



Brown Long Eared Bat © Ruth Hadden

Working with Wildlife

Bats Species Action Plan

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Latest version	January 2008

Description

10 of the 17 British species of bat have been recorded in Northumberland and although the different species have different requirements their needs are broadly similar. All are insectivorous and need insect-rich wetland, pasture or deciduous woodland in which to hunt. They navigate to feeding sites from their roosts using linear land features such as hedgerows, watercourses, avenues of trees or roads. All bats need a warm safe place to roost in the summer such as a hollow tree, in a building or in cavities external to a building such as hanging tiles, soffits and bargeboards or timber fascias. All bats hibernate and so need a cold, draft-free and safe place to spend the winter months, often within stone structures, mineshafts, large trees or even behind rotten timber window frames in wall cavities.

Pipistrelle bats are the most abundant and widespread bat species in the UK, but are thought to have undergone a significant decline in numbers in the last century. Estimates from the National Bat Colony Survey suggest a population decline of approximately 70% between 1978 and 1993. The current pre-breeding population estimate for the UK stands at approximately 2,000,000. The problems of estimating population trends have been compounded by the recent discovery that there are 3 distinct species of Pipistrelle bat in the UK.

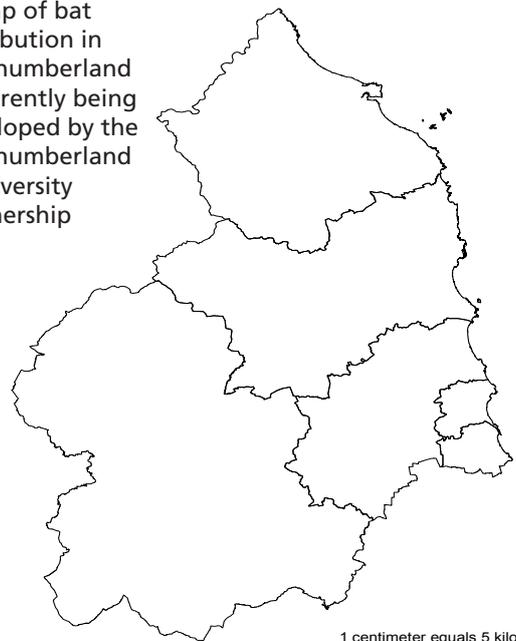
Conservation Status

Bern Convention, Appendix III
 EC Habitats Directive, Annex IV
 Bonn Convention, Appendix II
 Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994, Regulation 38
 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Schedules 5 and 6
 UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species – Brown Long Eared, Noctule & Soprano Pipistrelle
 North East Biodiversity Action Plan Species – Brandt's, Brown Long Eared, Daubenton's, Natterer's, Noctule & Whiskered

Current Extent in Northumberland

Species	Frequency
Brandt's bat (<i>Myotis brandtii</i>)	Rare
Brown Long Eared (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	Frequent
Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	Common
Daubenton's bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	Frequent on water
Leisler's bat (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>)	Rare
Nathusius' Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>)	Rare
Natterer's bat (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)	Uncommon
Noctule bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	Scattered
Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	Common
Whiskered bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>)	Uncommon

A map of bat distribution in Northumberland is currently being developed by the Northumberland Biodiversity Partnership



1 centimeter equals 5 kilometers

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Bats Species Action Plan

Current Factors Causing Loss or Decline

- Loss and fragmentation of insect-rich feeding habitats
- Loss of or damage to linear commuting routes such as tree-lines or hedgerows
- Loss of or damage to roosting sites, including buildings, hollow trees, and underground structures
- European protected species status not enforced by organisations when assessing planning applications
- Loss of many roosts through demolition and inappropriate building practices
- Reduction in the abundance and diversity of insect prey due to intensive agriculture
- Legal or illegal roost loss not being balanced by active general provision for bats elsewhere in new builds
- Predation of bats by domestic cats or accidental death by collision with vehicles

Associated Action Plans

Brownfield Land
 Built Environment
 Gardens & Allotments
 Lowland Meadows & Pastures
 Native Woodland
 Ponds, Lakes and Reservoirs
 Recreational & Amenity Spaces
 Rivers & Streams
 Transport Corridors

Further Information

This Bats action plan links to the Brown Long Eared, Noctule & Soprano Pipistrelle bat UK BAP action plans, all led by the Bat Conservation Trust.

Bat Conservation Trust - www.bats.org.uk

The Bat Conservation Trust, Unit 2, 15 Cloisters House, 8 Battersea Park Road, London, SW8 4BG. Tel: 020 7627 2629 Fax: 020 7627 2628

Targets

Maintain the current population of bats in Northumberland by 2010.

Maintain the current range of bats in Northumberland by 2010.

Code	Priority Actions	Date
B A01	Establish baseline knowledge of recorded bat roosts, swarming sites and hunting areas by mapping existing records	2008

B A02	Establish baseline knowledge of unrecorded areas through strategic car transect surveying and appealing to the public for roost reports.	2008
B A03	Monitor known bat roosts to establish population numbers	2010
B A04	Survey all old Pipistrelle roost records to establish which species is resident	2010
B A05	Review survey data to establish typical distributions for each bat species	2010
B A06	Identify importance of roosts to help inform future planning decisions	2010
B A07	Use the survey results to create numeric targets to maintain and increase the population and range of bats	2010
B A08	Create a display on bats and tour it through events and libraries	2009
B A09	Hold bat walks to promote bats and encourage people to submit roost records	ongoing
B A10	Engage schools and out of school groups through box making, craft activities and meet-the-bat events	ongoing
B A11	Continue to offer free general advice to householders and an injured bat rescue service via the Bat Advice Line	ongoing
B A12	Create advisory leaflets aimed at the construction sector and tree surgeons on how to deal with bats legally	2008
B A13	Prevent where possible, or mitigate against, any roost loss or habitat loss or fragmentation (including commuting roosts)	ongoing
B A14	Require habitat enhancement as planning gain for all developments that adversely affect bat roosts	ongoing
B A15	Promote habitat enhancement through rural and farming grants	ongoing
B A16	Promote hedge cutting on at least a three-year cycle to increase hedge sizes and the establishment of new hedgerow trees. Lay hedges rather than flail where possible	ongoing
B A17	Install 20 suitable hibernation and summer roosts in areas known to be used by bats	2015