

Small mammal trapping in Cambridge University Botanic Garden, Cambridge as part of BioBlitz 2022 from 24/06/2022 to 25/06/2022 – Peter Pilbeam and Alex Jamieson.

Twenty (20) Longworth traps were set up with bedding (hay) and bait (muesli, diced apple and casters) at various locations (slightly different habitat types) on a near-circular route round part of the Garden from around 7.15pm on 24 June 2022. They were checked and opened (all but two of the trapped animals being released immediately after weighing and sexing) from 8.00am on the following day. One of the trapped animals was marked by fur clipping to demonstrate the technique and two animals (one Wood Mouse and one Bank Vole) were kept in small tanks with hay and bait and water for about two hours for visitors to see - they were then released where trapped. Six (6) of the traps were reset and rebaited and then opened from about 1pm the same day - the traps were then removed. Overnight the weather was cloudy, dry and mild.

Results:

Trap No.	25/06 am	25/06 pm
59	WM - mr - 22gm	o
53	WM - fr - 12gm	o
61	or	o
52	BV - fr - 16gm	BV - f - 18gm
68	WM - f - 22gm	-
55	WM - mcr - 17.5gm	o
63	WM - mr - 25.5gm	WM - escaped
64	WM - m - 19gm	o
67	o	o
65	WM - m - 17.5gm	o
60	te	o
57	WM - f - 23gm	o
66	o	o
54	o	o
69	o	o
56	o	o
51	te	o
70	WM - m - 20.5gm	o
58	WM - m - 18.5gm	o
62	WM - m - 18gm	o

A few traps were slightly disturbed during the night and one had been pulled apart. The bait left outside the traps when they were set had been taken in several cases - this was likeliest to have been by grey squirrels.

Key:

WM -- Wood Mouse
 BV -- Bank Vole
 m -- male
 f -- female
 c -- fur clipped
 o -- open (not tripped)
 te -- tripped/empy
 r -- reset

Conclusions:

Over the 26 trap sessions a total of 14 captures were made – 12 Wood Mice and 2 Bank Voles. The weather previously had been very dry and occasionally very hot. The catch rate was higher than the last BioBlitz, in 2021, and back up to the level of 2019, though at slightly different times of year to both events.

Therefore, for the purposes of the Bioblitz, two small mammal species were noted.

Peter Pilbeam -- 26 June 2022