



The Echo



Newsletter of the Warwickshire Bat Group

May 1999

Welcome to the first of the new-look newsletters. At our recent AGM we decided to change from publishing just twice a year to quarterly. This was proposed so that members could be kept more up to date with events and information throughout the year. It is planned that these will be published in March, June, September and December with the deadline for articles being the 1st of each of these months. As there were a lot of bat events coming up shortly we have brought out this May issue as an interim measure.

John and myself are planning a series of informal bat walks about once a month this summer. We hope that these will be not only enjoyable but productive sessions that will help to map out just where Warwickshire's bats choose to live. Details of the walks will be published in the next newsletter in June.

With the summer season just around the corner we require volunteers to help us run stalls at various events such as the Town & Country and Godiva Festivals. You don't have to be a bat expert and if you have even a couple of hours to spare we would be most grateful. If you can help please then contact John Waller.

Finally, Paul Elliott is organising some talks for our winter programme so if you have any suggestions for speakers then please let us know.

Julia Waller

Bat Detector Workshops

We have just been notified of a free workshop which takes place at Cropston Reservoir Visitor Centre, near Leicester, on Saturday 15th May from 12.30 – 4.30pm. Led by Colin Catto of the BCT it is likely to be followed by an evening's bat watching. For further details contact Francois Scire on 01509 264714.

This is one of a series of training workshops aimed at improving bat detector skills. The workshops nearest to Warks are listed below with the organiser's contact number:

- 30th May, Cambs – Vera Herman 01604 405285
- 16th June, Shrops – Mike Worsford 01691 404505
- 26th June, Northants – Vera Herman 01604 405285

The Bat Worker's Manual



A new version of the "Bat Workers Manual" has now been published. It covers bats & the law, health and safety, surveys and monitoring, catching bats, examining bats, ringing and marking, handling, releasing and keeping bats, the role of a bat group, public relations, timber treatment, pest control and building work, and conserving and creating bat roosts. It is available to bat group members at £10 per copy, which is half the normal price, from: NHBS Mailorder Bookstore, 2-3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5XN. Tel: 01803 865913 Fax: 01803 865280. They have a website with all the details (www.nhbs.com) but do not support online ordering however you can email them at cuserv@nhbs.co.uk. They sell numerous other bat books and if you would like a copy of their latest list/order form then let us know and we can post you one.

Bats and the Law

Under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, bats have become amongst the most protected animals in Britain. The act makes it illegal to

- Intentionally kill or injure any bat.
- Disturb a bat at roost
- Damage a roost site or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter.

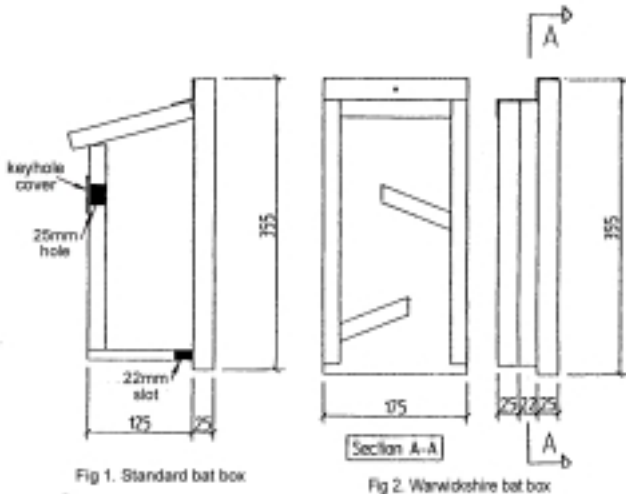
It is not illegal though, to remove bats from the living area of a house or to rescue injured or abandoned bats as they may be released when recovered.

Should any work be planned that may disturb bats or their roost, English Nature must be consulted.

If bats are unwelcome or work is planned in a building suspected of housing bats at any time, contact English Nature on 01743 709611 or Cresswell Bat Line on 01453 764450. Work will not necessarily be prevented, but advice given on the least disturbing way of doing it.

Blue Tits Nesting In Standard Bat-Box With Fatal Results

As licensed bird-ringers and bat-workers, we organise nestbox schemes for birds and bats. On 15th July 1993 while examining a standard batbox, we found a dead brood of 6 almost fully-fledged Blue Tits *Parus caeruleus*. It would appear that the adult tits had entered the box through the slot at the bottom, built a nest and hatched young. As the young approached fledging age their trampling had flattened the nest across the entrance slot and, just before fledging, the nest had completely blocked the entrance, preventing the adults from entering. The young were trapped inside and subsequently starved to death. Reflecting on this incident prompted us to examine, on 7th November 1993, a further 5 standard type batboxes attached to isolated Pedunculate Oaks *Quercus robur* in a 30 year old plantation of Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*. Three of these contained old nests, presumably of Blue Tits, of which, two appeared (from the appearance of feather scale) to have been successful whilst the third contained an incomplete nest. These batboxes could represent a common hazard for Tits that use them. We suggest two remedies:



1. In all batboxes, bore a 25mm hole in the position of the conventional nestbox hole but close this with a keyhole-type cover (Figure 1). Inspect the boxes in April and, if birds are using them, remove the hole cover to allow access above the nest. After fledging remove the nest, recover the access hole, and allow bats to use the box during July to September.
2. Use the "Warwickshire type" bat boxes (Figure 2) designed by M W Finnemore (an original member of the Warwickshire Bat Group). While these have been used with great success by bats they are of insufficient volume to be attractive to Blue Tits as nesting sites.

George Yates & John Matthews

(We would like to thank British Birds for giving us permission to reproduce this article)

Plans for the Mick Finnemore designed bat box are reproduced on the back page of this newsletter.

BAT DIARY

Here's a list of the latest bat events that we know of. If you know of any other batty "happenings" please send us the details or email us on batgroup@jwaller.demon.co.uk so that we can include them.

14th May 1999 - 20.00

Bat Walk at Upton House

This walk is free with any donations going to Warwickshire Bat Group. It is led by bat group member Keith Blundell. Upton House is found on the A422, 7 miles NW of Banbury, 12 miles SE of Stratford-upon-Avon national grid reference: [SP371461] <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/>

15th May 1999 - 21.00

Bat Walk at Bedworth

This walk is not at Bedworth Slough, as previously advertised. Meet in the car park at the bottom of Coalpit Fields Rd, Bedworth. Led by John Waller of Warks Bat Group.

Bat Detector Workshop

See front page.

16th May 1999

Burbage Common Open Day

This is an open day at Burbage Common, near Hinckley with lots of wildlife related stalls and events.

21st May 1999 - 19.30

Bat Box Check at Snitterfield Bushes

This is a bat walk to check the bat boxes at one of Warks Wildlife Trust nature reserves (SP200603).

4th June 1999

Wildlife Workshop at Brandon Marsh Nature Centre

Aimed at children aged between 4 - 11 years. Based on practical exploration, the workshop is fun and yet educational with a slide show, batty games and crafts. Each workshop lasts 2 hours. There is one in the morning (10.30-12.30) and a repeat in the afternoon (2-4pm). The cost is £3.50 per child which is payable on the day. Booking is essential on 01203 308977 (<http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk>)

Family Bat Walk at Brandon Marsh Nature Centre

Listen to bats using bat detectors and watch them hunting for prey. The event is from 9.15pm to 10.45pm. Bring a torch! The cost is £3 per family (Warks Wildlife Trust members) or £6 per family (non-members) which is payable on the day. Booking is essential on 01203 308977 (<http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk>)

4th - 6th June 1999

Godiva Weekend

This is a weekend festival held in the Memorial Park in Coventry. Apart from having our bat "roadshow" it includes a wide range of entertainment. There may be a bat walk on Saturday evening.

More info at (<http://www.coventry.org/godiva/index.htm>)

4th - 6th June 1999

The 2nd Irish Bat Conference

The 2nd Irish Bat Conference will take place in the Burren College of Art on June 4th - 6th 1999. For further information, please contact either: Kate McAney, Tel: +353 (0)93-35360, e-mail: mcaney@iol.ie or Congelia McGuire, Tel: +353 (0)65-40266, e-mail: mcgguirec.ennis@tinet.ie

12th June 1999 - 22.00

Bat & Moth Night at Ryton Pools Country Park

Meet at the Visitor Centre at Ryton Pools Country Park. Cost £1.50 (75p for senior citizens, children, unemployed) plus car parking charge. Limited places so book on 01203 305592. Bring a torch!

16th June 1999 - 21.00

Bat Walk at Tocil Wood

Paul Elliott (Chair of WBG) is leading a bat walk on behalf of Warks Wildlife Trust (<http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk>) around the Tocil Wood area on Warwick University campus. For further details phone Warks Wildlife Trust on 01203 302912.

26th June 1999

Amazing Bats!

Paul Elliott is running a 'Twilight' School (as opposed to Dayschool) at Warwick University (nr Coventry) through the Open Studies scheme. This comes highly recommended and will give you a thorough introduction to bats. It includes a guided bat walk in the evening. For more information phone the Open Studies department on 01203 523831 (<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/study/lifelong/open.html>)

16th July 1999 - 22.00

Bat & Moth Night II at Ryton Pools Country Park

Meet at the Visitor Centre at Ryton Pools Country Park. Cost £1.50 (75p for senior citizens, children, unemployed) plus car parking charge. Limited places so book on 01203 305592. Bring a torch!

18th August 1999 - 19.30-21.30

Bats & BBQ Night at Kingsbury Water Park

A short talk followed by a barbeque and then a bat walk. Meet at Broomey Croft car park. Cost £3.00 (£1.50 for senior citizens, children, unemployed) which includes the BBQ but excludes car parking charge. Please book in advance on 01827 872660.

23rd - 27th August 1999

European Bat Research Symposium, Krakow, Poland

<http://www.york.biosis.org/zrdocs/confs/confs99/bat.htm>

27th August 1999

Wildlife Workshop at Brandon Marsh Nature Centre

Aimed at children aged between 4 - 11 years. Based on practical exploration, the workshop is fun and yet educational with a slide show, batty games and crafts. Each workshop lasts 2 hours. There is one in the morning (10.30-12.30) and a repeat in the afternoon (2-4pm). The cost is £3.50 per child which is payable on the day. Booking is essential on 01203 308977.

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28th August 1999

European Bat Night

28th - 30th August 1999

Town & Country Festival

This is held at the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh, Warks. We have a bat stall, so come and say hello!
<http://www.rase.org.uk/events/townco98.html>

10th - 12th September

National Bat Conference at Ripon

This year's annual conference is to be held at University College of Ripon and York St John, Ripon Campus. Booking forms will be sent to all BCT members in July. If you would like details then write to:

The Bat Conservation Trust (Conference)

FREEPOST LON 10138

London

SW8 4BR

Bat Boxes in the Memorial Park

In conjunction with Coventry City Council the bat group is organising a series of three events. The first will be a bat walk in the Memorial Park in Coventry that will identify suitable locations for bat boxes. The second will be a workshop to produce a number of bat boxes to be put up at designated locations around the park by the Council. The final event will be a bat walk around the park to see the bat boxes in situ. The provisional dates for the two bat walks are 29th May and 31st July. For further details contact John Waller.

National Bat Monitoring Program



This year there are no new surveys for new species planned so 'bat surveyors' will be asked to either repeat the site they did last year or explore a new one. The survey dates are:

29 May – 17 June

6 – 25 June

1 – 30 July

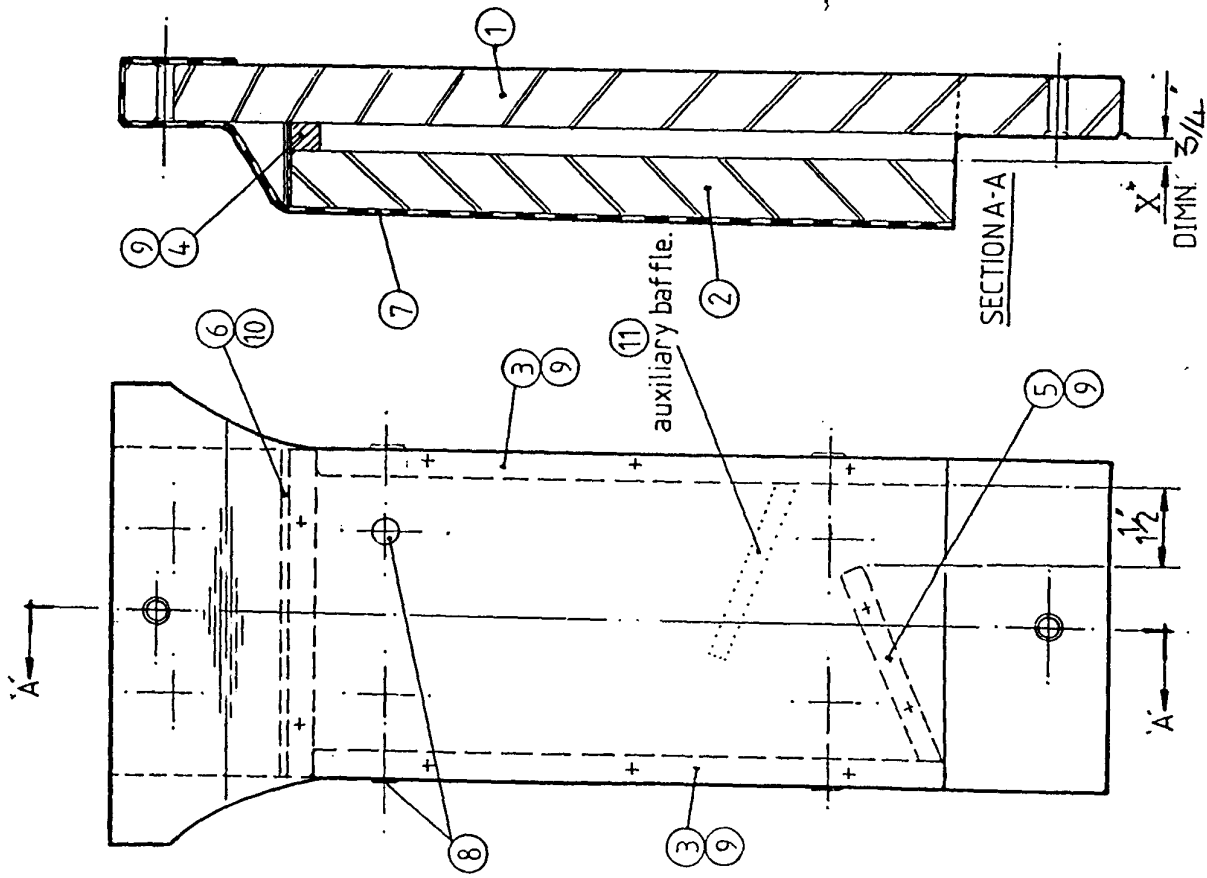
1 - 30 August

Lesser Horseshoe colony count

Pipistrelle & Serotine colony count

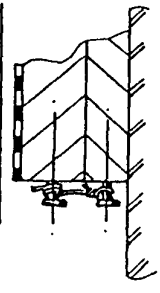
Noctule, Serotine & Pip field survey

Daubenton's field survey

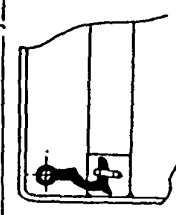


PARTS LIST		
№	QTY	DESCRIPTION
1	1	1X6X16 ROUGH SAWN TIMBER
2	1	1X6X12 "
3	2	X DIMN. SQ. X (12'-X DIMN.) PLANED
4	1	X DIMN. SQ. X 6 PLANED
5	1	X DIMN. SQ. X TO SUIT PLANED.
6	1	NYLON WEBBING 1" WIDE X 6' LONG
7	1	ROOFING FELT TO SUIT.
8	12	FELT NAILS
9	10	PANEL PINS
10	6	TACKS
11	1	IF REQD X DIMN. SQ. X TO SUIT.
—	—	CATCH - SEE BELOW FOR EXAMPLES

two nails and wire.



brass hook and eye.



stiff wire (coathanger) and staples.

