

YOUR HELP NEEDED

Building development has been an important factor in the decline of our bat population. Knowledge about the location of bat roosts and areas of land used by bats is important to our bat conservation efforts, and we routinely scrutinise planning applications to identify any that might affect bat populations. We can then arrange for guidance to be provided to the developers to minimise the impact on neighbouring bat populations. So, if you know of a roost, or regularly see bats flying in your neighbourhood, please let us know, by e-mailing details to:

jenny@jonez.info

or completing the form below and forwarding it to the group's recorder:

Dr Jenny Jones, 23 North Road, Hertford,
Hertfordshire SG14 1LN.

Your name.....

Address:.....

.....

Where have you seen bats:

.....

.....

If in a building, do you own it YES/NO.

May we contact you for more information YES/NO

If yes, contact telephone number / e-mail address

.....

Bat Helpline – 01992 581442

JOIN US

All our work is undertaken voluntarily but the Group depends on membership fees and donations from the public to cover necessary expenses. The money raised by the group is used exclusively for bat conservation work in the two counties.

If you would like to support the work of Hertfordshire & Middlesex Bat Group by:

- actively working to conserve bats in our area, or
- just wishing to express your support or
- if you want to learn more about these valuable, fascinating, animals,

then please complete the form below and send it, with your subscription, to the membership secretary.

We would welcome your membership.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

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Tel No:.....

e-mail:.....

Do you wish to be added to our email newsgroup? Yes / No.

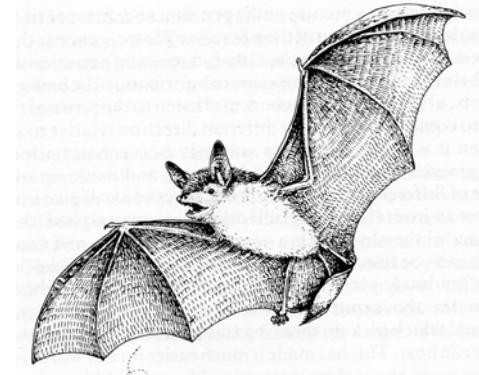
Individual Membership £8 + £1.50 for each additional person

**Membership Secretary: Hazel Makepeace
101 The Avenue, Bengo, Hertford, SG14 3DU**

HERTFORDSHIRE AND MIDDLESEX BAT GROUP



www.hertsmiddlesexbatgroup.org.uk



Do you have bats in your house? Do you need information on bats? Do you need advice before carrying out building work or timber treatment? Do you need someone to look after injured bats?

Call the BAT HELPLINE 01992 581442

Bats in brief

Bats have been around in their present form for about 50 million years. So they were evolving while dinosaurs were still roaming the Earth. During that long time they have evolved into about a thousand species, which live all over the World (except for Polar Regions) and eat a wide variety of foods.

TV nature programmes often show the large fruit bats that hang in trees in Australia, Thailand, Indonesia etc, but few people realise how tiny our native bats are, or that they eat only insects. We have 17* species of bats in Britain, ranging in size from the Noctule and Greater Horseshoe Bats, which are about 75mm (3 inches) long and weigh about 30g (1ounce), to the smallest (and commonest) Pipistrelle Bats, which are about 40mm (1½ inches) long and weigh only about 6g (¼ ounce). That's the weight of a sheet of A4 paper!

British Bats have suffered an enormous (about 70%) decline in numbers since the 1970's, due to factors such as

- **loss of feeding areas** as towns expand into the countryside;
- **changes in agriculture** such as removal of hedges, and increased use of insecticides and other agro-chemicals;
- **loss of roosting places** which, in turn has caused population fragmentation and further losses.

Bats are one of Nature's ways of controlling insect populations, and therefore are a vital component of biodiversity. To help to reduce further population declines, all British bats and their roosts are now protected by law.

Local Bat Groups play a major role in the conservation of our bats, supported by The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT). BCT is routinely consulted on bat-related matters by the Government and is the lead organisation in Biodiversity Action Plans for bats, which are intended to reduce, or reverse the decline in our bat population. Trends in bat populations are monitored by BCT's National Bat Monitoring Programme, set up in 1996 in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, in which volunteers throughout the UK count the numbers of bats emerging from roosts. Further information is on BCT's website - www.bats.org.uk.

Hertfordshire and Middlesex Bat Group activities

Members of the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Bat Group contribute to bat conservation by:

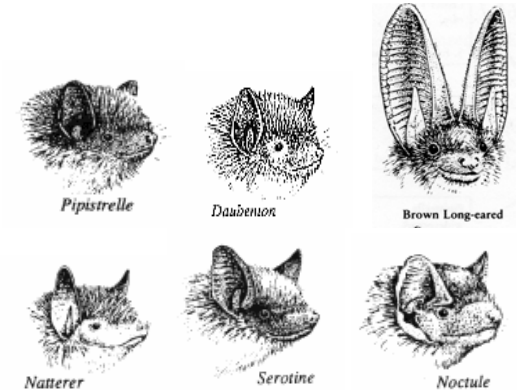
- **surveying sites** within our area to establish which bats are present and how they are using the site (eg whether there is a roost nearby or if it is a feeding area). This is particularly important to determine how large-scale planning proposals (eg housing development, building major roads) could impact the local bat population,
- **monitoring roosts** to identify fluctuations in populations (no experience needed), which is important to alert us to problems causing declines, and also to monitor the effectiveness of bat enhancement schemes,
- **caring for sick and injured bats**, and abandoned or orphan baby bats, which the bat group receives every year from the public and the RSPCA etc. Those bats are either cared for, or hand reared, by the Group's volunteers, with the intention of releasing them back into the wild. Some bats that cannot be released are used at talks and environmental shows as ambassadors for their species.
- **education.** The Group is pro-active in promoting awareness of bats to the general public and takes the opportunity to attend environmental organisations' shows and open days. More experienced members give talks to the public (including schools, youth groups, adult groups) and to specialist groups likely to come across bats in their work, and also lead bat walks during the summer. We organise training days, initially for those who want to learn a little more about these fascinating animals and, for anyone wanting to develop their interest and take bat work further, we have qualified trainers who will guide you to your roost visitors licence.
- **operating a BAT HELPLINE** with the financial assistance of Natural England. Anyone who needs

information about bats, finds a bat that is injured or cannot fly, or help with bats in conjunction with buildings or building work can contact the group on **01992 581442**.

We meet informally at St. Etheldreda's Church Hall, Old Hatfield, Herts on the last Thursday of the month except December. Come along and meet us and find out how you can help to protect and conserve bats in Hertfordshire and Middlesex. See our web page for directions.

We also produce a regular newsletter which will provide you with information about batwork in the two counties, and details of bat walks and surveys that you could join in.

Bats found in Hertfordshire and Middlesex



These 6 species are commonly found in Hertfordshire and Middlesex. But there are three species of Pipistrelle Bat, which are very similar to each other in appearance. Two of them are common while the other is found occasionally. So we have 7 species that are found regularly in the two counties. But we also have rarer species, such as Barbastelle, Brandt's, Whiskered and Leisler's – making 11 species out of the national total of 17.