



Wildlife Friendly Addingham

Fascinating facts about Bats

- **Bats are the only true flying mammals in the world**
- **All our British bats species (18 in total) eat insects, like the majority of bats across the world. In the Tropics bats also eat fruit, flowers, blood, frogs, fish and even other bats!**
- **Bats sleep in their roosts during the day and come out to feed at night**
- **They have an inbuilt 'radar' system, using echolocation calls, which bounce off landscape features, to help them navigate between their roosts and their favourite feeding grounds**
- **Using echolocation they can fly through a wood avoiding the trees. They are incredibly skilled at avoiding obstacles - so to dispel a myth they won't get tangled in your hair!**
- **They also use echolocation to find their prey. They look for places to hunt where there are lots of insects. All bats love water - becks, rivers and ponds provide water to drink, and attract midges and other flying insects, which congregate in their thousands, providing a ready feast!**
- **A tiny pipistrelle (usually no more than 2.5cm in length) can eat up to 3,000 insects in a night, consuming its entire body weight in midges**
- **Bats can lower their body temperature below 10 degrees C so they can sleep (hibernate) through the winter, waking up in March/April**
- **This month (May) females form maternity colonies, looking for suitable nursery sites in trees or buildings. Males roost on their own or in small groups**
- **In June, the female bats give birth to a single pup, which they feed on milk. Bats can live for up to 30 years**
- **As the days shorten in late September & October, and there are fewer insects to eat, its time for bats to head to their winter roosts to hibernate.**



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Some bat species found locally

Common & Soprano Pipistrelles These are by far the most commonly seen, tiny bats, which roost in very small cavities. They often live with us in our houses and other buildings, in spaces between the soffits and the roof tiles. **The Soprano** is known for being very skilled at 'lekking' that is making social calls to other bats.



Daubenton This is a tree dwelling bat, which is particularly fond of hunting by diving down to skim the surface of rivers for water loving insects. It can be found living under the arches of old stone bridges as well. The River Wharfe at Addingham, with plenty of well wooded banks is perfect habitat.

Noctules A woodland bat that often lives in Oak trees. It flies very high in the sky and has a long range. So it is difficult to spot, and when you pick it up on a bat recorder it is often much further away than you might think.



Bat Friendly Gardens:

- * Plant night-scented flowers
- * Make a wildlife pond
- * Let your garden go a bit wild
- * Put up a bat box
- * Plant a line of trees or hedgerow
- * Reduce or remove artificial lighting
- * Keep cats indoors at night!

[Click here](#) for more advice from the Bat Conservation Trust on making your garden bat friendly.



Identifying Bats in Flight

The echolocation call bats make when they are out hunting are usually pitched at too high a frequency for humans to hear naturally - but they can be heard or recorded using a bat detector.

Different species of bat emit calls with specific characteristics related to their size, flight behaviour, environment and prey types.

AEG has detectors to loan if you are interested in trying one out. Email: aeg@addingham.info

How are trees important to bats?

Trees and woodland can be important for a variety of bat species. Many species also make use of the natural features in trees for roosting although this can vary by species and time of year.

Below you will see examples of these natural features. The species illustrated provide a visual aid into how these features are used and not the sole species to use that feature.



As a **navigational aid** especially when trees are in lines or hedges



Feeding perch or protection during bad weather



Roosting inside **woodpecker holes**



Roosting in **cracks, splits and crevices**



Roosting behind **loose bark**



Occasionally roosting behind **dense ivy**



Roosting in **rot holes**



Winter hibernation in **hollow trunk** if frost-free

