

Weasel

According to Paul, Weasels are more common in our parish than Stoats. They can be distinguished from Stoats by their much smaller size, almost non-existent tail,



pencil-like thin body and rapid ground-hugging movement, particularly obvious when they dart across a road. They are coloured rusty red-brown with white underparts. The prey of Weasels includes Mice and Voles and also, incredibly, given their tiny size, the much larger Rabbit (approx 20 centimetres long, weight of male 54 grams, shoulder height 5 centimetres).

Paul has been getting glimpses of

Weasels quite regularly over the last few years.

Stoat

Paul last saw a Stoat in our parish in 2020, feeding on a Rabbit. He recounted to



me how a Stoat will make its way through scrub woodland looking for an occupied rabbit warren using its acute sense of smell. An unsuspecting Rabbit will be dispatched by a bite or bites to the back of the neck. Stoats in southern England are the same colour as Weasels, much larger and with a long black-tipped tail.

Their total length including

tail can be up to 30 centimetres in males who can weigh up to 445 grams

Badger

Badgers are also present in good numbers in the parish. Badgers live communally in a “sett”, a series of burrows with various entrances/exits for safety. The colony

will include an old adult boar Badger, several adult males and females and young. The same Badger setts are occupied for many decades. Territorial boundaries can be marked, often in autumn, by faecal droppings including yew berries which I have seen along Beaconsfield Road most autumns since I arrived in the parish in 2006. There are active setts off Freshfield Lane, Danehill, and in Charles Smith wood close to Beaconsfield Road and Brabies Farm. (There may be a third sett in Danewood.) Badgers are nocturnal hunters so be very careful when driving at night through the parish. Scientists who have put out food and erected webcams nearby to watch the night-time antics of mammals have found that Badgers are dominant over all else including Foxes. Don't mess with " Brock ".

Clive Poole, retired Voluntary Ranger, Ashdown Forest



Danehill Parish Historical Society

Mapping Danehill Burial Ground: Members of the Society

Members will report on the interesting findings that have come out of the project, the history of the old and the current burial ground and of some of the families interred. Also an exhibition of highlights of the genealogical research.

Tuesday, July 25th. Doors open at 7:15 for a 7:30pm start

Danehill Memorial Hall

Members free, visitors £4

Next Magazine

Many thanks to all contributors to this issue. The deadline for the next issue is Tuesday 18 July. The mailbox for hard copy is at Marten Cottage, Coach and Horses Lane.

Electronic copy to: parishmagazine@allsaintsdanehill.org.uk

It is helpful if the format of copy is an A5 document with 1 cm margins and point size 11.

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