

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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Crathes is massive for mammals

Conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland's Crathes Castle, near Banchory in Aberdeenshire, has turned out to be massive for mammals.

A new Mammal Atlas of North East Scotland and the Cairngorms has revealed the results of a species count carried out by volunteers and organised by the Northeast Scotland Records Centre. The 2km² area with Crathes Castle at its centre turned out to have the highest number and widest range of mammals concentrated within it.

Twenty-seven different species were recorded, ranging from bats and badgers, to red squirrels, roe deer, mice and voles.

Toni Watt, of the National Trust for Scotland's North East Ranger service said:

"We always knew Crathes was a great place to see Scotland's wild mammals but now it's official!

"As the authors of the mammal atlas say, this is because Crathes estate is made up of a diversity of habitats, including coniferous and broadleaved woodlands, waterways and mixed farming. The good news is that we have plenty of formalised countryside access to encourage people to come onto the estate to see all of the wildlife we have here for themselves, not just mammals.

"One of the more unusual mammals we see here is the pine marten. These beautiful animals have chocolate brown fur with a buttery orange throat patch. Once they would have been seen all over the north east but they declined due to historic woodland loss and persecution. They have only been seen again in Aberdeenshire very recently and we have caught them on camera traps at Crathes and they have also been spotted by lucky visitors at dusk.

"I hope this news encourage more people to come to Crathes for a walk in breath-taking countryside with a very good chance of seeing some of our magnificent wildlife. The possibilities are endless, especially as we are putting on special animal tracks and walks for children over the school holidays."

