

Mammals

Little more than 80 mammals occurs in Sweden.

40 of these are listed below.

The animals are ordered by taxonomy with slides noting each new order

Note that the listing is partly hierarchical so both a larger group and one or more taxa within it is discussed as separate taxa. This hierarchy is noted in the upper right corner when present.

Cetartiodactyla: Even-toed ungulates/Partåiga hovdjur



Alces alces Moose/Älg



Identification

- Huge "cowlike" deer.

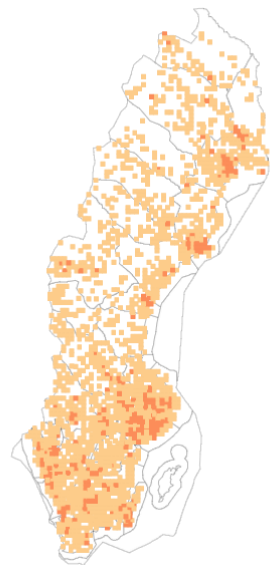
Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

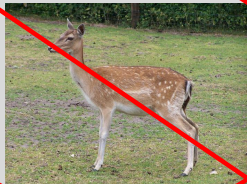
- Primarily seen in very wet areas.

Head-body length	200 – 290 cm
Tail length	7 – 10 cm
Weight	275 – 800 kg



Capreolus capreolus

Roe deer/Rådjur



Chordata

Mammalia

Cetartiodactyla

Cervidae

Capreolus capreolus

Identification

- Smallest deer in Sweden.
- Males have smaller antlers than other deer.
- Both genders can be recognized by pure white backend.

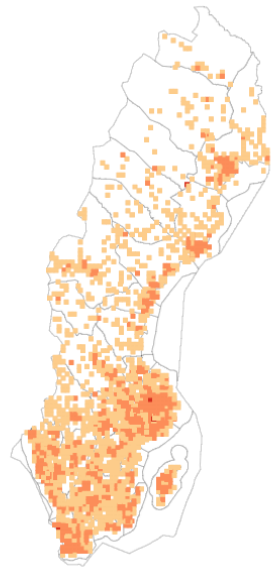
Potential misidentifications

- Compare with red deer and fallow deer (Mammals nr. 3 and 4).

Habitat

- Prefer woodlands/parklands.
- Particularly active dusk and dawn.

Head-body length	95 – 135 cm
Tail length	2 – 4 cm
Weight	16 – 35 kg



Dama dama

Fallow deer/Dovhjort



Identification

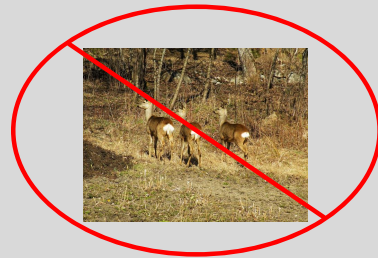
- Males recognizable by "plates" (wide parts) on antlers.
- Spots remain on adults (other deer only spotted as fawns).
- Black stripe on backend (unlike roe deer).

Potential misidentifications

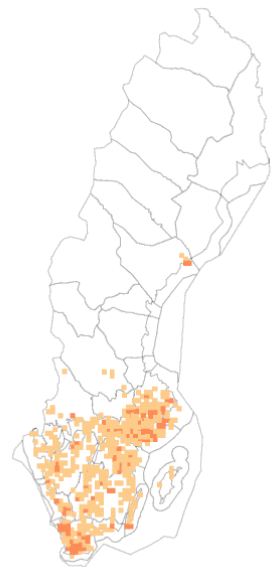
- Compare with fallow deer and roe deer (Mammals nr. 2 and 4).

Habitat

- Prefers deciduous forests.



Head-body length	130 – 170 cm
Tail length	16 – 19 cm
Weight	35 – 80 kg



Cervus elephus

Red deer/Kronhjort



Identification

- Larger than fallow and roe deer.
- Males have widely branches antlers.
- Red stripe on backend (unlike roe deer).

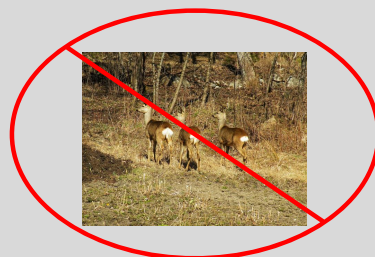
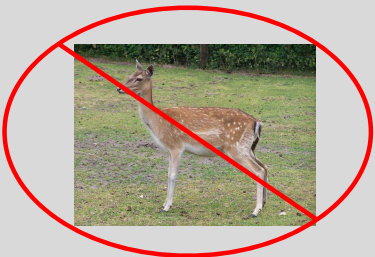
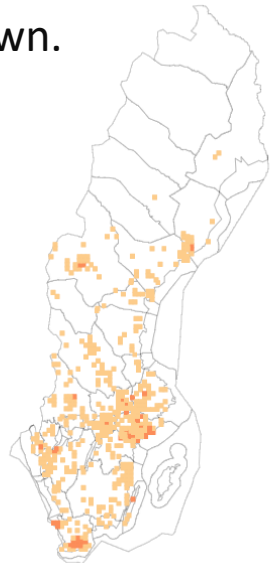
Potential misidentifications

- Compare with red deer and roe deer (Mammals nr. 2 and 3).

Habitat

- Diverse habitats.
- Active all day but particular dusk and dawn.

Head-body length	165 – 260 cm
Tail length	12 – 15 cm
Weight	Up to 250 kg



Sus scrofa

Wild boar/Vildsvin



Identification

- Only Swedish species looking like a pig.

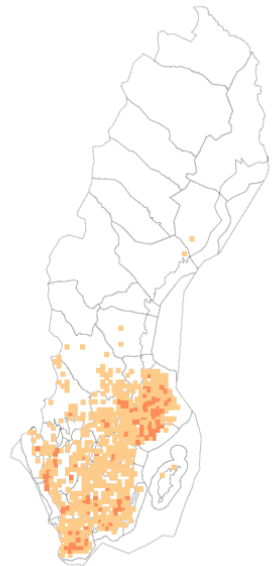
Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Prefers deciduous forests.
- Mainly active at dusk, night and dawn.

Head-body length	100 – 167 cm
Tail length	6 – 28 cm
Weight	30 – 148 kg



Cetacea Whales/Valar



Balaenoptera acutorostrata



Delphinapterus leucas



Lagenorhynchus acutus

Identification

- Only fully marine Swedish mammals.

Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Marine environments.
- Most species are only very rarely seen in Sweden.

Head-body length	1.3 – 1.9 m
Weight	35 kg – 150 ton



Phocoena phocoena Harbour porpoise/Tumlare



Identification

- Smaller than any other whale.
- Marginally overlapping in size with dolphins.
- Blunt forehead unlike dolphins which have "beak".
- Low dorsal fin unlike dolphins which have sharp fin.

Potential misidentifications

- Potentially mistaken for a dolphin but see above.

Habitat

- Regularly seen close land.
- Mainly found in water lower than 50 meters.

Head-body length	1.3 – 1.9 m
Weight	35 – 70 kg



Carnivora: Carnivores/Rovdjur



Lynx lynx

Lynx/Lo



Identification

- Only wild cat in Sweden.

Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Mature dense forest.
- Very shy and mainly found far from humans.
- Mainly active at dusk and dawn.
- Records in Sweden not publicly available.

Head-body length	80 – 130 cm
Tail length	11 – 25 cm
Weight	18 – 25 kg



Canis lupus

Wolf/Varg



Identification

- By far the largest canid in Sweden.

Potential misidentifications

- Can only plausibly be mistaken for feral dogs.

Habitat

- Widely adaptable to nearly all habitats but occurring in very low densities in Sweden.
- Mainly nocturnal.
- Records in Sweden not publicly available.

Head-body length	90 – 150 cm
Tail length	30 – 50 cm
Weight	18 – 60 kg



Vulpes vulpes

Red fox/Rödräv



Identification

- Readily identifiable by its dog like shape small size and red color.

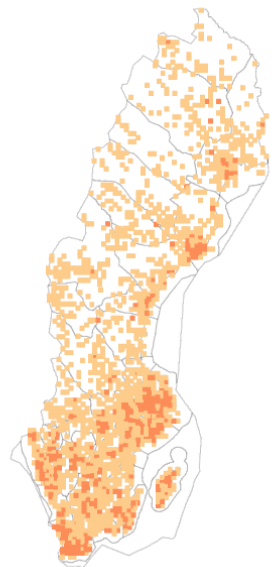
Potential misidentifications

- Arctic fox (only in Arctic Sweden) has similar body shape but is smaller and different color.

Habitat

- Generalist, often seen I cities.
- In the wild often active at daytime.
- In cities more nocturnal.

Head-body length	58 – 90 cm
Tail length	32 – 48 cm
Weight	6 – 10 kg



Nyctereutes procyonoides

Raccoon dog/Mårdhund



Identification

- Short legs.
- Looks almost like a mixture of a dog and a mustelid.
- "Raccoon like" face.

Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Invasive.
- Not yet known from western Sweden but it is likely spreading.
- Nocturnal.
- Inactive during hard winter.

Head-body length	55 – 80 cm
Tail length	15 – 26 cm
Weight	5 – 10 kg



Meles meles Badger/Grävling



Identification

- Readily identifiable by size, shape and colour.
- Distinct black stripes in otherwise white face.
- Stout.

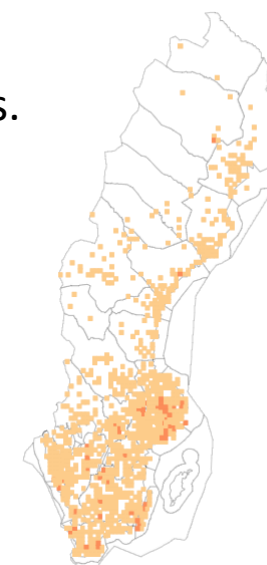
Potential misidentifications

- None in Western Sweden.
- Body shape and size similar to wolverine but wolverine colours are nowhere similar and wolverine is only found in northern Sweden.

Habitat

- Prefer mixtures of forest and open areas.
- Mainly active at dusk, night and dawn.

Head-body length	67 – 80 cm
Tail length	35 – 47 cm
Weight	~10 kg



Martes martes

Pine marten/Mård



Identification

- Easily recognizable by brown colour with yellow spot on neck.

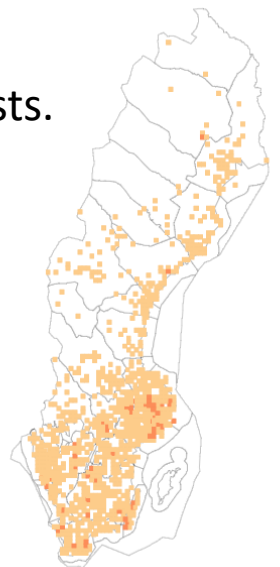
Potential misidentifications

- None in Western Sweden.
- *Martes foina* (which has a small introduced population in in Skåne) looks similar.
- *Martes foina* has white rather than yellow spot on neck.

Habitat

- Prefers mature coniferous or mixed forests.
- Less active at daytime.

Head-body length	36 – 56 cm
Tail length	17 – 28 cm
Weight	480 – 1050 g



Mustela putorius

European polecat/Illr



Identification

- Elongated body.
- Dark brown with white nose and generally white chin.

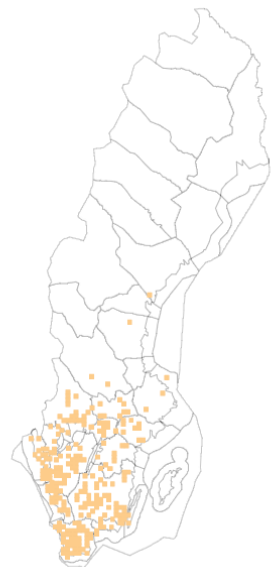
Potential misidentifications

- Body shape but not color similar to other *Musela* and to mink.

Habitat

- Wooded semi open areas. Common in farmland.
- Mainly nocturnal.

Head-body length	29 – 46 cm
Tail length	1 – 14 cm
Weight	440 – 1500 g



Mustela erminea Stoat/Hermelin



Identification

- Summer-form brown with black tip of tail.
- Winter-form white with black tip of tail.

Potential misidentifications

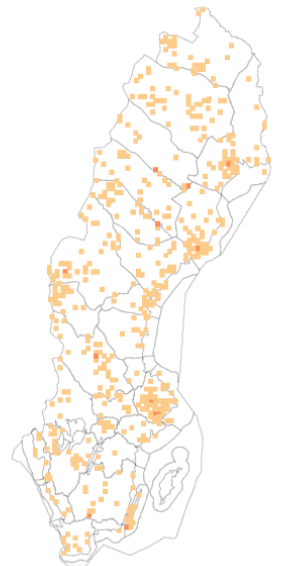
- Both summer and winter form looks similar to least weasel (Mammals nr. 16). Least weasel is however much smaller and lack black tail.

Habitat

- Seen in very diverse habitats.
- Active at either day or night.



Head-body length	16 – 31 cm
Tail length	9 – 14 cm
Weight	90 – 440 g



Mustela nivalis

Least weasel/Småvessla



Identification

- By far the smallest mustelid in Sweden.
- Tail not black.
- Summer-form brown.
- Winter-form white (no change in southern Sweden).

Potential misidentifications

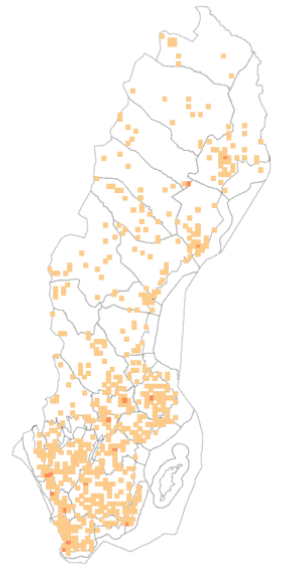
- Stoat (Mammals nr. 15) looks similar but is bigger and has a black tip of tail.

Habitat

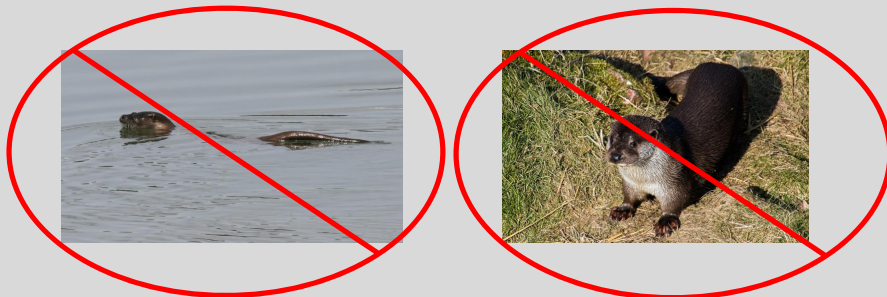
- Seen in very diverse habitats.
- Active at either day or night.



Head-body length	<20 cm
Tail length	3 – 13 cm
Weight	8 – 23 g



Neovison vison Mink/Mink



Identification

- Swims with back above water.
- Substantially smaller than otters.
- Dark-brown to black.
- Weasel shaped face.
- Pointier face than otters.

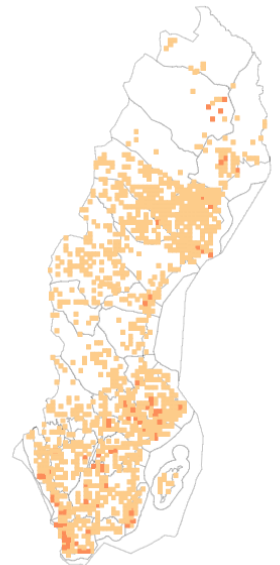
Potential misidentifications

- Otter (Mammals nr. 18) is similar but bigger and has different shaped head.

Habitat

- Near still or slow running water.
- Mainly active at dusk, night or dawn.

Head-body length	30 – 47 cm
Tail length	32 – 45 cm
Weight	0.45 – 1.8 kg



Lutra lutra Otter/Utter



Identification

- Swims with only head above water.
- Substantially larger than mink.
- Generally lighter than mink.
- Seal or dog shaped face.
- Rounder face than mink.

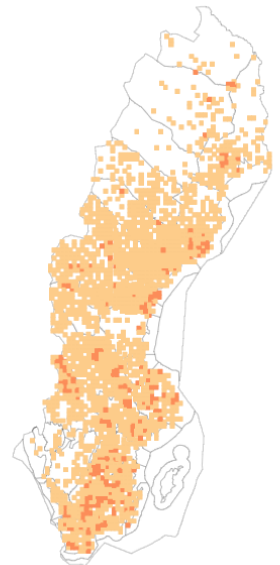
Potential misidentifications

- Mink (Mammals nr. 17) is similar but smaller and has weasel shaped head.

Habitat

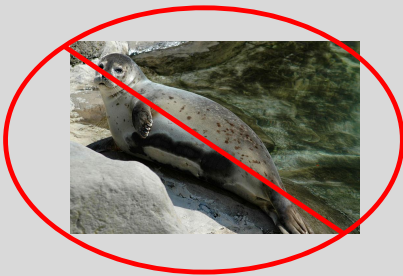
- Variable types of freshwater.
- Occasionally also marine.
- Mainly nocturnal.

Head-body length	60 – 90 cm
Tail length	35 – 47 cm
Weight	6 – 17 kg



Halichoerus grypus

Grey seal/Gråsäl



Identification

- Very large for a seal.
- Elongated head.
- Straight line from forehead to nose (see picture and compare with next slide).

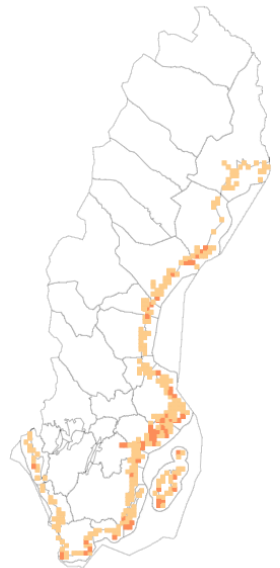
Potential misidentifications

- Other seals.

Habitat

- Prefers rocky shores.
- Spends a lot of time resting.

Head-body length	2.1 – 3.3 m
Weight	125 – 315 kg



Phoca vitulina

Harbor seal/Knubbsäl

LC



Identification

- Smaller than grey seals.
- Rounder head.
- Clearly concave between nose and forehead.

Potential misidentifications

- In western Sweden see grey seal (Mammals nr. 19).
- In Baltic sea also ringed seal. Ringed seals have distinct white rings on a black fur.

Habitat

- Mainly seen on sandy areas but also occur in rocky coasts.
- Mainly feed at day time.

Head-body length 1.2 – 2.0 m

Weight 45 – 130 kg



Chiroptera: Bats/Fladdermöss



Vespertilionidae

Vespertilionidae/Läderlappar



Eptesicus nilsoni



Pipistrellus pygmaeus



Myotis daubentonii

Identification

- Only mammals with wings.

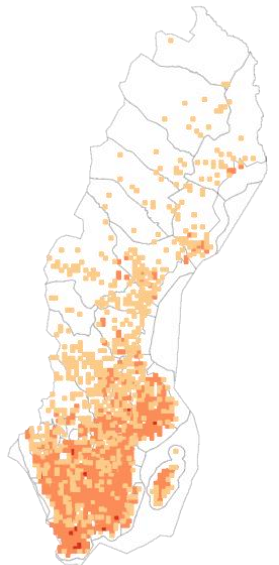
Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Nocturnal but sometime seen at dusk and dawn.

Head-body length	36 – 89 mm
Tail length	23 – 60 mm
Weight	3.5 – 40 g



Plecotus sp.

Long-eared bats/Långöron



Identification

- Extremely long ears >3 cm.

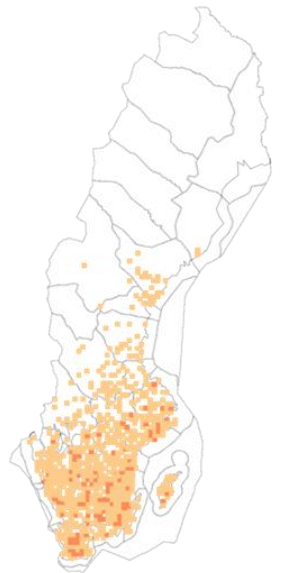
Potential misidentifications

- A few other bats can have large ears (up to 2 cm).

Habitat

- Prefers open woodland.
- Generally emerges relatively late at night.

Head-body length	40 – 58 mm
Tail length	37 – 55 mm
Weight	5 – 14 g

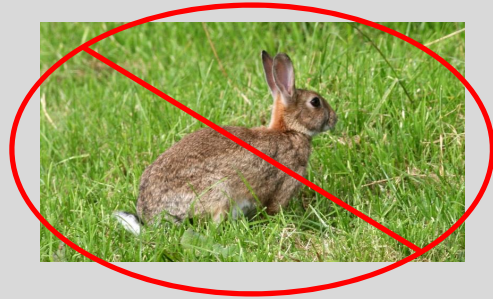


Lagomorpha: Hares/Hardjur



Lepus europaeus

European hare/Fälthare



Identification

- Ear tip black (unlike rabbit).
- Top of tail black (unlike mountain hare).
- Substantially larger than rabbits.
- Do not change color in winter.

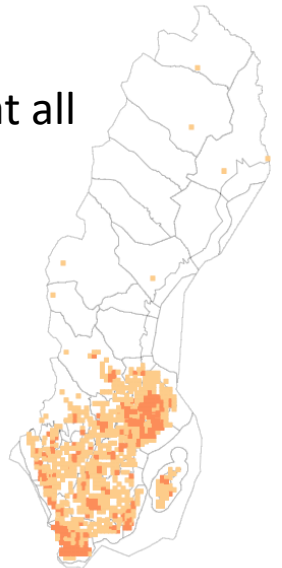
Potential misidentifications

- Mountain hare or rabbit (Mammals nr. 24-25) are similar but see above.

Habitat

- Prefers open areas, but rests in woods.
- Mainly nocturnal but potentially active at all times.

Head-body length	48 – 70 cm
Tail length	7 – 13 cm
Weight	2.5 – 7.0 kg



Lepus timidus

Mountain hare/Skogshare



Identification

- Ear tip black (unlike rabbit).
- Tip of tail white.
- Some populations change to white in winter.
- Substantially larger than rabbits.
- Shorter ears than European hare.
- Shorter tail than European hare.

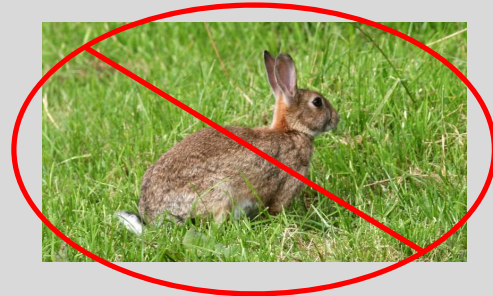
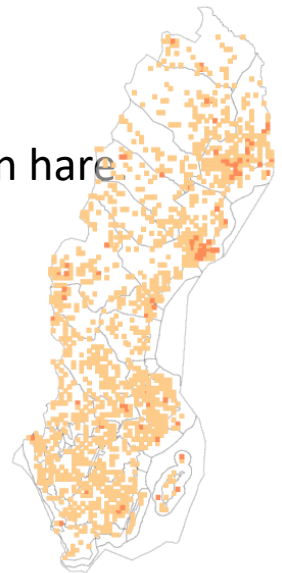
Potential misidentifications

- European hare or rabbit (Mammals nr. 23 and 25) are similar but see above.

Habitat

- Prefer rockier hillier areas than European hare
- Active at dusk, night and dawn.

Head-body length	46 – 61 cm
Tail length	4 – 8 cm
Weight	2.0 – 5.8 kg



Oryctolagus cuniculus

European rabbit/Vildkanin



Identification

- Substantially smaller than hares.
- Tip of ears brown.

Potential misidentifications

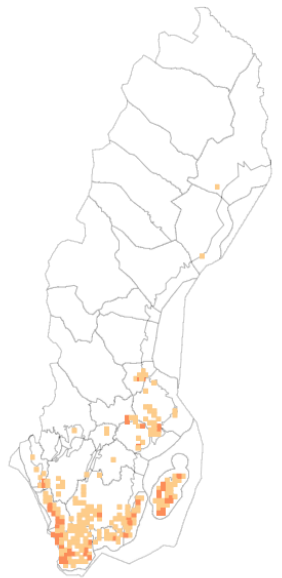
- Hares (Mammals nr. 23-24) but they are much larger and have black tip of ears.

Habitat

- Prefers meadows and grasslands.
- Mainly dusk, night and dawn.



Head-body length	34 – 50 cm
Tail length	4 – 8 cm
Weight	1.2 – 2.5 kg



Rodentia: Rodents/Gnagare



Sciurus vulgaris

Red squirrel/Ekorre

LC



Identification

- Arboreal rodent with extremely bushy tail.
- Very distinct morphology.

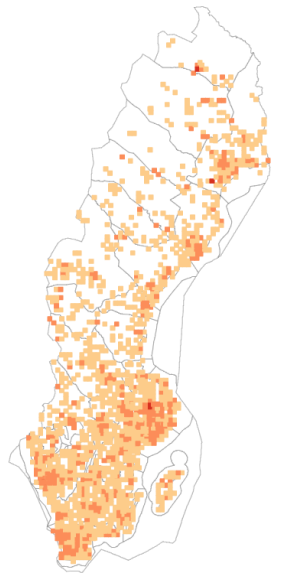
Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Arboreal.
- Trees in parks and forest.
- Higher abundance in coniferous forests.
- Diurnal.

Head-body length	18 – 24 cm
Tail length	14 – 20 cm
Weight	250 – 350 g



Castor fiber

Eurasian beaver/Bäver

LC



Identification

- Very large aquatic rodent.
- Completely outside the size range of other rodents.
- Tail flattened like a paddle.

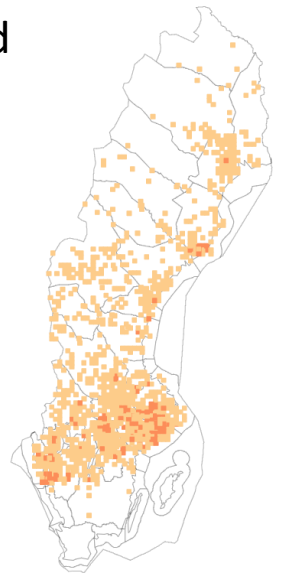
Potential misidentifications

- From a distance potentially muskrat (Mammals nr. 35).

Habitat

- Near water.
- Builds dams in slow running streams and small rivers.
- Mainly nocturnal.

Head-body length	74 – 81 cm
Tail length	28 – 38 cm
Weight	12.5 – 30 kg



Muscardinus avellanarius

Common dormouse/Hasselmus



Identification

- Very bushy tail (when compared to other mice).
- Long tail.

Potential misidentifications

- May initially look like some smaller Muridae (Mammals nr. 30-32).
- Muridae tails are however distinctly less bushy.

Habitat

- Prefers semi-closed deciduous woodland.
- Nocturnal, hibernates in winter.

Head-body length	60 – 90 mm
Tail length	55 – 80 mm
Weight	15 – 30 g



Sicista betulina

Northern birch mouse/Buskmus



Identification

- Distinct black line across entire body.
- Very long tail.

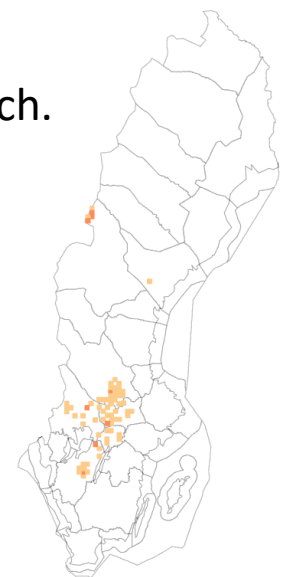
Potential misidentifications

- Likely no similar species in Sweden.
- *Apodemus agrarius* is known from one record (introduced) also has a black line.
- It has a tail length of ~75% of body., whereas Northern birch mouse has longer tail than body.

Habitat

- Prefers wet woodland dominated by birch.
- Nocturnal, hibernates in winter.

Head-body length	50 – 70 mm
Tail length	76 – 110 mm
Weight	6.5 – 13 g



Micromys minutus

Harvest mouse/Dvärgmus



Identification

- Smallest rodent in Sweden.
- Tail ~95 % of body.
- Tail prehensile.
- Small ears (for family).
- Reddish upper side.

Potential misidentifications

- Can be mistaken for field mouse (Mammals nr. 31) but they are larger and has larger ears.

Habitat

- Generally seen ~0.5 meter above ground in large grasses or small bushes in open areas.
- Nocturnal.

Head-body length	50 – 80 mm
Tail length	50 – 70 mm
Weight	5 – 11 g



Apodemus sp.

Field mice/Skogsmus



Identification

- Large ears.
- Reddish upper side.
- Sharp colour separation between upper and underside.
- Upper side of feet white.
- Tail similar length to body.

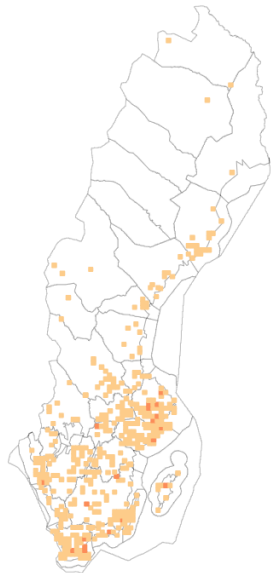
Potential misidentifications

- Can be mistaken for harvest and House mouse (Mammals nr. 30 and 32), see these.

Habitat

- Mainly woodland.
- Mainly nocturnal.

Head-body length	88 – 130 mm
Tail length	69 – 135 mm
Weight	10 – 45 g



Mus musculus

House mouse/Husmus

LC



Identification

- Colour variable but often diffuse separation between upper and underside.
- Upper side often grey to black.
- Upper side of feet grey.
- Tail similar length to body and large ears.
- Hairy tails

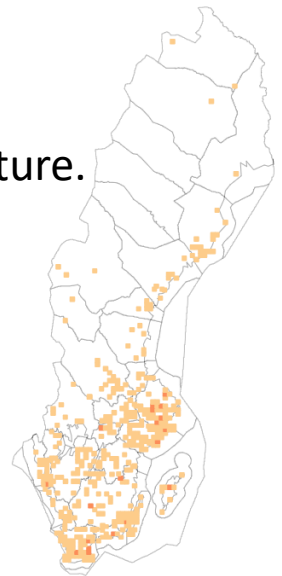
Potential misidentifications

- Can be mistaken for field mouse or rats (Mammals nr. 31 and 33), see these.

Habitat

- Mainly near humans but also seen in nature.
- Mainly nocturnal.

Head-body length	72 – 103 mm
Tail length	70 – 95 mm
Weight	12 – 22 g



Rattus sp. Rats/Råttor



Identification

- Much larger than rest of family.
- Tail appear naked without magnification.
- Variable color from brown to black.

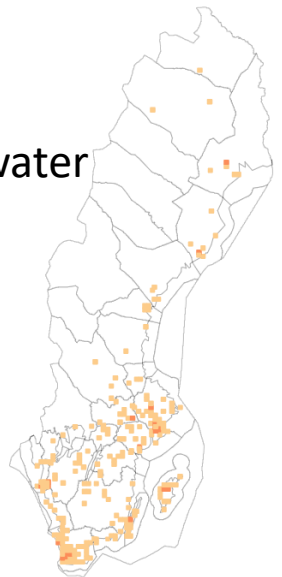
Potential misidentifications

- Small individuals can be mistaken for house mouse.
- House mouse however have distinctly hairy tails.
- Swimming individuals can be mistaken for Water voles (Mammals nr. 36).
- Water voles have smaller ears and shorter tails.

Habitat

- Generally near buildings, but also near water in parks and gardens.

Head-body length	150 – 290 mm
Tail length	115 – 260 mm
Weight	145 – 520 g



Cricetidae

Cricetidae/Sorkartade gnagare



Microtus agrestis



Myodes glareolus

Identification

- Shorter tails generally less than 50% of body.
- Noticeably smaller ears than Muridae.

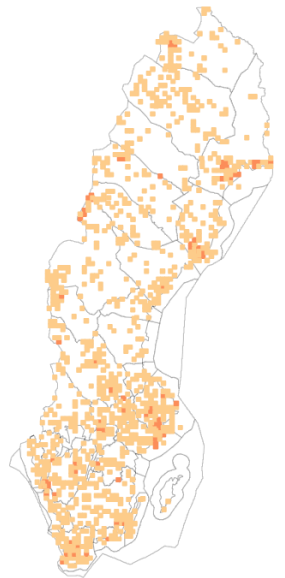
Potential misidentifications

- The four genera of Muridae (Mammals nr. 31-34) but they all have larger ears and longer tails.

Habitat

- Different species found in nearly all habitats.

Head-body length	78 – 240 mm
Tail length	10 – 146 mm
Weight	10 – 1800 g



Ondatra zibethicus

Muskrat/Bisam



Identification

- Large aquatic rodent.
- Tail somewhat flattened but much less in a beaver.

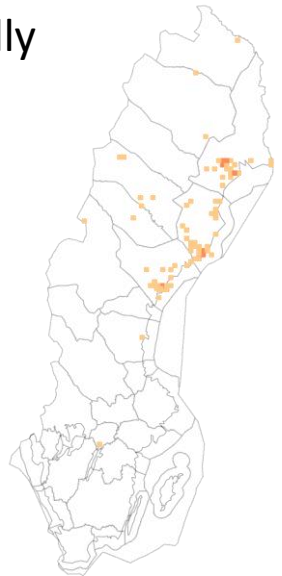
Potential misidentifications

- At a distance potentially a beaver (Mammals nr. 27).
- Substantially smaller and with less flattened tail than a beaver.

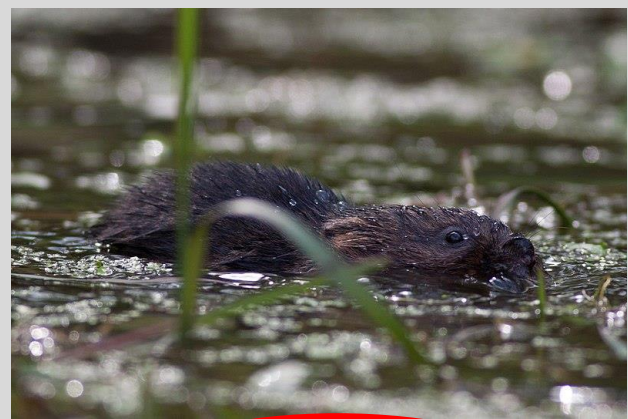
Habitat

- Near fresh water.
- Not yet in western Sweden but potentially spreading.
- Active at dusk, night and dawn.

Head-body length	240 – 400 mm
Tail length	190 – 280 mm
Weight	600 – 1800 g



Arvicola amphibius Water vole/Vattensork



Identification

- Medium sized aquatic rodent.
- Tail 50% of body length.
- Ears small (like rest of family).
- Colour black or dark brown (lighter underside).

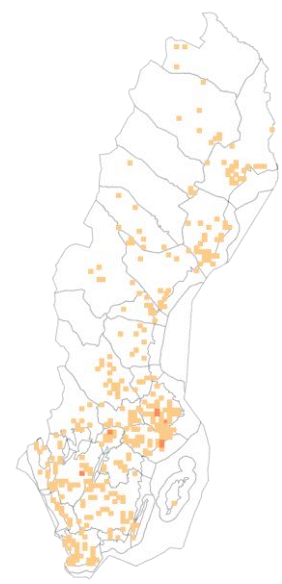
Potential misidentifications

- Looks somewhat similar to rats (Mammals nr. 33.) but rats have longer tails and larger ears.

Habitat

- Mainly but not always seen near water.
- Mainly day-active.

Head-body length	120 – 235 mm
Tail length	40 – 146 mm
Weight	Up to 320 g, normally < 100 g



Eulipotyphla: Insectivores/Äkta insektsätare



Neomys fodiens Water shrew/Vattennäbbmus



Identification

- The largest Swedish shrew.
- Very sharp separation between black side and white belly.
- Distinct row of swimming hairs on tail and hind feet.
- 4 unicuspid (like canines) teeth in upper tooth row.

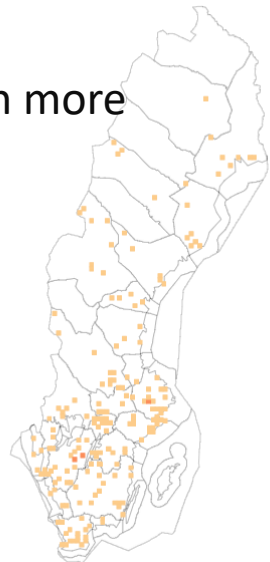
Potential misidentifications

- Other shrews (Mammals nr. 38) are similar but with different size and/or coloration.

Habitat

- Primarily near running water (rarely seen more than 1 km from water).
- Mainly nocturnal.

Head-body length	63 – 96 mm
Tail length	47 – 82 mm
Weight	8 – 23 g



Sorex sp. Other shrews/Andra näbbmöss



Identification

- Always matching at least one of the next two criteria.
 - A) Distinctly smaller than water shrews..
 - B) Less distinct break between colors of underside and side.
- Lacking swimming hairs.
- 5 unicuspid (like canines) teeth in upper tooth row.

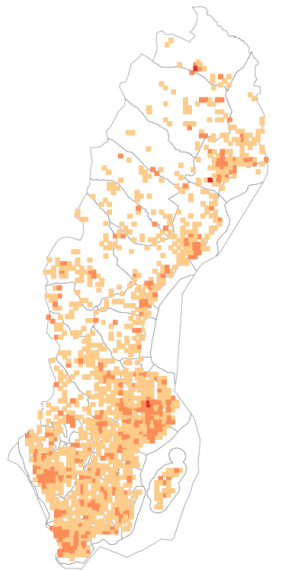
Potential misidentifications

- Water shrews (Mammal nr. 37), see this.

Habitat

- Terrestrial: nearly all habitats.
- Active at any time of day.

Head-body length	40 – 87 mm
Tail length	30 – 56 mm
Weight	2.5 – 15 g



Erinaceus europaeus

Hedgehog/Igelkott

NT



Identification

- Covered in spines.
- Medium sizes animal.

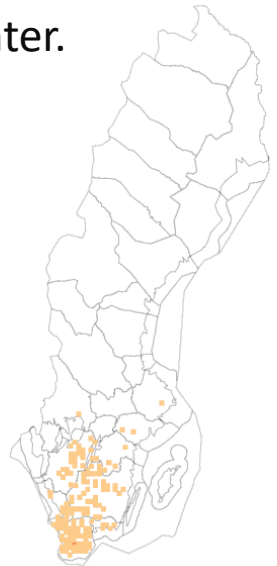
Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Most common on the border between open areas and forest (this habitat type includes gardens).
- Nocturnal
- Normally hibernates and not seen in winter.

Head-body length	275 – 235 mm
Tail length	15 – 30 mm
Weight	400 – 1200 g



Talpa europaea

Mole/Mullvad

LC



Identification

- Feet clearly adapted to digging.
- Very small eyes.

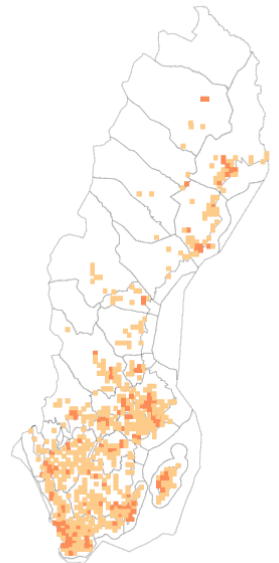
Potential misidentifications

- No similar species in Sweden.

Habitat

- Fossorial.
- Mainly in non-stony non-sandy soils.
- Active either day or night.
- Rarely seen above ground.

Head-body length	110 – 160 mm
Tail length	20 – 40 mm
Weight	65 – 130 g



Sources

Species selected and text written by Søren Faurby.

Sizes measurements are taken from Mammals of Europe (Princeton Field Guides, 16 David W. Macdonald, Priscilla Barrett).

Distributional maps for all taxa are taken from artfakta.se

All pictures are from wikipedia commons.