

# ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS NOTE:

## WATER VOLES (1)

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Ecology & Environmental Services

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## Water Voles

### Did you know?

The water vole is fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and is a priority conservation species.

You're breaking the law if you: intentionally or recklessly capture, kill or injure a water vole or destroy or disturb their burrows without an appropriate licence from Natural England.

### How do I recognise a Water vole?

Measuring between 12 and 20cm Water voles have a glossy, silky, yellowish-brown to dark brown coat of fur, a blunt nose, a rounded body and a long, slightly hairy, tail.



### Are there other signs?



Burrow entrances  
40-80mm wide



Feeding sticks  
50-100mm long



Droppings (tic-tacs)  
8-12mm long

### Why does it matter?

Unless undertaking works in accordance with a Natural England, Natural Resources Wales or Scottish Natural Heritage species licence, works that effect water voles could result in the forfeit of plant and equipment and fines of up to £5,000 and six months in prison per offence.

### Do

- ✓ Check the area for Water voles before starting work.
- ✓ Immediately stop work and report any burrows or other signs found on site or close to the working area.
- ✓ Seek guidance from a competent person before starting work in a known water vole area.

### Do not

- X Carry out any works that are likely to disturb, damage or destroy a water vole burrow without an appropriate licence in place and competent person present.
- X Capture, kill or attempt to capture or kill a water vole.
- X Work within 5m of a water vole burrow entrance.

**For more information contact HalpinRobbins:  
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