

**European Community Directive  
on the Conservation of Natural Habitats  
and of Wild Fauna and Flora  
(92/43/EEC)**


**Second Report by the United Kingdom under  
Article 17  
on the implementation of the Directive  
from January 2001 to December 2006**

**Conservation status assessment for  
Species:  
S1358 - *Mustela putorius* - Polecat**

The information in this assessment corresponds to the "species fact sheet" submitted by the UK to the European Union in February 2008 (second and final submission). Please note that this is a section of the UK's report. For the complete report visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17>

Please cite as: Joint Nature Conservation Committee. 2007. *Second Report by the UK under Article 17 on the implementation of the Habitats Directive from January 2001 to December 2006*. Peterborough: JNCC. Available from: [www.jncc.gov.uk/article17](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17)

**Species Name: *Mustela putorius***

<b>1. National level</b>	
Species Code	S1358
Member State	United Kingdom
Biogeographic regions concerned within the Member state	ATL
1.1 Range map	 A map of the United Kingdom showing the distribution of the species <i>Mustela putorius</i> . The distribution is indicated by shaded areas. The shaded regions include the Shetland Islands, the Orkney Islands, the Hebrides, the Scottish Highlands, the Scottish Lowlands, the English Midlands, the English East Midlands, the English South Midlands, the English South East, and the English South West. The map also shows the outline of Ireland and the Channel Islands.

## 1.2 Distribution map



## 2. Biogeographic level

### 2.1 Biogeographic region

ATL

### 2.2 Published sources and/or websites

BATTERSBY, J. (ED.) and TRACKING MAMMALS PARTNERSHIP 2005. UK Mammals: Species Status and Population Trends. Joint Nature Conservation Committee/Tracking Mammals Partnership.

BIRKS, J.D.S. and KITCHENER, A.C. (EDS.) 1999. The Distribution and Status of the Polecat *Mustela putorius* in Britain in the 1990s. Vincent Wildlife Trust.

HARRIS, S., MORRIS, P., WRAY, S. AND YALDEN, D. 1995. A Review of British Mammals. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

MACDONALD, D.W. AND TATTERSALL, F.T. 2001 Britain's Mammals: The Challenge for Conservation. Mammals Trust UK/WildCru.

Map Data Sources

	Biological Records Centre - Mammals and Irish Otter Databases (via NBN Gateway).			
	Vincent Wildlife Trust polecat data (1959-2006).			
	BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey mammal data (1995-2005).			
<b>2.3 Range of species in the biogeographic region or marine region</b>				
2.3.1 Surface range of the species (sq km)	129297			
2.3.2 Date of range determination	1990-2006			
2.3.3 Quality of data concerning range	Moderate			
2.3.4 Range trend	Increasing (+)			
2.3.5 Range trend magnitude (%)	Unknown			
2.3.6 Range trend period	1990-2006			
2.3.7 Reasons for reported trend	3 - Direct human influence; 4 - Indirect anthropo or zoogenic influence;			
<b>2.4 Population</b>				
2.4.1 Population size estimation	Minimum	63240	Maximum	63240
	Units	Individuals		
2.4.2 Date of population estimation	2004			
2.4.3 Method used for population estimation	2 - Extrapolation from surveys of part of the population			
2.4.4 Quality of population data	Moderate			
2.4.5 Population trend	Increasing (+)			
2.4.6 Population trend magnitude (%)	Unknown			
2.4.7 Population trend period	1995-2005			
2.4.8 Reasons for reported trend	3 - Direct human influence;			
2.4.9 Justification of % thresholds for trends (optional)	Not applicable			
2.4.10 Main pressures	110 - Use of pesticides; 141 - Abandonment of pastoral systems; 243 - trapping, poisoning, poaching; 502 - routes, autoroutes; 850 - Modification of hydrographic functioning, general;			
2.4.11 Threats	110 - Use of pesticides; 141 - Abandonment of pastoral systems; 243 - trapping, poisoning, poaching; 502 - routes, autoroutes; 850 - Modification of hydrographic functioning, general; 960 - Interspecific faunal relations; 964 - genetic pollution;			
<b>2.5 Habitat for the species in the biogeographic region or marine region</b>				
2.5 Habitats for the species	A radio-tracking study undertaken by Birks and Kitchener (1999) found that <i>M. putorius</i> ' mean home range was 213ha and 125ha for males and females, respectively. <i>M. putorius</i> are primarily nocturnal; 72.4 % of activity is undertaken in the dark. Activity during the day was typically recorded from <i>M. putorius</i> that were underground in rabbit warrens, in farm buildings, or in thick cover. The study found that woodland edges, field boundaries and			

	farm buildings were preferred habitats; farm buildings were particularly so during winter months. A strong association was also identified between <i>M. putorius</i> and rabbit warrens.
2.5.2 Area estimation (sq km)	Unknown
2.5.3 Date of estimation	05/2007
2.5.4 Quality of data	Poor
2.5.5 Trend of the habitat	Unknown (X)
2.5.6 Trend period	1994-2006
2.5.7 Reasons for reported trend	Not applicable
<b>2.6 Future prospects</b>	
2.6 Future prospects for the species	Good prospects_Species expected to survive and prosper
<b>2.7 Complementary information</b>	
2.7.1 Favourable reference range (sq km)	129297
2.7.2 Favourable reference population	38381
2.7.3 Suitable Habitat for the species	Unknown
2.7.4 Other relevant information	
<b>2.8 Conclusions</b> <i>(assessment of conservation status at end of reporting period)</i>	
(2.3) Range	(FV) - Favourable
(2.4) Population	(FV) - Favourable
(2.5) Habitat for the species	(XX) - Unknown
(2.6) Future prospects	(FV) - Favourable
Overall assessment	(FV) - Favourable