

ALL ABOUT MICE

*'Twas the night before
Christmas, when all
through the house not a
creature was stirring, not
even a mouse'
(Clement Clarke Moore).*



The sleeping mouse was American, but probably the same species as the **British house mouse**. Originally native to Asia, mice have followed humans around the world. Britain is home to three other mouse species.



The field mouse, also known as the wood mouse, is the most common and widespread. Field mice have an important role in woodlands, as any stored seeds that they subsequently forget will germinate into new trees. If tree seeds are scarce in a particular year, mouse numbers decline, and this affects owls, who rely on them as



prey.

The harvest mouse is the smallest mouse and lives in areas with tall grasses. Their nests are globe-shaped, woven from grass and located above the ground. Harvest mice have prehensile tails, which means they can use them to hang on when climbing.



The hazel dormouse, as depicted in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, isn't a true mouse. It has golden fur, big ears and a very fluffy tail. Dormice spend most of their lives in trees. They are uncommon in this area, being most common in southern England, and, in some places, are being closely monitored and assisted through the provision of nest boxes for hibernation. There is some great information about dormice here: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/blog/quest/26-wild-essays-dormouse>.

Rosemary Collier

Images: Harvest mouse– Dulcie Fairweather, Dormouse -Wildlife Trust

MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE IN TYSOE

Work continues on the wildflower areas in the churchyard and School Lane and the plants for the new wildlife hedge in the churchyard have been ordered – bird-friendly species and some buckthorn for caterpillars of the brimstone butterfly. A hedgehog bunker has been constructed under some trees in the churchyard (thank you to Jackie Keyser and Graham Hall for the materials, and to Jackie for helping to build it) and we hope it will be used! Some of you may have noticed that a badger (or several) has been digging in the churchyard and making lots of potholes in the grass. Take care if you walk across the grass. We will be starting to mark up the additional areas where we plan to sow wildflower seeds and if you're interested in being involved, or have any questions about the location of the plots, please contact Beverley Thorpe, Parish Clerk

Rosemary Collier



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