

AMAZING BAT FACTS

Resource

DEVON
GREATER
HORSESHOE
BAT PROJECT



The Greater Horseshoe Bat

- wingspan of 35 – 40cm (the Lesser Horseshoe is 20 – 25cm)
- weighs 17-34 grams
- length of head and body is around 76mm (the Lesser Horseshoe is 38mm)
- can live up to 30 years
- GHB have declined by over 90% over the last few decades
- remaining 10,000 GHB in the UK are found in the South West and South Wales (a third of them are in Devon)
- they feed along flyways such as hedgerows, woodland edges and streams



- GHB's are about the size of a pear & hangs freely upside down with their wings wrapped around them like a cloak

- loves to eat dung beetles, crane flies and cockchafers
- mates in autumn but fertilisation is delayed until Spring, once hibernation is over



- has a single baby per year
- the 65 species of Horseshoe bats are in the family Rhinophidae (only 2 live in the UK)
- the latin name is *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* (ferrum = iron and equinum = horse)



- has a bizarre looking nose leaf shaped like a horseshoe.
- echolocates with a constant frequency of 80 kHz
- prey are taken back to the roost to be eaten, or bats perch on a temporary roost e.g. a tree
- are at risk because of changing farming practices, hedgerow removal, declining hay meadows and use of chemical worming treatments which affect dung beetle populations



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Funding raised by
The National Lottery
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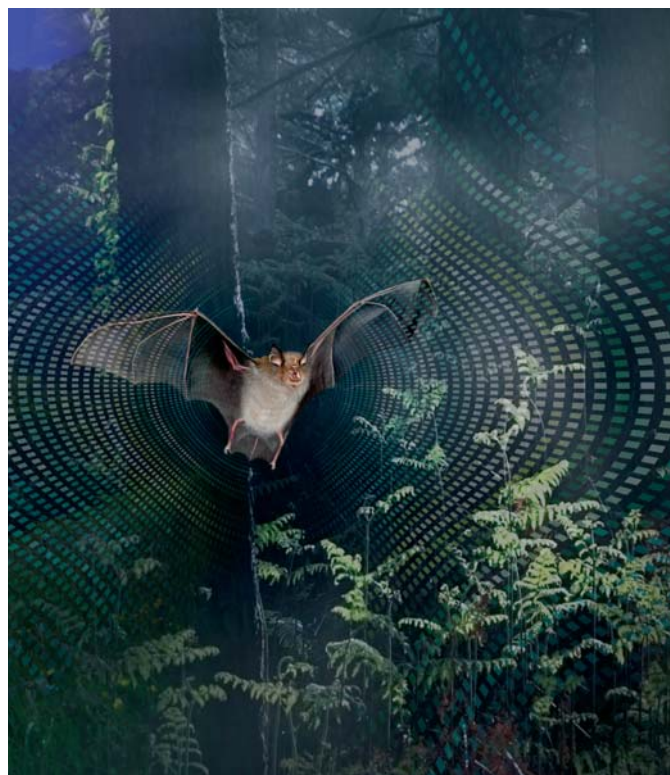
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General

- 1100 of the world's 5,000 mammal species are bats
- They range from tiny in size to a wingspan of nearly 2 metres
- There are 18 species of bats found in Britain
- Bats have been around for millions of years – the oldest insect eating bat fossil found is over 50 million years old! They were probably around at the same time as dinosaurs walked the earth.
- 'Blind as a bat' is not true – bats can see but in the dark they use echo location to navigate whilst foraging for their food



Echo location

- Bats shout out high frequency sounds inaudible to humans
- The sounds have short wavelengths and allow the bats to build up a picture of their surroundings, and locate their prey – working out its size and whether it has a soft or hard body
- Bats emit 10-15 calls per second
- Bats can calculate their own speed using Doppler shift
- Pulse 3-4 beats per minute whilst torpid/hibernating, 3,000 whilst hunting in summer



Food

- UK bats only eat insects
- Most bats worldwide eat insects or fruit - though a few species prefer catching fish or drinking animal blood
- The common vampire bat feeds on the blood of mammals such as cattle, horses and pigs – it uses an anticoagulant to keep the blood flowing while it feeds
- up to 3,000 insects and moths can be eaten in one night by a pipistrelle bat
- A night's feeding can increase body weight by one third



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