

## Hazel Dormouse Footprint Tunnel Assembly and Guidance

This guidance is intended to be used by those who already have some experience of hazel dormouse ecology and surveying, or who have received appropriate training in the use of footprint tunnels. This technique was created by Suffolk Wildlife Trust with PTES funding and has since been recommended in the CIEEM magazine *In Practice* in September 2018.



### 1. Prepare the Tracking Plate

Cut a piece of plain paper or card into 56mm by 300mm strips.

Secure the paper onto the tracking plate at both ends with masking tape (min. 40mm wide) as shown in the schematic diagram below. Ensure the paper and masking tape are within the downpipe to prevent them from becoming wet.

### 2. Make the Charcoal Ink

Slowly add vegetable oil to the footprint tracking charcoal provided until a smooth ink paste is formed. Paint the ink onto the masking tape strips.

### 3. Setting up the tunnels and surveying

The tunnels should be fastened to the underside of horizontal branches, unless they can be securely fastened above. This can be done with cable ties, but better with Hoop and Loop Velcro to reduce waste. Once secured, place the tracking plate in the tunnel ensuring that the paper and masking tape sit within the tunnel at both ends to prevent them from getting wet.

The tunnels should be checked and re-inked every 2 weeks as the ink dries out and the papers can become damaged or become mouldy if the weather has been wet. The papers should be changed if there has been any footprint activity. The masking tape should be replaced only if required.

