



RINSE

Reducing the impact of
non-native species in Europe

Guidance on the control of invasive non-native animals

A comprehensive guide on the control of three invasive non-native animals
commonly found on farmland



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Photo Credit: Peter Trimming

American Mink



© NIJSS

Photo Credit: GBNBSS

Muntjac



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Photo Credit: GBNBSS

Grey squirrel



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American mink

Mustela Vison



Species Profile:

Origin: North America

UK Distribution: Widespread except Northern Scotland

Habitat: Aquatic environments

Pathway: Fur trade

Reproduction: Breeding takes place between late February and early April producing an average of 5.8 young per litter.

Legislation:



Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Schedule 9

American mink and the environment

American mink prey on a large variety of species ranging from fish, crayfish, ground-nesting birds and small mammals. With their voracious appetites, mink can quickly reduce the abundance of many native species both through direct predation and indirect effects of competition for food.

Famously, the American mink is responsible for the decline in the native European water vole, which has been lost from 94 % of its range in the UK alone.

There is no obligation for you to eradicate this species from your land, or to report its presence to anyone. However if you wish to take action against this species there are options available.



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American mink

Mustela Vison



Photo Credit: Peter Trimming



Rich glossy brown coat

White chin

Small – up to 50 cm long

Slender body



Photo Credit: Snowdonia National Park Authority



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American mink or European Otter?

American mink are often confused with our native European otter however there are some key differences which can be used to distinguish between the two.



Photo Credit: Keven Law

OTTER

- White cheeks, chin and stomach
- Large stocky size, up to 1.2 metres
- Tail is long, sleek and muscly
- Snout is flattened and dog-like



Photo Credit: Peter Trimming

MINK

- White chin only
- Smaller, slender body up to 0.5 metres
- Tail is rounded and furry
- Face is pointed and ferret-like



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American mink or European Otter?

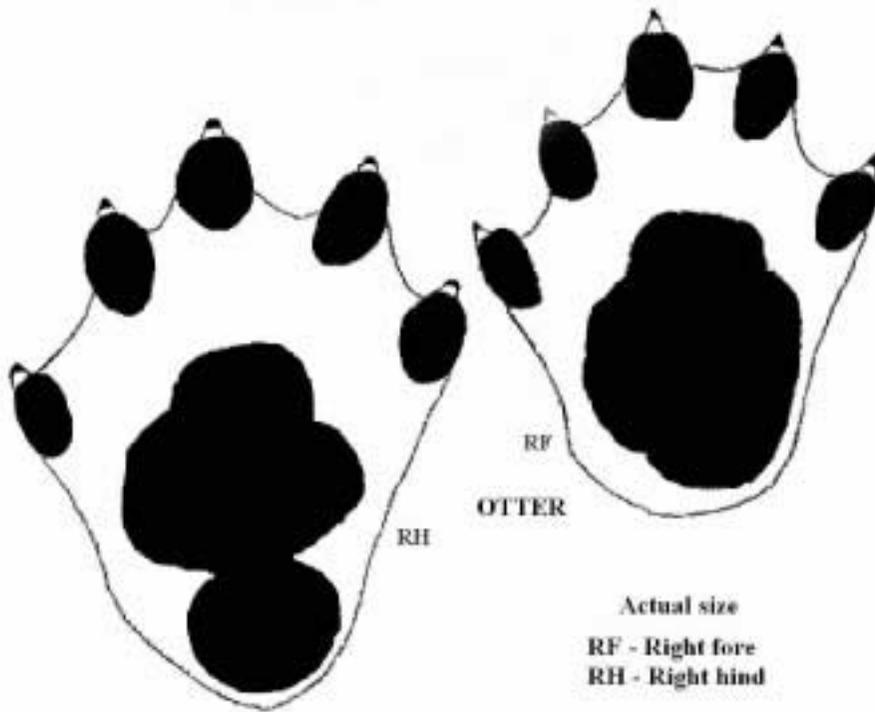


Photo Credit: Sussex Otters & Rivers Project

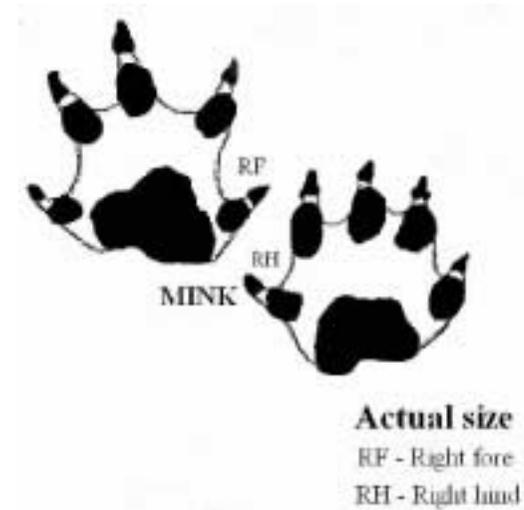


Photo Credit: Sussex Otters & Rivers Project



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CONTROL

You have no obligation to control American mink on your land and there is no lawful requirement to report its presence.

HOWEVER, we recommend that you report the presence of mink to allow us to effectively tackle their invasion on a European scale.

REPORT IT

If you wish to control mink on your land there are options available.

An example of an effective mink control programme can be found in the RINSE area - [The Norfolk Mink Control Strategy](#).

This project was initiated by the [Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership](#) in 2003. The project **aims to reduce the American mink to extremely low densities, effectively removed** from much of the **county**.

The project was started in an **effort to conserve the European water vole in Norfolk, a stronghold** for the **UK population**.

Useful Links:

[Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust](#)

[Natural England](#)



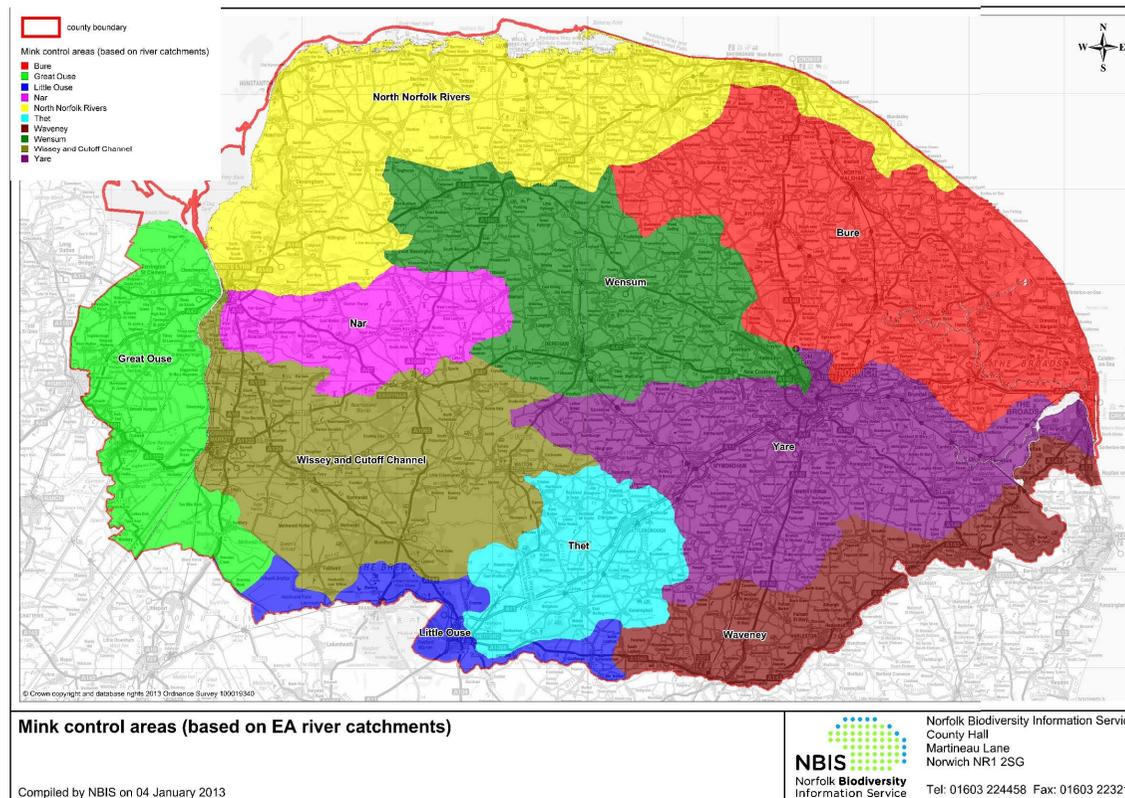
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MINK CONTROL IN NORFOLK

The **Norfolk Mink Control Strategy** was started in 2003 in the **River Wensum**. During the last 10 years, **over 500 mink** have been caught from this area and the project has expanded its reach into the Bure, Yare and Waveney.



Thanks to additional European funding from RINSE, the project is now expanding further into North Norfolk and to the rivers Thet and Nar.



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MINK CONTROL IN NORFOLK

Farmers and landowners volunteer to host a mink raft on their land.



Photo Credit: GWCT

Monitoring: Mink rafts monitor for the presence of mink using a clay pad for footprints and other field signs



Photo Credit: GWCT

Trapping: If mink are found to be present the raft is converted into trapping mode and checked regularly for caught individuals which are dispatched of humanely

If you would like more information on this mink trapping network, or advice on how to start your own, contact the Norfolk RINSE team at nnsi@norfolk.gov.uk



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Muntjac

Muntiacus reevesi



Species Profile:

Origin: Asia

UK Distribution: Widespread

Habitat: Wooded habitats, occasionally park lands and urban areas

Pathway: Ornamental park species and zoo collections

Reproduction: Breeding takes place all year round. Females have a gestation period of 7 months after which they give birth to a single kid, within a few days they are ready to mate again.

Legislation:



Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Schedule 9

Muntjac and the environment

As with many deer, muntjac can **severely over-graze** wooded habitats where they occur in sufficiently high numbers. Grazing can reduce the availability of scrub and bracken areas which are relied upon for shelter and food by other woodland species. In some cases, muntjac are known to graze on **agricultural crops**. Deer are also **responsible** for a large number of **road accidents** every year.

There is no obligation for you to eradicate this species from your land, or to report its presence to anyone. However if you wish to take action against this species there are options available.



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Muntjac

Muntiacus reevesi



Small and stocky



Photo Credit: AnimalFotos

Reddish coat

Short antlers present in males

Black stripes down the face to the muzzle

White underside of tail



Photo Credit: The Scottish Deer Centre



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CONTROL

You have no obligation to control the muntjac on your land and there is no lawful requirement to report its presence.

HOWEVER, we recommend that you report the presence of muntjac to allow us to monitor their populations

REPORT IT

Any **deer** species can cause **damage to woodland habitats** at **high population densities**.

By **reporting your sightings** of muntjac, we can **monitor** the **growth of populations** and **act to keep** these **populations** at a sufficiently **low** density to **reduce** their **impact**.

If you wish to control muntjac on your land there are options available



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SHOOTING AND CULLING

As the muntjac breed all year round there is **no closed season** for this deer species– this means they can be **shot all year round** in **hours of daylight** by an **authorised person**.



AUTHORISED PERSON

- The **occupier of land** on **where shooting** is **taking place**
- Any **member** of **occupier household** with **written authority** of **occupier** of land where shooting is taking place
- Any **person** in **ordinary service** of the **occupier** with **written authority** from occupier where shooting is taking place

Alternatively, you can **contact** a **local deer management group** to find out more information on **coordinated culls** in your area.



Co-ordinated culls are more **efficient** at maintaining **deer at low densities** than by individuals on an ad-hoc basis.

The Deer Initiative is a good place to start looking for more information:

Tel 0870 7743677

Email: admin@thedeerinitiative.co.uk
www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk



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Grey Squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis



Species Profile:

Origin: North America

UK Distribution: Widespread

Habitat: Woodland

Pathway: Ornamental species

Reproduction: Females usually have two litters a year, each with between 2 - 8 young. The first between December and February and the second between May and June

Legislation:



Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Schedule 9

Grey squirrel and the environment

Grey squirrel populations can have lasting **damage** on **wooded habitats stripping bark** from trees leaving them **vulnerable to diseases** and other pests. More famously, the grey squirrel has severely **reduced** populations of our **native red squirrel** through **competitive exclusion**.

Additionally, the grey squirrel is a **host** for the **poxvirus** which is **fatal** to the already threatened **red squirrel**

There is no obligation for you to eradicate this species from your land, or to report its presence to anyone. However if this species spreads from your land to the wild or a neighbour's property you could be liable.



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Grey Squirrel

Sciurus carolinesis



Distinct bushy tail

Grey coat

Slender body

Paler underside

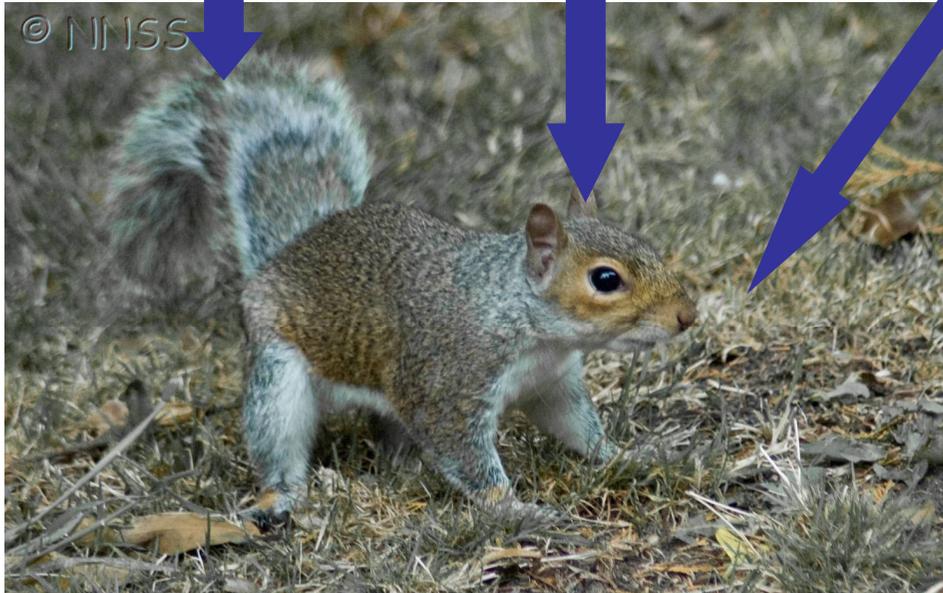


Photo Credit: GBNNS



Photo Credit: Jonathan Kington



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CONTROL

You have no obligation to control the grey squirrel on your land and there is no lawful requirement to report its presence.

HOWEVER, we recommend that you report the presence of grey squirrel to allow us to effectively monitor their populations.

REPORT IT

If you wish, you have the **right to control** grey squirrel populations **on your land** and you **do not require a licence** to do so.

However **squirrels** are **protected** from **ill treatment** by the **Wild Mammal Protection Act 1996** and therefore must be **dispatched with humanity**.

It is **illegal** to use any **bow or crossbow**, any **explosive** other than ammunition for a firearm, or **live decoy** to **control** or **deter squirrels** from your land.

Natural England recommend cage trapping followed by humane dispatch.



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CAGE TRAPPING

Single catch and **live catch** cages can be used

Traps will be **most effective** placed **near closed spaces** such as **brickwork** and the **outside of buildings**.

Whole yellow maize, peanuts, wheat or a **mixture** of these are recommended as **bait**.

You should **avoid stocking** any **bird tables** during the caging period

Traps should be inspected once a day for caught squirrels.

Caught squirrels should be dispatched of humanely.

Squirrels can be **run into a sack** and **killed** with a **sharp blow to the head**, or **shot** with a **suitable weapon**.

Shooting should only be carried out by an **experienced** and **competent person**, carefully **avoiding ricochet**

Caught squirrels **should not be drowned** – this is **inhumane**.



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SPRING TRAPPING

A spring trap approved for use on squirrels should be used:

Traps should be **set in an artificial or natural tunnel** with the **entrance restricted to reduce risk to non-target species**

- Fenn Mk4 and 6
- Springer Mk4 and 6
- Magnum
- Kania 2000

Whole yellow maize, peanuts, wheat or a **mixture** of these are recommended as **bait**.

You should **avoid stocking** any **bird tables** during the caging period

Not recommended for use in domestic places.

Carcasses should be **removed** and **disposed of discretely**

This can be done by **burning, burying** or **refuse collection** if **wrapped securely**



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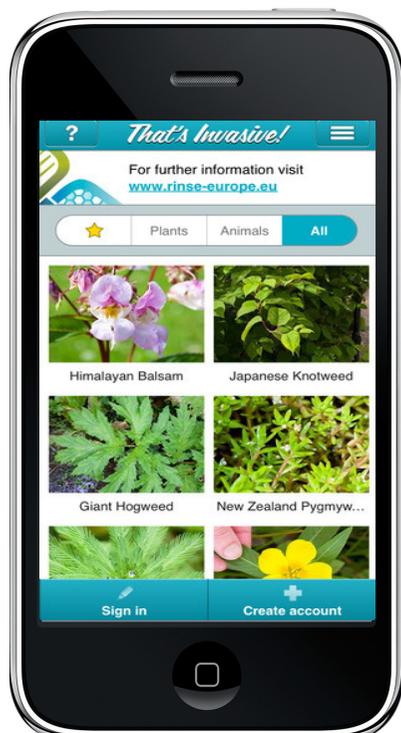
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REPORTING

Reporting the presence of any invasive non-native species on your land is of high importance. Without a detailed picture of their distribution, appropriate control and eradication projects are flawed.

Smartphone App



RINSE have created a **free Smartphone app** for recording invasive species.

'That's Invasive'

This easy to use app helps you to **identify** and **record invasive species**.

A **library of species biology, ecology, identification** and **images** will be **available** at the click of a finger allowing you to **identify, photograph and record** over **35 invasive non-native species** commonly found within Europe.



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Online Recording



iRecord – an **online environmental database** for **managing** and **sharing** your **wildlife records**.

You can **submit your invasive species sightings online**. All you need is: the **species** you saw, **where** you saw it (preferably a grid reference), the **date** you saw it and **your name**.

SUBMIT YOUR RECORD NOW



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RINSE (Reducing the Impact of Non-native Species in Europe) is an exciting new European project seeking to improve the management of invasive non-native species (INS) across four partner countries in western Europe. RINSE will also increase awareness of the threats posed by INS, and the most effective methods to address them. The project has been part-funded by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund) delivered through the Interreg IVA 2 Seas Programme.

www.interreg4a-2mers.eu

www.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_eu.cfm



These 'slides' reflect the author's views. The Interreg IVA 2 Seas Programme Authorities are not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



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