

BATS & The Millennium Link

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NEWSLETTER - ISSUE 9
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The Batting Order has been agreed and we are off again, for what is about to be our fifth season of studying bats on the canal network. Over the winter months we have reflected upon what has been achieved so far and where the project will be heading over the next few years. At this point in time we have a work schedule that will take us at least to the end of 2007.



As well as the survey work planned for 2005 we are really pleased to be offering two courses this year. In addition, we are also delivering a workshop at the BCT's Spring Into Action day and presenting to The John Muir Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Clyde Bat Group and an amateur radio society. If your organisation would like us to deliver something similar please get in touch.

Enjoy the newsletter and we look forward to seeing you all during 2005.

Pipistrelle Distribution

As previously reported, Napier student **Sarah Clear** worked with us looking at the distribution and habitat use of pipistrelles in the Edinburgh/West Lothian area. We are pleased to say that Sarah passed her masters degree.

The project compared the distribution of the two pipistrelle species between 4 canal sites and 4 other sites where water features were absent. The results suggested that Bandit pipistrelle was no more abundant away from our canals than on them. This work strengthens the case that the reason behind our low encounter rate for Bandits is due to them being poorly represented in the area as a whole, as opposed to habitat selection. The encounter rate for Soprano pipistrelle and unallocated bats did not vary greatly from what we had found already on our canals. A summary of Sarah's work will appear on our website later this year.

In Brief.....

- **BCT Spring Into Action Sat 14th May 2005**
- see over for details.
- **BaTML Bat Course (1st to 3rd Aug 2005)**
- only two places left, so hurry! Thanks to everyone who has booked. Looking forward to meeting you all in August.
- **151 Surveys completed during 2001/2004 involving 96 volunteers. 366 Hours of data collected.**
- **28 Survey Sites being monitored.**
- **Malaise Trapping 2005 Insect Survey to run for a full 26 weeks, commencing in April.**
- **Newsletter Circulation 246 people/organisations on our distribution list.**
- **Previous Newsletters can be downloaded from our website.**
- **Newsletter No 10 due out in October 2005. If you would like us to include anything just ask.**



Insects & Their Bat Predators Workshop (Thursday 14th July 2005) - Book Now

Haven't booked yet! Good news, there are still places available on this unique workshop where we tackle both predator and prey. The event will appeal equally to anyone with an interest in insects or bats. Facilitated by our project entomologist, Craig Macadam of **Bradán Aquasurveys Ltd**, we are offering a day of practical sessions followed by an evening trapping moths and watching Daubenton's bats and pipistrelles over the canal.

Centred near Linlithgow, on the Union Canal, one nights accommodation, breakfast, lunch, refreshments and course material are all included within the cost of £95 per person (a non-residential rate of £70 is also available). Places are limited to 20 delegates, and we have already had lots of interest. So if you or your organisation wish to attend please let us know ASAP and we will reserve your place (Contact: middleneil@msn.com).



BaTML Volunteer Opportunities For 2005

We have now put together our 2005 survey schedule and this year promises to be the most varied and exciting yet. We will be continuing with our monitoring programme and roost analysis, but also fully integrating Habitat Use Profiling into the project as we map the feeding hotspots and adjoining commuting corridors. This years activity will cover a number of locations including the following sites on the Union (UN) and Forth & Clyde (FC) canals:-

A801 (UN), Carmuir (FC), Gogar Moor (UN), Fawnspark (UN), Kelvinhead (FC), Learielaw (UN), Netherton (FC), Possil Loch (FC), Purliehill (UN), Slateford (UN), Tintock (FC), Underwood East (FC), Wilcoxholm (UN), Wilkies Basin (UN), Winchburgh North (UN)

If you are on our Volunteer Database you will start to receive our emails from late March advising you of details.

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

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE British Waterways **FALKIRK ENVIRONMENT TRUST** **The Royal Bank Of Scotland Group**
Central Scotland Bat Group Clyde Bat Group BTCV Lothians Bat Group The Bat Conservation Trust

Daubenton's & Pipistrelle Results Summary So Far

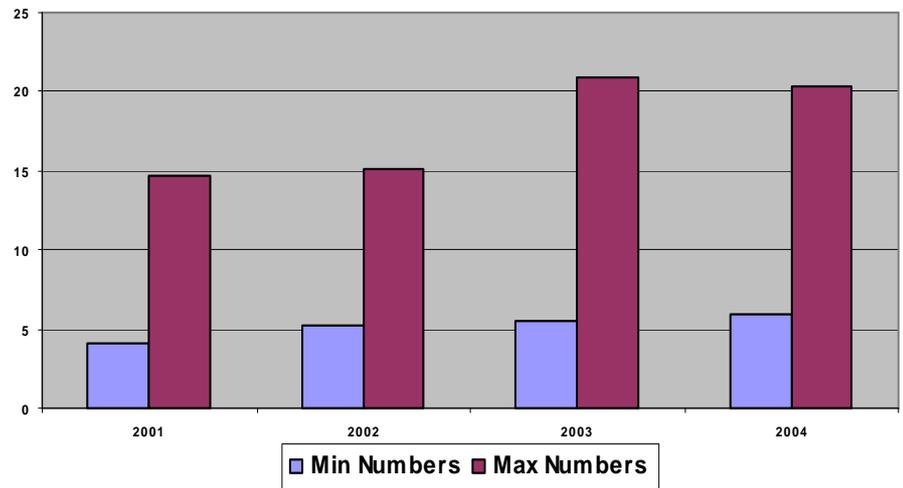
As 2004 drew to a close we reflected on the fact that we had been studying the bat populations of these canals for four full seasons. As such we decided that it was time to begin thinking about doing the much fuller statistical analysis required to test what the raw data appears to be telling us. With this in mind our survey programme for 2005 has been carefully drawn up to fill in any potential gaps that may exist.

The graphs on the right give a snapshot of some of our findings to date. Daubenton's bat, minimum numbers per survey, appears to be growing very slightly year on year. This also seems to be the case nationally, as highlighted in the latest findings of the BCT's National Bat Monitoring Programme. On the other hand, the recorded numbers relating to the maximum number of bat entries into our survey stretches is not as clear, albeit a comparison between 2001 and 2004 does show an increase. 2005 will be the last full year for this aspect of our data gathering, thereafter a more thorough analysis of our findings will be made available. From 2006 we will monitor a sample of our initial 22 sites in order to audit the ongoing situation.

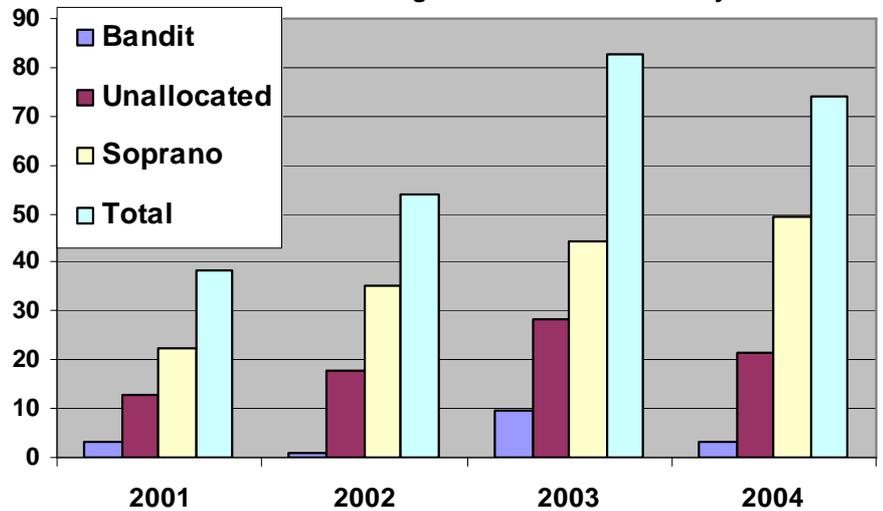
The pipistrelle results also show an upward trend in many respects, however they are proving to be very interesting in other respects. We have now collected enough data to begin to consider the questions posed regarding the high percentage of unallocated bats. In addition, the low occurrence of Bandit pipistrelles is now beginning to appear to be as a result of general geographical distribution, as opposed to preference of habitat. During 2005 we will conclude the mapping exercise for the pipistrelle species and this aspect of our work will be made available next winter.

Finally a **big thanks** to all of our volunteers who have helped greatly in making all of these things both possible and enjoyable.

Daubenton's Bat
Average Annual Numbers Per Survey



Pipistrelle Species
Annual Average Bat Passes Per Survey



Alana Ecology Ltd - BaTML Becomes An Affiliate

We are often asked where do we buy our equipment. Almost everything tends to come from **Alana Ecology Ltd**, whom we have found to be both, very reliable and friendly. So much so, that we have now entered into an affiliate arrangement with them, meaning, each time someone makes a purchase after accessing the **Alana Ecology** website via our **BaTML** Links page, they will make a contribution to our project funds.

BCT Spring Into Action Day

On the 14th May 2005 the **Bat Conservation Trust** are running a training event for bat workers at Battleby in Perthshire. During the day there will be opportunities to get involved with various workshops such as Bat ID, Sound Analysis and Harp Trapping. Booking is compulsory as places are limited. If you would like to go, we suggest you phone or email Anne Youngman ASAP (Tel 01786 447144 / Email ayoungman@bats.org.uk).

BaTML PROJECT TEAM

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Website & E-News - The Value Of Technology

If we ever doubted the value of having a website and the power of technology this was very quickly blown away when we reviewed things early in 2005.

So far we have almost 200 subscribers to our E-Newsletter and it is unusual for a week to pass without another subscriber being added. This is really important because it demonstrates to others what interest in bats there is. Most of our subscribers are in the UK, however we also have E-News going to mainland Europe and even as far as New Zealand and Australia.

The website statistics are equally impressive with well in excess of 200 unique visitors to the site each month and, so far, over 3500 separate visits in total since its launch in January 2004. Well done to **Room 108 Ltd** for providing us with such a quality site.

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.

In addition if you have received this from us directly by email you can unsubscribe electronically via our website by accessing our "Contact Us" page and typing the words "unsubscribe me" in the Other Comments field.