

# Pete Guest Award: 2009 Nominations

## Background

The Pete Guest Award is given in memory of Pete Guest who was an inspirational figure in the bat conservation movement for more than 20 years. Each year, the bat world is invited to nominate individuals who have made an outstanding practical contribution to bat conservation.

The criteria for the award includes: dedication, innovation, enthusiasm and inspiration in making a difference, both to bats and to people, helping make BCT's vision become a reality.

Previous winners of the award include:

2008	Tom McOwat
2007	Phil Birkinshaw
2006	John Haddow
2005	Phil Richardson
2004	Tony Hutson

## This Year's Nominations

Six bat workers have been nominated for the Pete Guest award in 2009:

Name	Number of nominations received	Voting reference*
Dr Sue Swift	4	PGASueSwift
Jude Hirstwood	2	PGAJudeHirstwood
Dr Roger Ransome	1	PGARogerRansome
Peter Andrews	1	PGAPeterAndrews
John Goldsmith	1	PGAJohnGoldsmith
Jan Ragg	1	PGAJanRagg

\* See 'How to vote'

Supporting statements submitted with nominations are enclosed in Appendices 1-6.

## How to vote

Traditionally, voting for the Pete Guest Award has always taken place at the Bat Group Forum on the Friday night of the National Bat Conference. This year, BCT is accepting remote voting for the first time.

### *To register your vote by email:*

- Please copy and paste the relevant voting reference into the subject of a new email;
- Write your name and bat group, only, in the main body of text; and
- Email to [ldunne@bats.org.uk](mailto:ldunne@bats.org.uk) by 9am on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

Please be aware that, if the voting reference has not been entered correctly, your vote may not be registered. Therefore please double check before sending.

***To register your vote by post:***

- Complete the form in Appendix 7;
- Return to the Laura Dunne, Bat Conservation Trust, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG.

Postal votes received after 16<sup>th</sup> September will not be valid, therefore please ensure you allow sufficient time for delivery.

***To register your vote in person:***

- Complete and return the form in Appendix 7;
- Bring it to the Bat Group Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at York University;
- Submit it on request from the Chair.

Please note that you are only allowed one vote.

Your name will be stored by BCT solely for the purpose of imposing this rule. Names will not be published or announced publically.

**The Decision Process**

The nominee with the greatest number of votes will be announced at the Bat Group Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

The Pete Guest Award will be formally awarded on the following Sunday of the National Bat Conference.

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# Appendix 1

## Supporting statements for Dr. Sue Swift

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### **Dr. Brian Boag**

*Retired ecologist from Scottish Crop Research Institute and now working full time as a research associate at Glasgow University, am also chairman of Perth Bat group*

I have known Sue for over 20 years and gained my bat licence 21 years ago.

She would be a very worthy recipient of the Peter Guest award for the following reasons:-

1. She has supported the Perth Bat Group through thick and thin. Membership of the group has fluctuated from probably over 15 to less than 5 but due to her support as committee member and, in the past as secretary and treasurer, she has been instrumental in keeping the group going. In that time there have been a large turn over of members (mainly young rangers from Perth Council and the like) and all have benefited from Sues knowledge and experience.

In the past support for Perth Bat Group (and the conservation of bats in Scotland) has meant she has had to take her 2 young children to day events (e.g. those held at the RSPB reserve at Vane Farm) and spent numerous hours making bat hats etc. and interacting with the general public promoting bats in Scotland.

Sue has included Perth Bat Group members in undertaking surveys she has been involved with e.g. the survey of Perth Bridges and given generous contributions to Perth Bat Group.

2. She has in many ways taken an active part in educating people in Scotland about bats. She has given talks to children in schools and sometimes in “batty places” e.g. Huntingtower Castle outside Perth.

She has been an invited speaker at Natural History Societies e.g. Scottish Wildlife Trust meetings and been one of the lecturers at residential courses held on bats at the Kindrogan Field Centre.

As a Bat trainer she has given tuition and experience in handling bats to those wishing to gain a bat licence.

Sue has also helped out in

3. As an independent bat consultant and part time SNH bat worker in Scotland she undertakes numerous surveys. Everyone I have had contact with within Scotland has heard of her and holds her work in the highest regard.

She is also one of the foremost bat researchers in Scotland having gained her doctorate at Aberdeen University. She has published the definitive book on Long-eared bats and has attended and contributed to national and international scientific meetings.

Her long experience working with bats and her authoritative knowledge of bats in Scotland meant she was chosen by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to undertake the ongoing research into the incidence of rabies in Scottish Daubenton and Natterers bat colonies.

Finally I must, on behalf of all of Perth Bat Group, say that Sue is an extremely helpful outgoing person who puts in an inordinate amount of time trying to help anyone who shows the least interest in bats. As an ambassador for bats and their conservation I can say that no one I know could have done a better job.

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**Anne Youngman**

***BCT Scottish Bat Officer, one time member of Inverness bat group and former NCCS/SNH bat worker***

I nominate Sue Swift (of Perth Bat Group) for the Pete Guest Award. Although Sue now makes her living as a bat consultant I am nominating her for in recognition of all the work she has done and is still doing as a volunteer.

Sue is regarded as one of the founders of bat work in Scotland. She is very highly thought of amongst us, valued as much for her bat knowledge and technical skills as for her sound judgment and sage advice with difficult bat/human cases. Sue has been a great asset and inspiration to bat workers in Scotland (and beyond). She is particularly valued for her;

- Huge knowledge of bat biology (gathered over 30 + years)
- Her technical skills
- Her pragmatic and wise approach when dealing with bats and people
- Her contribution to increasing the knowledge of others (through training, research, publications)
- Her development of heated bat boxes as maternity roosts for pipistrelle bats
- Her ability to stand up to Paul Racey! (He terrifies the rest of us!)

Sue began work on a PhD on pipistrelle bats in the late 1970s. (Around that time most other people were working on rarer species). Its from her work that we learned so much about the biology and ecology of the “common” pipistrelle. (In those days the 45 and 55s had not been separated)

For example;

- the way feeding behaviour changes with females before and after birth with peaks around dusk and dawn,
- how far bats fly from their roost
- how many midges a bat can consume per night.

After the introduction of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1981 it was recognized that skilled bat workers/volunteers would be needed to deliver advice on bat conservation. Sue was at the forefront of that work in Scotland and has been involved in volunteer bat work, training and research since then.

John Haddow remembers a very heavily pregnant Sue attending the training for trainers course in Orierton Field study centre in October 1986. To make such a long journey with so much extra baggage shows great dedication.

Many bat workers of my era and since have benefitted from training given by Sue. For many years Sue was a regular tutor on the bat worker training courses run for volunteers at Aberdeen University and Kindrogan field study centre. The Nature Conservancy Council (now Scottish Natural Heritage) and many bat groups have Sue to thank for her part in training of licensed bat workers. Many of these people have then gone on to train others.

Sue is a founder member of the Perth Bat Group, which is still going strong in Scotland. She has carried out NBMP surveys and car surveys in her area, she has also helped Central Scotland bat group by providing training in bat dropping analysis to us. (It was great fun, really interesting)



Her research on maternity roosts and subsequent development of heated bat boxes has provided alternative /new nursery sites for pipistrelle bats.

Sue has also spent many midge evenings collecting saliva and blood samples from bats for the active surveillance in Scotland. This work is done under contract, but I feel I must point out that it needs a great deal of dedication to work late nights/very early mornings in often very inhospitable conditions. (see photos) I have memories of Sue sitting in her mobile laboratory (i.e a tent) on canal banks outside Edinburgh while in the car park near by visitors seemed to alternate between drug dealers and police officers .It was all a bit dodgy and unnerving. In other places there were no fears of human attack but the midges were so ferocious full body “armour” was needed.



Sue Swift - Filling hot water bottle to keep bats warm, outside “outdoor laboratory”

Essential midge proofing –



Full “body armour” needed against midges – yes this IS sue swift

I have great respect for Sue and have particularly valued her help, advice and support during the Scottish Bat project. She has been someone to bounce ideas off and to learn from. She has been invaluable when I've run Scottish bat workers conferences contributing by giving talks, running workshops and not least of all chairing the conference. There has not been any year when Sue has been an "ordinary" delegate at a Scottish conference.

*Note from John Haddow*

The fact that Sue is a respected scientist means that many things that would just be regarded as anecdotal, as collected by people like me, become more widely accepted as facts. I think also because of who she is and the way she works she stands with a foot in both the scientific and amateur conservationist camp much more easily than anyone I know.

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### **Niall Lobley**

#### ***Senior Countryside Ranger & Secretary of the Perth Bat Group***

Sue has been a member of the Perth Bat Group as a volunteer for many years. She has acted in the capacity of both Chair and Secretary and has been with the group through challenging membership times, as well as the good. She has been a constant support to people new to bats, worked to help the bat group deliver public events and activities to promote bats to a wider audience, as well as doing various other bat related activities. Sue has regularly donated not only here time, but also her professional skills to support the bat group. Sue also participates in a wide range of other bat volunteer work, including surveys and rabies work.

I am afraid that I have only known Sue for the past five years whilst I have been a member of the Perth Bat Group; but in that time have realised how dedicated Sue is to supporting bat work across the area and Scotland. She would make an ideal candidate for the Pete Guest Award. I hope that other nominations are received for Sue and that she is eligible for consideration.

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### **Mandy Cook**

#### ***Perth Bat Group member***

I would like to nominate Sue Swift for the Pete Guest Award. She is a longstanding member of the Perth Bat Group, of which I am a fairly recent member. I admire the wealth of experience and knowledge Sue has and her enthusiasm for bats. As a relative novice in the bat world, I very appreciate her as a member of our local bat group.

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## Appendix 2

### Supporting statements for Jude Hirstwood

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#### **Kelly Robinson**

##### ***Bedfordshire Bat Group***

I am sure you have met or heard about Jude. She has done a fantastic job with the count bat project in queens park with Bob Cornes and then went onto travelling the country doing talks and workshops and brought this project nationwide fame as well as still going out and doing surveys and running the newsletter, setting up the yahoo group, doing the committee duties and membership secretary, bat care. She is suppose to be retired from her professional career but think she is more busy now than when she was working! If anyone deserves this award for what she has done the last few years its Jude. She has been an active bat worker for a long time and think she deserves a thank you.

#### **Lizzy Pauling**

##### ***Bedfordshire Bat Group***

I just want to second Kelly's nomination. Jude is absolutely fantastic. Don't know how she does it all. Her enthusiasm for bat work has been a real inspiration to me in going for my roost licence.

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## Appendix 3

### Supporting statements for Dr Roger Ransome

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**Prof Gareth Jones**  
*University of Bristol*

Roger has completed all of his studies while either working as a school teacher, or more recently an ecological consultant.

The greater horseshoe bats roosting seasonally in either Woodchester mansion or the surrounding mines, have been continuously studied by Roger for 54 years. It is the longest study of a mammal by a single person anywhere in the world. A series of English Nature research reports, produced from 1996 to 2002 using his study data, have resulted in environmental prescriptions and roost advice to promote horseshoe bat population recovery in the UK.

Many research papers have been published using data from the study, including collaborative ones with staff and students from Bristol University. One paper has been published in the world's top science journal, Nature.

The European Action Plan (EUP) for greater horseshoe bats was written using the Woodchester Mansion data. It also included hibernation studies based on local disused mines. A key recommendation of the EUP was the need for public education about bats. This aim has been partly realised by the installation of infra red CCTV cameras in both horseshoe bat attics in 1999 and 2001. They were funded by grants from the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species. They provided the first public viewing opportunities of bat behaviour in the UK. Thousands of members of the public have now enjoyed watching the Woodchester bats on the cameras. The Bat Exhibition Room here has a display of educational material for all ages, but is targeted at the young. It was provided, and is manned on some open days, by the Gloucestershire Bat Group.

Roger has made a massive long-term commitment to bat conservation and research in the UK. He has already been awarded the H.H. Bloomer Award from the Linnean Society (1988) in recognition of his important contributions to biological knowledge as an amateur naturalist.

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## Appendix 4

### Supporting statements for Peter Andrews

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**Charlie Liggett**

*Merseyside & West Lancs Bat Group, Chair*

I would like to nominate Peter Andrews of Merseyside and West Lancashire Bat Group for the Pete Guest Award.

Peter was a founder member of the group and has been Chairman for almost all of its 24 year existence, but he was interested in them even before the group was conceived. At present he is the President.

Peter has been an inspiration to many members of the group, with his deep scientific knowledge of bats, especially bat sound, and his tremendous enthusiasm for the animals themselves. He has conducted long-term research on Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats, in North and South Wales and is well-known and respected in the bat community.

He has published a number of papers on the ultrasounds of both species and has attended and given papers at many international conferences on bats. Peter has also been a very active bat worker on Merseyside for many years, given many talks and led bat walks and responded to calls from householders.

In my opinion Peter is worthy of the Award, and as he is extremely well known and liked by bat workers in the UK and abroad.

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## **Appendix 5**

### **Supporting statements for John Goldsmith**

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#### **John Dobson**

John has studied his beloved Norfolk bats for over 40 years, has invented the Norfolk Bat Brick, now widely used in many successful conservation projects, and the Norfolk Breeding Box, a substantial box that has been successfully used by colonies of pipistrelle bats.

He has also undertaken many volunteer calls on behalf of NCC/EN/NE since the introduction of The Wildlife & Countryside Act and been actively involved in the Thetford Forest Bat Box Scheme and also in the protection of Paston Barn, the first breeding site for barbastelles to be found in the UK.

This award would recognise and acknowledge both the tremendous amount of work that John has contributed as an amateur naturalist, and his commitment to bat conservation.

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## **Appendix 6**

### **Supporting statements for Jan Ragg**

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**Hilary Love**  
*Essex Bat Group*

I have worked as a volunteer for a number of animal rescue and welfare groups over the years, and have met some very committed people - and of them all, Jan stands out. She is tireless and devoted to the care and rescue of bats, and the support and education of other bat carers.

I first met her last year when I joined Essex Bat Group. Jan ran the induction training for the new bat carers, including myself. She is the contact point for found bats and other emergency calls throughout the area, and maintains the network of responders and 'ambulance drivers' accordingly. However, on many occasions there is no-one available to respond, and she responds herself.

She organises the training of new bat care workers and ambulance drivers and constantly keeps records updated of all bats that come into contact with carers throughout the year. She is a dedicated and experienced bat carer in her own right. At her home she will often have as many as 20+ bats in her care at any one time in various stages of recovery and rehabilitation, and I have been with her on a number of occasions when she is surveying bats, test-flying recovering bats, and releasing bats successfully back into the wild.

She also supports the other carers, with advice at any time day or night, and will turn out herself whenever necessary to help or to assist in the identification of an unusual bat. She also organises things like training and ordering specialist equipment for the other carers.

In short, her dedication to and knowledge of bat rescue are astounding: it would be a fitting tribute if she were to receive the Pete Guest award.

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## Appendix 7

### Voting form

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If you would prefer to vote by post, or in person at the Bat Group Forum, please print this page, fill in the details below, and either:

- Return to Laura Dunne, Bat Conservation Trust, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG.

OR

- Bring along to the Bat Group Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at York University.

<b>Your Name</b>	
<b>Bat Group</b>	
<b>Name of nominee for whom you'd like to vote</b>	

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