



# Field Vole

*Microtus agrestis*

## Quick facts

**Order** Rodentia

## Conservation status

GB *Least concern*

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England *Least concern*

Scotland *Least concern*

Wales *Least concern*

Global *Least concern*

**GB trend** *Stable*

**Size** body 9 - 11.5 cm, tail is <40% of head and body.

**Weight** 20 - 40 g

**Life span** up to 1 year

The field vole is grey-brown above and creamy-grey below. The tail is much shorter than in the bank vole and the eyes are less prominent and the snout more rounded than in mice. Found throughout mainland Britain, they are absent from a number of islands.

### Habitat

Deciduous and mixed woodland, grassland, heathland, arable land, urban and gardens.

### Behaviour

Does not hibernate. Grows a thick, dense coat for winter and moults out into lighter summer coat in spring. It is a host for various parasites, and important prey for avian and mammalian predators including kestrels, owls, foxes, weasels, stoats. Field vole populations may fluctuate on a 4 year cycle, with numbers increasing 10 fold between lows and highs.

### Diet & Feeding

Predominantly on grass, prefers bents, fescues, hair grasses.

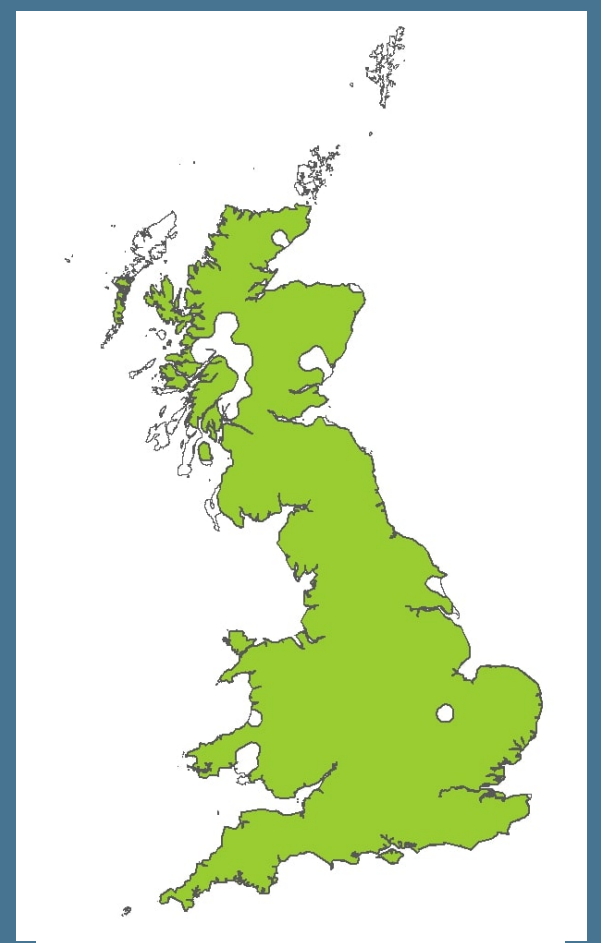
### Reproduction

Breeds between March or April and October and December. 5 - 6 litters per year with 4 - 5 young in each.

### Conservation & Threats

Very widespread, thought to be the most common British mammal with a population of around 75,000,000. Even so, it is important to consider conservation methods and maintain biodiversity within its habitats; this can be achieved by leaving wide field margins beside hedgerows, leaving long grass on roadside verges, and leaving some fallen branches etc in woodland.

## Range



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