



# BATS & "The Millennium Link" NEWSLETTER

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## Long, busy, but worth it !

..... That was definitely the verdict as we concluded the 2002 surveys. We started up again in February and completed a further 36 surveys to add to last years tally.

Now that winter is well on the way, we get a chance to analyse all of the data collated.

Hope you find this edition of our newsletter interesting as we try to keep everyone up to date with all that has been happening.

### Further Funding From FET

We would like to thank Falkirk Environment Trust for the further funding we received from them this summer. This is greatly appreciated. The money will allow us to buy some more equipment and also ensure that we can continue to produce future newsletters.

### First Things First

Kirsty Gourlay, who in conjunction with **BaTML** conducted a winter/spring bat project to conclude her studies, achieved a First Class Honours Degree in Animal Biology (Napier University). Well done Kirsty and all the best for the future.

## Roll Of Honour 2002

In any project it is said that "enthusiasm gets you to the start, but it's commitment that gets you to the end." Once again in 2002 we have been fortunate to have had many committed Volunteer Surveyors without whom we would not be able to achieve our objectives. Thanks all you for your continued support and look forward to seeing you again in 2003.

Laura Black, Toby Clark, Susan Craig, John Cruden, Karen Dobbins, Vance Docherty, Geraldine Donnelly, Pat Emslie, Maggie Fergusson, Frank Flemming, Andrea French, Chris Gould, Kirsty Gourlay, Scott Gourlay, Michael Lang, Olivia Lassiere, Helen Lundie, Craig Macadam, Kirsty Macintyre, Lindsay MacKinlay, Dougie MacRaid, Gayle Martin, Scot Mathieson, Catriona Morrison, Kirsty Morrison, Anna Morton, Des Norden, Elaine Porteous, Katrina Pringle, Peter Rigby, Alastair Stewart, Fiona Stewart, Sarah Watts.

### BaTML – Gets A Mention !

Our hard work has not gone unnoticed. The more observant of you may have seen us getting mentioned in various publications during 2002. These include :-

British Waterways "The Link"

Falkirk Green Diary

Falkirk Herald

Bat Conservation Trust Magazine

Scottish Wildlife Trust's magazine

Central Scotland Bat Group -Northern Natterer

We would just like to pass on our thanks to the above organisations for acknowledging the work being done by our group.

In addition we are aware that our newsletter also appears on various notice boards in the area – again we would like to thank those involved in arranging this – you all know who you are.

Finally a special thanks to **British Waterways** who arranged to provide extra copies of our last newsletter and made a supply of these available for the public at "The Wheel" site.

### In Brief.....

- **61 Surveys at 22 Sites** completed so far, collating 183 hours of data.
- **Every site produces Daubenton's bat and Soprano pipistrelle.**
- **First Daubenton's bat of the year** appears on 18.3.02 at Fawnspark.
- **First Soprano pipistrelle of the year** recorded 27.02.02 at Gogar Moor.
- **30 Volunteer Surveyors** involved this year.
- **Newsletter Distribution** Our newsletter is issued to more than 80 people & organisations who are involved with or expressed an interest in this project.
- **Newsletter No 5 – due out** in April 2003.
- **Get involved....** It's easy, just phone the editor. No experience necessary.



BATS & "The Millennium Link" is supported by the following organisations :-

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE

British Waterways

FALKIRK ENVIRONMENT TRUST

Clyde Bat Group

Central Scotland Bat Group

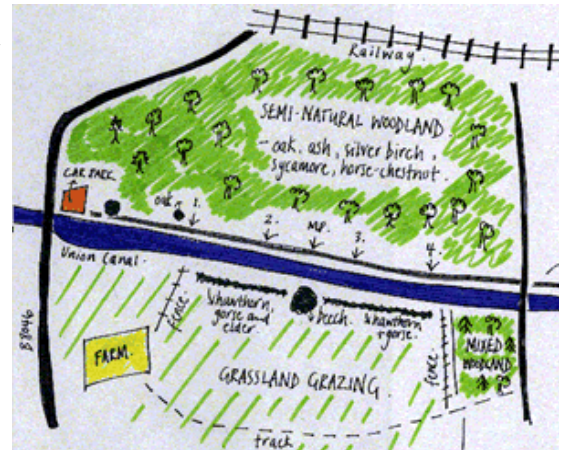
## When Is An Oak, Not An Oak ?

When it's a Beech. Neil's bat identification skills are pretty good but when it comes to vegetation he would be the first to admit that he struggles. As such I volunteered to get involved with putting together some bankside vegetation data for selected sites on our programme. What follows is a summary of the data collected for Fawnspark, Union Canal which was looked at in June of this year.

Near Philpstone, the site is bordered on the South side by an open field of grassland grazing, and on the North side by semi-natural woodland (Oak, Silver-birch, Ash, Beech, Sycamore and Horse-chestnut). A stone dyke, with Hawthorn, Ash and Elm running behind, separates the towpath from the woodland. Hawthorn, Gorse and Elder run along the off-side banking. A compartment of mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland lies at right angles along the field edge from Bridge No. 37 (just outside the survey site). The mid-point of our bat survey stretch is directly opposite a large Beech tree on the off-side banking.

This site also demonstrates the diversity of waterside vegetation found along the canal banks and towpaths. In just the short walk that I took to do the survey I identified approximately 25 to 30 different species (excluding aquatic plants). Wild flowers such as Meadowsweet, Water Avens and Willowherbs were well represented in this typically damp habitat.

Kirsty Morrison



## BATS & PIECES

**Sunrise Surveys** – 5 times we got up before sunrise to see if trying to follow bats back to their roost would produce any results. We managed to find the exact location of 1 roost with a further 2 narrowed down to specific areas. As importantly however we also eliminated long stretches of the Union Canal as being unlikely to hold a significant roost.

### Temperature Relative To Activity

Our bats started appearing regularly in March when typical survey evenings produced temperatures circa 5 C.

**Pipistrelles** – Although Soprano pipistrelle was recorded every survey evening since early March, Bandit pipistrelles were not recorded until late May. Also, only 4% of all pipistrelles recorded in this habitat so far are definitely “Bandits”.

**Largest Concentration Of Daubenton's** bats so far occurred at a site near Ratho, where a minimum number of 35 was established. After this survey we were able, through tracking the bats back, to establish which section of the canal held the roost.



Pictured Above - So this is what a “Mid-Point” looks like. Some of our equipment set up and ready to go. Even if it rains !

### Daubenton's Bat :-

#### Activity Averaged Over Period 2001/2002 Per Survey

Time that first bat appeared after sunset	59mins
Number of bat passes	68.6
Number of feeding buzzes	24
Minimum number of bats present	4.11

### Pipistrelle Species :-

#### Total Number Of Bat Passes Recorded 2001 / 2002

Soprano pipistrelle	1,365	62.61%
Bandit pipistrelle	93	4.27%
Unidentified pipistrelle	722	33.12%

### DATA PROTECTION ACT

Please note, if you are the direct recipient of this newsletter, then your name, address and other contact details are being retained on our database for use solely in connection with BaTML.

If you do not wish to be kept informed about our activities, please advise us accordingly and we will arrange for your details to be removed.