
This email has been sent to bat group contacts only.
Please forward this information to others in your group.

Dear bat group member,

Hello and welcome to the February edition of the Bat Group Bulletin! In this issue you can read about BCT's latest responses, and find your chance to get involved whether volunteering or sharing your experience.

Please use the interactive contents list to jump to the topics of most interest to you.

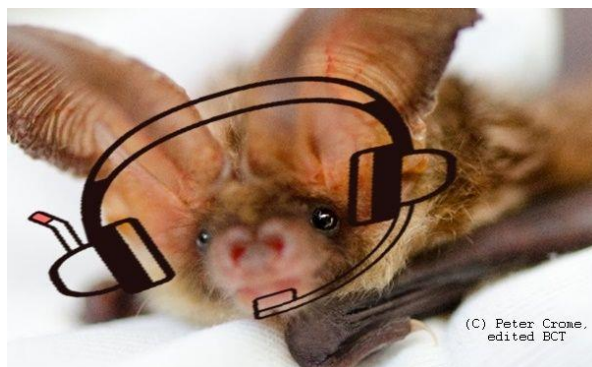
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1. Nature is Essential to All People's Future. Our vision for the future is of a world rich in wildlife where people and bats thrive together. We want everyone, everywhere to have opportunities to connect with bats and nature and get involved with conservation. Read more about this here: <https://bit.ly/3TnMSH7>.

2. Congratulations to the BAfTaAs Winners. The annual Batty Awards for Talent and Achievement celebrate some outstanding bat workers who have made a big difference for bats. Congratulations to the winners of the BAfTaA for Church Support: Barry Collins, Roger & Sylvia Jiggins, and Nigel Millbourne. Roger & Sylvia have also been inducted to the BCT Hall of Fame this year, along with Maggie Brown. Congratulations to all and thank you for your work for bat conservation. You can read more about their award-winning work here: <https://bit.ly/3UPG1XX>.

3. BCT's Response to the Government's Hedgerows Consultation. Hedgerows can be a very important landscape feature for bat species. Because of this, we responded to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) consultation on proposals regarding regulation on hedgerows on agricultural land. Further details and our response are available here: <https://bit.ly/431DwUA>.

4. Help the Helpline this Summer. Every year the National Bat Helpline takes thousands of calls from people who have found grounded and injured bats. We are fast approaching the summer, during which our Helpline becomes very busy. To ensure that as many bats as possible are helped during this critical time, a Volunteer Bat Care Helpline (VBCH) is operated from May to September. We need volunteers to answer bat care-related calls during office hours (9.30pm-4.30pm), as well as during the evenings, weekends and bank holidays. Volunteers attend



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an interactive and informative virtual training day before carrying out 'Bat Watches' from the comfort of their home, receiving full support from BCT staff throughout the project. Volunteering on the VBCH is a very rewarding experience for beginners, experienced bat workers and everyone in between.

We will be **recruiting volunteers for the 2024 summer season from 1st March – 1st April**. More information about the project and how to volunteer can be found on the [BCT website](#) (updated on 1st March). Please note that volunteer positions are available on a first come first served basis. We will end recruitment once all the places on the three training days have been filled. If you have any questions, please email helplinevolunteers@bats.org.uk.

5. Let us know what working in bat conservation means to you. For this year's BCT Annual Report, we want to include quotes from bat group members who work on the front line of bat conservation. If you want to take part, then send us a few words about the impact your volunteer work has had on your life. Maybe it's improved your mental wellbeing, got you motivated to learn more, or simply been a pleasure. If you have any photos of you volunteering you can share, that would be great, though not necessary. And do let us know if you're happy for us to contact you should we want to use your quote but edit it, so it fits in the limited space of the Annual Report. Please send your quotes to comms@bats.org.uk with the subject line 'Quote for Annual Report'.

6. Data Request for Bat Rehabilitators – understanding the effects of climate change.

Climate change is thought to be a major threat to bat populations worldwide, but we still know little about how bats are responding to climate change. Recently, BCT and several partner organisations launched the [Connecting People and Landscapes](#) in a changing climate project to understand the vulnerability of UK bats to climate change. We are asking all those involved in bat rehabilitation for data that will enable us to address these important questions. We are looking for data on date, location, sex, age, reproductive condition and body measurements of rescued bats, as well as any other information on why the bats ended up in care. If you think that you may be able to help with this project, then please contact Dr Luke Sutton at the University of Exeter on L.J.Sutton@exeter.ac.uk for more information.

7. Reminder – Big Green Hike. BCT will be taking part in the Big Green Hike again! This year, the Hike is taking place **Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th April**. This is a great way to get outdoors and to raise money for bat conservation by walking, skipping or running in your own style and at your own pace. You also decide the route and distance plus you can do it in urban or rural settings so you are in full control. It would be great for you to join us! If you are based in Scotland or have a particular love of Scotland we are keen for you to support our work there which is currently underfunded, although you can of course choose to raise money for any aspect of BCT's work, just make sure you let us know and make it clear on your fundraising page. For more information and to register for FREE, [click here](#).

8. 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 do utilise the **extra publicity for your events** by getting them added to the [BCT events page](#) or included in the bulletin for other bat group members to see. For more information about training please see our [training pages](#) or email the training team on training@bats.org.uk. You can also get updates straight to your inbox by signing up to BCT's events mailing list here: <https://bit.ly/3a2g0M0>.

BCT Events and Training. BCT runs a hybrid program of online and in-person events.

- **15th & 22nd March – How to Organise & Lead a Bat Walk.** [Online](#) training to develop skills to be able to run a bat walk by yourself. From preparing your event to running the bat walk

itself, covering some key aspects of bat biology so you can feel confident sharing your enthusiasm and knowledge. <https://bit.ly/3kjqNv>.

- ***Booking open* 23rd March – Midlands Regional Conference.** Booking for this hybrid event is open! Held at De Montfort University Leicester and online via zoom, offering a mixture of talks and two 1hr workshops. <https://bit.ly/3n73rXA>.
- **27th March – NBMP Discover your local bats.** Online workshop showing you how to carry out your first bat count and ways in which you can continue to develop your skills. <https://bit.ly/3IfHkYH>.
- **19th June-24th July – British Bats, their ecology and conservation.** Six-session online course designed for those new to bats wanting to develop a broader understanding of bat ecology, threats and conservation action. Nov-Dec dates also available to book. <https://bit.ly/42arupQ>.
- **13th-15th September – National Bat Conference.** Save the date of the 2024 hybrid conference. <https://bit.ly/2SyHhRB>.
- **November – Tracking Bats Methodologies Conference.** Originally hoped to be held in April, this has been postponed to November 2024. More details to follow. You can register your interest here: <https://forms.office.com/e/Gq8DWkfzyM>.
- ***New* Ongoing – Introduction to bats and artificial lighting.** The module is great CPD for anyone working in ecology or the built environment sector who would like to develop their knowledge and understanding of bat ecology, the impact of artificial lighting and the latest mitigation techniques. You will learn about the latest research and guidance on bats and artificial lighting online whenever is convenient for you. The module costs £25 per person and you receive a CPD certificate on completion. <https://bit.ly/48y8i8s>.
- **Ongoing – Bats and lighting talks.** Hear the talks given by experts who spoke at the Bats and Artificial Guidance Note Update Launch: <https://bit.ly/3TAj9Lk>.
- **Ongoing – 4th edition survey guidelines: exploring the changes webinar:** <https://bit.ly/4803R70>.

Other Events and Training.

- **12th March – 3rd International Bat Research Online Symposium.** Free online event on replacement roosts for bats at buildings: <https://bit.ly/46TH9fY>.
- **23rd-24th April – Trees, People and the Built Environment 5 Conference.** Hybrid conference to provide a place for built and natural environment professionals to collaborate, with real-world case studies, research, and practical solutions: <https://bit.ly/49yDxlz>.
- **2nd-6th September – European Bat Research Symposium.** Scientific conference dedicated to the study and conservation of bats in Europe, in Tarragona, Spain: <https://bit.ly/3Rzj6wy>.
- **Ongoing – Bat Acoustics Analysis.** Online course from BatAbility containing 14 modules and more than 15 hours of content to develop your skills in bat call analysis and, if you want, undertake a graded examination at the end of the course. BatAbility are kindly donating at least 6% to BCT for each participant that signs up. <https://bit.ly/3fvgZHa>.
- **Ongoing – Free Charity and Trustee Webinars.** See gettingonboard.org.

9. Bat Research Papers, Reports & Other Bat Media.

Please note we normally include articles, reports and blogs that are available to read online or download without charge.

- **Shift in birth timings of greater horseshoe bats in response to climate change.** Long-term monitoring study utilising NBMP data, looks at a non-invasive method to predict the change in birth timing of greater horseshoe bats associated with climate change. Thank you

everyone who submits greater horseshoe bat roost counts and has enabled this valuable research to be carried out. <https://bit.ly/3lcSrBs>.

- **Moonlight and swarming.** Data from multiple swarming surveys, taking account of serval parameters, shows no relationship between activity and moonlight illumination. <https://bit.ly/49l6r8l>
- **Evolution of laryngeal echolocation.** Comparing musculoskeletal morphogenesis of the larynx, to show support for the convergent evolution of this feature, rather than singular event and subsequent losses. <https://bit.ly/49PApRH>.
- **State of the World's Migratory Species Report.** Launched by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the report provides a global overview of the conservation status and population trends of migratory animals, combined with the latest information on their main threats and successful actions to save them. <https://bit.ly/3PIGVYP>.
- **Quantifying agricultural pest suppression by bats in rice fields.** Following exclusion experiments, it's estimated that more than 6 million euros is saved by bats per year in Spain. <https://bit.ly/49vz7vi>.

A rolling 12 months of previous bulletins are available on the BCT website at <https://bit.ly/2GGoYRK>.

Best wishes,



Abby Packham
Bat Groups Officer

If you wish to alter your contact preferences, including to opt-out of receiving future communications from us, please contact us by either calling 020 7820 7193 or emailing batgroups@bats.org.uk, **however if you are receiving this bulletin forwarded to you by your bat group, please contact the bat group directly.**