

**Small mammal trapping in the RSPB's Hope Farm at Knapwell as part of a LEAF event
from 9 June 2018 to 10 June 2018 – Peter Pilbeam, Joy Dingley,
Laura Kor and Roger Featherstone.**

Forty (40) Longworth traps were set up with bedding (hay) and bait (fruit and nut muesli, diced apple and casters) in two groups of twenty (20) - one along a beetle bank and a hedge line and one round the margins of a grass field - in two areas of the farm between 7pm and 8.30pm on 9 June 2018. They were checked from 8.00am on 10 June 2018. The catches of one (1) wood mouse and one (1) bank vole were kept in small tanks with hay, food and water until about noon and then released where caught. One set of twenty (20) traps were immediately reset and rebaited and then reopened from 1pm – the traps were then removed.

Overnight the weather was dry, mild and cloud-free after a very light shower late evening. The weather during the morning session was mild and cloud-free.

Results:

Trap No.	Location	10/06 am	10/06 pm
1	Nearest end of beetle bank	vo	
2	10m further along beetle bank	o	
3	10m further along beetle bank	o	
4	10m further along beetle bank	vo	
5	10m further along beetle bank	o	
6	10m further along beetle bank	vo	
7	10m further along beetle bank	o	
8	10m further along beetle bank	o	
9	10m further along beetle bank	o	
10	10m further along beetle bank	WM - m - 26gm	
11	Nearest end of hedge line	BV - f - 18gm	
12	10m further along hedge line	o	
13	10m further along hedge line	vo	
14	10m further along hedge line	o	
15	10m further along hedge line	o	
16	10m further along hedge line	vo	
17	10m further along hedge line	CS - 14gm	
18	10m further along hedge line	o	
19	10m further along hedge line	o	
20	10m further along hedge line	o	
21	Near corner of entry to mist-netting field	or	o
22	c10m anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
23	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	vor	o
24	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
25	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
26	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
27	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
28	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	vor	o
29	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
30	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
31	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
32	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	vor	o
33	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	vor	o
34	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
35	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
36	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
37	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
38	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o
39	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	vor	o
40	c10m further anticlockwise round field edge	or	o

Key:

WM -- Wood Mouse
BV -- Bank Vole
CS -- Common Shrew
m -- male
f -- female
o -- open (not tripped)
e -- entered
v -- visited (external bait removed, not necessarily by small mammals)
r -- reset

Traps numbers 1 through 20 were removed after the overnight trapping and not reset.

Conclusions:

Over the 40 trap nights and the following 20 trap sessions a total of 3 captures were made – 1 Wood Mouse, 1 Bank Vole and 1 Common Shrew. The catch rate was surprisingly low and not at all consistent with the season, the weather and the habitats chosen.

Unfortunately the Common Shrew was dead in the trap - this has been reported to Natural England as required. Bedding and bait (the latter in excess) and site were all according to best practice - it has been concluded that the animal had reached the end of its natural life span.

Peter Pilbeam
9 July 2018