

# Cornwall Coastal Otter Project



Cornwall



Mammal Group

Dave Groves, Cornwall Mammal Group  
South West Marine Ecosystems 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019

# **Cornwall Coastal Otter Project - Aims**

- Improve recording of European otter (*Lutra lutra*) around the coastal fringes of Cornwall
- Investigate the diet of otters in Cornwall
- Understand how otters in Cornwall use coastal habitats
- Inform conservation and management of coastal habitats
- Develop survey and analytical skills among volunteers
- Establish links with like-minded and complementary groups, academic institutions and organisations



# ***Lutra lutra* - the Eurasian otter**



Cornwall



Mammal Group



# Why use the coast?



**Shelter**

**Feeding**

**Connections?**

**Conflict?**



# What's in a spraint?



# Taking it all apart....



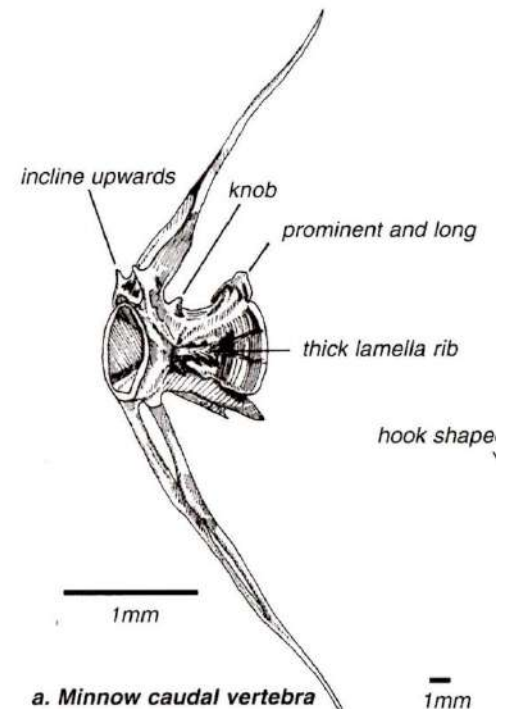
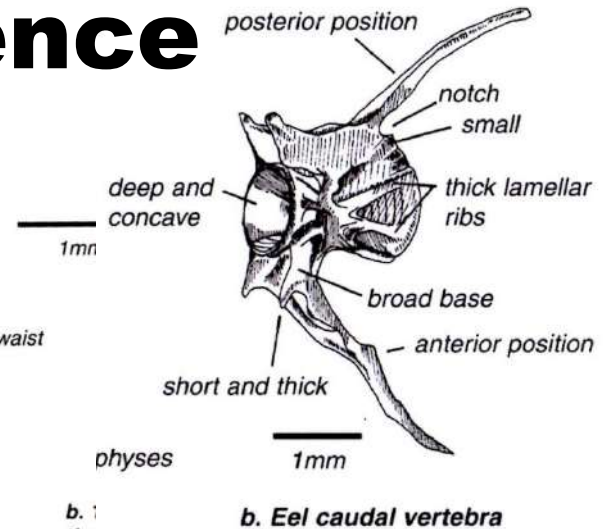
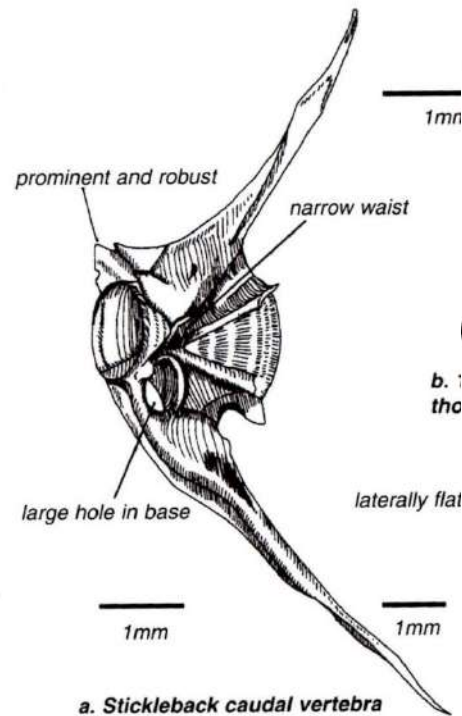
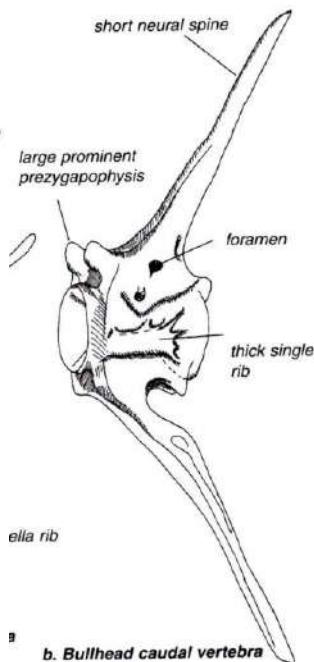
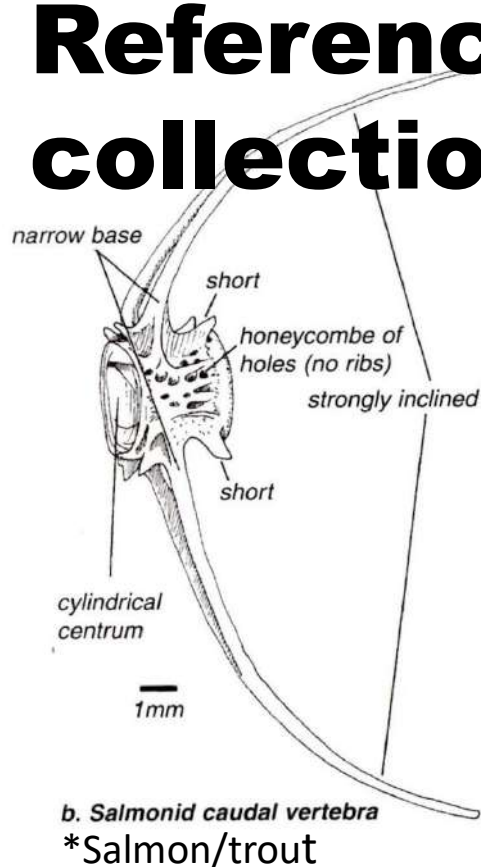
Cornwall



Mammal Group



# References and reference collections



\*Similar to other Cyprinidae <sup>b</sup>

All images from:  
Conroy et al, 2005

Cornwall



Mammal Group

# Collecting the evidence

**400+ Sites over 697 km**

**30 Volunteer Surveyors**

**Target 200+ samples (110 to date) by Summer 2019**

**Student project results by 2019**

**Publication by 2020**

**Links with Devon, Somerset and Dorset surveys**





# Conclusion

**Cornwall is a European stronghold for otters and they increasingly recorded from coastal areas**

**This is probably a return to natural behaviour**

**Coastal sites are vulnerable to many pressures**

**CCOP aims to gather evidence of otters at or near coastal sites**

**Analysis of spraint contents will show the importance of marine prey**

**CCOP will collaborate with other groups locally and nationally**

From: Otters in Shetland (2015) Shucksmith & Thomason



# Thanks

- Volunteer surveyors
- In no particular order - Paul Chanin, Kate Stokes, Rob Williams, Dan Forman, Matt Slater, Mary-Rose Lane, Ellie Knott, Ken Hutchinson, Jane and Vic Simpson, Ian and Rebecca, the Alexandra Fund and everyone else who has supported the development of the Project





**Find out more**  
**[www.cornwallmammalgroup.org](http://www.cornwallmammalgroup.org)**

