

Batty about Winkleigh

When it comes to bats, Winkleigh and Hollocombe have shown some real enthusiasm for learning more about these amazing creatures. It is really difficult to tell one bat from another when we see them flying around the garden at dusk, but now we can benefit from digital technology to give us clearer insight into the mysteries of the only true flying mammal.

People have participated in the Devon Bat Survey by borrowing a bat monitor (with microphone) to place in their garden or field for three nights. The unit detects the type of bat by its individual high-frequency calls. There are 18 different species of bats in the UK, the monitor can usually tell them apart, though there is sometimes an overlap.

In total, an impressive 11 kilometre squares in our Parish will have been surveyed by October 2019. Adding these reports to those of previous years, we have a clearer picture of which species are criss-crossing our gardens and countryside. We have all been surprised and pleased by the reports sent back to us, listing different bat species flying around.

We learned from the surveys:

12 (or more) species have been recorded in the Parish in 2017-2019

In 2019 the most frequent species by far were the **Common Pipistrelle** (829 flights) and **Soprano Pipistrelle** (371 flights) from 5 properties.

The highest number of flights was in Wood Terrill, Hollocombe.

Two less usual species – the **Brown Long-eared** and the **Natterer's Bat** were recorded just outside the village on Townsend Hill, Winkleigh.

Other more frequent visitors were **Noctules** and **Whiskered Bats** (seen in 5 properties; 50+ flights in 2 properties).

Due to Covid-19, bat surveys will start on 1st August 2020. Please check the following website for further updates.

<http://devonbatproject.org/devon-bat-survey/>

Kim J Melhuish - Winkleigh Biodiversity Group