

Small mammal trapping at Wandlebury Ring ditch and adjacent grassland areas overnight on 28 May 2023 - Peter Pilbeam and several attendees.

Twenty (20) Longworth traps were set to catch with bedding (hay) and bait (muesli, casters and diced apple) at various locations (a small range of habitats) around the Wandlebury Ring ditch and in two adjacent grassland areas inside the Ring from around 7pm on 28 May 2023 and checked at around 8am on 29 May 2023. All trapped animals were identified, weighed and sexed before being released immediately - the traps were then removed. One trapped animal, however, was kept in a small tank (with bedding, bait and water) for display for c2 hours and then release where it was trapped

Trap No.	Location	29/05/2023 – c8am
55	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
52	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	YNM - m - 32gm
62	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
67	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	YNM - m - 15gm
53	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
64	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
59	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	BV - f - 23gm
57	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
65	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
56	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
66	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
68	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
61	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
63	Floor/bankside/top edge of ditch	o
69	Grassland area	o
60	Grassland area	o
58	Grassland area	o
54	Grassland area	WM - f - 29gm
70	Grassland area	o
51	Grassland area	o

WM -- Wood Mouse

YNM -- Yellow-Necked Mouse

BV -- Bank Vole

m -- male

f -- female

o -- open (not tripped)

In summary, out of 20 traps there were two Yellow-Necked Mice (one of which was a juvenile), one Bank Vole and one Wood Mouse. This represents (of 20 trap sessions) an overall catch rate of 20%. The Bank Vole and the Wood Mouse were both pregnant/lactating so were released immediately after the traps were opened (and not kept for display).

The area was in general was very dry underfoot – the conditions overnight and when the traps were checked at 8am were cloudy, mild and dry.

Similar areas had previously been trapped overnight on 25 March 2017 and during the following morning - there was a greater variety of species caught (yellow-necked mouse and field vole were also caught) with 26 trap sessions and a catch rate of just on 54%. On that occasion the weather was much milder. Overnight (only) on 5 April 2017, using 14 traps of 5 different types, wood mouse, bank vole and common shrew were caught with a catch rate of 50% - the weather then was similar to that of 25 March 2017. Overnight (only) on 23 March 2019, using 20 traps, wood mouse and bank vole were caught with a catch rate of 45% - the weather then was similar to that of previous occasions but colder overnight. Overnight (only) on 10 September 2021 out of 20 traps there were 7 wood mouse catches. This represents (of 20 trap sessions) an overall catch rate of 35%. The weather was again similar to previous occasions.

Peter Pilbeam - 02 June 2023