Dear bat group member. Welcome to the May Bat Group Bulletin. This edition of the bulletin focuses quite a lot on calling for volunteers to help on several projects. BCT, Bat Groups and other organisations rely a great deal on volunteers who make a significant contribution to bat conservation. Only one person spotted the ‘deliberate mistake’ in my first Bulletin (part of my email address was missing), the prize went to Beatrice Dopita from River Allen Bat Roost [http://riverallenbatroost.org.uk](http://riverallenbatroost.org.uk) in Dorset. I sincerely apologise if you clicked the link and got nowhere, it was a genuine mistake (honest!).

1. **Pete Guest Award – Nominations**
2. **Kate Barlow Award Winner 2019**
3. **National Bats in Churches Survey**
4. **VOGAB Bat Group Crowdfunding Appeal**
5. **Alderney Bat Week 20-27th July**
6. **URGENT NBMP Volunteers wanted for unallocated sites**
7. **Bat walk leaders wanted by the National Trust**
8. **The Time is NOW - Mass Lobbying event in London**
9. **Call for Donations of Bat Research Equipment**
10. **The Use of Netting around Potential Roosts**
11. **Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Checks**
12. **BCT Training Courses. ABST. QGIS. Bearing Witness for Wildlife**
13. **National Bat Helpline – Out of Hours Service.**
14. **Animal Friends Insurance supporting the National Bat Helpline – Thank you!**
15. **Bat Research Papers, Reports & Other Batty Media**
16. **Key Dates for Your Diary**

**1. Pete Guest Award 2019 - Nominations open.**
The Pete Guest Award is presented annually to individuals (or joint nominations) who have made outstanding contributions to bat conservation. The award is presented in memory of Pete Guest, who was an inspirational figure in bat conservation for more than 20 years. We announced, via an email to bat groups last week that nominations are now being taken for the award in 2019. Full details of how to nominate and the previous winners are on the BCT website at: [https://bit.ly/1q2ZvVG](https://bit.ly/1q2ZvVG)

**2. The Kate Barlow Award Winner 2019.**
The Kate Barlow Award was established in memory of the late Dr Kate Barlow, former Head of Monitoring with BCT, and in honour of her contribution to bat conservation. The 2019 winner of the award is Benneth Obitte. Benneth is using an innovative socio-ecological approach to evaluate the drivers of bat hunting and meat consumption in southern Nigerian localities where intense hunting is reported, particularly of the Egyptian fruit bat (*Rousettus aegyptiacus*). You can read more about Benneth’s work on the BCT website at: [https://bit.ly/2QzXzUP](https://bit.ly/2QzXzUP)

**3. National Bats in Churches Survey - be the first to take part.**
The Bats in Churches project are organising two citizen science surveys and the first - the **National Bats in Churches Study** - launches this June. We’ve randomly selected 1000 churches for this study
and aim to survey as many as possible over the next four years (2019-2022) but **we need your help to achieve it!** If you join and choose a church, you’ll complete a one-off survey, comprising of a questionnaire with church representatives and a daytime bat evidence survey. You’ll also collect droppings for DNA analysis and place a static detector in the church for a few nights. This year we’re starting gently, and only promoting the survey to bat groups and current NBMP volunteers. If you’d be keen to take part this summer and be among the first to trial the survey, please register your interest with Claire Boothby (cboothby@bats.org.uk), who’ll let you know as soon as registration is live.

4. **The Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend Bat Group - Crowdfunding Appeal.**
The VOGAB are trying to raise some much needed funds towards equipment to catch bats for their new and exciting woodland *Myotis* project and Nathusius’ pipistrelle project. The more kit they can get the more surveys they can do and the more volunteers they can take out and train on these projects. The cost of the equipment they are looking to raise is £1800. They are already over a third of the way there, thanks to some very generous donations from their members as well as the general public. Any amount you can contribute towards this goal would be much appreciated. Follow this link to their Just Giving page with more details about the project: [https://bit.ly/2VbXION](https://bit.ly/2VbXION)

5. **Alderney Bat Week 20-27 July.**
The Alderney Wildlife Trust (AWT) are delighted to host the Alderney Bat Week 20-27th July 2019, with Annyctalus Ecology in collaboration with UK based bat researchers and training providers. The aim of the week will be to substantially grow our knowledge of the resident bat population here on Alderney which, thanks to Ani Binet, Mariko Whyte, Anna Sutcliffe and the Jersey Bat Group amongst others, is rapidly expanding. Since 2016 the species list for Alderney has increased by a further five potential species to give us the list of common soprano, Nathusius’ and potentially Kuhl’s pipistrelle, as well as grey long-eared, Natterer’s, whiskered and possibly Brandt’s bats and a confirmed barbastelle: [https://bit.ly/2KcheJ9](https://bit.ly/2KcheJ9)

6. **NBMP Field Survey. Volunteers wanted for unallocated sites.**
We are looking for more volunteers to help with the NBMP Field Survey. Could you use your bat detecting skills to help us monitor summer activity of our bat populations? By taking part in this survey you can help us find out how noctule, serotine, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle are faring across the UK. You can sign-up here: [https://bit.ly/2Ibi6Lu](https://bit.ly/2Ibi6Lu)
You will need a heterodyne (tunable) bat detector and experience of identifying the target species: [https://bit.ly/2WdwoV6](https://bit.ly/2WdwoV6) Please scroll down the web page and you’ll find a list of sites in your area that are available to survey.

7. **Bat Walk Leaders wanted by The National Trust.**
The National Trust at Penrose (Cornwall) would like help with bat walks for the South West Outdoor Festival on the 27th and 28th of September (See ‘Key Notes’ for your diary). Penrose is a fantastic property for bats and if you would like to help then please contact Rick Payne (Cornwall Bat Group) for more details email: cbgcommunicationofficer@yahoo.co.uk

8. **The Time is NOW - Mass Lobbying Event in London.**
On 26th June thousands of people are gathering at Westminster, central London, to call on politicians to set the foundations for a brighter, greener and safer world. BCT will have a stall there and we want to encourage as many people as possible to attend the lobby on the day. As many of you may know, BCT is a supporter of Greener UK, and has been working with them and the Wildlife and Countryside Link to encourage the government to strengthen the Environment Bill, and ensure that our wildlife is protected as and when we leave the EU. The main part of the lobby on the day will be between 1pm and 4pm, further details are available from: [https://bit.ly/2TMvSgv](https://bit.ly/2TMvSgv) If you
are interested in attending, please email comms@bats.org.uk, so we can see how many people are planning to come.

9. Call for Donations of Bat Research Equipment.
Have you got any Bat Research Equipment you no longer need/use? Discover the Mammals of Europe https://discovermammals.org/ is an initiative of the Habitat Foundation, in partnership with the Dutch Mammal Society and the European Mammal Society. The campaign aims at supporting organisations and people working on research, management and conservation of the mammals and their habitats in Europe. Increasing Research and Conservation capacities among mammal biologists in Eastern Europe is vital for the sustainable conservation of mammal diversity there, and in Europe as a whole. The bat research equipment you donate will be given as gifts to the mammal conservationists and researchers in Eastern Europe, who currently lack funds to afford it.
You can send your equipment to: Wildzang 64, Huissen 6852 JR – NL. Since mailing outside the EU is more expensive and sometimes uncertain if it will ever reach the receiver, they will discuss and find the best ways to ensure the equipment gets to the place it’s meant to. When/if you send equipment please let them know by email: info@thehabitatfoundation.org

10. The Use of Netting around Potential Roost Sites – BCT’s Position.
There has been quite a lot of coverage on Social Media about the use of netting around potential roost sites. At BCT we are concerned that the use of netting could have an impact on bats and other wildlife. Although the use of netting is itself not illegal, it would be unlawful if as a result of its use, the netting either prevented bats from entering or exiting an existing roost or injured or killed bats. BCT’s Position Statement can be found here: https://bit.ly/2EsGh7l

Alongside the BCT Safeguarding Policy, we have produced a guidance document for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. In addition we would recommend bat groups reading the DBS Eligibility ‘Handiguide’ from SAFEcic UK. If your group is undertaking a project or activities where you meet the criteria for a DBS check please see the relevant page on the GOV.UK website for details of how to organise one. Further details, including the guidance document, can be found on the BCT website: https://bit.ly/2JYeILV

12. BCT Training Courses. ABST. QGIS. Bearing Witness for Wildlife.
We offer a wide range of training courses for anyone interested in developing their skills and knowledge of bats, from novice volunteers and professional ecologists to building professionals and tree surgeons. Details of these and all our Training Events can be found at: https://bit.ly/2WvkTIx (also in BCT TRAINING)

13. The National Bat Helpline Out of Hours Service.
The National Bat Helpline Out of Hours Service started operation on Friday 24th of May 2019. Just in time too, since we heard about the first wild born pup recently. Between 24th May and 30th September 2019, the Out of Hours Service will be open from 6-10 pm Monday-Friday, and from 10 am till 10 pm on weekends and bank holidays. This service is for people who have found grounded or injured bats, or those wanting to report a bat crime that is in progress at the time of the call.
For other enquiries, please phone during normal office hours.

14. Animal Friends Insurance supporting the National Bat Helpline – Thank you!
One of the organisations that have lent their support to the work done by the National Bat Helpline is Animal Friends Insurance who have very generously donated £10,000 toward the bat care aspect of the work done by the Helpline: https://bit.ly/2HAn2uc
15. 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://bit.ly/2WvkTIx

- The latest NBMP Trends published. For the full picture please follow this link: https://bit.ly/2M4XYQu
- Managing hedgerows for nocturnal wildlife. Do bats and their insect prey benefit from targeted Agri-environment schemes? https://bit.ly/2VZHq2p If you would like a full copy (pdf) of this Paper please email Katherine Boughey: KBoughey@bats.org.uk
- Genetic adaptation to climate change: https://bit.ly/2Y9H6sV
- Bats evolved diverse skull shapes due to echolocation and diet: https://bit.ly/2MgI8Cy
- Signatures of echolocation and dietary ecology in the adaptive evolution of skull shape in bats: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-09951-y

16. 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 September 2019 – Conservation & Technology Conference, University of Nottingham. For more information or to book your place see: https://bit.ly/2UaTl06-08 September 2019 – National Bat Conference, University of Nottingham. For more information or to book your place see the BCT website at: https://bit.ly/2DFW2I9
- 06-08 September 2019 – National Bat Conference, University of Nottingham. For more information or to book your place see the BCT website at: https://bit.ly/2DFW2I9

BCT Training
- 21-23 August - Advanced Bat Survey Techniques. Swanage, Dorset. Over three days and two nights, attendees will be given theoretical and practical experiences of acoustic lures, harp traps, mist nets (including triple-high) and radio tracking. Book now to avoid disappointment. More info: https://bit.ly/2MgOWjE
- 26 October QGIS for Bat Groups - NSBRC, Swindon. This one-day hands-on workshop will provide an introduction to what the QGIS software can offer and how to use it. More info: https://bit.ly/2YIGKtz
- 13 November - Bearing Witness for Wildlife - nr Rugeley, Staffordshire. This one day course is for anyone wanting to improve their skills in recognising and reporting wildlife crime or when acting as a witness. More info: https://bit.ly/2EtgnjK

Other Events
- 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 for more details) https://bit.ly/2XHLTie

- 31 August - 05 September 2019 XXVII International Bioacoustics Congress, University of Sussex, Brighton. For more information see: http://www.2019.ibac.info/

Back issues of the bulletin (a rolling 12-months) are available on the BCT website at https://bit.ly/2GGoYRK 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.

Best wishes,

Colin.

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 7193 or emailing cmorris@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).

Colin Morris
Bat Groups Officer
Bat Conservation Trust, Quadrant House, 250 Kennington Lane, London SE11 5RD
Direct line: 020 7820 7193
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: https://www.bats.org.uk/resources/resources-for-bat-groups

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.