From: Lisa Worledge
Sent: 27 March 2019 14:23
Cc: Steve Lucas; Elisabeth Ferrell
Subject: BCT Bat Group Bulletin No. 164: 27 March 2019

Dear bat group member,

It is with mixed feelings that I have prepared this edition of the Bat Group Bulletin. This is my last after almost eight years. From Monday I shall be handing over the role of Bat Groups Officer to Colin Morris. Many of you will know Colin from his work at the Vincent Wildlife Trust and with Dorset Bat Group. We are really delighted to have him join us at Bat Towers and I am sure you will make him welcome in his new role. (I’m not leaving BCT and will continue in my role as Head of Conservation Services.)

This edition of the bulletin includes a special focus on the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) but also a variety of other items from conferences and training to a petition and the latest bat research papers:

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1. NBMP Surveys – Find the right survey for you
Our surveys are carefully designed so that anybody can take part in bat monitoring. As well as being of great value to bat conservation, the surveys are a fun and rewarding way to connect with the wildlife in your area. They usually involve visiting a roost or monitoring activity in the field on two evenings in the summer. The data are used to produce population trends for 11 of the UK’s 17 resident bat species, and are also shared with bat groups, researchers and the NBN Atlas.

You can sign up to surveys and enter data online as well as viewing all records you have submitted previously. For more details on each survey and to sign up visit www.bats.org.uk/our-work/national-bat-monitoring-programme.

2. NBMP Survey sites up for grabs!
We have several sites that need repeat visits and these are listed at www.bats.org.uk/our-work/national-bat-monitoring-programme/surveys/field-survey for the Field Survey and at www.bats.org.uk/our-work/national-bat-
monitoring-programme/surveys/waterway-survey for the Waterway Survey. Please contact us at nbmp@bats.org.uk if you would like to survey any of these sites and we can sign you up. You can download the survey materials from your online account or, if you prefer, we can send you a survey pack in the post closer to the survey period.

3. NBMP Champions within bat groups
A number of bat groups around the UK have a Bat Group NBMP Champion (previously known as Bat Group NBMP Coordinator) who takes on the role of promoting NBMP participation within the group. The change of name is designed to emphasise the fact that the purpose of this role is to encourage participation in the NBMP without the additional pressures of having to organise local monitoring. This can range from simply emailing round a list of unallocated survey sites in your bat group’s area, to giving a presentation on the NBMP or helping create opportunities for members to join in with surveys. We are keen to have Bat Group NBMP Champions within as many bat groups as possible as we are aware of the brilliant work carried out by bat groups in local monitoring.

This role is supported by BCT’s NBMP Survey Coordinator, who sends regular e-bulletins with guidance on the different ways Champions can get involved and help. If you would like more information or are interested in taking on this role within your bat group then please contact David Williamson at dwilliamson@bats.org.uk.

4. NBMP Training and workshops
Each year we organise a programme of NBMP introductory bat detector workshops in order to train new volunteers and refresh the skills of existing volunteers. These workshops begin with a classroom session which focuses on identifying bats by their echolocation calls, followed by an evening practical session in the field.

So far four workshops have been confirmed (with a slight Celtic bias!), however details of more dates and venues across the country will be finalised and made available over the next few weeks. For more information or to book a place visit www.bats.org.uk/our-work/national-bat-monitoring-programme/workshops.

If your group would like us to run a workshop for you (in any part of the UK) then please contact Philip Briggs at pbriggs@bats.org.uk.

5. Changes to Helpline Rabies Disease Risk Management Service
As of 01 April 2019, Defra will no longer be funding the National Bat Helpline's work on rabies disease risk management, and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) will be taking over responsibility for possible rabies exposure incidents (such as bites and scratches, illegal landings and suspect bats). The way the Helpline responds to these incidents is therefore going to change.

We are in the process of updating our guidance and information, including the Good Practice Guidelines for Bats and Rabies. These documents with new procedures will be published on Friday. We’ll send a separate email to all bat groups to let you know when these are all online.

Please note this does not affect our work with APHA for the rabies passive surveillance service.

The National Bat Conference 2019 is taking place at the University of Nottingham from 06-08 September. It should be a great weekend with the Bat Workers Forum on the Friday night followed by a weekend of exciting talks, workshops and of course the BCT AGM and the conference dinner (with ceilidh!) on the Saturday evening. The conference is an opportunity to learn about the new discoveries in the world of bat conservation, catch up with old friends and meet new ones. We hope to see you there!

We also will be holding a one day Conservation & Technology Conference on Friday 06 September and you can book to attend just this day, just the National Conference or both events in combination. For more information about the weekend, delegate rates and to book your place see: http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/national_bat_conference.html (We have a limited number of rooms for couples available in the conference centre, if you would like to book one of these please get in touch with Naomi Webster nwebster@bats.org.uk.)

Please note we will be in touch with Partner Bat Groups during April about the two conference bursaries available.
7. QGIS Training for Bat Groups
QGIS is a freely available Geographic Information System (GIS) software package that can prove invaluable for bat groups and particularly Bat Group Recorders. Steve Roe has been offering workshops at regional and national conferences in QGIS for a few years now and we have introduced this one day course in response to requests from bat groups.

This one-day hands-on workshop will provide an introduction to what the software can offer and how to use it, enabling bat groups to more effectively identify what they know and where they need to go to get more data. The cost is £100 (or £95 for BCT members) for a full day of tuition, plus resources and refreshments. Non-bat group members are also welcome. We are running two days:

- 13 April at Lockington Hall, Derby – book online at: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/training-and-conferences/training-for-volunteers-beginners/qgis-for-bat-groups
- 26 October at NSBRC, Swindon – book online at: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/training-and-conferences/training-for-volunteers-beginners/qgis-for-bat-groups

If you have any questions about the course please contact Naomi Webster at nwebster@bats.org.uk

8. Bats & Sticky Flypaper Petition
Professor Fiona Mathews has started a petition to ask the Government to restrict the sale of unguarded sticky fly traps. You may well have seen the excellent coverage about this on various media channels. At the time of writing the petition had over 1,500 signatures. If you haven’t yet signed it you can find the petition online at: https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/ban-the-general-sale-of-sticky-traps. To support Fiona’s campaign please share this link and encourage people to sign.

You might also be interested in the associated Facebook page that Fiona has set-up. You can find this at: https://fb.me/stickytrapbats

9. New Chair of Natural England
Tony Juniper CBE has been appointed as the new Chair of Natural England. He will take up the role on the 23 April, leaving his role as the Executive Director of Campaigns and Advocacy at WWF UK. More information is available on the GOV.UK website at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tony-juniper-cbe-appointed-as-natural-england-chair

10. New Bats in Scotland Leaflet
The new edition of the BCT leaflet ‘Bats in Scotland’ is now available. If you’d like copies for your group please contact Liz Ferrell at eferrell@bats.org.uk You can see the full range of leaflets we have available to download or order at: https://www.bats.org.uk/resources/publications-and-leaflets/leaflets (please note not all of our leaflets are available as printed copies).

11. JustGiving Campaign to Support BCT Bat Care Network
We have recently launched a new JustGiving campaign for BCT’s Bat Care network. We’re aiming to raise £5,000 by the end of the year. Please do share this link: https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/batcarehelp. All donations are welcome no matter how small. (Please note that JustGiving has scrapped their 5% fee so the full donation is now received by BCT.)

12. Change in Natural England Licence Reporting Deadlines – Correction
In the February Bulletin we explained that Natural England have changed the deadline for annual licence returns. Previously these had to be submitted by the end of April to cover the previous year (to the end of March). This deadline has now been changed to the end of June. We incorrectly stated that the returns still covered the period to the end of March, however we understand it will actually be the period to the end of May. That means for this year only licence returns will cover 14 months rather than 12.

13. Bat Research Papers, Reports & Other Batty Media
Please note we normally only include bat related articles, reports and blogs in this section where they are available to read online or to download without charge. For more information about how to access journal papers (including
details of a variety of relevant open access journals) see the BCT website at: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/training-and-conferences

- Improving our understanding of the distribution and status of bats within the Ryevitalise Landscape Partnership Scheme area – this is a new publication from the BTO about a project working with the North York Moors National Park Authority. It is free to download from: https://www.bto.org/research-data-services/publications/research-reports/2019/improving-our-understanding-distribution (printed copies are available to purchase).

- Common noctules exploit low levels of the aerosphere – O’Mara et al. tracked foraging flights of noctules in Switzerland to understand how the species uses vertical space. Their findings were that the bats generally flew lower than 40 m, but had scouting flights to 100 m and achieved a maximum height of 300 m. Read the full paper at: https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsos.181942

- Effectiveness of mitigation of the impacts of a new road on horseshoe bats Rhinolophus ferrumequinum in Wales, UK – This is an individual study published in Conservation Evidence (see below). A PDF of the full paper can be downloaded at: https://www.conservationevidence.com/individual-study/6955

- New Conservation Evidence Bat Synopsis – An updated version of the Conservation Evidence publication on bat research has been published. It can be found online at: https://www.conservationevidence.com/synopsis/index and the team have also published a blog ‘A call to wings’ that can be read at: https://conservationbytes.com/2019/03/19/a-call-to-wings/

- Tree cover mediates the effect of artificial light on urban bats – This paper by Straka et al. investigates the effect of tree cover on the relationship between artificial light at night and bats in Berlin, Germany. The full text is available at: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fevo.2019.00091/abstract

- Aerodynamic reconstruction of the primitive fossil bat Onychonycteris finneyi (Mammalia: Chiroptera) – In this paper Amador et al. reconstruct the aerofoil of the oldest known bat species from the two complete fossil specimens, calculate basic aerodynamic variables and compare them with those of extant bats and gliding mammals. https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsbl.2018.0857

14. Key Dates for Your Diary

Watch this space for dates and reminders of conferences, BCT training and other events you may be interested in. Please don't forget you can get some extra publicity for your events by getting the details added to the BCT website, see online for more information.

**BCT Events**

- 06 April 2019 – North of England Bat Conference, University of Lancaster. **This Event is Fully Booked** but email Naomi Webster (nwebster@bats.org.uk) if you would like to go on the waiting list. See the programme online at: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/english-regional-bat-conferences/north-of-england-bat-conference

- 11-12 May – Wales Bat Worker’s Weekend – Glyndwr University, Wrexham. For more information or to book your place see: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/welsh-bat-conferences/wales-bat-workers-weekend


- 06 September 2019 – Conservation & Technology Conference, University of Nottingham. For more information or to book your place see: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/conservation-and-technology-conference

- 06-08 September 2019 – National Bat Conference, University of Nottingham. For more information or to book your place see the BCT website at: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/national-bat-conference


**Other Events**
• 9 – 11 May 2019 – National Forum for Biological Recording Conference, BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk. For more information see the NFBRC website http://www.nfbr.org.uk/?q=conference
• 28 July-01 August 2019 – 18th International Bat Research Conference (18th IBRC), The Slate, Phuket, Thailand. For more information see the event website https://www.ibrc2019.com/. (There are travel grants available for this conference, a BCI grant aimed specifically for developing countries but also an open grant for anyone who meets the criteria, see the IBRC 2019 website https://ibrc2019.com/scholarship.html for more details)
• 24 August – International Bat Night 2019 https://www.eurobats.org/international_bat_night
• 31 August – 05 September 2019 XXVII International Bioacoustics Congress, University of Sussex, Brighton. For more information see: http://www.2019.ibac.info/
• 12 – 13 November 2019 – Communicate, Bristol Zoo. The UK's conference for environmental communicators. For more information see: https://www.bnhc.org.uk/communicate/communicate-2019/

Back issues of the bulletin (a rolling 12-months) are available on the BCT website at https://www.bats.org.uk/resources/resources-for-bat-groups/bat-group-bulletin and following requests from bat groups we are now adding the latest bulletin on the day it is circulated to bat groups.

Finally, the bat group bulletin is also available as a PDF file. If your group would like to receive a PDF copy in future please let me know.

Kind regards,
Lisa.

If you wish to alter your contact preferences, including to opt-out of receiving future communications from us, please contact me by either calling 020 7820 7176 or emailing lworledge@bats.org.uk (if you are receiving this Bulletin forwarded to you by your bat group, please contact the bat group directly rather than emailing me).

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Direct line: 020 7820 7176
National Bat Helpline: 0345 1300 228 (hours of service are 09.30 to 16.30, Monday to Friday)

There are dedicated Bat Group pages on the BCT website at: www.bats.org.uk/pages/resources_for_bat_groups.html

Find us on: www.bats.org.uk | facebook | Twitter | Instagram

Get involved and help BCT conserve the UK’s bats and their habitats by joining BCT as a member, or remember us by leaving a gift in your Will.