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Water vole

Description and status

The Water vole is much bigger than other voles and has chestnut-brown fur, a rounded nose and a small, furry tail and rounded ears that do not protrude from the fur. Look out for the signs of Water voles such as burrows in the riverbank, often with a nibbled 'lawn' of grass around the entrance. Water voles like to sit and eat in the same place, so piles of nibbled grass and stems may be found by the water's edge, showing a distinctive 45° angled-cut at the ends. 'Latrines' of rounded, cigar-shaped droppings may also be spotted.

These charming riverside mammals, made famous as 'Ratty' in Wind and the Willows, were widespread in Kenneth Grahame's day but numbers crashed by 90% in the 1990s.

Threats

The Water vole is Britain's fastest declining wild mammal. The population in the UK has fallen by over 95% from its estimated pre-1960 level of around 8 million to 220,000 in 2004. It is threatened by:

- **Habitat loss and fragmentation** – the loss of riverbank habitat as areas are developed for housing, farmland or new motorways, has also made it difficult for the mammals to survive and breed. In addition unsympathetic management of ditchs, reens and riparian is also significant as it prevents their dispersal into the wider countryside and makes them more vulnerable to mink attacks if they remain in clusters.
- **Water abstraction** – water companies in times of drought abstract water from rivers which impacts the riverside vegetation and therefore the food supply of the water voles.
- **Predation** – they have suffered particularly from predation by the introduced American mink.

Actions required

- Support Water vole re-introduction programmes where appropriate
- Support American mink control programmes
- Reduce and reverse the habitat loss and fragmentation – more areas, bigger areas, better and joined up areas.

Species Champion



John Griffiths MS
Party: Welsh Labour
Region: Newport East



More information

- wtwales.org/species/water-vole
- gwentwildlife.org/what-we-do/projects/water-vole-project/what-water-vole

Lead members

Wildlife Trusts Wales
Ymddiriedolaethau Natur Cymru

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Pencampwr Rhywogaeth



John Griffiths AS
Plaid: Welsh Labour
Bro: Newport East

John

Mwy o wybodaeth

- wtwales.org/species/water-vole
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Prif aelod

Wildlife Trusts Wales
Ymddiriedolaethau Natur Cymru

Llygoden y Dŵr

Disgrifiad a statws

Mae llygoden y dŵr yn llawer mwy na llygod eraill ac mae ganddi flew brown lliw cnau castan, trwyn crwn, cynffon fechan, flewog iawn a chlustiau crynion nad ydynt yn ymwthio am allan o'r blew. Chwiliwch am arwyddion llygod dŵr, fel tyllau yng nglannau afon, gyda 'lawnt' o laswellt wedi'i gnoi o amgylch y fynedfa fel rheol. Mae llygod dŵr yn hoffi eistedd a bwyta yn yr un lle, felly gellir canfod pentyrrau o laswellt a choesynnau wedi'u cnoi ar lan y dŵr, gyda thoriad ongl 45° nodedig ar eu pen. Hefyd, efallai y gwelir 'toiledau' o dail crwn, siâp sigâr.

Roedd y mamaliaid glan afon dymunol yma, a ddaeth i enwogrwydd drwy 'Ratty' yn Wind and the Willows, i'w gweld yn eang yn oes Kenneth Grahame ond roedd gostyngiad enfawr o 90% wedi bod yn eu niferoedd erbyn y 1990au.

Bygythiadau

Llygoden y dŵr yw'r mamal gwyllt sy'n wynebu'r dirywiad cyflymaf ym Mhrydain. Mae poblogaeth y DU wedi gostwng fwy na 95% o gymharu â'r amcangyfrif o'i lefel cyn 1960, sef tua 8 miliwn, i 220,000 yn 2004. Dyma sy'n ei bygwth:

- **Colli a darnio cynefinoedd** – colli cynefinoedd glan afon wrth i ardaloedd gael eu datblygu ar gyfer tai, tir amaethyddol neu draffyrdd newydd ac mae hyn wedi ei gwneud yn anodd i'r mamaliaid oroesi a magu. Yn ychwanegol, rheolaeth anghydymdeimladol ar ffosydd, corsydd a chynefinoedd glan afon yn arwyddocaol hefyd gan fod hyn yn eu hatal rhag gwasgaru i gefn gwlad ehangach ac yn eu gwneud yn fwy agored i niwed o ymosodiadau gan fincod os ydynt yn aros mewn clystyrau.
- **Echdynnu dŵr** – mewn cyfnodau o sychdwr, mae cwmnïau dŵr yn echdynnu dŵr o afonydd ac mae hynny'n effeithio ar lystyfiant glannau afonydd ac felly'r cyflenwad o fwyd i lygod dŵr.
- **Ysglyfaethu** – maent wedi dioddef yn arbennig yn sgil ysglyfaethu oherwydd bod y minc Americanaidd wedi cael ei gyflwyno i Brydain.

Gweithredu angenrheidiol

- Cefnogi rhaglenni ailgyflwyno Llygod Dŵr os yw hynny'n briodol
- Cefnogi rhaglenni i reoli'r minc Americanaidd
- Lleihau a gwyrdroi'r patrwm o golli a darnio cynefinoedd – mwy o ardaloedd, ardaloedd mwy a gwell, ac ardaloedd unedig.

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