

Forest of Dean pine marten individual identification crib sheet

Pine martens have a 'bib' of creamy-yellow fur that extends from under their chin down their chest. However, the size, shape and pattern of this bib fur varies between animals, with no two pine marten bibs being the same. This means that we can use this bib patterns to identify and monitor individuals. Identifying pine martens individuals from camera trap footage helps us to monitor the population and understand where particular pine martens have set up territory, which other individuals they interact with, whether they are likely to have bred and how many individuals in total are in the population.

Each pine marten is given a unique identification name when they are translocated. Each ID begins with 'FD' which stands for Forest of Dean, followed by a number relating to the order they were released in. This ID name allows us to differentiate between martens introduced to Wales who's names begin with 'PM' standing for pine marten and those originally released in the Forest of Dean, as it is likely these populations will join up in coming years! When spotting on this project you will see the normal species list on the right, but also a tab containing profiles of different pine marten individuals known to be living in the Forest of Dean. Each profile contains some information about that animal along with images and a diagram of it's bib markings. This can be used to help identify whether or not that individual is present in a camera trap photo or video. Identifying individual pine martens can be tricky, so please check out our top tips below to help you get started.

Tips on how to identify a pine marten using its bib pattern

1. Pick out really obvious markings from the image or video of the marten you see (the edges tend to be really variable in their patches and wiggles).
2. Look through the pine marten profiles or skim through this crib sheet of bibs to discount as many individuals as possible and come up with a shortlist of likely candidates
3. Find the photos with the clearest view of the bib, or, if it is a video, re-watch the video and pause it at points where you have a really clear shot of the bib (either from the side or the front, or check the photos again) and match the most obvious markings to the pictures on the profiles/ crib sheet.
4. Skim through all of the images on this crib sheet again to check you haven't overlooked any individuals.
5. Look at the close up images of the marten bibs to find the best match.
6. Remember to check if the marten is wearing a collar and this matches the information available – this can limit your options and help with identification
7. You can also check to see if nipples are visible – suggesting it is i) a female and ii) she may have kits.
8. Sometimes it is almost impossible to identify an individual but in this instance a shortlist of individuals is more useful to us than nothing. Select the individual you think is most likely but add other possibilities in the comments box.
9. Some videos or photo sequences may contain footage that you are confident is a pine marten, but that will not be possible to identify to individual as there is no clear view of the bib. E.g. a pine marten tail disappearing out of shot. If this is the case then please classify as 'unidentifiable pine marten'. This helps us sort through the footage and filter the most useful photos and videos.

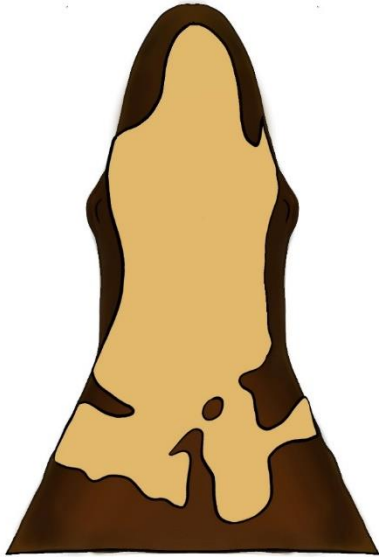


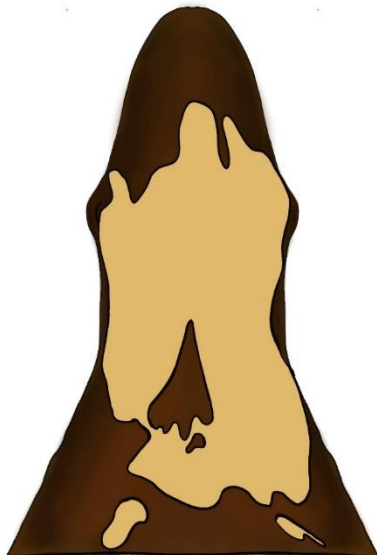
NB This crib sheet will be updated regularly as we gain new information on pine martens in the area, and it is possible that more individuals will be added, so please check the website for updated versions. This crib sheet is:

Version 1 -February 2021



Gloucestershire
Wildlife Trust



FD03 – Adult, Female	FD05 – Adult, Female
	
FD06 – Adult, Female	FD19 – Adult, Female
	
FD10 – Adult, Male	FD11 – Adult, Male
