

Pygmy Shrew

Sorex minutus



Quick facts

Order Eulipotyphla

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 40 - 60 mm; tail 32 - 46 mm (tail is proportionately shorter than in common shrew)

Weight 2.4 - 6.1 g

Life span 2 - 4 months



Mammal
SOCIETY

The pygmy shrew is a tiny mammal with greyish brown fur above and off-white fur below. They are found throughout mainland Britain and Ireland, as well as the Isle of Man and Outer Hebrides where the common shrew is absent.

Habitat

Widespread in most terrestrial habitats with sufficient ground cover. More common in moorland than common shrew. Territories range from 500 - 2000 square metres. Maximum density is around 12 individuals per hectare.

Behaviour

Solitary, territorial, and aggressive towards other pygmy shrews. Active day and night, mainly above ground. Makes and uses surface tunnels in vegetation and uses burrows dug by other animals. In winter, reduces body size (including skull, brain, liver) to lower energy requirements. Main predators are owls and other avian predators.

Diet & Feeding

Mainly insects, arachnids, woodlice - unlike common shrew, rarely takes worms. Requires 125% of body weight in food per day.

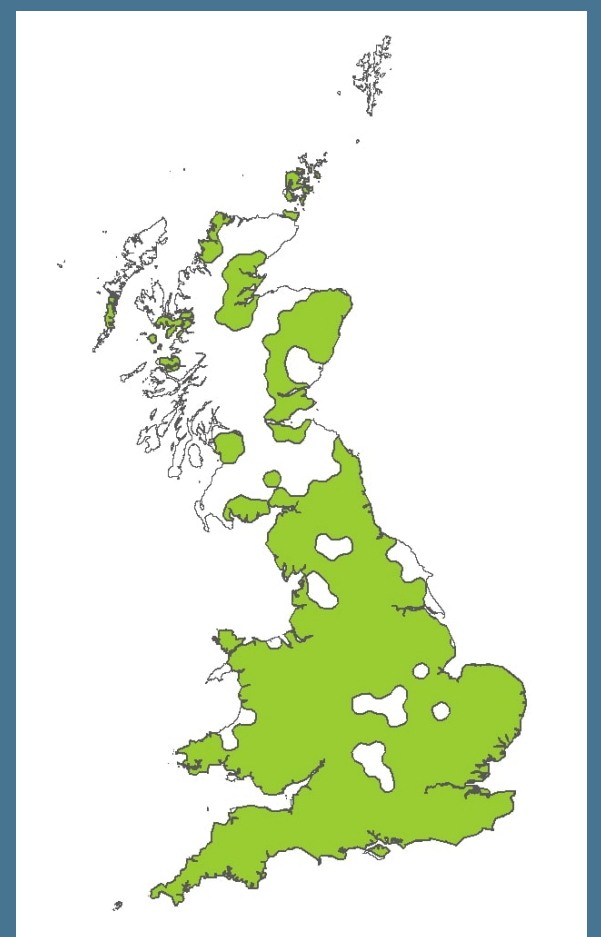
Reproduction

Less territorial during breeding season April - October. Produces 2 or 3 litters of 5 - 7 young.

Conservation & Threats

Protected under Wildlife & Countryside Act. As with all shrews, trapping may only occur under licence and care must be taken to prevent starvation, to which they are vulnerable due to their high metabolic rates.

Range



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