

Mink differences from Otter

- Mink is ferret sized: twice size of stoat, half size of otter
female 45cm, male 60cm inc tail otter female 90cm male 120cm
female 0.5-0.8 kg, male 1-2 kg otter female 7kg, male 10kg
- dark brown fur, little white chin otter med brown, large pale bib
- swimming: body visible otter only head shows
- tail same diameter all length otter broad base tapers to point



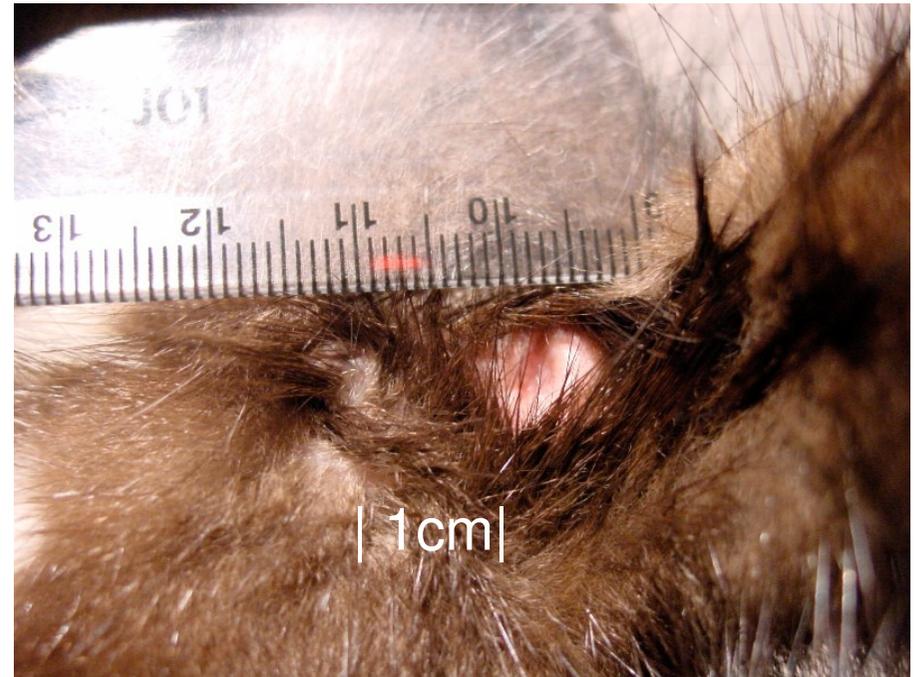
Mink



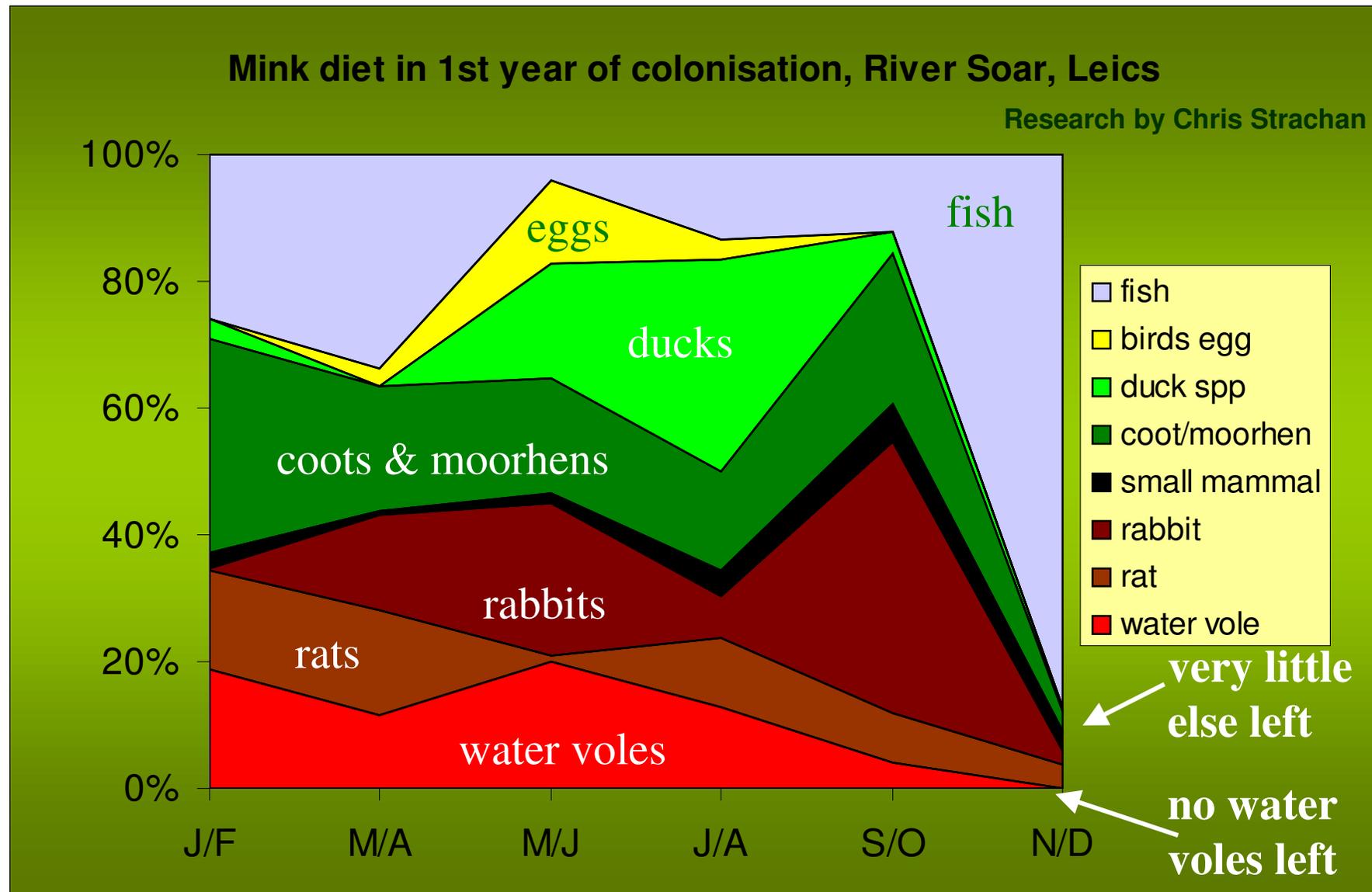
Otter

Mink differences between sexes

- Mink capture record: date, sex (length & weight if poss)
 - male 40-45cm body, 60cm (2ft) with tail, 1200-2000g, anus to urine tract (tuft of long hairs, usu damp) = 6-7cm
 - female 30-35cm body, 50-55cm (1ft 8in) w tail, 600-800g, anus to urine tract (tuft of long hairs, usu damp) = 1cm
 - juveniles body size ~female, so measure anus-urine tract



Mink Diet - water voles etc



Natural Predators of Mink

- American mink have predators
 - these keep mink in balance in the USA and Canada
- Predators of mink in North America :
 - wolves, coyotes, grey foxes, feral dog packs
 - snowy owls, bears, alligators
- Other controls :
 - disease, parasites
 - starvation through over-population
 - evidence of competition with otters but minor impact
- Predators of mink in Britain :
 - people



Impact on Water Voles

- No defences against mink
 - water voles' defence is to dive and kick up a silt “smoke screen” then swim underwater to burrow entrance
 - effective against usual predators: foxes, stoats, herons
 - mink swim more strongly, faster, can smell underwater
 - females and juveniles can enter water vole burrows
- Timing esp. in Spring
 - all voles surviving winter are the breeding population
- Effective
 - can wipe out whole colony in 1 year
 - now less than 3.5% water voles left in UK



Impact on Agriculture



Mink can devastate a pheasant or partridge rearing pen in a single night