

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE MODULAR SCHEME

Sheet updated: September 2010

Module Code EE71	Module Title Water Voles (I): Ecology, Habitat Assessment and Survey Techniques	Module Leader Mike Dean, BSc, MSc. C.Env, Cresswell Associates
School which owns module	Real Estate and Land Management	
Programme(s) to which module belongs	Applied Ecology for Professionals (elective)	
Module Level 7	Module Credits 7.5	Pre-Requisites None
Minimum Study Time 75 hours	Contact Hours within Study Time 8 hours plus additional tutor support	Teaching Period 1 day course from October onwards
<p>Module Content</p> <p>This module is aimed at professional ecologists who wish to learn about the ecology of water voles, survey techniques and their relevant legislation.</p> <p>The one day course provides an introduction to water vole biology in the context of development projects, with particular reference to appropriate survey methodologies, habitat assessment and their legislative protection. There will be a brief introduction impact assessment and mitigation for development projects. A field trip will demonstrate survey techniques and habitat assessment.</p>		
<p>Module Outcomes</p> <p>To achieve credit for this module, students must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the life history and social organisation of water voles, and how these influence when, where and how surveys for these species should be devised and justify their implementation. 2. Assess and evaluate field signs for water voles. 3. Formulate and implement habitat assessments for water voles. 4. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the legislation relating to water voles and its application. 		
Assessment	Description	Weighting
Coursework	(1) Formal letter to Cirencester Town Council justifying the importance of local water vole population, using evidence obtained during field trip and demonstrating data handling skills.	30%
	(2) Assignment of approximately 2,500 words to assess for SNH the water vole populations in Strathclyde and Ayrshire.	70%

Key Text:

Students should be familiar with the content of the following:

Strachan, R. and Moorhouse, T. (2006). *Water Vole Conservation Handbook*. (2nd edition). Wildlife Conservation Research Unit, University of Oxford.

Other supporting information:

Strachan, R. and Jefferies, D.J. (1993). *The Water Vole in Britain 1989-1990: its Distribution and Changing Status*. The Vincent Wildlife Trust, London.

Strachan, R. (2010). *Water Voles*. (2nd edition). Whittet Books.

Natural England (2006). *Halting the Decline: Refuges and National Key Sites for Water Voles R386*. English Nature, Peterborough.

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/R386>

Natural England (2008). *Water Vole Guidance for Planners and Developers*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Natural England (2008). *Water Voles and Development: Licensing Policy TIN042*. English Nature, Peterborough.

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/TIN042>

Natural England (2008) *Water Voles – the Law in Practice NE86*. English Nature, Peterborough.

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE86>

UK Biodiversity Action Plan for Water Voles

<http://www.ukbap.org.uk/ukplans.aspx?id=115>

It is planned to use some elements of e-learning as part of delivery of the module to support module attendees. Copies of PowerPoint slides, key references and web resources will be made available online, along with email support for assignments.