

Release date: TBC

## **The State of Britain's Mammals – A focus on disease**

This week (2 June 2014), People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) publishes the latest in its series of research and conservation reports, *The State of Britain's Mammals*. The theme of this year's report focusses on diseases that affect British mammals, ranging from waterborne diseases in our rivers and streams, to squirrelpox virus, and mange in urban foxes, which can be transmitted to domestic dogs, as well bovine TB and other diseases that impacts livestock.

Wildlife disease has significant potential to impact human health and livelihoods and despite our island status, the continuous movement - both legal and illegal - of people, livestock, pets, wildlife, meat and animal products between countries means that almost nowhere on the planet is exempt from global disease trends. These determinants of disease in UK mammals include urbanisation; climate change; environmental contamination and emerging infectious diseases influenced by factors such as human population density, land use change and large scale transportation of animals within the food supply chain.

Eight major themes are singled out in the report exploring:

- The fundamental principles of disease ecology
- When disease becomes a conservation priority
- The relationship between diseases of wild and domestic mammal species
- Managing the impact of bovine TB on cattle
- The implications of the spread of disease caused by human-mediated movement of mammal species
- Diseases that are transmissible to humans from wildlife and livestock
- Monitoring and regulation of wildlife diseases
- Predicting future trends in inter-related human and wildlife disease

Each theme is illustrated by reference to examples and case histories of native British mammals, supported by a series of 11 stand-alone vignettes, providing details of particularly intricate host-disease relationships.

*The State of Britain's Mammals* is produced in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU) at the University of Oxford.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

**To obtain a PDF copy of the *State of Britain's Mammals* report, arrange an interview or request 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)**

The following people are available for interview:

Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Department of Zoology, University of Oxford

- Professor David Macdonald – Director
- Dr Tom Moorhouse – Report author
- Dr Meryll Gelling – Report author

People's Trust for Endangered Species

- Jill Nelson – CEO
- Nida Al-Fulaij – Development Manager

### About PTES

- People's Trust for Endangered Species is a UK conservation charity created in 1977 to ensure a future for endangered species throughout the world. Working to protect some of our most threatened wildlife species and habitats, it provides 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)
- The Wildlife Conservation Research Unit is part of the Department of Zoology at the University of Oxford. Its mission is to undertake original research on aspects of fundamental biology relevant to solving practical problems of wildlife conservation and environmental management.
- Although the original BAP targets for water voles were achieved, the objectives were not numerical and were soft, e.g. setting up monitoring and even setting targets; this explains that while the BAP targets were met, the species is **still declining**.