

Bats

Common Pipistrelle



Pipistrellus pipistrellus is one of the commonest British bats, the species you are most likely to see around your garden. A single pipistrelle can eat thousands of tiny insects in just one night. Their flight is fast and jerky as they dodge about pursuing small insects which the bats catch and eat on the wing. They generally emerge from their roost around 20 minutes after sunset and fly 2-10m above ground level searching for their insect prey, which they catch and eat on the wing by 'aerial hawking'. They are 35-45mm nose to tail with a wingspan of 200-235mm and weights ranging from 3g to 8g. They are medium brown with the area around their face a darker brown. They like to roost in crevices and tree holes. Calls are between about 45 and 70kHz with the deepest sounding slap being heard at about 45kHz, the peak intensity of the call

45-70kHz, peak at 45kHz

Soprano Pipistrelle



Pipistrellus pygmaeus is one of the commonest and most widespread of all British bat species. It is very similar to the Common Pipistrelle but has a paler face and it echolocates at a higher frequency. It was only recognised as different in the 1990's. They feed in wetland habitats, for example over lakes like Dernmere and rivers like the Cam, and also around woodland edge, tree lines or hedgerows, but also in suburban gardens and parks, typically at a height between 2 and 10m above ground level. Sizes and weights are the same as Commons, but their echo location is noticeably higher between about 55 and 80kHz, with the peak at 55kHz.

55-80kHz, peak at 55kHz

photo during an onsite survey

Nathusius' Pipistrelle



Pipistrellus nathusii is a rare bat in the UK, though records have increased in recent years. It is a migratory species, and most bats are encountered in autumn, although some do remain all year and breed in the UK. It is similar in appearance to the Common and Soprano but slightly larger at 46-55mm nose to tail and 228mm to 250mm wingspan weighing 6-16g. The fur on its back is longer, sometimes giving a shaggy appearance. Females form large maternity colonies of up to 350 bats where each gives birth to a single young in June or early July, often near large bodies of water for insect supplies. Males tend to be more solitary. Their calls are also 55-80kHz but the peak intensity is lower than other pipistrelles at about 38kHz (between 36 and 40kHz). Their social calls and calls to attract mates are between 20 to 30kHz, audible to some adults and children.

55-80kHz, peak at 38kHz

Bats

Daubenton's Bat



35-85kHz, peak at 47kHz

Known as the 'water bat', Daubenton's bats fish insects from the water's surface with their large feet or tail. *Myotis daubentonii* is a medium-sized species. It has a steady flight, often within a few centimetres of the water surface and is reminiscent of a small hovercraft. These like to roost in damp areas such as tunnels or bridges over rivers, or in caves, mines and cellars. They are 45-55mm long with a wingspan between 240 and 275mm and a weight of 7-12g. They can feed up to 6km from their roost, sometimes taking insects from the water's surface with their feet or tail. Their calls range from 35 to 85kHz and are loudest at 45 to 50kHz, lasting 5-10 seconds.

Noctule



20-45kHz, peak at 25kHz

Nyctalus noctula is one of the largest British species, 60-82mm long. Noctules have broad brown ears and a distinctive mushroom-shaped tragus (ear flap). This bat has long narrow wings and flies in a straight line, very high and fast. They weigh 18-40g and have a 320-400mm wingspan. Most food is caught and eaten on the wing but occasionally taken on the ground. Noctule bats are primarily tree dwellers and live mainly in holes made by woodpeckers or rot. They can feed in the winter but equally can survive four months without eating in hibernation. They forage for up to two hours at dusk and half an hour at dawn, flying over 10km from roost to feeding areas. Their calls range from 20 to 45kHz and peak at 25kHz.

Long-eared Bat



25-50kHz, peak at 35kHz

Brown long-eared bats are medium-sized with ears nearly as long as the body, which they can tuck away completely under their wings leaving only the pointed inner lobe of the ear, the tragus, visible. They can reportedly hear a ladybird walking on a leaf. They are 37-52mm long with a 230-285mm wingspan and weigh between 6 and 12g. *Plecotus auritus* are known as 'whispering bats' because their large ears mean their echolocation sounds are very quiet. They have particularly sensitive low frequency hearing and often locate prey from the sounds made by the insect's own movements. They may sometimes use vision. Large prey are taken to a perch to eat. Their habit of flying close to the ground, or even landing to tackle prey, makes brown long-eared bats vulnerable to attack by predators. Calls range from 25 - 50kHz and peak at 35kHz.