



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

Bedfont Lakes Country Park

Clockhouse Lane
Bedfont, Middlesex
TW14 8QA
T: 0845 456 2796
E: bedfont.lakes@continental-landscapes.co.uk

Cranford Country Park

The Parkway, Cranford
Middlesex
TW5 9RZ
T: 0845 456 2796
E: Cranford.Park@continental-landscapes.co.uk

Hounslow Heath

450 Staines Road
Hounslow
TW4 5AB
T: 0845 456 2796
E: Hounslow.Heath@continental-landscapes.co.uk



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

Nature Leaflet

Mammals



Wood Mouse

Mammals

Foxes raiding your bins at night, Grey Squirrels in your local park, some mammals are easy to spot. But what exactly are mammals?

All mammals, from bats to humans share a number of important traits that make them different from other animals. Mammals are warm-blooded, they have fur or hair and most mammals give birth to live young (rather than laying eggs). Strictly speaking, the thing that defines Mammals is that they suckle their young. Many animals are warm-blooded, they are hairy snails, and two mammal species do lay eggs.

Britain has a good variety of mammals, some more common than others, but a lot can be seen in the London Borough of Hounslow. Some of these mammals you may spot in the Boroughs parks.

Bats

Bats are very small mammals that have evolved to fly and use echolocation to eat insects. Bedfont Lakes Country Park is home to a particularly rare species of bat known as Nathusius Pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus Nathusii*. The nearest known roosts for these bats are Lincolnshire and Northern Ireland.

Weasels and Stoats

These are some of the hardest mammals to spot in Hounslow. The two species look similar, but the best way to tell them apart is to look for a black tip on the tail; if it has one it is the larger Stoat (17-30cm). Weasels are only 17-25cm in length and like to have plenty of cover to ambush their prey which consists mainly of mice and voles.



Water Voles

One of the Borough's rarest mammals, Water voles are best found along the River Crane and are often mistaken for rats. In fact Ratty from Kenneth Grahame's 'The Wind in the Willows' was a Water Vole!

Water Voles are a protected species in the UK due to their declining numbers. In recent years populations of Water Voles have decreased by 90%. One of the main reasons for their decline has been predation by American mink which has escaped or been released from fur farms and changes to farming and flood control over the last 60 years, which has resulted in the loss of suitable habitat.



Wood Mice	They are one of the most common European small mammals. They are usually found on the edges of forests and in woodlands, in hedgerows, grassland, and gardens. They feed on insects, centipedes, snails, and worms and on seeds, fruit, buds and fungi.
Foxes	Foxes are found in cities and the countryside. The most common fox is the Red Fox. They are mostly active at dawn and dusk but can sometimes be seen during the daytime lying in thick vegetation, patrolling, or hunting if they have cubs.
Hedgehogs	In the UK hedgehogs generally hibernate from November to March and are nocturnal creatures. They roll into a ball as a defence mechanism, using their spines to protect themselves.
Grey Squirrel	Introduced into the UK in the late 19C, grey squirrels feed on nuts, leaves, shoots, flowers and bark and are most active at dawn and dusk, searching for available food.
Rabbits	The male is called a buck and the female a doe. The young are known as kittens. Rabbits generally measure 40 - 45 cm in length and have ears that measure 8.5 centimetres long. They have compact bodies with long, powerful hind legs.