

BATS & The Millennium Link

www.batml.org.uk

EDITOR:


NEIL MIDDLETON

25 KILLIN DRIVE, POLMONT, FK2 0QQ


Tel - 01324 710007 Email - middleneil@msn.com

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Bat'll do nicely! was the title of our workshop sessions recently given during BTCV's October CLAN gathering in Linlithgow. It also sums up our 2005 season pretty accurately. This season has been excellent in so many ways ranging from the diversity and enthusiasm of our volunteers, the work done in narrowing down Daubenton's roosts, the continued monitoring programme and the 2 courses we delivered in the summer. Our surveying of insect species present in the habitat has been considerably more extensive than previous, with our Malaise Trap and data loggers being permanently in place next to the Union Canal since May.




In 2006 we plan to launch a new survey for our volunteers looking at the foraging behaviour of Daubenton's bats and we would like to thank **Caroline Robertson** and **Scott Riddell** for assisting us with the development of this project. More details will appear in our next newsletter.

Daubenton's Ringing Summary



Since September 2003 we have been monitoring 2 Daubenton's roosts discovered on the Union Canal as a result of our wider activities. On average we visit each site twice per annum (spring and autumn) and so far we have ringed 191 bats. We are now beginning to build a good level of knowledge as to how these roosts are being used. Many of the bats have been recaptured in later surveys. One bat has had first 'hand' experience of our harp trap and hospitality on 6 occasions so far. This bat (ring number Y2167) is a female Daubenton's, first caught as an immature in September 2003, with a forearm length of 36.51mm and weighing 6.8g. In addition to Daubenton's bats we also occasionally capture Brown long-eared and Natterer's at these sites.

Volunteer Team 2005



We have now concluded 5 years of survey work and the tremendous effort put into the project by our volunteers once again cannot be stressed enough. Whether you have been out with us only once or many times, everyone has helped contribute towards our results to date. In particular we would like to thank the following people who have assisted us in such a variety of ways during the 2005 season:

Brian Alton, Donna Clark, Fiona Clark, Toby Clark, Karen Couper, Susan Craig, Sarah Dalrymple, Sallie Deans, Julie Ellam, Kirsty Gourlay, Martin Gray, Callum Hollywood, Diana Holt, Richard Inger, Charlotte Jolly, Jonathan Kendrew, David Knox, Helen Lundie, Iain Mackie, Laura McKinnon, Andrew McLeish, Garry Mortimer, Denise Neely, Andy Nyul, Bridget Peacock, Elaine Porteous, Katrina Pringle, Stewart Pritchard, Mark Quinn, Catarina Rei, Scott Riddell, Caroline Robertson, Darren Rollett, Stuart Smith, Tina Lee Smith, Alison Steel, Stewart Storrie, Lesley Sweeney, Nicola Sweeney, Sue Swift, Teresa Tasis, Natalie Taylor, Gillian Telfer, Gordon Tucker, Anne Youngman

Thanks lots, we have really enjoyed working with you all and look forward to seeing you again soon.

BaTML 5 Year Report

When this project was launched, a 5 year lifespan was anticipated. A number of the objectives for monitoring activity and mapping distribution were designed with this in mind. We are now in a position to prepare a report on our results regarding the initial project goals. This report will be ready prior to year end and issued to our funders. Thereafter it will be available for other interested parties to see on our website.

Thinking Ahead

At this point in time we see the following projects taking up most of our time during the 2006/2007 seasons:

- # Ongoing audit of Daubenton's activity.
- # Search for new roosts in the canal area.
- # Monitoring existing roosts.
- # Foraging/Commuting Corridor studies.
- # Analysis of bat diet and parasites.
- # Study of pipistrelle roosts/behaviour.

In Brief....

- **215 Surveys** completed during 2001/2005 involving **115 volunteers. 535 Hours** of data collected.
- **7 New Bat Roosts** found.
- **Malaise Trapping** Insect Surveying to continue throughout the winter until March 2006.
- **Workshops** delivered to BTCV Scotland on 16.10.05.
- **BaTML presenting to SWT** Edinburgh on 2.2.06 & Falkirk on 14.3.06.
- **2006 Course Programme** 3 courses planned during the week 31.7.06 to 4.8.06.
- **Newsletter Circulation** 281 people/organisations on our distribution list.
- **Previous Newsletters** can be downloaded from our website.
- **Newsletter No 11** due out in March 2006. If you would like us to include anything just ask.

BATS & The Millennium Link is supported by the following organisations :

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE British Waterways FALKIRK ENVIRONMENT TRUST The Royal Bank Of Scotland Group
Central Scotland Bat Group Clyde Bat Group BTCV Lothians Bat Group The Bat Conservation Trust

Insects & Their Bat Predators Workshop 2005

21 delegates attended our very first insects and bats workshop in July 2005. During this event we covered numerous topics including: insect anatomy, insect ecology, survey techniques, identification, surveying for bat droppings and dropping analysis. There were many highlights including an excellent afternoon session using microscopes (see picture) to identify the bits of insects that were contained within the droppings we collected after a visit to Linlithgow Palace. We would especially like to thank **Bridget Peacock** (Natural History Museum, London) and **Martin Gray** (Historic Scotland) for helping to make this event such a success.



Field Surveying For Bats Course 2005

In August, 22 delegates attended our second 3-day bat training course near Linlithgow, during which we covered many areas including: bat survey techniques, habitat requirements, identification and the use of bat detector systems. It was an excellent event and the feedback received from delegates on the whole was extremely positive. We have, however, taken on board some suggested changes that will ensure that in the future our courses are even better. As in the past, delegates travelled from all over the UK to attend this event and the enthusiasm and participation of the attendees made it a very enjoyable few days with many bat highlights and humorous moments. We would like to say thanks for the support that we received from **Anne Youngman, Stuart Smith, Stewart Pritchard, Martin Gray** and **Lesley Sweeney** thus ensuring that our delegates were not short of quality.

Shrewd Thinking!

 by David Dodds

A recent pilot survey by the Habitat Use Profiling team recorded several ultrasonic shrew calls on the Union Canal, near Linlithgow. Just in case they were scarce water shrews, the team left 16 baited tubes at the site and later collected them for analysis. The scats found were then analysed by the Mammal Society for aquatic insect fragments, to see if they were produced by water shrews. The good news is that some of them were from water shrews. This is particularly exciting as it may be the first record of water shrews, not only on the canal, but in the Lothians. Water shrews have a number of common characteristics with bats - they are insectivorous and share the Daubenton's bats' aquatic invertebrate diet. They are also thought to use a rudimentary form of echolocation and, like bats, they are heavily protected by the law!

BaTML Course Programme 2006

We are delighted to announce our 2006 course programme. Everything will be centred in a single location in Linlithgow. The Low Port Outdoor Education Centre provides very good standards of overnight accommodation, an onsite restaurant, as well as excellent lecture facilities. It is a 5 minute drive from the M9 motorway or if you prefer to travel by train, a 3 minute walk from the station. With everything on site, delegates can look forward to enjoying learning about bats in a relaxed atmosphere. The course programme takes place from 31.7.06 to 04.08.06 with 3 separate events for you to pic'n'mix from. Delegates attending 2 or more events earn a 5% discount. Fuller details will be available later this year, in the meantime if you would like to reserve a place please get in touch with Neil Middleton by email: middleneil@msn.com

Dates	Course Title	Cost
31.07 to 01.08.06	Basically Bats	£95.00
01.08 to 03.08.06	Field Surveying For Bats	£210.00
03.08 to 04.08.06	Insects & Their Bat Predators	£105.00

A Special Mention To Our Trainers

More and more, the areas of work we have become involved with require specialist knowledge and training. As such we would like to acknowledge the assistance, patience and perseverance provided to our team by the following people during the past 2 seasons: **John Haddow, Iain Mackie, Garry Mortimer, Stuart Smith, Sue Swift**. You have all been brilliant to work with and we have gained so much from your input. Thanks.

BaTML PROJECT TEAM

Project Administrator
Shoana Mackenzie

Project Co-ordinators
David Dodds
Chris Gould
Neil Middleton
Craig Macadam
Kirsty Morrison

Email Contact:
projectteam@batml.org.uk

Hupdate - Habitat Use Profiling

 by David Dodds

HUP activities in 2005 have proven overall to be successful as we adopted a number of techniques to narrow down the location of 8 Daubenton's bat roosts ahead of next years efforts to find the precise locations of some of these. We are now in the process of deciding which sites will receive priority attention in 2006 and thanks to a brilliant volunteer effort we have some excellent information to work with. As such our work regarding these roosts and their associated commuting corridors will take a far greater focus for a small number of these sites going forward.

HUP will continue in a new direction in 2006 as we begin to map out the foraging areas used by Daubenton's bats along the canal corridor. Again this will require good levels of volunteer effort and we are sure we have designed a methodology that will not only drive good data, but also be fulfilling and fun for our surveyors.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

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If you do not wish to be kept informed about our activities, please advise us accordingly and we will arrange for your details to be removed.

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