

Mammal Recording Form (including badger RTAs)

Welcome to the Dorset Mammal Group recording form. Please note that all records submitted using this form will be sent to the Dorset Mammal Group, the Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC), the Biological Records Centre and The Mammal Society Atlas Project so there is no need to re-submit them to the other organisations. Also, records of badger RTAs will be used exactly as before (ie when a dedicated form was used) with records sent to DERC and Badger Trust. When submitting badger RTAs, please use the 'comment' field to record details of injuries, any sign of gunshot wounds, any evidence of tattoos on the abdomen (indicating that animal has been microchipped), or any other relevant information.

The mammal recording form is easy to use but the following notes may be helpful:

A1. Click in the 'Date' box and use the calendar which appears to select the date of observation

A2. Next click on the 'down arrow' to the right of the 'Species' box and scroll down to find the species concerned. The list is alphabetical based on the first letter of the first word i.e. 'Roe deer' is in the 'R's not the 'D's. You may wonder about the coloured and numbered triangles adjacent to each species - *(add explanation when known)*

A3. Now move to 'Observation type'. The drop down list here is self-explanatory. (For badger RTA the fourth choice is the obvious one). If the observation type is not listed, you can enter something else in the next column ('Other observation type') instead.

A4. Click in the 'Abundance' box and type the **number of individual creatures or signs concerned in this observation**.

A5. In the 'Comment' box you can add any other relevant information.

A6. The 'Sensitivity' box allows you to limit the accuracy of the location information you are about to enter. In most cases, you will probably leave the entry as 'not sensitive'.

A7. Photos are an invaluable aid to the verifiers and the mammal recorder when your record is appraised; please use this facility, especially when unsure of road casualty id (e.g.polecat)

If you have a number of records for same date and location, you can add one or more further rows. When finished, it's '**Next Step**'.

The next step is all about the location of the observation.

B1. The 'Habitat' drop down list is self-explanatory - for RTA, just use 'hedge, wall or ditch'.

B2. 'Place Name' could be helpful for confirmation but it is optional.

B3. You could, in the 'Enter a spatial reference' box, type the grid reference directly if you happen to know it but it is quicker and safer to use the map facility. By the way, if you click on the blue symbol at the right end of this box, you will be offered the chance of having your present position determined for you! Presumably this only works if you are using a smart phone. *(nb the recording form was provided for us by the Biological Records Centre; we can request changes but not make them ourselves)*

B4. Using the map: You can start with a place name but the simplest way is just to click in the middle of Dorset (outlined in blue). This will bring up a 10km square and you will see its reference appear in the spatial reference box (e.g. SY69). You can then just move the map around by clicking and holding the left mouse button then dragging the mouse until the approx location is in the centre of the display area. You will then see a grid of 1km squares and you can click in one of them to home in. (the reference is now refined accordingly to two letters and four digits - 1km square accuracy). The next click highlights the 100m square AND brings in aerial photography; it also produces the '6-figure' grid reference we are used to seeing. Moving the background by dragging the mouse again, we can click and select a 10m square (8-digit grid ref.) - which is as far as we can go. You can control the map display in other ways: hover over the icons at top right of display area to see how. Click on the plus sign to open up a menu for adding/subtracting map layers.

When you have the correct location in the spatial reference box, it's '**Next Step**'

...and time to enter information about yourself - the observer.

The only issue here is how to describe your level of experience. The drop down list allows four choices but most of us will choose either the second or third. The idea is to help the verifier assess, in the absence of a photograph, how likely it is that you actually saw a pine marten on the lawn at noon!

Then '**Save**' - job done.