

Apart from the annual **Hibernaculum Survey** there were no bat records for January or February. [Table 1]

With the intention of attracting Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii* RNHS, in partnership with Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group, bought and fixed seven Schwegler bat boxes in Burley Wood during March. Boxes were checked in September and the results are noted in the species reports that follow. [For more detail see *Fieldfare* **313** Nov 2017]

The first records of bats in flight were single bats in a Barrowden garden during unusually mild weather in the first half of March (SK 948 002), and a small bat foraging at Crown Well Bridge, SK 883 034 (31.03). The return of cold weather in April meant that, unusually, there were no bat sightings in the month, although droppings in Wing (01.04) indicated that bats were venturing out. Over the summer some members who visited traditional bat-haunts reported seeing fewer bats than usual. The last record of (unspecified) bats in flight were of two seen (25.10) in Gypsy Lane, Uppingham, SP 859991. There were no records for November~December.

### Rutland Water Bat Box Scheme (RWBBS)

The project bat boxes sited around Rutland Water, particularly at Barnsdale Wood and Egleton NR, were maintained and checked by Joelle Woolley and her team.

### National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project (NNPP)

Harp trap and mist netting for this project took place in Burley Wood on 25.05. The late-July survey (22.07) was abandoned at 11.00 pm because of heavy rain. A further survey (07.10) included sites adjacent to Rutland Water. For more detail see species reports.

### National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP)

Six maternity roosts were counted, four species were present. [Table 2]

### Bat groundings

Sixteen bats were found 'grounded' in Rutland, with seven, found over several days at the Manton Hall care home in Wing, leading to the identification of a roost. The lack of groundings after July could suggest that 2017 was probably a good season for Rutland's infant and juvenile bats. [Table 3]

## Species reports

### Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*

Status: Widespread in suitable habitats, but probably not common.

The first record of the year was a male caught in a mist net set up in C.25, Burley Wood, SK 892 095 (25.05) as part of the NNPP.

Many bats were foraging (07.07) over the Chater at Sinc Bridge and Station Road Bridge, Aldgate, SK 983 043. At Rutland Water (06.09) bats were foraging out over sheltered water near Teal hide LNR, SK 894 056.

### Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* Status: Uncommon; a maternity roost known at Seaton.

The first record (02.04) was of a grounded female found in Aldgate, SK 983 043. [Table 3]. A single male was caught in the mist net (25.05) in C.25, Burley Wood.

During harp trapping at RW (07.10) a male was caught at Egleton, another at Burley Wood. A female was caught in Barnsdale Wood (exact locations unknown).

The maternity roost in Main Street, Seaton, SP 899 983, was occupied in June but although bats were observed emerging, no formal count was undertaken.

#### **Natterer's bat** *Myotis nattereri*

Status: Uncommon; maternity roosts known at Stoke Dry and Whissendine churches.

Six were found (22.01) in the Morcott hibernation site, SK 924 003; five were present 19.02. Two males were mist-netted in C.25, Burley Wood, on 25.05. The maternity roosts at Stoke Dry and Whissendine churches were counted twice in June for the NBMP. [Table 2]

Four males were caught in harp traps at Egleton on 07.10; a further four males were caught in Barnsdale Wood on the same date.

#### **Myotis sp.**

Two bats in the Morcott hibernaculum (22.01) could not be specifically identified but were either Daubenton's or Natterer's. [Table 1]

#### **Noctule bat** *Nyctalus noctula*

Status: Widespread but not common; one maternity roost known in Burley Wood.

The first record of the year (25.05) was a male mist-netted in C.25, Burley Wood. The species was heard briefly, but not seen, at Sinc Bridge, Aldgate on 07.07.

On 06.09 one was heard distantly at Gibbet Gorse, Lyndon, SK 900 057. A probable noctule was seen, and heard on a bat detector, foraging over the summer path at RW Egleton SK 880 074, on 23.07.

#### **Common Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*

Status: Widespread and common; currently few confirmed maternity roosts.

The first confirmed in-flight record was 06.04 in Oakham gardens, SK 867 091. The species was heard regularly foraging there over the summer. The first grounded bat was found on 04.04 and a further four grounded bats were recorded during the year, the last on 29.07. [Table 3]

Several bats were heard (03.05) in Burley Wood; one was mist-netted in C.25, on 25.05. Two maternity roosts were counted in June for the NBMP. [Table 2]

Further counts were made at the Stone House, Wing, in August, with 108 present 21.08. Numbers had dropped to eight on 23.08, with 10 recorded at the last count on 26.08.

Foraging bats were seen in Aldgate, Ketton on 07.07 and at Lyndon NR, especially at Gibbet Gorse, SK 900 057, and Teal hide, SK 894 056, on 06.09. A male was in Box BW1 at Burley Wood on 13.09. The last record of the year for this species was a male was trapped at Egleton 07.10.

#### **Soprano Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*

Status: Widespread and common; two maternity roosts known.

The first record was of at least one bat in flight on 06.04 in Oakham gardens, SK 867 091, with further occasional sightings in this area during the summer. During a check (21.04) of 51 bat boxes in Barnsdale Wood 57 bats – of both sexes – were found (located SK 910 087~ 914 087). A juvenile male was found with a broken finger; the same bat being re-found in May and September in the same box, obviously able to fly but with the break still visible. On 07.05 there were many fewer bats in the boxes, just two males and seven females.

Bats were foraging in Burley Wood (03.05), and in Aldgate, Ketton (07.07). Three emerged to forage in light rain at Hambleton Peninsula, SK 905 069, at the start of the NNPP survey (22.07) but disappeared as the rain grew heavier. Soprano were foraging at Lyndon NR near Gibbet Gorse and around Teal hide on 06.09. On 25 May a number of bats, of both sexes, were caught in harp traps in C.23, (SK 889 095) and C.18 (SK 891 100), and mist-netted in C.25 all in Burley Wood.

On 13.09 a check of the seven new Burley Wood bat boxes found three being used

by soprano pipistrelles: a mating roost of 10 bats (BW2), a male and female (BW7), and a single male (BW5).

A check of bat boxes (24.09) near the Volunteer Training Centre at Egleton found 7 soprano (2 males, 5 females) – the most numerous species counted. Two boxes were being used as mating roosts, droppings in other boxes was evidence of use.

A total of 17 soprano were caught in harp traps during the NNPP (07.10) survey at RW. (Egleton 4 males; Hambleton Peninsula 2 males and 2 females; Burley Wood 2 males; Barnsdale Wood 5 males and 2 females).

Two roosts were counted for the NBMP at Braunston-in-Rutland and Egleton churches. [Table 2]

Several hundred bats emerged from a roost in Station Road, Ketton, but no formal count was carried out.

The discovery of pregnant female, infant and juvenile bats grounded inside Manton Hall care home, SK 879 045, in June and July led to the identification of a maternity roost on site. No formal count was carried out but 6 of the 7 grounded bats could be returned to their roost, as were the two discovered at Braunston church. [Table 3]

### **Pipistrellus sp.** (*not identified to species*)

The first record of the year was of a single pipistrelle in the Morcott hibernaculum on 22.01. [Table 1]

A colony of pipistrelles was identified at The Jetty, Wing, SK 893 031, with 219 bats seen emerging on 09.07. An infant found in Empingham on 16.06 was too small to be positively identified, as was an infant found at Manton Hall on 01.07. [Table 3]

### **Nathusius' Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus nathusii*

Status: Nationally rare breeding species. Rare in Rutland, no maternity roosts known.

The first records for the year (21.04) were from Barnsdale Wood where a male and female were found together in one box, and two males in separate boxes.

Five males were caught in harp traps set in C.23 and C.18 in Burley Wood on 25.05. One male was found in a bat box at Egleton (24.09). Four males and four females were caught (07.10) in harp traps at Barnsdale and Burley Woods, Hambleton Peninsula and Egleton NR.

### **Barbastelle** *Barbastella barbastellus*

Status: Rare British breeding species. Very rare in Rutland.

A highlight of the batting year was the record of a single female bat caught in the mist net in C.25, Burley Wood, SK 892 095, on 25.05. This is the first record of a Barbastelle in the hand since September 1986, when two were found in a stable at Barnsdale Hall, SK 906 091, before its conversion to a hotel.

### **Brown Long-eared bat** *Plecotus auritus*

Status: Widespread, probably common.

The first record of the year was of droppings beneath entrances to a known Brown Long-eared bat maternity roost in Wing, SK 889 032, in May, then throughout the summer. A single bat was found in a roof void in Lyddington, SP 875 971 (14.05). From the amount of droppings this is thought to be a maternity roost. The Stone House, Wing, maternity roost was counted for the NBMP in June; 18 bats were counted emerging 22.08. [Table 2]

On 06.08 a grounded Long-eared bat was found on the lawn of Stone House, no others being found during the year. The last confirmed record of the year was of two females caught in harp traps in Barnsdale Wood on 07.10.

TABLE 1

## 2017/2016 Hibernaculum Survey

The East Rutland hibernaculum was surveyed twice during 2017 as part of the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP). The hibernaculum is in a disused railway tunnel running beneath the A47 at Morcott, SK 923 003. Although the entrances are on private land the tunnel structure is owned and maintained by a successor to British Rail.

Date	22 Jan 17	24 Jan 16	19 Feb 17	21 Feb 16
Surveyors	9	4	7	6
Survey time (mins)	105	100	77	75
External temperature (°C)	0	10	8	10.5
Lowest internal temperature (°C)	2.1	9	7.6	9
Humidity (%)	85	89	83	85
Daubenton's bat	–	–	–	1
Whiskered/Brandt's bat	–	–	–	1
Natterer's bat	6	5	5	6
<i>Pipistrelle</i> sp.	1	1	–	–
Unidentified <i>Myotis</i> sp.	2	–	–	–

TABLE 2

## 2017 Roost Counts

Seven maternity roosts were counted for the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) in June 2017 and provided an assessment of the number of breeding females – figures exclude young born to the colony.

Location	Date	Species	2017	(2016)	2017 observers & comments
Braunston-in-Rutland ch	22.06	Soprano pipistrelle	438	(554)	3
Egleton church	09.06	Soprano pipistrelle	895	(506)	4
	16.06	Soprano pipistrelle	786		4
Morcott (house)	21.06	Common pipistrelle	7	(74)	1
	22.06	Common pipistrelle	44		1
	24.06	Common pipistrelle	91		1
Stoke Dry church	07.06	Natterer's bat	20	(NC)	1
	19.06	Natterer's bat	17		1
Whissendine church	29.06	Natterer's bat	45	(44)	1
Wing, house	19.06	Common pipistrelle	35	(30)	5, up to 7 access points
Wing, house	19.06	Brown long-eared	13	(2)	5, many potential access points

**Key:** Bracketed (counts) are 2016 census totals, all dates refer to 2017 data

TABLE 3

## 2017 Grounded Bats

During the year sixteen bats were found grounded, with the following outcomes.

Date	Species	W	Location	Age	Sex	Comments/outcome
02.04	Whiskered bat	4.8 g	Aldgate, SK 983042	Ad	F	Starved, dehydrated, died 05.04
04.04	Common pipistrelle	n/k	West Farm Drive, SK 944001	Ad	M	Broken shoulder, cat, died 08.04
22.05	Common pipistrelle	3.8 g	Beech Road, SK 866092	Ad	M	Injured, died 24.05
09.06	Soprano pipistrelle	4.4 g	Manton Hall, SK 879045	Ad	F	Pregnant, indoors, released, 12.06
09.06	Soprano pipistrelle	5.2 g	Manton Hall	Ad	F	Pregnant, released, 12.06
10.06	Soprano pipistrelle	n/k	Manton Hall	Ad	F	Pregnant, released, 12.06
12.06	Soprano pipistrelle	4.9 g	Manton Hall	Ad	F	Pregnant, released, 17.06
16.06	Pipistrelle sp.	n/k	Empingham	Inf	F	Small, no fur, <b>E</b> 16.06
24.06	Common pipistrelle	5.3 g	Beech Road SK 866092	Ad	F	Lactating, cat strike, <b>E</b> 25.06
01.07	Pipistrelle sp.	1.1 g	Manton Hall	Inf	M	Dead, too small to identify
02.07	Soprano pipistrelle	n/k	Manton Hall	Juv	F	Away from roost, released, 09.07
02.07	Soprano pipistrelle	n/k	Manton Hall	Juv	M	Away from roost, released, 15.07
02.07	Common pipistrelle	4.7 g	Cottesmore Road, SK 889111	Ad	F	Found indoors, released, 02.07
07.07	Soprano pipistrelle	3.0 g	Braunston church, SK 832066	Inf	M	Returned to roost, 08.07
08.07	Soprano pipistrelle	n/k	Braunston church	Juv	M	Returned to roost, 08.07
29 July	Common pipistrelle	3.5 g	Essendine TF 045124	Juv	F	Not thriving, <b>E</b> 05.08

**Key:**

**E** – put down by vet because of injuries

F – female

M – male

W – weight when taken into care, n/k no weight recorded

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