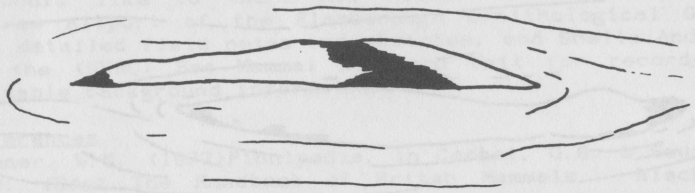
3.

*3. Head shape more like common seal with neat rounded head and hump in front of eye on forehead, though perhaps larger muzzle and very contrasting distinct colours. Face, muzzle and forehead dark brown or blackish with rest of head dirty white or even creamy colour.*

4.



*4. While upside down the animal would occasionally roll over, its head then bobbing up above the water, then lunge forward to dive. When diving a dark thin saddle across the upper back clearly seen, forming a sort of 'V' shape. The animal appeared close in size to an adult grey seal.*



# THE MAMMAL SOCIETY AUTUMN CONFERENCE: SEPTEMBER 1989.

PAPERS PRESENTED:

R.. W. Brown: Predation by foxes on the North Yorkshire Moors.

M. Williamson: The spread of the grey squirrel.

Both red and grey squirrels have been introduced into the British Isles, although the red squirrel is a native species which became extinct in this country due to forest clearance.
There has been some disagreement on the subject, but it is now agreed that, once the grey squirrel becomes established in an area, the red eventually dies out. The red squirrel has also become extinct independently of the grey in certain places.
The grey invasion has been modelled and it is characterised by exponential population growth and random diffusion. A more complex model has also been developed, allowing for competition. This shows the same pattern of spread, but at a slightly slower rate. According to this model, the red squirrel becomes extinct approximately 15 years after the introduction of the grey.
Various aspects of grey squirrel invasion dynamics are still poorly understood. These include long distance migrations and the species' failure to spread into some areas.

H. Smith and G. L. Woodroffe: The status of the otter in Yorkshire.

The N.C.C. surveys of the otter in Britian (1977-86) revealed that Scotland, Wales and the West Country were its main strongholds, with low population levels in Yorkshire and East Anglia. Various factors may have contributed to its decline. These include habitat loss, increased human recreational use of waterways and mortality due to nets and traps.
The North York Moors were not surveyed by the N.C.C.. G. Woodroffe studied 40 sites on the rivers Esk, Dove, Seven, Rye, Derwent and Seph in 1984-87. During this period, otter signs have gradually decreased in frequency, until none were found in 1987. This implies that the population in the area is small and fragmented.
Possible future strategies for increasing the Yorkshire population include releases (which are expensive and labour intensive), and encouraging otters to migrate from the north by improving suitable habitat corridors along the route.