



BAT PROJECT YEAR 3 NEWSLETTER

The Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project continues to be a great success, thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund.



This 5-year project works across Devon to secure the future of greater horseshoe bats in the county. Our priority areas are their 11 maternity roosts in Devon. It is vital that the countryside near these roosts provides everything these bats need to survive and raise healthy young for the next generation.

The number of greater horseshoe bats has fallen by 90% in the UK during the last 100 years. They need countryside with good networks of hedges, woods, rivers and fields. This is why Devon is a last stronghold for them in the UK – however, even here threats are mounting.

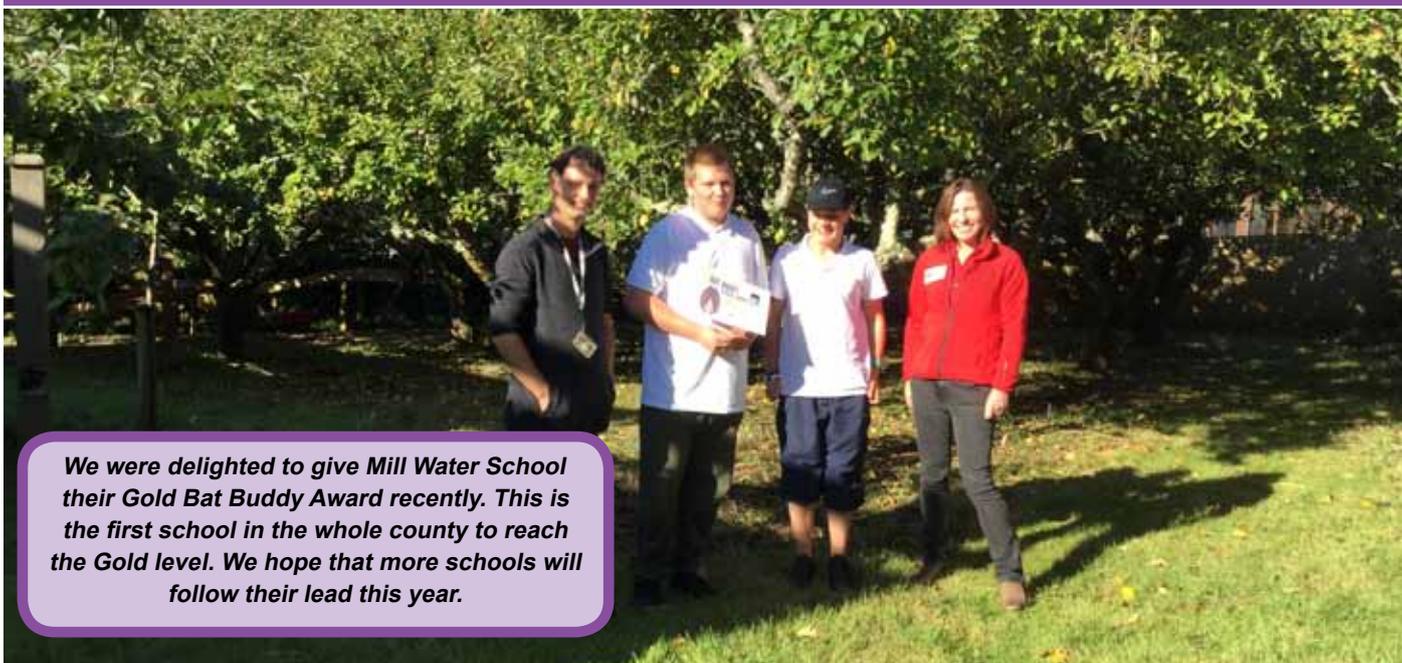
Find out more and watch our project films at www.devonbatproject.org, where you can also subscribe to our regular newsletters. You can also follow us @devonbatproject on Twitter and Facebook



Devon
Wildlife Trust

**Funding raised by
The National Lottery**
and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund





We were delighted to give Mill Water School their Gold Bat Buddy Award recently. This is the first school in the whole county to reach the Gold level. We hope that more schools will follow their lead this year.

Bats & Communities Conference

75 people attended our conference in Chudleigh. A series of talks from various speakers aimed to inspire delegates and equip them with the knowledge to kick-start their own 'Bat Friendly' community project.

Participants at the conference



Crowdfunder campaign success

Supporters donated a whopping £10,800 to our Crowdfunder, exceeding the original target of £8,000. Their generosity will allow us to create a new maternity roost for greater horseshoe bats, sow wildflower meadows and plant hedges to provide food for mother and baby bats. Every £3.50 donated is worth £10 to the project, thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund. We need to continue raising funds during Years 4 and 5 so if you can help please donate at www.devonwildlifetrust.org/support-us/make-donation (remember to select the Bat Project).

Schools

In Year 3 we were delighted to award a further 8 Bat Buddy awards to a mix of primary, secondary and special schools following 43 school activity sessions. Well done to all these young bat

champions. We hope to engage more schools next year, and that existing schools advance from bronze to silver or silver to gold.



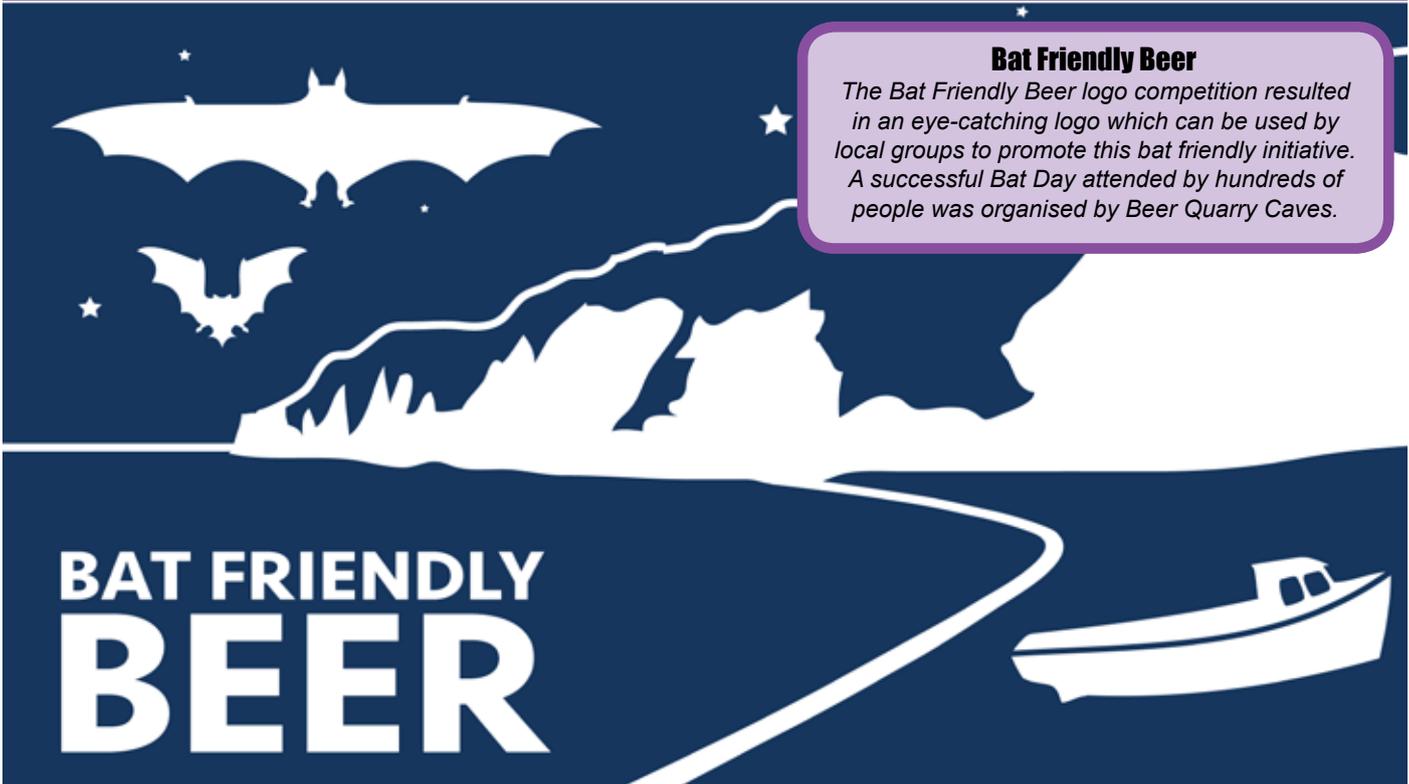
"Volunteering with the project is really rewarding. I have gained new skills and met new people. Learning more about greater horseshoe bats has been fascinating!" Jess helps with surveys and data analysis

DGHP volunteer Jess

Volunteers

A growing band of volunteers are giving up their time to help at events, run bat walks, give talks, analyse data or help with the website and social media. Contact us at bats@devonwildlifetrust.org to get involved.

With the help of volunteers, we surveyed 10 County Wildlife Sites this summer, checking their condition and recording any changes on these important sites. The wildlife-rich habitats these sites contain are great foraging grounds for local bats, and it is vital to maintain them in good condition.



Bat Friendly Beer
The Bat Friendly Beer logo competition resulted in an eye-catching logo which can be used by local groups to promote this bat friendly initiative. A successful Bat Day attended by hundreds of people was organised by Beer Quarry Caves.

Bat Friendly Communities

People in Chudleigh, Beer, Braunton and Bovey Tracey continue to do sterling work towards becoming bat friendly. The project will be supporting more communities during Year 4.

BAT FACT: A maternity roost is where baby bats (pups) are born and raised



Beer Bat Day



Chudleigh Bat Garden

Bat Friendly Gardening

Everyone can help bats by creating a bat friendly garden. Planting wildflowers in your garden, for example, will attract more insects, which in turn attracts bats and other wildlife. Leaving a small log pile will provide shelter for insects and other creatures such as hedgehogs. Download our 'Stars of the Night Sky booklet' from the website for lots of ideas.



Create your own bat friendly space at home

BAT FACT: Sustenance Zone – the countryside around a roost (typically a 4km radius circle); the good health of this is crucial for bats to hunt and live here

Farm News

The team continue to visit landowners who live near greater horseshoe maternity roosts. We have given advice and support to encourage bat friendly land management across 186 landholdings.

BatWorks Grants

This year we have awarded 12 grants to a value of £15,000. These projects range from orchard restoration and hedge planting to wildflower seed sowing and roost creation. They will all benefit greater horseshoe bats by providing more feeding opportunities and making the countryside better for them to thrive in. If you live in one of our target areas and are keen to improve your land to help bats, please get in touch by emailing bats@devonwildlifetrust.org.



“When we bought our house we set out to enhance the attached fields for local wildlife, putting in native mixed hedging and local trees, and clearing the undergrowth. Our BatWorks grant has enabled us to go further by providing advice and funding to increase the wildflowers within our meadowland. As well as supporting local wildlife in general, we hope to have a positive impact on the local greater horseshoe bat population.” Ross Dyter, BatWorks recipient

Devon Bat Survey

It was another busy recording season with over 700 people taking part, helping us to collect at least 350,000 bat records across Devon from April-October. Each volunteer surveyor received a report identifying the bats they recorded. To take part in next year's survey, keep an eye on the website or sign up to our online newsletter so you will be the first to know when bookings open.

Research Surveys

Detailed surveys have continued with the help of local volunteers. The detectors have been located along specific hedgerows so we can learn more about how disturbance along the A38 affect greater horseshoe bats.

Targets update Yrs 1-3

Priority habitat secured:	657ha	target 1494ha
Hedges improved:	120km	target 230km
River habitat secured:	25km	target 175km
Workshops delivered:	70	target 31
Advisory visits:	560	target 950
Events run/attended:	178	target 170
Schools accredited:	22	target 31
School sessions:	180	target 250
Festival activities:	55	no target
Research surveys:	21	target 20
New bat records:	500,000 bat passes	no target
Greater horseshoe records:	10,000 bat passes	no target



Contact our friendly team with your enquiry at bats@devonwildlifetrust.org

BAT WATCHING



Stick to footpaths and do not enter private land

Don't use torches

Avoid standing in their path

BAT FACT: Dung beetles are an important food for greater horseshoe bats. Reducing the use of wormers in livestock helps to make sure there are plenty in cow pats!

This is a partnership project consisting of; Bat Conservation Trust, Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Clinton Devon Estates, Devon Bat Group, Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, Devon Communities Together, Devon County Council, Devon Wildlife Trust (Lead Partner), East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West, Natural England, North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, North Devon Biosphere Reserve, South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, The Vincent Wildlife Trust, Torbay Coast And Countryside Trust, University of Sussex.