

**Name:**

## Common dormouse

*Muscardinus avellanarius*

**UK status:**

[UK BAP Priority](#). Uncommon and local. Historic decline

**London status:**

Rare (4 sites); possibly under-recorded

**Protected status:**

- W&CA, Schedule 5 (full protection)
  - Habitats Regulations, Schedule 2
  - Habitats Directive, Annex IV (European protected species of animals)
  - Bern Convention, Appendix III
  - Wild Mammals (Protection) Act
- 'Species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England' (CRoW Act, 2000)

**Relevant London HAPs:**

Woodland; Chalk grassland; Hedgerows Statement

**Citation:**

The endearing dormouse is somewhat misleadingly named being far from common anywhere within its range. As a relatively long-lived and comparatively slow breeder, it lives at far lower densities than other small woodland rodents. The dormouse is primarily a species of plant-rich woodland with a dense shrub-layer and these essential habitat features are easily lost if management is either neglected or undertaken insensitively. Encroachment of built development can impact on populations by introducing predatory domestic cats. The importance of well-structured, inter-connected hedgerows to facilitate the species' dispersal within the landscape has recently been emphasised through conservation research



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studies. The species' national range has contracted substantially over the last century with the strongest populations now occurring in south and southeast England. In Greater London it is apparently a very rare animal: known populations include those at High Elms Country Park (where there is a dormouse nest-box scheme), Jewels Wood and at Downe Bank in LB Bromley; and on a steep railside cutting at Riddlesdown in LB Croydon. There are undoubtedly further sites involved; dormice easily go undetected and good habitat exists in the many private woods and copses of London's downland Green Belt. Managing agencies; Bromley Borough Council, Kent Wildlife Trust, Croydon Borough Council/Railtrack; Downlands Countryside Management Project; private

**Conservation priorities:**

- Monitor and maintain all known populations through careful and informed habitat management [addresses UK SAP target T1]
- Targeted borough-wide surveys of privately-owned woodlands
- Protect and maintain any new populations emerging from further surveys

**References:**

[Dormouse Action Plan - Bromley LBAP](#)