



The Norwich Natterer

for Norwich and the surrounding area



Welcome to the autumn edition of the
Norwich Natterer.

Towards the end of the summer we saw a big uptake in bat walks and had some lovely evenings sharing our bat knowledge with attendees, see Lindsey's bat walk report and photos further down. We also have a report from Jane about a surprise bat she came across when on duty as a bat carer, with a happy ending.



As bats themselves begin to slow down and find safe places to mate, October, and Halloween specifically, sees a lot more focus on bats by us humans. It's a time when Bat Groups remind people that bats are not scary, they don't bite people or get tangled in hair, but are mostly timid creatures that need our help and protection. The Bat Conservation Trust holds bat-themed events and awareness raising schemes, including the Bat Bake which we've taken part in! Rocky Road recipe and inspiration from Lauren further on.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, and please feel free to share with anyone who might find it interesting or want to join our group!

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!

Affiliated with the Bat Conservation Trust



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.

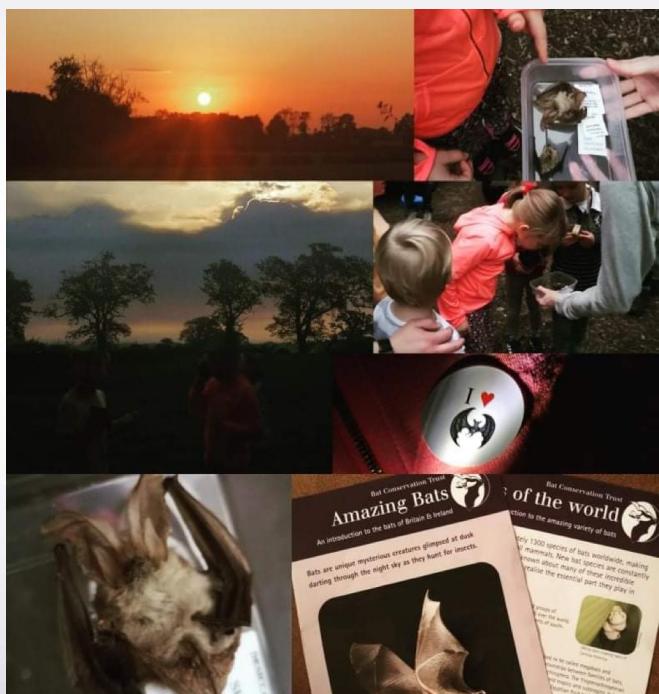


Bat Walks Are Back!



Bat walks – a bat group staple

Bat walks are a staple part of Norwich Bat Group's work, and that of many other bat groups. It has been lovely this year to get back and lead walks and there have been quite a variety. Some have become regular walks we undertake every year and we have also had several requests for new sites, which is really encouraging.



To have a group of people who have never been on a walk before, to explain a little about bats to them, to dispel some myths, to try and answer a range of really interesting questions, is great public engagement. However, it is the reaction that people have, on seeing bats and hearing them with the Magenta detectors, that really brings an excitement to a walk every time. People are thrilled to be able to witness their flight, listen to different species (and the raspberries that sound up so clearly on the detectors!), and that magic definitely rubs off every time and makes leading a walk so worthwhile.

Ketteringham Hall, a walk led by Jane Harris, provided an absolute wealth of Daubenton's over the lake. A great walk generally, with a variety of species. Norfolk Wildlife Trust again asked us to lead some walks for them – Upton Fen will stay long in my memory! The feel of midges and mosquitoes around my face, despite various types of repellent, was overshadowed by the huge quantity of Soprano pips, as well as Common pips, Noctule and Daubenton's.

Various Broadland villages have requested walks this year as part of their Wildlife Friendly Villages initiative and the walks were well received, as were walks led in Norwich for the Families Get Active project. Some walks have been for specific groups, for example one led by Andrea Kelly at Marsden Marshes and at Watton for their Wild Church, led by Abi Grey.

Norwich Bat Group had a walk at Whitlingham Broad for International Bat Night, with some activities for children as well. It was a fairly short walk, as there were so many bats very close to the broad near the car park, that members just wanted to stand and watch them - and why not? Whitlingham once again proving to be a bat hot spot!

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Bat Walks Are Back!



Bat walks cont.



Fairhaven Water Gardens is a beautiful setting and the walks there are always popular. Hoveton Great Broad, at which a few of us lead walks in the Spring, Summer and Autumn, is a unique setting and comes with the bonus of a boat trip and hot drinks and biscuits in a bird hide halfway around! Strumpshaw Fen always starts with the emergence of the Soprano pip colony there and provides interest from the word go.

My last walk this year, was for a group of very keen children and their equally keen parents. Despite an ideal location, it proved to be the classic walk, where the bats are flying in the car park, not on the walk and lo and behold, are back in the car park at the end! However, everyone was still delighted with the experience and the thrill of being out in the dark for a walk and the chance to shine a torch around (I don't mind when children shine their torches briefly, in the cause of encouraging them to love bats!). This walk, yet again, brought home to me the delight that bats can bring to all.



Now to look forward to next year's walks and hopefully some new sites again. If you know of a good site which is accessible, please do let us know. Keep a look out on the events page for walks happening next year and take yourself on a walk - you might be surprised at what you discover!





An April Surprise!

Jane Harris is one of the many trained bat carers that voluntarily take in injured or grounded bats year round to help them get their strength back and eventually be released when strong enough. There are still not enough bat carers to cope with the increasing numbers of care calls during the busy summer, so if you would like to volunteer to be a bat carer or help the Bat Helpline find out more here - www.bats.org.uk/support-bats/volunteer

On April 3rd, I received a call from Stalham veterinary surgery. A bat had been found grounded and brought to the surgery. The vet could see no obvious injuries, so the reason for being grounded was uncertain. I headed off right away, expecting to find a starving Pipistrelle or brown long-eared bat. On opening the box, I found a medium-sized male bat with beautiful golden frosted fur and very dark skin areas. It was slightly underweight but otherwise unharmed.



First thought was a serotine, but it was not big enough and, with no other native bats of similar appearance, I started looking at possible migrant bats which might have made landfall in Norfolk. Candidates for this are Natusius' pipistrelle, parti-coloured bat, Savi's pipistrelle and Northern bat. It certainly wasn't a Natusius' pipistrelle and Savi's pipistrelle is smaller. I have cared for parti-coloured bats found in Norfolk before and, in fact, Abi also cared for one this year, so we are familiar with this species. After carefully working through identification keys, I was certain that this was a Northern bat *Eptesicus nilssonii*.



Northern bat lives up to its name being the only bat species which breeds north of the Arctic Circle. Its range extends from Norway to eastern Europe and down to France and northern Italy. Occasional records from North Sea oil rigs, the UK and the Faroe Islands suggest that Northern bat exhibits occasional migratory behaviour. Perhaps this one was blown off course from Norway and ended up on a patio in Stalham. The bat soon recovered and was released at Eccles near the coast. Thanks are also due to the lady who took the trouble to rescue him and take him to the vets.



Halloween and Bats

While real bats are mating and preparing to hibernate, October sees bats appearing on cushions, cakes and t-shirts to celebrate Halloween. Halloween can be a bad time for bats as they are portrayed as scary animals with fangs, but we can take advantage of the spooky season and raise awareness of how awesome bats are.

Download the free Halloween for Bats pack on the BCT website bats.org.uk/support-bats/halloween-for-bats



As the Bat Conservation Trust holds another Bat Bake, our social media officer Lauren made some bat-themed Rocky Road!

The annual Bat Bake aims to highlight how important bats are to our food cupboard, as without them we would be without loads of our favourite baking ingredients!

To make your own batty rocky road biscuits you will need—

Two packs of cooking chocolate

One pack digestive biscuits

Golden syrup

Mini Marshmallows & Halloween sprinkles

Gently melt all the chocolate in a bowl over some simmering water. Break up 6-8 of the biscuits into the melted chocolate. Add a spoonful of syrup. Add as many of the mini marshmallows as you like.

Line a baking tray or tin with greaseproof paper and pour the mixture in. Wait for the mixture to cool slightly then sprinkle the sprinkles on the top. Before the rocky road cools completely use a bat-shaped cutter to cut into spooky shapes (not like Lauren who left it to cool completely and couldn't cut the biscuit at all!!)



Share your bat bakes on our facebook page, we'd love to see them!



Upcoming Events

For the most up to date list of events, please see the [Norwich Bat group website](#)

Event	Date	Event Details
Norwich Bat Group AGM	7.30pm 1st December 2021	Location TBC. Please check our website and facebook for details nearer the time