



THE NATIONAL TRUST

INFORMATION SHEET

MANAGING RISK – European Protected Species All bat species

Status and distribution

UK	17 species. Only eight extend north to the Scottish border or beyond. Only five are widely distributed. Most are vulnerable and locally endangered. Some are declining in number and range. Five are Priority Species in the UKBAP. All (and roost sites) protected in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, and CroW Act 2000.
EU	All bats are protected in Schedule 2 of the Habitats Directive, Appendices II & III of the Bern Convention and Appendix II of the Bonn Convention.
IUCN	Two species are endangered, five are vulnerable, four are rare and the others not threatened.

Horseshoe bats: restricted to the south-west of England and Wales. Both **lesser** and **greater horseshoes** have declined in number and the ranges have contracted towards the south-west. Closely linked to woodlands and cattle-grazed pastures, especially in steep-sided valleys. In summer they roost in old roof spaces with easy access. In winter, use mainly underground sites such as stone mines and caves. Many are in Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), being noted under the Habitat Directive (1992), which provide extra protection of their foraging areas and routes.

Myotis bats: **Bechstein's** bat is rare and restricted to ancient woodlands in the south of England. **Daubenton's** bat is associated with water sites, often roosting in trees.

Whiskered and **Brandt's** bats are often found in woodland and around waterside, roosting in trees, bat boxes and buildings. **Natterer's** bats are a parkland and woodland species, often roosting in old timbers of barns, old house roofs and churches.

Noctules: Tree-roosting and forage widely, especially high over water. **Leisler's** bats (common in Ireland) roost in buildings. **Serotines**, restricted to the southern half of England and South Wales, roost in older houses, foraging over pasture and gardens.

Pipistrelles (three species, two relatively common): roost commonly in modern houses, but are found roosting and foraging everywhere.

Brown long-eared bats roost in large roof voids and forage in woodland, gardens and orchards. The **grey long-eared bat** is rarely found and is restricted to England, south of the Thames.

Barbastelles are rare and found in ancient woodland in the southern half of the UK.

Greater mouse-eared bat, one site known (near south coast) on the edge of its range in Europe.

Presence within NT properties

The NT manual of Building (January 1999) states that there is a presumption of bats or their roosts in all built structures owned by the Trust. Some rarer species

(horseshoe bats and barbastelle) have significant national populations in NT properties. Some of the principal bat roosts in the UK are in NT buildings. Horner Wood (Holnicote Estate) has at least 15 of the 17 UK species.

Threats and risks

Bats are likely to be encountered during any building works, development or change of use of buildings or structures, or during tree operations. Any works that may disturb bats or their roosts must only proceed under licence or with advice from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (EN, CCW, EHS).

Feeding areas could be adversely affected by farming and forestry practices.

Routes to foraging areas could be disrupted by land management.

It is NT policy to maintain bat populations. Bats are included in all local and national BAPs.

Examples of works likely to affect bats and their habitats and which may require licensing:

- Woodland management works, such as tree surgery.
- Hedgerow management or removal.
- Removal of grazing animals from pastures/dosing of grazing animals with certain anthelmintics.
- Roofing works.
- Pointing up mortar.
- Change of use of derelict or empty structures.
- Maintenance of bridges, tunnels.
- Entering hibernation tunnels, mines, cellars in winter.

References and further information

Action Plans for horseshoe bats, barbastelle, Bechsteins' bat and pipistrelles:

www.ukbap.org.uk

Bat Conservation Trust *Bats and the Law* www.bats.org.uk

Bat Conservation Trust *Distribution Atlas of bats in Britain & Ireland 1980-1999*

www.bats.org.uk

DEFRA (2002). *European Protected Species Guidance Note*. (WLF 11 (5/02).

DEFRA, Bristol: [www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/cons_man/wlf11 .htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/cons_man/wlf11.htm)

The National Trust *Wildlife and Buildings Technical guidance for Architects, Builders, Building Managers and others*: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wildbuildings

Daubentons bat



Greater horseshoe



Noctule bat



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