



# The Dormouse Monitor

Newsletter of the  
National Dormouse Monitoring Programme  
October 2001

We hope you enjoyed reading the April edition of *The Dormouse Monitor*. The purpose of the autumn issue is to up-date you on some of this year's activities on the dormouse front, but mainly, it has to be said, to remind you to send in all your data from this year's checks as promptly as you possibly can. It takes time for Susan at PTES to enter all the data on the computer before it can be analysed by Paul Bright and Fiona Sanderson at Royal Holloway. The sooner all the work can begin the greater the chances we shall be able to report back to you in April with all the results.

Lots of people have reported to us that numbers of dormice found at checks early in the year were lower than usual. We, too, found that at our June check in Bridesford Woods on the Isle of Wight we found only 4 dormice in the boxes (one of which was unfortunately found dead in a box) while the previous year we had found 12. Our spirits were raised in September, when we found 42! It will be interesting to see if this picture is reflected at more monitoring sites throughout the country.

As we hope you've noticed, the Great Nut Hunt that was run for the first time in 1993 organised by English Nature, is being run again this year and we've included a Great Nut Hunt pack with the newsletter. Perhaps you would show it to your families and friends and encourage others to join in. If they would like to join in, they can look at the website

[www.greatnuthunt.org.uk](http://www.greatnuthunt.org.uk) to order a pack, or they can call us on 020 7498 4533.

The Chief Nutter himself (alias Dr Pat Morris) promises to check all nuts sent in and everyone who submits nuts for his inspection will receive a card confirming which species opened their particular shells.



Pat Morris

The Chief Nutter

If you have news or would like to write a short article about the site you are monitoring for the spring edition of *The Dormouse Monitor* we would be very pleased to receive it. Please may we have all contributions by the end of February 2002.

## 2001 RECORDS REMINDER

Please can all 2001 completed recording forms be returned to Dr Paul Bright, School of Biological Sciences, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2001.

©October 2001 Valerie Keeble & Susan Sharafi, PTES, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG. 020 7498 4533  
The National Dormouse Monitoring Programme is funded by English Nature and the People's Trust for Endangered Species.  
The scientific work is based at Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX and the organisation is carried out by PTES. *The Dormouse Monitor* is compiled by Valerie Keeble & Susan Sharafi.

## Dormouse Re-introductions 2001

This year, dormice were re-introduced to two Forest Enterprise woods; one in Bedfordshire and the other in Cambridgeshire. You may remember that the very first re-introduction was carried out in Cambridgeshire back in 1993.

### News from Bedfordshire

David Anderson, Bedfordshire Dormouse Group Chairman, reports. "Due to the restrictions caused by Foot & Mouth one of the planned 2001 release sites was lost. A suitable site in Bedfordshire was proposed and, in the course of two very short weeks, the project went from zero to 30 animals on site.

14 pre-release cages were established on a 100 metre grid. Each pre-release cage held a pair of dormice, except two cages that had one male and two females due to a mix up with one dormouse that was female rather than the expected male!

Monitoring is now on-going by checking the colonisation of the area using 200 boxes. In September four groups of young were seen, one of which was of eight well grown animals. Food is still being provided so the prospect of a good body weight population being fit for hibernation looks good. The project has involved a lot of work by a lot of people but the results so far are very promising."

### News from Cambridgeshire

The release at this site was covered by the BBC for the national news. Neil Bemment from Paignton Zoo was filmed arriving with the dormice and carrying them to the pre-release sites in the wood.

One dormouse, during its first weeks of freedom had a narrow escape when it fell down a world war two drainage hole and had to be rescued by the local herpetologist who was out looking for snakes! On the first box check in September, Jim Alexander and his team from Forest Enterprise found nine dormice in the boxes this included one female with two youngsters. In addition one adult was found still to be nesting in its pre-release cage.

We hope to bring you more news on both releases in the spring.

We are already searching out sites for next year's re-introductions and have been writing round to all those who may own or know of any potentially suitable ones. Dr Pat Morris has written a short note outlining the criteria on which sites are chosen. Please call Susan on 020 7498 4533 if you would like a copy or know of any potential re-introduction sites in Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire or Norfolk.

## 5<sup>th</sup> International Dormouse Conference, 2002

This Conference will be held at the Szent István University of Gödöllő, near Budapest (Hungary) from 26th-29th August next year. The official language of the Conference will be English. The proceedings will be published in the *Journal Acta Zoologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*.

The conference programme will have sessions devoted to ecology, conservation, physiology, behaviour and other appropriate topics. There will be a poster session, two practical workshops, and excursions (some optional).

Accommodation will be in student rooms, approximate total cost ranging from about US\$80, including food (if three share one room) to US\$180 for single occupancy, superior accommodation. The conference fee will be approximately US\$100 (with possible reductions for full time students and non-EU delegates). The deadline for booking, with a non-refundable deposit, will be July 1<sup>st</sup> 2002.

For more information and a registration form write to, The Secretariat, 5<sup>th</sup> International Dormouse Conference at:

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BBC cameraman trying to get that perfect shot with help from Neil Bemment and Don MacPherson at the Cambridgeshire re-introduction site.