

## **Press Release**

**For immediate release**

### **Help support your local wildlife by taking part in the People's Trust for Endangered Species 'Living with Mammals' survey**

The People's Trust for Endangered Species is asking members of the public to look out for mammals in the green spaces around their homes and places of work as part of their annual survey, *Living with Mammals*. Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the 2014 survey begins on Monday 31 March and volunteers are asked to take part in at least eight of the thirteen weeks to the end of June.

The citizen science project not only acts as an important environmental inventory, but by recording the public's observations of mammals and their tell-tale signs in the built environment, the results help provide a picture of how towns and cities can support our native wildlife. Volunteers are required to select a site and monitor the mammals they see there over the survey period, reporting their sightings online at the PTES website.

Gardens, allotments, cemeteries, recreational grassland, industrial and brown field sites, derelict spaces, railway embankments and roadside verges, as well as isolated pockets of heath and woodland are all typical survey sites and provide important refuges for our urban wildlife neighbours.

David Wembridge, Surveys Officer at PTES says, "By carefully identifying and counting the mammals that live in and around built-up land, we can begin to understand and encourage the biodiversity on our doorstep."

Last year's survey revealed that hedgehog records continued a downward trend. Just over a third of volunteer sites recorded hedgehogs, with the figure being the second lowest since the survey started. Green spaces such as neighbourhood gardens are important habitats for hedgehogs but are often fragmented by garden fencing, creating impassable barriers for hedgehogs and making searches for food and mates much more difficult.

Mammals recorded in previous surveys include bats, deer, shrews, hedgehogs, voles, squirrels and otters and this year PTES is running a competition for people to submit their best mammal photos during the survey

period. To take part in the 2014 *Living with Mammals* survey, register online at [www.ptes.org](http://www.ptes.org)

- ENDS -

**For further information, interview requests, or images please call Jane Bevan or Susannah Penn at Firebird PR on 01235 835297/ 07977459547 or email [jb@firebirdpr.co.uk](mailto:jb@firebirdpr.co.uk)**

## Notes to Editors

### Available for interview:

- David Wembridge, Surveys Officer, PTES
- Jill Nelson, CEO, PTES
- The *Living with Mammals* survey takes place through April, May and June each year and requires volunteers to spend some time observing a chosen site each week for eight or more weeks in the survey period. You can spend as little as ten minutes through the week observing (although the more the better) and it can be done by an individual or be a team effort.
- Species of Conservation Concern include: bat species; hedgehog; badger; shrew species; roe deer; brown hare; weasel; stoat; red squirrel; water vole; otter; hazel dormouse; red deer; fallow deer.
- A long-term trend analysis by PTES based on their Living with Mammals and Mammals on Roads surveys shows that hedgehog populations have plummeted by over a third in the last ten years.
- Wildlife charities PTES and BHPS launched *Hedgehog Street* in June 2011 to encourage hedgehog conservation action at a local community or neighbourhood level. Nearly 30,000 volunteer "Hedgehog Champions" up and down the country have registered to help to date and the campaign is ongoing, but we still need your help to make a difference. Visit [www.hedgehogstreet.org](http://www.hedgehogstreet.org)
- People's Trust for Endangered Species is a UK conservation charity created in 1977, which works in partnership with voluntary organisations, wildlife experts, government and industry to conserve wild mammals and their habitats throughout the world. PTES protect some of our most threatened wildlife species through providing practical conservation support through research, grant-aid and educational programmes, including wildlife surveys, publications and public events. PTES owns and manages two of its own habitat reserves – Briddlesford Woods, an area of ancient woodland on the Isle of Wight and Rough Hill, a traditional orchard in Worcestershire
- More information about PTES can be found at [www.ptes.org](http://www.ptes.org)