

BATS (CHIROPTERA), 2021

Colin R. Pope

Twelve different bat species were recorded during 2021. A diminishing number of house roosts were monitored by householders. The Bat Hospital was kept busy with many bat calls dealing with 94 individual bats of a range of species and circumstances. I am grateful to them for allowing me to use their records in this report and to Donna Street for entering the records into Mapmate.

Greater Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*)

One was recorded from the Shide hibernaculum on a visit on 3rd January (C&JP). A surprise report was of an individual seen hanging in an unused doorway in the moat at the Needles Battery and photographed by one of the National Trust staff on 13th October. Fig. 1 When checked a few days later, it had gone. In 2008, a female was found grounded at Freshwater Bay. It had been ringed three years earlier at Winspit on the Dorset coast. The nearest known maternity roosts are in Dorset and a recently discovered small colony in West Sussex.



Fig. 1 Greater Horseshoe Bat hanging in a doorway at the Needles Battery on 13th October. National Trust

Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)

One was seen and photographed in daylight on the trunk of an old Beech tree beside Bonchurch pond on 25th May (JC). Fig. 2 A long-dead individual was found in a Tree-creeper nest box by Selena Bone at the Haseley Manor nature reserve, Arreton. Many Daubenton's Bats were recorded by bat detector by Jill Green feeding over Longdown Lake, a reservoir near the Eastern Yar between Blackwater and Merstone on 4th August. The Bat Hospital received a single Daubenton's bat in 2021: a female was grounded in Newport High Street on 23rd

August (GS). Individuals are frequently found grounded in central Newport in August and September.



Fig. 2 Daubenton's Bat Photographed in daylight on 25th May on a beech tree at Bonchurch. John Caws

Whiskered Bat (*M. mystacinus*)

The Bat Hospital treated 2 grounded Whiskered Bats in central Newport in August; a male on 12th and a female on 23rd (GS). Individuals are occasionally found grounded in central Newport in August and September.

There were no records of the closely related Brandt's Bat, nor of Alcatheo's Bat.

Natterer's Bat (*M. nattereri*)

Individuals were found using hibernation bat boxes installed in Shide hibernaculum. On 3rd January there were individuals in two boxes and on 12th March there were individuals in two boxes plus one in a crevice (C&JP).

The Bat Hospital received one Natter's Bat in 2021, a male which died after being attacked by a cat at Wroxall on 2nd April (GS).

Bechstein's Bat (*M. bechsteini*)

One, probably a lone male, was filmed emerging from a bat box at Southford, near Whitwell on 28th July by Jon Whitehurst. In 2018, the Bat Hospital received a grounded male Bechstein's bat from Southford Mill which was subsequently released.

The Bat Hospital treated three individuals in 2021: on 26th May, a female was found grounded at Appuldurcombe Road, Wroxall and remains captive due to a broken and pinned wing; on 11th August (Fig. 3), a male was found in a wood burner at Elm Farmhouse, Calbourne; a male was grounded at Shalcombe Manor, Chessell, on 2nd September. The last two were subsequently released (GS).

Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)

The bat group enjoyed a spectacular display of three individuals flying near the western ramparts of Carisbrooke Castle on 26th June (JW). The Havenstreet Station Cottage house maternity roost continues to hold both Noctule and Serotine bats. The highest count of Noctules was 14 on 6th June (JL).

Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)

At the long-established maternity house roost in Lower Adgestone Road, 56 bats were counted emerging on 7th June (JG). This is encouraging; it is the highest count since 2009.

The Havenstreet Station Cottage house maternity roost continues to hold both Noctule and Serotine bats. The highest count of Serotines was 16 on 23rd June (JL).

The Bat Hospital received several Serotines in 2021: on 6th July, a female was found in a wood burner at Brighstone and was released; also in July, a total of four abandoned babies were found at Arreton Barns on different dates; on 6th September, a female trapped in a classroom at Arreton Nursery School, was released. (GS).

Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*/*P. pygmaeus*)

Pipistrelle bats are the most frequently treated at the Bat Hospital. They dealt with 56 Common Pipistrelle (*P. pipistrellus*) and 10 Soprano Pipistrelles (*P. pygmaeus*) in 2021 (GS).

Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

Despite being the second most frequent bat, the Bat Hospital treated very few bats of this species: just ten individuals in 2021, which was a fairly typical number for the Hospital.

Grey Long-eared Bat (*P. austriacus*)

The Island is a stronghold for this nationally endangered species. The Bat Hospital dealt with just one individual in 2021: a male was found in a log pile at Shalfleet Manor on 27th March and subsequently released (GS).

Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*)

The Bat Hospital dealt with three individuals in 2021: on 18th January, a female found at Wyatts Lane, Northwood had been attacked by a cat and subsequently died; on 13th September, a male was found hanging on an outside wall at Chillerton and subsequently released; on 17th September, a female was found on an outside wall at Albany Prison and subsequently released.

Acknowledgements

Selena Bone, John Caws, Jill Green, Jessica Lloyd, National Trust, Jillie Pope, Graham & Donna Street, Jon Whitehurst.

Author: C. R. Pope

email: colinrpop@gmail.com



Fig. 3 A female Bechstein's Bat found grounded at Appuldurcombe on 29th May and taken into care in the Bat Hospital. Graham Street