



Identify 100 Species – Mammals

10 species you are likely to find in Leicestershire and Rutland

How easy is it to identify?

Easy



Care needed



Target species

Grey Squirrel – *Sciurus carolinensis* ●

ID: Grey fur with orange tones, bushy tail and an agile tree climber.

Similar species: None. There are no Red Squirrels in Leicestershire and Rutland.

Where to look: Parks, woodland, gardens – anywhere with trees. In Autumn and Winter they can be found visiting nut hoards they buried as a food store.

About: Introduced from the USA, they carry the squirrel pox which is spread with fatal consequences to the native Red Squirrel. Their main diet is nuts and fruit but they will eat small animals and eggs, and if times are hard, tree bark.

Recording: No photo required.



Mole – *Talpa europaea* ●

ID: You probably won't see the Mole itself but will see mole-hills. Moles have black fur and huge front feet for digging.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Grassland, where there is sufficient soil depth.

About: They eat mainly worms which fall into their tunnel network. They live alone and may emerge at night to look for a new territory or to escape flooding.

Recording: Mole hills are acceptable evidence. No photo required.



Rabbit – *Oryctolagus cuniculus* ●

ID: Brown fur, large ears and moves by hopping. Up to 30-40cm.

Similar species: The Brown Hare has even longer ears with black tips.

Where to look: Most commonly seen on road verges where it feeds on grass and plants. It is mainly nocturnal but does emerge at dusk.

About: The Rabbit was introduced to Britain by the Romans. It was originally farmed in protected warrens but eventually it escaped and spread.

Recording: Burrows and droppings can be acceptable evidence with a photo.



Other common Leicestershire mammals to check out:

Bank Vole, Water Vole, Common Shrew, Brown Hare, Stoat

Fox – *Vulpes vulpes* ●

ID: Orange-red fur with a white throat and bushy tail.

Similar species: Though a little larger than a cat it can be confused with one at night.

Where to look: Most frequently seen crossing roads at night. May visit gardens.

About: Feeds on rabbits, mice and rats but also scavenges. More common in urban areas than the countryside. May build a den under a garden shed and may be seen sun-bathing on flat roofs! Mainly nocturnal.

Recording: Photo not necessary. Road casualties can be recorded.



Hedgehog – *Erinaceus europaeus* ●

ID: Grey-brown and covered in prickles. 20-30 cm.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Gardens & parks at night. Noisy snuffling as it moves and feeds.

About: Feeds on worms, slugs and will scavenge meat. Can travel several kilometres each night searching for food, visiting multiple gardens.

Recording: Photo not necessary. Road casualties can be recorded.



Badger – *meles meles* ●

ID: Grey fur with a black and white stripy face. Up to 75cm.

Similar species: None, but setts can easily be confused with rabbit warrens.

Where to look: Woods, areas with dense tree/shrubs.

About: Feeds on worms, insects, small animals and eggs, as well as roots and fruit. May visit gardens when people feed them with peanuts. A powerful digger, excavating deep burrows (setts) to live in. Mainly nocturnal.

Recording: Photo not necessary. Road casualties can be recorded.



Wood Mouse – *Apodemus sylvaticus* ●

ID: Tawny brown with pale belly fur, large black eyes, a pointed face and a long tail. 7cm (ex tail). Also called the Long-tailed Field Mouse.

Similar species: The long tail and pointed face separate this from other mice/voles

Where to look: Under bird feeders, hedges. Cats may catch them.

About: The commonest mouse around our homes and gardens (the House Mouse is now rare). Will come inside houses, particularly in Autumn. Feeds on seeds, nuts and small invertebrates such as caterpillars.

Recording: Photo needed.



Brown Rat – *Rattus norvegicus* ●

ID: Grey-brown fur and paler belly with a pointed face and a long hairless tail. Up to 18cm (ex tail).

Similar species: The Water Vole is similar but has a shorter tail and a rounder face.

Where to look: Around human habitation and water.

About: They have a very varied diet, feeding on plants, nuts, seeds and fruit, but also scavenging and eating small animals that they can catch. Excavates burrows to live in. Often found near water and are excellent swimmers.

Recording: Photo needed.



Bat – *unidentified species* ●

ID: Bats are generally very small (mouse-sized) and most commonly seen at dusk when they are feeding on flying insects. Most bats have a fast and frenzied flight.

Similar species: Birds but few fly at night.

Where to look: Along hedges, over water, gardens sometimes.

About: Bat species are all very hard to identify without sound equipment. Nevertheless it is important to know where bats of any species live as they all protected in law.

Recording: You can record 'bat' without knowing the species. No photo required.



Muntjac – *Muntiacus reevesi* ●

ID: Brown all-over and the size of an Alsatian dog but with shorter legs. Males have very short antlers and black markings on their face.

Similar species: Roe Deer have longer legs, a large black nose and a white rump.

Where to look: In and around woodland. Ventures into open areas after dark.

About: Our smallest deer and the one most likely to be seen. It hides in dense vegetation but emerges at dusk to graze on grass and other vegetation.

Recording: Photo needed.

