



# Harvest mouse

(*Micromys minutus*)

GB IUCN status Near Threatened

## General information

Compared to other British mice, harvest mice are tiny, and have a blunt nose, small eyes, and hairy ears. Their fur is russet orange on their backs and white undersides. They are the only UK mammal with a prehensile tail which they use to climb.

They eat a mixture of seeds, berries and insects, although moss, roots and fungi may also be taken. Harvest mice are extremely active climbers and feed in the stalk zone of long grasses and reeds, particularly around dusk and dawn. Nests are built from leaves that have been split lengthways and are woven together to form the framework of the nest. These leaves are still attached to the plant, supporting the nest by keeping it attached to the surrounding vegetation

Harvest mice are a native species. Sadly, they are data deficient and increased survey effort is needed to improve our understanding of their distribution across the UK as they may be widely under recorded.

## Habitat Requirements

Harvest mice can be found in a wide range of complex habitats that have tall grasses and other vegetation, including tussocky grasslands, hedgerows, field margins, road verges, reed beds and ditches.

## Distribution

Harvest mice are found sparsely across the UK, more frequently south of central Yorkshire. View the map of the latest National Harvest Mouse Survey results [here](#).

## Species Pressures

Harvest mice are listed as a BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) Species and IUCN Near Threatened as they have become much more scarce in recent years and they require conservation plans to reverse the decline. The reasons for this decline are unknown as harvest mice are currently understudied, and this data deficiency is the first issue to tackle.

## Conservation Actions 'Potential Measures'

Increasing available harvest mouse habitat by reducing mowing of road verges and field margins, encouraging agri-environment schemes and reducing uses of pesticides and herbicides.

Increasing our knowledge of harvest mice populations and distribution by participating in the [National Harvest Mouse Survey](#).



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