

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A GROUNDED BAT

Sometimes people will find a grounded bat that may just be exhausted. It may be injured or in danger from passing cats so it is better to take it into captivity temporarily. Most bats found in houses are usually just young bats that are still trying to master the art of flying! **It is important to note that you should never try to catch a flying bat as you may injure it severely.**

If you feel confident that you can move the animal **without** physically touching it or injuring it, proceed to step one. Otherwise, contact your local bat worker immediately.



1. **Wait until the animal is motionless.** A bat that is flying is almost impossible to catch, and you have a greater chance of injuring the bat if you attempt to capture it while it is airborne. In addition, bats that are caught while flying frequently panic and attempt to bite. Be patient. Wait until the bat lands and is still, and then proceed to step 2



2. **Contain the bat.** Quietly approach the bat, and wearing thick gloves or using a thick towel, gather the bat up (holding it securely but not tightly) and place it into a box with a lid (an old ice cream container or shoe box with air holes). Or instead, simply place a box over the bat where it has landed. Then, take a piece of cardboard (the back of an old cereal box would work well) and gently slide it between the box and the surface the bat is on (i.e. floor, wall or ceiling). Keeping the cardboard in place, gently turn the container right side up. We recommend you line the box with kitchen roll for the bat to hang to and a jam jar lid filled with water as bats tend to get dehydrated. Do not place the bat in a bird cage or container with small openings. Bats are very intelligent and can easily squeeze through a 1/4 x 1/2 inch crack. Keep adult bats in dark cool areas. If the bat is very young, please keep it somewhere warm.



3. **Call a local bat worker** – see contact details. Sometimes young bats, which are inexperienced flyers, will become exhausted before finding the way out. They may try to land on a wall or curtains, or they may crash land on furniture or the floor. In this case, you should **contain the bat** or **contact your local bat worker**.

NEED HELP WITH A BAT?



Northern Ireland
BAT GROUP

BAT WORKERS:

Robin Moffitt MBE: **028 9185 2239**
Donna Allen: **079 0292 9368**
Austin Hopkirk: **077 6995 0758**
Catherine Reilly: **079 2195 3227**
Karen Healy: **077 0404 5262** (North West)
Danielle Thompson **077 3298 7996**
(Banbridge/Newry/Dromore)

BAT CONSERVATION TRUST HELPLINE

0845 1300 228

NIEA BIODIVERSITY UNIT

028 9056 9605



Help us put bats
on the map!



Share your sighting...
www.bats.org.uk

print 02871267509/02871279439

Photos courtesy of Bat Conservation Trust,
Hugh Clark, Austin Hopkirk, John Altingham and Karen Healy.



Northern Ireland
BAT GROUP

BATS IN NORTHERN IRELAND



www.bats-ni.org.uk



THE NORTHERN IRELAND BAT GROUP



The Northern Ireland Bat Group was formed in 1985, the year when bats first achieved protected status. The Group's members, who come from all walks of life, share a common interest in bats and their conservation. The bat group carries out a number of activities including

- Providing advice to councils, businesses and individuals
- Recording and collating bat records across Northern Ireland
- Delivering bat talks and events
- Cooperating in bat conservation and research projects
- Rescue and rehabilitation of grounded bats
- Providing training for members wishing to apply for a Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor Licence



BATTY FACTS

- There are 8 species of bats in Northern Ireland
- Bats are the only mammal in the world capable of true flight
- Female bats give birth to live young
- Bats have only one baby or pup each year
- Bats do not build nests
- Bats can live in buildings, trees and caves
- Bats rest in a roost
- Bats belong to the order 'Chiroptera' meaning 'Hand wing' as bats fly using their hands
- Bats eat midges, moths and spiders
- A single bat can eat up to 3,500 insects in one night!
- All our bats hibernate in winter
- In Britain and Ireland all bat species and their roosts are legally protected, by both domestic and international legislation. This means you will be committing a criminal offence if you:
 - ◆ Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
 - ◆ Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
 - ◆ Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
 - ◆ Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
 - ◆ Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

BAT SPECIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Below are some species you may find in Northern Ireland



- **Pipistrelle bat:** There are three species of pipistrelle including common, soprano and nathusius'. Pipistrelle's are our smallest bat, they are so small they can fit into a matchbox.



Austin Hopkirk

- **Leisler's bat:** This is Ireland's biggest bat, they are rare in Europe and common in Ireland so we have an important population of this species.



Hugh Clark, Bat Conservation Trust

- **Daubenton's bat:** Also known as the water bat or hairy footed bat this species can be found on rivers, lakes and ponds where they snatch insects from the surface of the water. They are often found roosting in holes in trees.



Hugh Clark, Bat Conservation Trust

- **Brown long eared bat:** Their large ears are so sensitive and they use them to locate moths by hearing the fluttering movements of their wings.



John Altringham, Bat Conservation Trust

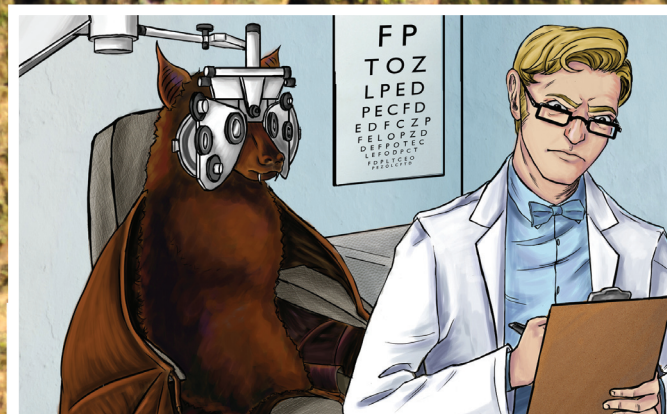
- **Whiskered bat:** The Whiskered Bat is one of Northern Ireland's rarest species, only a few roosts have ever been located. In 2012, a female Whiskered bat was discovered in Derry and provided an important record for the region. The ears, muzzle and wing membranes are blackish brown and the fur is quite long and dark grey at the base.



John Altringham, Bat Conservation Trust

- **Natterer's bat:** Natterer's bat is relatively rare in Northern Ireland with both roosts and flying bats being only occasionally seen. They are relatively large bats with quite big ears. The fur is light brown on the top and paler on the underside. They roost in old houses and in cracks and crevices in stone structures.

To find out more about bat species in Northern Ireland visit www.bats-ni.org.uk



BATTY MYTHS

- **Bats do not drink your blood:** Irish and UK bats only eat insects. If you lived in South America you might come across the Vampire Bat which feeds on blood of livestock.
- **Bats do not get tangled in your hair.** This is a common myth. The only reason bats may fly close to you is to feed on the midges and moths that are surrounding you. In reality, bats are actually trying to do you a favour!
- **Bats are not blind.** The saying 'As blind as a bat' is not actually true as bats have good eyesight. They can even see in darkness using a special skill called echo location. They shout loudly and listen for the echo that bounces back from a flying insect – this is how they find their food.

HOW YOU CAN HELP BATS

- Join the Northern Ireland Bat Group – log on to our website to download the membership form
- Plant night scented plants in your garden such as honeysuckle and night-scented stock to encourage insects and provide a food source for bats
- Visit bats.org.uk and record sightings on the Big Bat Map
- Avoid using pesticides in your garden
- Put up a bat box to provide a much needed home for bats. Visit www.bats.org.uk for details on how to make your own



www.bats-ni.org.uk