

Small mammal trapping in Cambridge University Botanic Garden, Cambridge as part of BioBlitz 2021 from 23/07/2021 to 24/07/2021 – Peter Pilbeam, Carol and George Baber, Sharon Erzinclioglu and Kate Spink.

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 23 July 2021. They were checked and opened (all but one 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 a different animal was kept in a small tank with hay and bait and water for about two hours for visitors to see - it was then released where trapped. Eleven (11) 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.	23/07 am	23/07 pm
63	WM - mcr - 22.5gm	o
57	WM - f? - 11.0gm	-
66	or	o
60	or	o
62	o	-
39	o	-
51	o	-
59	WM - mr - 20.5gm	o
69	WM - f - 23.0gm	-
54	or	o
70	WM - mr - 21.0.gm	o
58	or	o
68	WM - mr - 28.0gm	o
38	or	o
37	or	o
55	or	o
61	o	-
65	o	-
52	o	-
56	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. The female trapped in trap 69 was lactating so that trap particularly was not reset.

Key:

- WM -- Wood Mouse
- m -- male
- f -- female
- c -- fur clipped
- o -- open (not tripped)
- r -- reset

Conclusions:

Over the 31 trap sessions a total of 6 captures were made – all were Wood Mouse. The weather in the preceding few weeks had been very changeable and included some very high temperatures and very heavy rain. The catch rate was down from the last two BioBlitz (in 2019 and 2020, though at a different time of year to both events).

Therefore, for the purposes of the Bioblitz, one small mammal species was noted, and during the evening part of the exercise a red fox was observed on a picnic table by the viewing platform.