

Mammals Continuing the Action for Species



TEN 1st class stamps featuring mammals go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 13 April, the fourth in the Action for Species series, following the Birds, Insects and Plants sets of September 2007, April 2008 and May 2009. The stamps depict: a Humpback Whale, Wildcat, Brown Long-Eared Bat, Polecat, Sperm Whale, Water Vole, Greater Horseshoe Bat, Otter, Dormouse and Hedgehog. Designed by Jason Godfrey, the stamps are printed in litho by Cartor.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or to the nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centre (Batts Corner, Farnham postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FD1019' or 'FD1020'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Batts Corner postmark.

For sponsored handstamps and addresses of Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from Tallents House (UK/Europe £12.25; elsewhere £24.95). For a free sample copy write to: British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ •



Mammals on stamps Some of the mammals on the forthcoming stamps have featured in previous issues. The Hedgehog and Otter were both shown on the Wildlife stamps of 1977, the Wild Cat was featured in 1986 and 2004, and the Dormouse was included in the Endangered Species issue of 1998 •

series: ten of our most threatened mammals

Action for Species: Mammals prices

Set of stamps	£4.10
Presentation pack	£4.60
First Day Cover envelope	£0.30
Serviced First Day Cover (UK customers)	£5.29
Serviced First Day Cover (overseas customers)	£4.51
Stamp cards set (10 cards)	£4.00



The first day postmarks for Tallents House (FD1019) and Batts Corner, Farnham (FD1020).

Presentation pack The pack (left), was written by Dr Pat Morris, author of books on mammals, who has a specialist interest in hedgehogs, and printed by Walsall Security Printers.

mammals

Mammals of the UK

Sixty-six species of mammals occur in the British Isles, as well as a few free-living domestic animals such as goats and ponies. Of these, nearly half have been introduced from elsewhere in the world, including some of the most abundant, such as the rabbit and grey squirrel. Over two dozen species of whales and dolphins also inhabit British waters. While many are thriving, some of Britain's mammals face uncertain futures, including the ten profiled below.

Wildcat

Felis silvestris

Average weight: 5.4-6.5kg
Total length: 75-100cm

Shy and reclusive, and now confined to the wilder parts of Scotland, the wildcat resembles a tabby cat with prominent black stripes on the body and legs. Its tail is thick and rounded, and compared to the domestic cat's, also pointed, but there are many hybrids. Female wildcats can produce one family a year, in spring.

Sperm Whale

Physeter macrocephalus

Average weight: 15-40 tonnes. Total length: 10-15m

This sperm whale, with its large, blunt-nosed head, is normally found in deep waters in the north of Britain, but occasionally strays into southern and gets stranded when the tide goes out. Usually solitary, the sperm whale sometimes lives in small groups. After remaining on the surface for about 10 minutes, it then dives deep for half an hour or less, mainly on squid.

Humpback Whale

Megaptera novaeangliae

Average weight: 43 tonnes. Total length: 13-15m

This big, black whale with white under its tail is no longer seen these days of any other whale. Seen to hark to dive and feeds by sucking small fish to plates found in its upper jaw instead of teeth.

Hedgehog

Erinaceus europaeus

Average weight: 500-1200g
Total length: 20-25cm

Britain's only spiny mammal is found throughout. Normally encountered in meadows about in gardens and woodland, feeding on worms, larvae and so on. It rolls into a tight ball when disturbed, and for five to six months over winter.

Dormouse

Muscardinus avellanarius

Average weight: 10-15g
Total length: 12-15cm

This golden-yellow mammal is the only British mouse with a thick fluffy tail. Found mostly in southern England, it is usually encountered and taken over the winter. Active among the branches of shrubs and trees, it feeds on flowers, fruits and insects.

Red-footed Booby

Sula nebouxi

Large bodied terns, caught in flight or attached from the ground. In summer, females seek out warm places such as barn roofs, where, after a 70-day gestation period, they give birth to a single baby each year, nearly a third of its mother's weight.

mammals

Royal Mail First Day Cover

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South, Oyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9PB