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POLECAT DISTRIBUTION SURVEY

The aim of this survey is to collect information on the distribution of the polecat both past and present. The survey has been running for about 18 months and has provided a fairly large number of new sources of records. A number of museums have also been found to have 'new' records. This raw material will in time be used with all the other information for a long term (full-time) study of polecat distribution. The distribution of the polecat is increasing slowly after the range was reduced to a small area around Aberystwyth, of 40 miles radius. The study aims to document the increase in range of the species. The survey has so far been running for nearly 16 years and although this sounds a long time only about 800 records have been collected during this period.

The information required is details of all specimens that museums have in their collections. Specific information required includes 1. Sex, 2. Form of record i.e. skull, skin, mount, 3. Locality 4. Grid reference, 5. Date, 6. Museum Accession No. 7. Can the material be examined? 8. Can bodies (fresh) be provided? (they can be returned if required), 9. Measurements.

Records from the period between 1800 to the present day would be particularly useful as there is more work to be done on the rate of decline of the polecat. The main source of these records will be Church Warden's Accounts and any records of this type will be gratefully received.

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