



# The Norwich Natterer

for Norwich and the surrounding area

## Update from the Chair

Welcome to the latest edition of the newsletter. The nights are closing in and the bat season already seems so very long ago. Of course, our bats are still about; I have seen pipistrelles flying outside my kitchen window this week and, when leaving the Norwich Beer Festival last Thursday, I watched a Daubenton's bat feeding over the River Wensum behind Blackfriars' and St Andrew's Halls. Such sightings will decline as temperatures drop.

It is at this time of dark evenings, that I start to think about pulling all my summer species records together in spreadsheets to submit to the County Recorders, including my bat records. It is also the time I always seem to find myself wondering about the location of bat hibernation sites. The vast majority of our bat records in Norfolk are made in the summer months when bats are active, and we discover new maternity roosts each year. In contrast, our knowledge of hibernation roosts is tiny. Where do all those bats we record in summer spend the winter months? Just a small number of winter roosts seem to be monitored annually but this can only be the tip of the iceberg. In fact, as a group we are trying to gather information of which hibernation sites are regularly monitored and identify other likely locations which could be checked. If you do already monitor sites, do let the County Mammal Recorder know, so we can start to build up a better picture of coverage. All records can be kept confidential if you wish.

It is a time of change in our country with a general election imminent (at least it was when I wrote this). The long-awaited Environment Bill passed its second reading in late October but who knows what will happen to it now an election looms. What is certain is that we must keep fighting to protect our bats and other wildlife. There are also changes in my life, and I feel it is now time to pass the role of Chair of the NBG to someone else, as I am struggling to give sufficient time to do justice to the role. I will look to handover the baton in the new year. Talking of change, as the work of the group has now expanded well beyond Norwich, should we consider a change of name that reflects the geographical spread of our activities? I shall leave that thought with my successor.



### Support Us

If you would like to become a member of the Norwich Bat Group we do not ask for a membership fee. However, we rely on donations and if you would like to support the work of the Norfolk bat Group, this can be done via the [Norwich Bat Group Website](#). Thank you for your support!

The central part of the Norwich Bat Group's efforts are to help protect, conserve and raise awareness of bats in Norwich and the surrounding area.

Affiliated with the Bat Conservation Trust

Bat Conservation Trust





# Norwich Bat Group News



## Wildlife in Common Event, Gressenhall

Norwich Bat Group were invited to run a stall at Gressenhall on the 15th September at Norfolk Wildlife Trust's "Wildlife in Common" event as part of their project about wildlife and commons. The Norwich Bat Group have attended some of Norfolk Wildlife Trust's events at commons over the summer, to run bat walks.

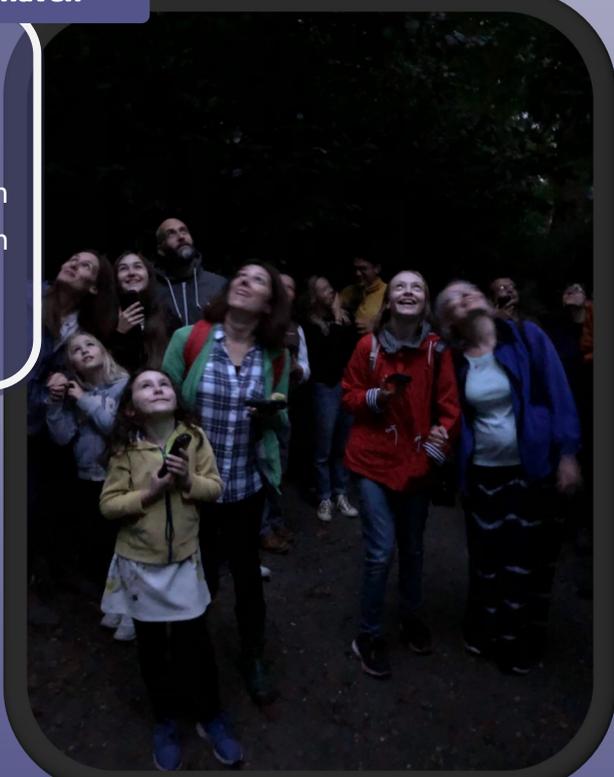
Thank you to all those that helped on the day and contributed to raising the profile of bats in Norfolk.



Nick Cull with his prototype electronic bat sound board

## International Bat Night at Fairhaven

Norwich Bat Group members have been busy running bat walks all summer including walks at Fairhaven Gardens, Brewer's Green, Hoveton Great Broad, Whitlingham Broad, Quaker Wood and Strumpshaw Fen and we attended the International Bat Night at Fairhaven.



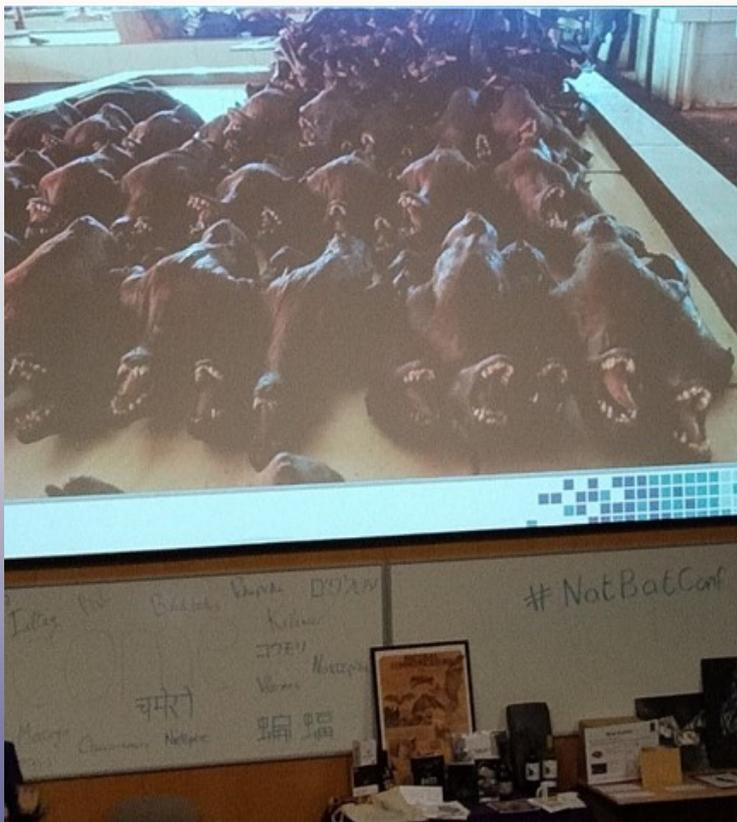


# 2019 Bat conference



On the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September I attended the Bat Conservation Trust's National Bat Conference at Nottingham University. If you have not been to a bat conference I thoroughly recommend it. The East of England Bat Conference returns in 2020 (watch this space <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/english-regional-bat-conferences/east-of-england-bat-conference>)

**The Big Bat Year** There was an emphasis on bats from other parts of the world and we were regaled by Nils Bouillard, from Brussels, who has spent 2019 travelling around the world on his 'Big Bat Year'. At the time of speaking he had visited 23 countries, seen/recorded 297 species of bat, and photographed 110 species! One of the most shocking images he shared with us was that of a stall selling dead bats (bush meat). I was aware that bats are killed for food by villagers (which has a fairly limited impact on populations), but what I was not aware of is that this is just the tip of the iceberg. Bats are killed en masse and transported to local towns (see picture). I was shocked. More information about Nils's Big Bat Year is available here: <https://www.bigbatyear.com/>



I also learnt that we should be buying bat friendly tequila, as the commercial tequila farming techniques are not bat friendly – depriving them of their food source. The Tequila Interchange Project in Mexico asks tequila and mezcal producers to let 5% of their agaves flower. This allows the bats to pollinate them, benefiting both bats and business. More information is available here: <https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/bat-friendly-tequila-factsheet.pdf>.



## A Few Updates:

**(Draft) Thermal imaging: Bat Survey Guidelines** have been released by Dr Kayleigh Fawcett Williams in association with the Bat Conservation Trust. Sign up to this newsletter to get a copy: <https://kfwscicreate.lpages.co/kfw-newsletter-sign-up/> The BCT are going to be updating the **Bat Mitigation Guidelines** although no date was provided. Roost will also be back up and running shortly but they have had technical problems.

For developers there is the **'Wildlife Assessment Check'** website [www.biodiversityinplanning.org](http://www.biodiversityinplanning.org) which allows you to generate specific site checks for a proposal, and will be of use for householder and small scale developers who are perhaps not familiar with the planning system.

Dead bats – can be sent off to The Darwin Tree of Life Project, led by the Wellcome Sanger Institute, who plan to read the genomes all known species of animals, birds, fish and plants in the UK – for more information visit: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/news/view/genetic-code-66000-uk-species-be-sequenced>



Breathable Roofing Membranes (BRMs) have been renamed **Non-Bitumen** Roofing Membranes and a paper detailing the testing requirements for roofing membranes that claim to be bat friendly will be published shortly, providing standardised testing techniques.

The **British Bat Survey** is being trialled using Audio Moths – a cheap (<\$70.00) bat detector designed to be left out for long periods. More information on the Audio Moth is available here: <https://www.openacousticdevices.info/> It will necessary to analyse the files yourselves, however there are plenty of useful bat sound analysis books and guides out there to help you analyse the files.



# Introducing Barbara the Barbastelle

## Lottie's geocache treasure



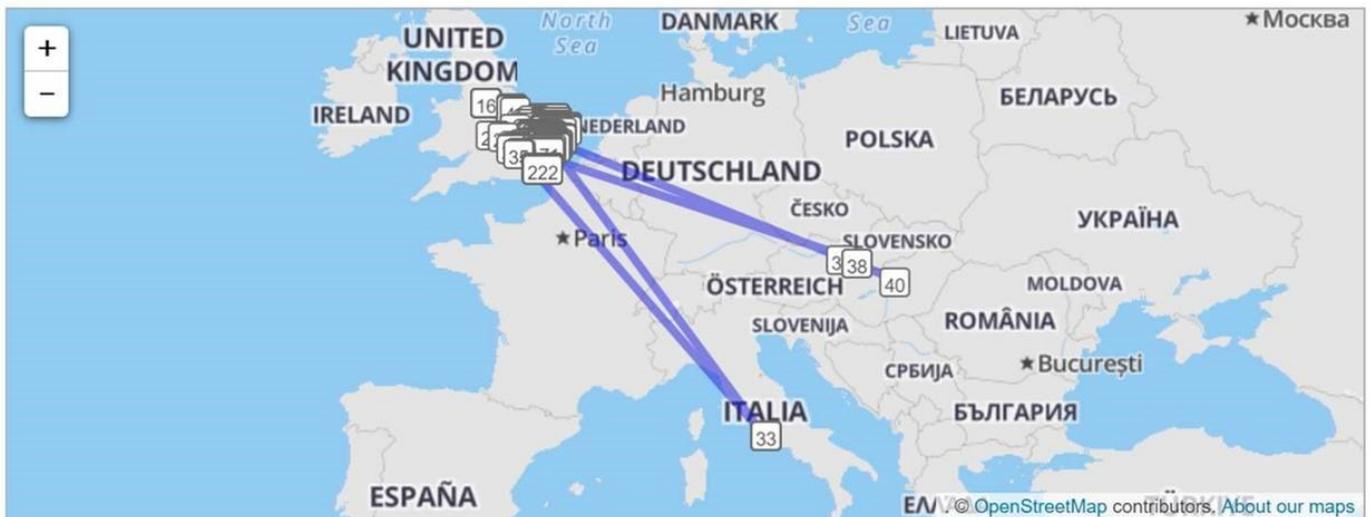
Lotty Carlton released Barbara to go on tour to spread the word about her batty friends. Her mission is to make it to caches that rhyme with 'bat' or to have photos taken with places, people or things that rhyme with 'bat'. Barbara is a rarity and on the red list of endangered species, listed as 'threatened'.

Barbara the Barbastelle has a special code that means that if you find her you move her from box to box and log where she has been on the geocaching.com website. Barbara has spent 5,783 miles travelling and as you can see from the map Barbara has travelled across the UK and she has even travelled as far away as Italy!



### Travel Bug Map

for Barbara the Barbastelle Bat



Lottie has been geocaching since 2008! Geocaching is simply an electronic treasure hunt using a GPS device or smartphone to find a cache. You download the location codes and clues from the geocaching.com website and then use your gps/ phone to get to the location, then use the clues to help you find the physical box/container. You sign the log book in the cache then log your find on the geocaching.com website to share your experiences with other geocachers. So, if you decide to take up geocaching, look out for Barbara the Barbastelle on your geocaching adventures.



# Halloween Bat Biscuits



## Ingredients

### *Biscuit*

- 100g unsalted butter (room temp)
- 1 free range egg (slightly beaten)
- 275g plain flour
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

### *Icing*

- 400g icing sugar
- 2-4 tsp water
- 2-3 drops food colourings of your choice

One bat cookies cooker (available in various stores). This recipe makes approximately 8 biscuits.

## Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 190oC and line a baking tray with greaseproof paper
2. Beat the butter and sugar together in a bowl until combined.
3. Beat the egg and vanilla extract, a little at a time, until combined
4. Stir in the flour until the mixture comes together as a dough.
5. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface, until it is a thickness of 1cm
6. Using a bat cookie cutter cut out biscuits from the dough and place on the baking tray.
7. Bake the biscuits for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Set aside to harden for 5 minutes then cool on a wire rack.
8. For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a large mixing bowl and stir in enough water to create a smooth mixture. Stir in the food colouring.
9. Carefully spread the icing onto the biscuits using a knife and set aside until the icing hardens.
10. Enjoy.



Image from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CdvHiUrF-0>



# Bat Care



## Catherine Dew's bat care update

I recently returned from New Zealand (after 5 years away) and have started caring for bats (again).

It has been nice and quiet for me so far despite the UK Bat Helpline receiving more calls this month than in previous years (in July 2019 the helpline handled over 1513 calls compared to, for example 1177 in 2018 (Bat Care Bulletin; August 2019)).

My favourite bat I had this year was a female pipistrelle from Sizewell who, had such a zest for life that she flew around the village hall (my dad has the keys) for 1 hr 45 minutes. I spent ages trying to catch her disguised as a bed sheet.

The aim of bat care, at least for me, is to rehabilitate injured/grounded bats and return them to the wild. I also enjoy the opportunity I get to do a little bat public relations with the finder of the bat. Occasionally we also recruit new members for the bat group.

Most of the calls about grounded bats we get are via the National Bat Helpline. The helpline can also answer your questions and concerns about bats and give you advice on, building works and reporting bat crime. Their number is 0345 1300 228. More information (including hours of operation) is available at <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/national-bat-helpline>.



**Bat Carers are volunteers who give their own time to collect injured or grounded bats from across the county and care for them. If you would like to support bat carers in their valuable work please donate to the Norwich Bat Group and let us know that you would like the funding to go towards bat care . Your funding will go towards supplying bat carers with the resources they need to be able to rehabilitate and care for bats including purchasing meal worms, heat pads, boxes to keep the bats in and antibiotics. Donations can be made through the [Norwich Bat Group Website](#) page. Thank you for your support.**

For the most up to date list of events, please see the [Norwich Bat group website](#). Contact Lindsey Bilston for further details of any event via email [enquiries@bats.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bats.org.uk).

Date	Event	Location
Saturday 25th April 2020	East of England Bat Conference	To be confirmed. Please see the BCT website for further details — <a href="https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/english-regional-bat-">https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/conferences-symposia/english-regional-bat-</a>