



# BAT NEWS

Newsheet of the Warwickshire Bat Group  
Issue 5, Spring 1996

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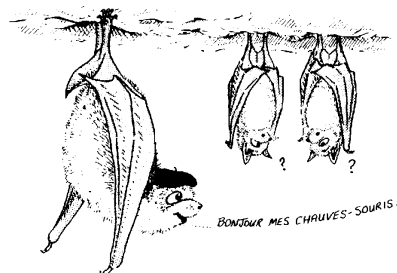
## *Introduction*

Welcome to Bat News number 5. It's now spring and I hope you are all waking up after a long winter hibernation ready for a summer of batting! During the winter we have had three very interesting talks, including one from Phil Richardson who is a nationally known and respected bat worker. The first event of the summer will be the first Warwickshire Bat Group AGM and this will be held on Monday 22nd at 7.30pm at the University of Warwick.. During the rest of the summer months we shall be organising some outdoor events where we shall hopefully be able to see bats in the fur!

John Waller

## *Amazing Bats!*

This is a Day-School at the University of Warwick on May 18. It runs from 4-10pm and includes illustrated talks, a bat identification session, a game and a chance to see and hear bats (with detectors) in the Tocil Wood nature reserve. I organise the day with Mary Durose, the irrepressible organiser of Staffordshire Bat Group. This is the third time we have put it on. In previous years it has been very well received and the bats have never failed to turn up. It is aimed at people who are interested in bats, but would like to find out more. If you have already been on it, recommend it to your friends. For information phone: 01203 523831.



Paul Elliot

## *Bats at the NEC*

The Individual Homes Exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre ran from 7-11th March. It was aimed at people renovating or building their own homes. Redland, the bricks and tiles people, donated room on their stand for the Bat Conservation Trust. I helped to man the stall on the Sunday. There was a great deal of interest from people attending the exhibition and it turned out to be a very effective way of getting specific information about bat conservation to relevant people. There were many enquiries from people about to re-roof their homes or convert barns. Some wanted to know the legal position of having bats already in residence, many others wanted to know what they could do to encourage bats to use their premises. The latter were particularly encouraging since it shows that people's attitudes to bats really are changing.

Paul Elliot

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## *Amazing Trivia !*

Mexican free-tailed bats sometimes fly up to two miles high to feed or to catch tail-winds that carry them over long distances at speeds of more than 60 miles per hour.

The pallid bat of western North America is immune to the stings of scorpions and even the seven inch centipedes upon which it feeds.

## *Youngsters going batty*

Staff and pupils at Finham Primary School in Coventry are planning to place nine bat boxes on trees in the school grounds. They have a great interest in improving the school's environs to the benefit of wildlife and bats are their latest interest. I gave two illustrated talks at the school in February, attended by all classes, from 4-11 year olds. The children demonstrated a great enthusiasm for bats and I could have stayed all week answering their questions.

A Scout group in Alcester have been building their own bat boxes. They sought advice on where to place them and I offered to go and advise and give another talk.

Paul Elliot

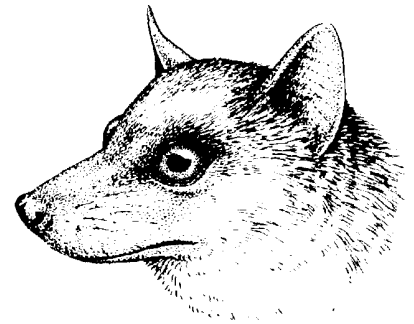
## *British Bat Survey*

The Bat Conservation Trust recently won a £0.5million contract from the Department of the Environment to carry out a nation-wide investigation over five years into the status of seven of Britain's bat species. They have appointed two people to coordinate the work, but will be relying on the enthusiastic participation of volunteers, mostly from bat groups. Most of the work will involve counting bats out of known roost sites each summer, to establish how numbers fluctuate. BCT will be providing advice and training on the techniques and recording methods to be employed so it should prove an ideal opportunity for more people to become actively involved in conservation research in Warwickshire. Details will be relayed when we have them.

Paul Elliot

## *Bats at London Zoo*

May 12 is Bat Day at London Zoo. From 11am. to 4pm. there will be many batty events and activities. There is even a competition to win the chance to feed the fruit bats.

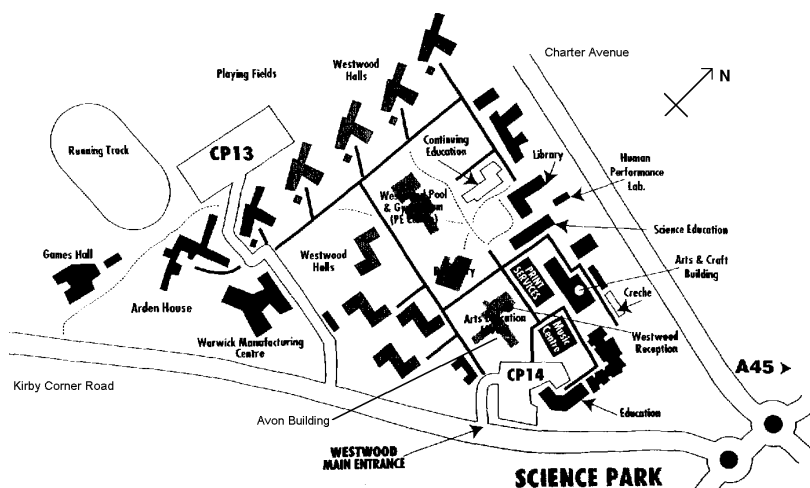


Events and activities include: interactive children's talks, how to study bats in the field, interview with a bat, story telling, bat treasure hunt and fun things for younger children. BCT members pay a reduced entrance fee.

Paul Elliot

## *AGM*

The first Warwickshire Bat Group AGM will be held on Monday 22nd at 7.30pm in the Staff Common Room, Avon Building, University of Warwick Westwood Campus, Coventry. We would like as many members as possible to be there, especially ones who are interested in helping to organise the bat group!

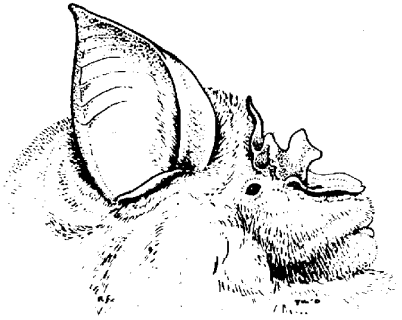


After the business part of the meeting we shall be showing The Secret World of Bats video from the Keepers of the Kingdoms series which features the work Merlin Tuttle from Bat Conservation International. Those members who came to the March meeting may remember that featured the work Paul Elliot did with Merlin Tuttle last summer. (Is this your 15 minutes of fame Paul?)

John Waller

## Bat Profile

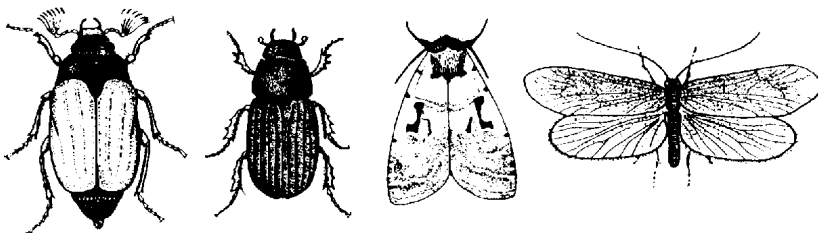
### Greater Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*



The horseshoe bats can be distinguished from other British bats by the presence of a complex horseshoe shaped noseleaf which is related to their particular type of echolocation system. When roosting they hang free with the wings more or less enfolding their body. The greater horseshoe bat is one of our largest species - the size of a small pear.

### Bat facts

<b>Description</b>	<b>Head and body length</b>	57-71 mm (2¼"-2¾").
	<b>Forearm length</b>	54-61 mm (2"- 2¾")
	<b>Wingspan</b>	350-400 mm (14"-16").
	<b>Weight</b>	17-34g (c. 1 oz).
	<b>Colour</b>	Adults buff-brown; juveniles greyish.
<b>Life cycle</b>	<b>Mating period</b>	Late September-October.
	<b>Maternity colonies</b>	Late spring. Young: usually one, born mid July, weaned within 7 weeks.
	<b>Colony size</b>	50-200 (rarely 600).
<b>Habitat and food</b>	<b>Longevity</b>	Up to 30 years.
	<b>Summer roosts</b>	Mainly buildings.
	<b>Winter roosts</b>	Caves, disused mines, cellars, tunnels.
	<b>Feeding habitat</b>	Deciduous woodland, scrub, permanent pasture, water, along hedgerows.
	<b>Food</b>	Chafers and dung beetles, noctuid moths, crane-flies, caddisflies.



Bat profile information supplied by the Bat Conservation Trust

## *The Batlopedia, - an A-Z of Bats* (continued from issue 3)

### Insects

Many species of bats (including all European bats) are insectivorous and are a very effective method of pest control. One pipistrelle can eat 3000 midges in one night!

### Joists (and other timbers)

Bats regularly roost in buildings, especially in gable ends and other secluded areas. These timbers should therefore never be treated with dangerous chemicals such as Lindane, which is likely to kill any bat roosting on the treated timber, even a long time after it has been treated.

## *Bats And The Law*

Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. There are three main areas of protection which means it is illegal to:

1. Intentionally kill or injure any bat.
2. Disturb a bat at roost
3. Damage a roost site or obstruct the entrance

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

## *Amazing Trivia !*

African heart-nosed bats can hear the footsteps of a beetle walking on sand from a distance of more than six feet.

## *Events Diary*

### April

Monday 22nd 7.30pm Annual General Meeting (see page 2)  
*University of Warwick*

### May

Thursday 9th 7.30pm Beer and Bats  
*The Red Lion, Main Street, Hunningham*  
National Grid ref: SP374686

Saturday 18th 4-10pm Amazing Bats day school (see page 1)  
*University of Warwick*

### June

Sunday 9th All day Dawn 'til Dusk day with evening bat walk  
at 9.00pm  
*Brandon Marsh Nature Centre, Coventry*  
For more information telephone  
01203 302912

### July

Friday 26th 8.00pm Canal-side barbecue and bat walk  
"Trefusis", 8 Leam Road, Myton,  
Warwick, CV31 3PA  
Bring your own burgers, sausages etc.  
Buns etc. will be provided!

### August

Friday 23rd 8.00pm Bats & Burgers  
*Coombe Abbey Country Park*

Friday 30th 8.00pm Who Dares After Dark  
*Coombe Abbey Country Park*

Saturday 31st 8.00pm Bats & Bugs  
*Coombe Abbey Country Park*

Events at Coombe Abbey Country Park are organised by the Ranger Service and may need booking. For further information telephone (01203) 453720

## *Events in other areas Gloucestershire Bat Group*

for further information contact:  
Sheila Nicholls (01452) 712406

"Basically Bats II" second part  
of a 2 part course for  
newcomers & intending licence  
holders: Wednesday 24th April  
7.30pm

Bat Box Inspection (Parish and  
Oldhills Wood & Three Groves  
Wood) Saturday 4th May from  
9.30am

Bat Box Inspection (Collinpark  
Wood) Sunday 19th May 2pm

Bat Walk at Baunton  
Wednesday 22nd May 8.30pm

Bat Walk at Newent Lake  
Wednesday 26th June 9pm

## *Amazing Trivia !*

The world's smallest mammal is  
the bumblebee bat of Thailand,  
weighing less than a penny.  
Giant flying foxes that live in  
Indonesia have wingspans of  
nearly six feet.

The common little brown bat of  
North America is the world's  
longest lived mammal for its  
size, with life-spans sometimes  
exceeding 32 years.

Fishing bats have echolocation  
so sophisticated that they can  
detect a minnow's fin as fine as  
a human hair, protruding only  
two millimetres above a pond's  
surface.