

## BATS (CHIROPTERA) 2004

Colin R. Pope

Twelve confirmed species were recorded in 2004. Thirty-seven house roosts were counted by bat group members and householders. Mist netting was again carried out by Ian Davidson-Watt in late July in Briddlesford Copses and, for the first time, in Chillingwood Copse, Havenstreet. This again proved very successful for rare woodland bats, yielding many more Bechstein's Bats, and their roost sites, and the first ever Island nursery roost for Barbastelle bats. The Bat Hospital, run by Graham and Donna Street, was again kept busy throughout the year dealing with 123 bats, the most ever.

[Greater Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*)

No records this year. It was not present in Ventnor Tunnel, where it has been found in the past, when checked on 20<sup>th</sup> January and was not present in the usual Undercliff hibernaculum on 6 January (JW) or 20 January (JP). ]

Daubenton's Bat (*M. daubentonii*)

On 1<sup>st</sup> May, the bat group were pleased to find a good number were feeding over the Eight Bells pond at Carisbrooke. Although this has proved a highly reliable site in the past, none were seen on visits in 2004.

The Bat Hospital received one male and one female, on different occasions, from Sandown and a female from Newport.

Whiskered/Brandt's Bat (*Myotis mystacinus / brandtii*)

A maximum of 40 were counted from a long-established house roost in Pallance Road, Northwood on 21 June (SC). The Bat Hospital received one male from Shanklin High Street, a female from Green Lane, Shanklin, and a female from Newport during the year.

Natterer's Bat (*M. nattereri*)

A search of natural rock cavities and crevices at Bonchurch Landslip was made by the Bat Group on 31<sup>st</sup> January, led by John Winch. Evidence of bat use was found and in one cavity, a hibernating Natterer's Bat was seen. It is likely that natural crevices right along the Undercliff provide suitable niches for small numbers of hibernating Natterer's Bats.

Individuals were caught in mist nets in Dunnage Copse, Briddlesford on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> July (IDW). Both males and lactating females were involved. One male was caught in nearby Hurst Copse on 21<sup>st</sup> July. The Bat Hospital received a female from Freshwater.

Bechstein's Bat (*M. bechsteinii*)

IDW and JR had a most successful season of mist netting in Briddlesford Copses and Chillingwood Copse in July. A lactating female was caught in a mist net in Briddlesford Copse on 18<sup>th</sup> July. A total of one lactating female, two juvenile females, three adult males and two juvenile males were caught in mist nets set up in Hurst Copse, Briddlesford on 21<sup>st</sup> July, and two tree roosts were located in the wood. The bats were using woodpecker holes in ash trees.

An adult female, an adult male and a juvenile female were caught in mist nets in Chillingwood Copse, near Havenstreet, on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, again indicating a nearby tree roost.

A grounded female at Bouldnor on 1<sup>st</sup> July was treated by the Bat Hospital. Another, a male, was brought in to the Hospital from Totland in early September.

## COLIN POPE

### Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)

There was an unusual record of a female Merlin which was watched making repeated unsuccessful attempts to catch two Noctules flying in daylight at around 17.00 on 30<sup>th</sup> October over Brading Marshes (DH).

Noctules were recorded by the bat group on the RSPB reserve, between Bembridge windmill and Knowles Copse, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

### Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)

Just five roosts were monitored this year. The highest count was 59 on 15<sup>th</sup> June from a regularly monitored roost site in Havenstreet (C&JP). Meadow Cottage, Adgestone, which generally has the highest count, had a recorded maximum of 39 on 16<sup>th</sup> June (JR).

The Bat Hospital received one male and three females during the year.

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

Twenty-eight house roosts were monitored this year. The highest peak counts were recorded from roosts at Cranmore (262 on 25<sup>th</sup> June) and Marks Corner (127 on 16<sup>th</sup> June).

The bat group counted out 154 bats from the Ranges house at Porchfield on 16<sup>th</sup> August. Bats were emerging from access points on all sides of the building.

The Bat Hospital received 49 males and 40 females during the year.

### Nathusius' Pipistrelle (*P. nathusii*)

Two records this year. A male was found clinging to the outside of the bird hide at Newtown in July (SY). Another male, in fine condition, was found clinging to a block of flats at the St Helen's end of Embankment Road on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

### Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

Four roosts were monitored this year. The maximum count, as usual, from a house at Brook Hill, was 22 on 6<sup>th</sup> June (MJ).

A lactating female was caught in a mist net in Chillingwood Copse on 23<sup>rd</sup> July (IDW).

The Bat Hospital received 3 males and 4 females during the year.

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

A remarkable total of 11 individuals were received by the Bat Hospital (GS). On 17<sup>th</sup> March, a female which had been hibernating in a shed due for demolition at Queen's Bower (JG) was treated by the Bat Hospital. During the spring, 2 males and a female were roosting in a courtyard at Brading Waxworks Museum. This seems to be a regular spring roost site for bats emerging from hibernation. A male was found at Chillerton, and another male at Wootton. Individual females were found at Calbourne, Brighstone, Thorley and Seaview. Another female was found outside Newport Library on 14<sup>th</sup> September.

### Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*)

A male was caught in a mist net in Briddlesford Copse on 18<sup>th</sup> July and a lactating female in Dunnage Copse, Briddlesford, on 19<sup>th</sup> July. The female bat was radio tagged and tracked to a maternity roost in an ash tree in open woodland to the east of Woodhouse Farm. Fifteen bats were counted out the following evening between 21.20 and 21.35 from beneath loose bark. This is the first Barbastelle nursery roost located on the Island. It was an important find; only a handful of tree roosts have been located to date in this country (IDW, JR).

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The Bat Hospital received a grounded female from a porch at Flower's Brook, Ventnor, on 4 January.

### **Acknowledgements**

Neil Brown, Sheila Cooper, Ian Davidson-Watts, Carol Flux, Jill & Dave Green, Derek Hale, Margaret Jackson, Colin & Jillie Pope, John Ralph, Jo Ramsay, Graham & Donna Streets, John Winch, Simon Young.

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