Site, making it the 'finest in Warwickshire'.
- **Don Scott** is a Forestry and Ecology graduate with a desire to specialise in forest ecology. He is looking to broaden his experience of dormouse surveys and assist in expanding their populations in Warwickshire.
- **Toby Woodhams** maintains the mammal records for the WBRC.
- **Lisa Worledge** is the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Co-ordinator for Warwickshire. Her interest in dormice relates to their importance as a BAP species and she is keen to support their re-establishment across the county. She is currently studying part-time towards an MSc in Biological Recording and has some experience of protected species and habitat surveys.
- **Vicky Worrall** works at Hartshill Hayes. She has attended a course on coppicing in Worcestershire that really sparked off her interest in old styles of woodland management and with that, the species it supported so well especially dormice. She only works part-time and would be very interested in participating in the dormouse project.

#### THINGS TO DO THIS WINTER

- Support the PTES **Third Great Nut Hunt** – click on the link: [www.greatnuthunt.co.uk](http://www.greatnuthunt.co.uk) for more information. If you find evidence of dormice, tell Stacey Dunn (0781 780 7234)
- Collect 100 Tetrapak juice cartons – please wash, screw the top back on and leave at the Ecology Field Services, The Butts, Warwick, for Ruth (01926 492635).
- Identify one or more woodlands suitable for installing nest tubes. Contact Stacey (0781 780 7234) if you have any information on the potential of sites or records of dormice.

#### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS IN 2010

- Assist with path cutting and resiting 100 nest boxes at the new release site (close to jn.3 M42 motorway/Tanworth in Arden) on Sun. Jan.17<sup>th</sup>, from 9.30–12.30. **NUMBERS LIMITED TO 8 SO TELL RUTH ASAP** (Tel. 01926 492635) **TO JOIN THIS FIRST MEETING OF THE GROUP!**
- Install 200 nest tubes in March/April at two or more potential dormouse sites – we can make these meetings weekdays or weekend days to suit more members.
- Help with nest box checking at the new release site, monthly from May onwards.