



Newsletter Spring 2019

Doing your bit for the bats of Essex

This year is set to be a busy one for our Bat Group, with the launch of several new local surveys and full participation in the new national Bats in Churches Project. The serotine, considered to be declining in south east England, will be the deserving subject of a new survey aimed at establishing its local distribution, breeding status and habitat use. Our woodland project continues to evolve, with the start of a landscape scale barbastelle project at Danbury, detector surveys of Epping Forest and a concerted effort to locate tree roosts and influence woodland management to the benefit of bats.

Meanwhile, efforts to find barbastelle in the far south continue and some north Essex woods will be surveyed under the detector loan scheme known as Essex Community Bat Survey. Trapping sessions aimed at finding whiskered bat and other small *Myotis* species are now in their second year and our involvement in the national Nathusius' pipistrelle project goes on, aiming to find that elusive maternity roost.

The range of experience available to Bat Group members is now greater than ever and our new training programme will be used to ensure a thorough grounding for licence trainees.

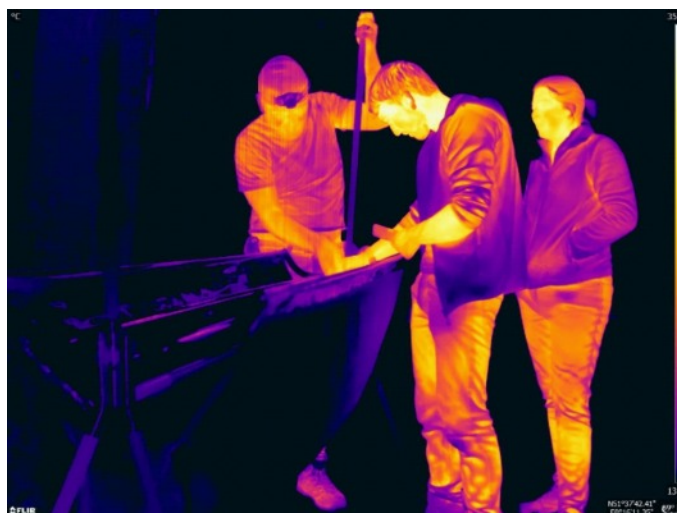
There is plenty for our members to get involved in, but volunteers are particularly needed for certain aspects of our work. A few members act as Voluntary Bat Roost Visitors on behalf of Natural England, providing a free advice service for churches and householders, and we need more people to come forward for training for this work, which makes a direct and valuable contribution to bat conservation.

Our Bat Care Network also needs new volunteers to help with the collection and care of grounded bats, including exercising captives in a flight cage. No one gets to know bats quite like our carers do!

We are invited to give talks and walks and run stalls at events by an increasing number of community groups, all great opportunities to spread the word. Volunteers are required for this important work, including running bat events at churches as part of the Bats in Churches Project.

If you are interested in helping with any of these activities, please use the relevant contacts on page 10.

- Essex Bat Care Network
- Voluntary Bat Roost Visitors
- Essex Woodland Bat Project
- Bats in Churches Project
- Chigborough Bat Box Project
- Essex Community Bat Survey
- Danbury Barbastelle Project
- Small *Myotis* Project
- Hibernation Project
- Epping Forest Bat Walks
- Lee Valley Bat Box Project
- Deneholes SSSI Hibernation Monitoring
- Weald Bat Box Project
- National Bat Monitoring Programme



Thermal image of EBG members assembling a harp trap during a trapping night at Weald Country Park. See article on use of TI for ecological surveys, page 9. [Photo: Liat Wicks]

- Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project
- Remote Roost Monitoring
- Hanningfield Soprano Pipistrelle Roost Monitoring
- Harlow Bat Box Project
- Essex Serotine Project
- Chafford Hibernation Monitoring
- Colchester Bat Project
- Lake Meadows Bat Box Project
- Public bat walks
- Bat talks
- Stalls at public events
- Social media & publicity
- Training
- Site management advice

Searching for Serotines

Sarah Mackinnon announces a brand new project

The serotine is thought to be widely distributed across Essex, but is now arguably one of our county's least common residents. Like all other British bats, it has undergone substantial population declines in the past; however, it has perhaps fared worse than most due to its heavy reliance on human-influenced sites for both roosting and foraging. Roosts are almost invariably within human structures, typically older buildings such as Victorian era housing and churches. With the advent of modern building practices and the restoration of many older properties, availability of suitable roost sites has substantially decreased. At the same time, changes in farming practices and equestrian care have compounded the difficulties faced by the species. The serotine is customarily associated with grazing pasture, where it favours foraging on *Coleoptera* such as chafers and dung beetles. In our region in particular, much traditional pasture has now been converted to agricultural cropland, if not lost totally to development. Within the habitat that remains, favoured prey have also declined, hit first by the post-war pesticide era, then again by the introduction of modern farming machinery which can kill larvae during soil cultivation. Dung beetles in particular have also suffered from the now routine use of anthelmintics, parasitic worm killing drugs that persist in livestock dung when excreted and have toxic effects on the beetles themselves. Initially, most routine use of anthelmintics was limited to commercial livestock operations; however use in equestrian settings has now become more common, further limiting foraging opportunities for serotines.

In an attempt to gain a better understanding of how our serotines are responding to these challenges, this summer Essex Bat Group will be kicking off the Essex Serotine Project. The project's core aim is to enhance our understanding of the species current distribution and conservation status in our county. To do this, we will be seeking to revisit old roost records to determine if the bats are still present, as well as searching for new colonies by visiting potential church roost sites and favoured foraging habitats across the county. There is a lot of ground to cover and so we're looking for volunteers to get involved in the project, starting late May 2019.



Serotine foraging habitat on a dairy farm in the Stour Valley
[Pat Hatch]

This is a great opportunity for our newer members to gain experience in surveying buildings for bats and build confidence in identifying serotines in the field and via sound analysis. You will be able to select your favoured area to cover and guidance will be provided on priority sites to survey within that area. Full training and support will be provided to help start you on your way. And for the more experienced among you – well the draw is obvious I'm sure – the possibility to see these fantastic creatures up close and contribute to their conservation close to home!

The project will be kicking off with an introductory meeting and workshop at the Wilderness Foundation, Chatham Green on 20th May. Please contact Sarah Mackinnon at sarra32@hotmail.com if you are interested in the project and/or workshop.

Essex Bat Group Committee News

The EBG committee is very grateful for the donation of £1,050 by South Essex Natural History Society. It is regrettable that the funding arises from the dissolution of the group, but we are honoured that they chose the Bat Group as a recipient.

The committee would also like to thank Essex Recorders' partnership for a grant of £5,000 for new equipment for our woodland project. Funding for equipment is difficult to come by, and the high level of survey activity currently underway in Essex would not be possible without the partnership's support.

Steve Donovan, bat care stalwart, has joined the committee and Tim Sapsford has kindly stepped up to be our new Treasurer and Fundraising Officer.

We are looking for a new Publicity Officer, a role which involves publicising the group through various media, including social media and local press.

Danbury Barbastelle Project

Graham Hart heralds the arrival of a new landscape-scale survey

“I’m not in love, it’s just a silly phase I’m going through” pleaded the singer in the band 10cc when all evidence was to the contrary. I bring this up because whenever discussion amongst my fellow bat workers and I turns to “what’s your favourite bat”, it is normally assumed mine is the barbastelle, even though I honestly don’t have a favourite. No, honestly, I think they’re all great. Or am I just in denial like 10cc?



Ancient woodland at Danbury Ridge
[Graham Hart]

I do understand how this rumour about the barbastelle and I started. When I first started the surveys at Weald Country Park about 10 years ago I was keen to find this scarce species. A quest had begun. Over the years it became the bat for me to hear on a detector as my interest in woodland surveys grew. It wasn’t rarity alone that inspired me; the recent hunt for the small *Myotis* species and finding the uncommon serotine and *Nathusius’* pipistrelle also motivate me in equal measure. I admit there is an aloof quality about the barbastelle though, that does seem to set it apart from the others. Its dark appearance also gives it a cool ‘dark side’ factor. I sometimes refer to it as the pirate bat which comes from the translation of its name - ‘starbeard’. It’s also a bat that tends to favour woods that are aesthetically pleasing; ancient remote woods with streams, diverse habitats and a dark understorey; the woods of folk tales and childhood memories. These woods tend to also be good for a wide range of other flora and fauna but are unfortunately few and far between and decreasing along with the barbastelle.

The barbastelle is a species of conservation concern with a population decline across Europe. It has therefore been given additional legal protection under EU law and its presence may result in a Special Area of Conservation designation. Of course all bat species require protection, but with barbastelle conservation there is arguably a sizeable trickle down effect for other wildlife because of its use of some of our most precious, ancient and threatened habitats. That’s one to debate another time though.

The ‘favourite bat’ assumption grew stronger when in 2016 barbastelle became the initial target species of our new woodland project (EWBP), aiming to improve our knowledge of barbastelle distribution throughout the county.

During the early years of the woodland project, barbastelles were consistently found at a number of sites in the Danbury Living Landscape area, a mosaic of woodland, common land, heath and farmland east of Chelmsford. Landscape-scale conservation such as that taking place within the area is essential if we are to move conservation beyond nature reserves and take into consideration all landscape factors that influence wildlife and especially our bats. With this in mind, it seems obvious to me that we should have a bat project in Danbury with barbastelle as the focus, even though I realise this won’t distance me from that favourite bat tag!

So in 2019 Essex Bat Group will formally launch a new long term project looking at how barbastelles use the Danbury Living Landscape. This will be the first project of its kind in Essex.

The objectives of the Barbastelles in Danbury Project are:

- To produce a barbastelle distribution map for the Danbury Living Landscape
- To confirm the presence of maternity colonies within the area
- To identify core roosting areas
- To identify core foraging areas
- To identify important commuting routes
- To improve conservation advice to land owners within the Danbury Living Landscape

The potential for the project to make a difference to landscape management and leave a lasting legacy for bat conservation is exciting. There will be much for members to get involved with. The project will have three distinct phases and will include hand held and static detector surveys, recording potential roost features and locating tree roosts.

Colchester Cemetery Bat Roost Survey

Sonya Lindsell finds roosts among the grave stones

There will be an application for a project licence further down the line and, if successful, we will be trapping and radio tracking too. The project will go a long way to expanding on our members' experience of woodland bat work.

We are working closely with landowners such as The National Trust, Essex Wildlife Trust and Essex County Council and there has already been a lot of preparation. We have been scoping the landscape for the best looking commuting routes, noting potential foraging areas and getting a better understanding of the landscape on the ground and its connections to the River Chelmer in the north. We will be looking to see if this plays a part in how barbastelle move around the area. We have been continuing with the static surveys throughout the winter, putting bat detectors in trees for up to a week to see if any bats are around during the winter months. We have found barbastelle still active into January so far. Tree roosts of other species have been found at Danbury Country Park.

We will be arranging a formal launch in the spring, followed by regular transects throughout the rest of the year as well as other events. Please keep an eye on the group's emails and Facebook page. If you are a member of Essex Bat Group and want to register your interest in helping with this exciting project, please email the Danbury Project Team at danburyweald@essexbatgroup.org.

So what is the final answer to that question, "Are barbastelles my favourite bat?" Well it might be "just a silly phase I'm going through" (with phase 1 being the acoustic surveys, phase 2 being the trapping sessions and phase 3 the radio tracking) but my answer would have to be "barbastelle are my joint favourite bat. It's a tie with all the other UK species". Apparently "I'm not in love, so don't forget it!"



Object of desire - an Essex barbastelle
[Andrew Palmer]

For several years now I have been involved in leading annual public bat walks in Colchester Cemetery. The cemetery has two chapels. The Anglican chapel is disused and fenced off as it is literally starting to crumble, while the Non-Conformist chapel has been converted into a florist and tea room. Throughout that time we have known that there is a brown long-eared bat roost in the Anglican chapel and from the evidence of bat droppings peppering the door and walls of the tea room, it is obvious bats use this building as well.



Non-Conformist chapel,
Colchester Cemetery

During the public bat walks we have been lucky enough to see bats emerge but it has been some time since a full roost count has been conducted on either chapel so I decided last year to take a closer look at both chapels and carry out roost counts.

On 11th June six of us (mainly Essex Bat Group members and Volunteer Rangers) staked out the chapels, three of us on each chapel. We positioned ourselves around the porches of the buildings with one of us in front of each of the three arches that make up the sides of the porches. We stared up at the arches waiting to see something fly out. We would call out the sightings then one person would record the data. We had hand held electronic bat detectors which could tell us what kilohertz the bats were calling at so we could identify species.

We arrived at 8.30pm, while there was still some daylight, and we could see about twenty swifts circling in the clear, still sky above. This was lovely to see but also indicated to us that there was plenty of insect life up there ready for the bats to feed on.

From the tea room chapel we could hear, without the aid of the bat detectors, social calls coming from the roost. This was a very good sign. The first bat emerged at 8.51pm, then over the next 15 minutes nine more bats emerged, all soprano pipistrelles. It appeared the bats would emerge in bursts of 10 – 20 individuals at a time.

By 10.25 the bats had stopped emerging and in all we had counted 184, a good size soprano roost. We noted some behaviour whilst watching the roost – at 9.45 four bats came back to the porch and circled around under the porch for about 10 minutes before flying off again.

Then two individuals flew back to the porch and right back into the roost. More bats emerged after this but whether they were the same or different individuals coming back out we have no way of knowing. It surprised us that bats would come back to the roost so soon after emerging and led us to wonder if it was anything to do with it being a maternity roost and whether some bats had already given birth – were mothers returning to feed their youngsters? We don't know.

Over at the Anglican chapel 53 bats emerged during a one hour period from 9.35, the majority being brown long-eared bats mixed with pipistrelles.

We wanted to see how numbers would vary over the summer season; whether they would increase as the youngsters in the maternity roosts matured and then decrease as the roosts disperse for the autumn so we surveyed the roosts another couple of times.

The next roost count was on the 6th August. It was another very warm still evening of 23 degrees. From 8.50 to 10.02, 92 soprano pipistrelles emerged from the tea room chapel, a few less than last time, so maybe the maternity roost was starting to disperse? At the Anglican chapel we had a more hi-tech bat detector available to us, an Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro (thank you Sarah Mackinnon), so were able to get a more accurate count. We had 30 soprano pipistrelle, 31 brown long-eared, two Natterer's and three unknowns (two were later identified from the recordings as Natterer's), totalling 66 bats emerging between 8.49 and 10.07. There was also a serotine recorded passing overhead at 9.08 and Daubenton's, which was to be expected as we know they forage over the nearby Bourne Pond, so adding to the overall species count for the cemetery. A few more brown long-eared emerged than last time. Perhaps long-eared bats mature later than soprano pips so their roost hadn't started to disperse yet?

On the 12th September we carried out our last roost count of the year. Again, it was a still, calm night but only 15 degrees. From the tea room there was very little activity and no social calls were heard.



The Anglican chapel, Colchester Cemetery
[Pat Hatch]

One bat emerged at 7.42 but it didn't echolocate as it flew out so it couldn't be identified. Common and soprano pipistrelle were heard echolocating nearby but were not seen to emerge. We conclude the maternity roost was fully dispersed?

At the Anglican chapel the first long-eared emerged at 7.38 but it circled round under the porch then flew back into the roost! Changed its mind for some reason! However, by 8.15 we had recorded 54 bats - 33 long-eared, 16 soprano pips and five common pips; however, with the pips it was hard to see if they were emerging from the building or just passing by. Some were definitely feeding as we could hear the feeding buzz from the detector as they caught their prey. So, the long-eared numbers had stayed at a similar level whilst pip numbers were down. Conclusion – long-eared bats disperse later than pips?

Another conclusion to be drawn from our survey work so far is that we can confirm the cemetery is used by at least six bat species – not bad out of the ten species which are regularly found in Essex.

We aim to conduct roost counts again this year, perhaps with an earlier date for the first count of the year and see how the bats have fared over the winter. A warm and dry winter may not necessarily have been good for them. Also, it would be good to get more data to back up some of the questionable conclusions we have drawn from our first year.

If anyone is interested in helping out with the counts then contact Sonya on 07770814282 or sonya.lindsell@colchester.gov.uk.

Also, just a note to say thank you to the volunteers who have helped out with this project so far.

Finding tree roosts

Graham Hart reports on a new branch of EBG surveys

In January 2013, with snow on the ground, Essex Bat Group ran its first “Assessing Trees for Roost Potential” workshop at Weald Country Park in Brentwood. We had over 25 people attend over two days despite the weather. It was obvious there was a lot of interest in how bats use trees and it is still our most popular workshop.

The initial intention of these workshops was to identify the tree features bats are most likely to use. This quickly grew into a desire to find the bats in these features. Finding roosts in trees will help protect them for the future, influence management of trees for the benefit of bats as well as adding to our understanding of the use of trees by bats.

Back then we knew very little about potential roost features (PRFs) and, most surprisingly, we knew of very few tree roosts too. Bat roosts tend to be discovered more frequently in buildings because humans use them, but there are so many trees and these were around long before buildings, so bats must use trees a lot, right? And trees are everywhere, right? Pass me that endoscope and let's go and find some bats. Hmm, we soon realised it wasn't going to be that easy.....

We became aware of work being done by Henry Andrews in the West Country. Henry's work around PRFs and endoscopy for tree roosts went under the banner of 'Bat Tree Habitat Key'. The Bat Group invested in an endoscope. At the time I was running our only woodland project at Weald Country Park, so the following year I set up an endoscope workshop with Pat and we started training members on how to use endoscopes (as part of licence training). Together with one of our tree experts, Geoff Clack, we also learned more about the PRFs and how they are formed. There was only one problem, we still weren't finding any bats! It's hard to believe now but years went passed without any finds. Why was this? In 2018 Henry Andrews published his book on bats and trees. I snapped up a copy. I also attended the national bat conference, went along to a tree workshop and got to chat to others working in this area. Looking back now both of these things proved to be turning points for me. Within a week I had seen my first bat in a tree using an endoscope.



Common pipistrelle roost behind loose bark of standing dead tree
[Graham Hart]



Since this find in September 2018, the roost count has grown phenomenally, with 17 tree roosts discovered at

Weald Country Park and Hartswood (Brentwood), Danbury and Hylands Park, Chelmsford. The species found so far are common, soprano and Nathusius' pipistrelle, brown long-eared, Natterer's and Daubenton's. The most bats we have found in one roost has been three common pipistrelles. Some are possible mating roosts, others hibernation roosts. These finds have already added significantly to our knowledge of how bats use trees. You can read more about them on our Facebook page and that of the Bat Tree Habitat Key.

So, what changed? Well, I would summarise the main reasons as time (hours devoted to looking), timing (when you're looking) and field craft (assessing which features are most promising and where to find them).

However, it's also important to have someone else along for the endoscope journey, because for every tree roost found there are a multitude of features that are empty, so it can be easy to become demotivated. Recent licence holder Jenny Wrayton has provided an infectious positivity and enthusiasm. Jenny also recently found her first roosts, just reward for the amount of time she has devoted to endoscopy. The rewards are pretty special too, because to see a bat occupying a natural roost in the wild is a thrill few of us get to see on a regular basis. The Bat Group will continue to run regular workshops in the hope of inspiring others to reap the same rewards while contributing to bat conservation.

Please remember that you need to have a level 2 survey licence to disturb bats using an endoscope, which means that you need such a licence to search for bats using an endoscope.

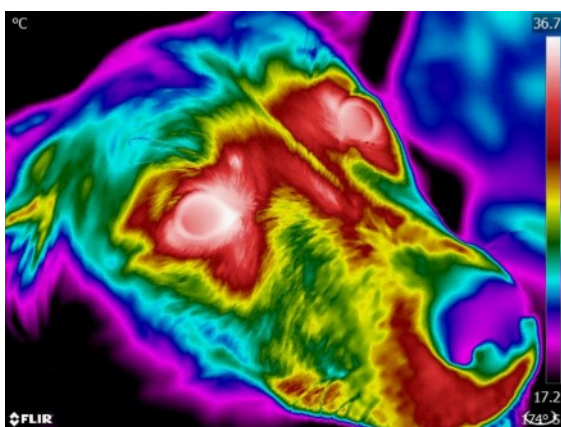
Thermal Imaging Applications in Ecology

Dr Liat Wicks explores use of TI for bat and other surveys

Technology used to survey, and monitor wildlife has come a long way since I first started my ecology career over 15 years ago, and I have had to upskill and re-train in certain technologies to make my job as a professional ecologist easier and more efficient. Being a bat specialist, in the dead of night I have often dreamed about acquiring super powers of night vision and the power of flight. Flying is a bit out of my reach but the ability to see in the dark has been around in various forms for a long time.

Infra-red night vision cameras, scopes and binoculars have been effectively used by the military, hunters, game reserve managers and indeed ecologists for years with great results. Infra-red thermal imaging however until relatively recently has been out of the budget of most people, and there are key differences between the two systems.

Infra-red (IR) night vision cameras detect light from the near infra-red region of the electromagnetic spectrum (the part closest to red light which is right next to the visible range that we can see). This type of infrared energy behaves very much like human-visible light. It can be focused using glass lenses, and the sensors used in digital cameras can detect it easily. Put simply IR camera sensors can detect reflected IR light in this region of the spectrum, and with the use of red filters and IR illuminators the range and distance of what can be detected can be increased.



A TI image in rainbow palette showing fine details in thermal radiation differences of a dog head [Liat Wicks]

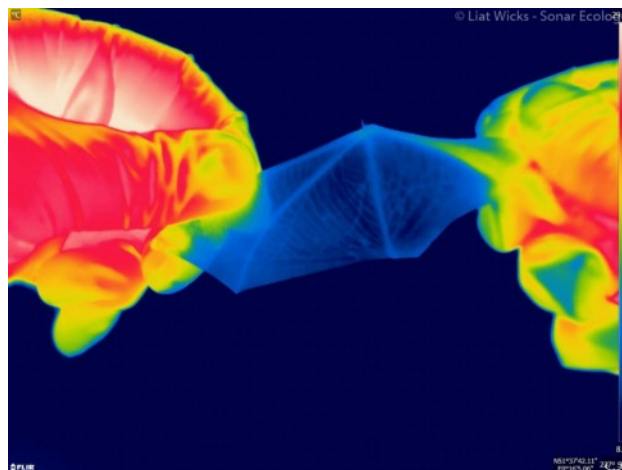


Image of a bats wing soon after being captured during a trapping survey with EBG [Liat Wicks]

Thermal Imaging (TI) cameras detect infra-red or thermal radiation from the far infrared region of the spectrum (invisible to the human eye). TI camera sensors do not need additional illumination or filters to improve detection range as they detect emitted, reflected and absorbed thermal radiation 'heat' which is emitted by all objects that have a temperature above absolute zero. This requires lenses and sensors made of specialist materials, hence the massive difference in price between the two systems.

Why is this difference important in ecology survey work? The answer comes down to what you as an ecologist are trying to do.

Do you want to count the deer in your reserve? Then a good IR night vision system might do just fine. Do you want to understand what bats are doing in your woodland and where they might be roosting? With a night vision system, you would need to flood your woodland with IR illuminators (and batteries) to get the detection range required, so a TI system which detects the bats emitted heat signatures and turns it into a visible colour palette will be less bulky and a far more portable solution. TI colour palettes can be changed to enhance what you are looking at and analysis of images containing radiometric data undertaken. Medicine, veterinary and equine science utilise TI as part of their diagnostic tool kit.

Understanding the limitations to the technology you use is vital in interpreting and analysing results. TI cameras cannot see through tree trunks or metal or brickwork, but they can (providing the conditions are right) detect differences in thermal radiation behind certain materials: roofing felt, thin wood sheets, within vegetation, through mist or fog. This means that this technology can be very effective for certain ecology work.

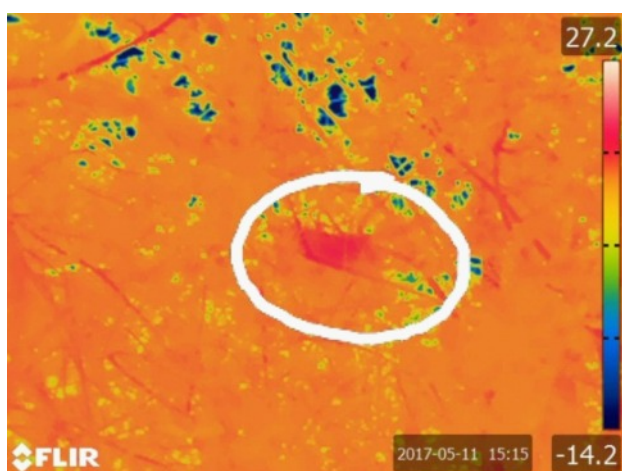
Ecological applications of TI include nesting bird surveys or checks in dense vegetation, checking if nests are active (without direct disturbance and without lengthy visual surveys), ground nesting bird surveys, bee hive management/assessments and small mammal surveys. Other applications for this technology would be monitoring surveys, whether badger sett monitoring or bat mitigation monitoring (green bridges, road gantries etc.).

For bats, as fast flying nocturnal mammals, the applications are obvious. These range from roof void inspections for bats, bat activity surveys especially in dark sites/within woodland, bat tree roost emergence surveys and buildings emergence and re entry surveys.

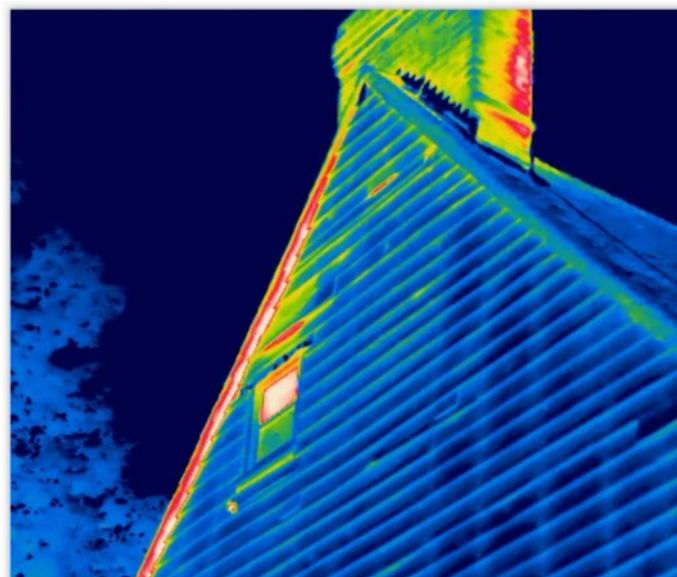
Thermal imaging provides hard evidence of the presence of an animal, and in the case of European Protected Species, can provide evidence to support Mitigation Licence applications and help inform key decision makers. With respect to bats, it can assist in proving presence/absence more easily than acoustic surveys alone, and critically can pin point the exact roost location/entry exit points on more complex sites/buildings with 100% accuracy as well as provide information on flight behaviour.

As this technology becomes more affordable I see this being a great addition to the kit bag for many land managers, ecologists and researchers.

Essex Bat Group has helped me to investigate the research applications of this technology and I have filmed bats in flight cages, imaged bats caught in mist nets and harp traps and gone underground at Chafford Gorges looking at the effectiveness of TI during hibernation surveys.



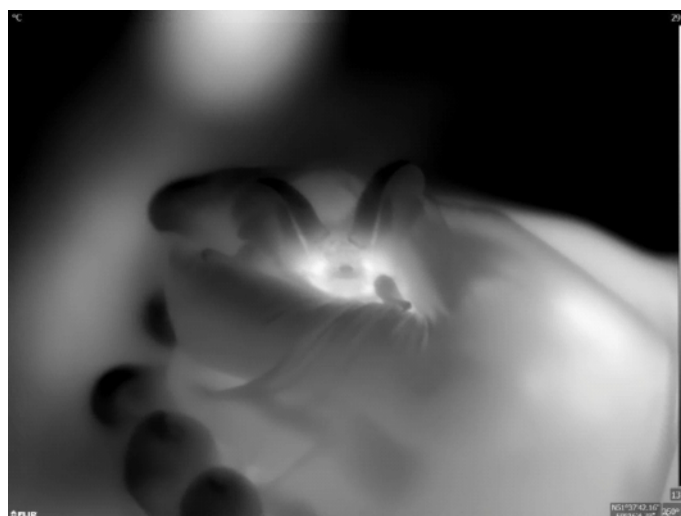
Bird nest in dense vegetation, thermal camera clearly shows a difference in thermal radiation (hot spot) in the nest, indicating it is active [Liat Wicks]



Common pipistrelle emerging from under a window lintel. Bats were also roosting above the window under the lifted wooden cladding (note thermal difference shown in red) [Liat Wicks]

As this technology becomes intergrated into our work, it is critical to acquire the right training in thermography theory, equipment operation and analysis methods. Understanding the possibilities with TI, as well as its varied limitations, is important for robust results and training courses are now available out there for ecologists looking to get into this exciting area.

About the author: Liat is a certified Level 1 Thermographer and bat specialist, having worked with bats for more than nineteen years. She is trained in Thermographic Physiological Imaging and assists veterinary practices in the diagnosis and investigation of animals. Her research interests include thermoregulation of bats and physiological imaging advances.



Thermal image of a long-eared bat captured during a trapping survey at Weald Country Park [Liat Wicks]

Bat Monitoring in Romania

Essex Bat Group is fast acquiring a close link with bat conservation in Romania. **Cecilia Montauban** relates her recent involvement

For a week in June 2018 and a week in January 2019, I volunteered with the Romanian Centre for Bat Research Conservation (CBRC), an NGO aimed at researching and conserving Romanian bats. Some of you may recall a fantastic talk on Romanian Bats at the last National Bat Conference by Szilard Bucs, president of CBRC. Both these trips were organised by Szilard, Matt Cook and Barry Collins - and they were unbelievably cool bat experiences that I would highly recommend. The June trip was in the Banat region monitoring roosts in buildings and caves, and the January trip was in Transylvania conducting hibernation surveys in caves and mines. Fellow EBG members Jennifer Wrayton and Tanith Cook also joined the monitoring trip in January and we had a fantastic time out there.

The summer trip included maternity colony counts, acoustic recording, monitoring with infrared cameras, and watching bat emergences from caves. Romania in the summer also meant camping by forests and lakes and impressive shows of bats foraging with our detectors going mad. The monitoring started at an abandoned building with a mixed maternity colony of ~1,000 bats, including greater and Mediterranean horseshoe and Geoffroy's bats. It was an epic start and the following eight caves we surveyed all had similarly impressive maternity colonies, varying from ~30 bats to several thousand. In total we recorded over 10 species, including three of Romania's four species that are exclusive cave-dwellers: Schreiber's bats, Blasius's horseshoe and long-fingered bats.

The winter trip was a chilly week of hiking through the snow, abseiling into caves, manoeuvring through tight spaces and wading through icy water to survey colonies in caves and mines. These varied from a few individuals to clusters in the thousands - an amazing sight! During the trip we recorded 16 bat species. Some of the largest clusters were of greater and lesser mouse-eared bats, Schreiber's and greater horseshoes. The Myotis species posed the usual tricky ID, with the added challenge of pond bats and the large myotis species. Similarly, the horseshoe species ID expanded from the UK 'is it plum or pear sized?' question, to the added possibility of three medium sized horseshoes species. Small numbers of barbastelles were recorded, always very close to the cave entrance in colder temperatures. Common pipistrelles - although common - are a rare treat to see in hibernation and we were overjoyed!



Surveying a Romanian cave
[Cecilia Montauban]

There are 32 bat species in Romania and the diversity of species and size of colonies make it home to some of the most important bat colonies in Europe. Many of the caves have been closed off to tourists with bat friendly grills, and annual monitoring has shown successful increases in colony sizes as a result. Protecting these colonies is becoming increasingly important and CBRC is doing remarkable work researching and monitoring their bat fauna, providing education on bats to their communities and implementing conservation projects. They are amazing to work with and it was a phenomenal experience learning about their bats and roosts, and helping to monitor them.

For more info on CBRC please visit their website:
<https://lilieci.ro/en/about/cbrc/>

And please consider donating to help: <https://gogetfunding.com/for-bats-and-their-future/>



Large aggregation of bats on cave roof
[Cecilia Montauban]



Committee members and other contacts



EBG Committee

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Pat Hatch	Chair & Newsletter Editor	pathatch@live.co.uk 07548 220589
Roger & Sylvia Jiggins	Joint Secretaries	r.jiggins@btconnect.com
Steve Donovan	Committee Member	coppeliUSD@hotmail.com
Helen Miller	Membership Secretary	membership@essexbatgroup.org
Tim Sapsford	Treasurer & Fundraising Officer, Records Officer, Conservation Officer	records@essexbatgroup.org

Other Contacts

Bat Care Network (to report a grounded bat):	See EBG website for contact phone numbers
Bat Care Network (other enquiries):	batcare@essexbatgroup.org
Hanningfield Roost Counts:	hannersbats@gmail.com
Woodland Project:	woodlandbats@essexbatgroup.org
Danbury Barbastelle Project:	danburyweald@essexbatgroup.org
Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project:	pathatch@live.co.uk
Other enquiries:	enquiries@essexbatgroup.org

Membership Form

You can use this form to renew your membership or recruit a friend

Send to: Helen Miller, 176 Abbotsbury Road, Morden SM4 5JS

Yes, I would love to become a member of EBG for 2019 / 2020 / 2021 (delete as appropriate)

Name _____ Address _____
 Email _____ Telephone _____

Using e-mail means we can send your newsletter and correspondence electronically, saving on postage and stationery so more of your membership money is used for bat conservation. Your e-mail address will not be passed on to any other organisation or used for any other purpose.

How did you hear about EBG? (internet, local bat walk, EWT, friend etc): _____

Please tick as appropriate:

- Standard membership of the group is just £5 for 1 year
- or £12 for 3 years
- Group / organisation membership is available for a minimum subscription of £30

I would also like to make a donation of £ _____

I enclose a cheque for £ _____ made payable to Essex Bat Group

If you wish to pay by BACS please contact Helen at membership@essexbatgroup.org

*Your first year's membership will run until 31st December 2019