




Bat Identification Guide

The 17 resident species of bats in Britain can be divided into six groups:

<p>Pipistrelles</p>	<p>Our smallest bats, with a wingspan of 19 - 25cm. There are three species in the UK. The Common and Soprano Pipistrelles are the commonest and most widespread of all our bats while the third, the Nathusius' Pipistrelle, is much rarer.</p>	
<p>Noctule Leisler's Bat Serotine</p>	<p>The Noctule is our biggest bat, with a wingspan of 45cm. It flies high, early in the evening even before sunset and emits low frequency calls which some people can hear. Leisler's Bat is similar to the Noctule, but smaller, with longer fur, particularly around the shoulders and the upper back, giving a lion's mane appearance. With its characteristic dark face, the Serotine has broad wings allowing it to manoeuvre amongst the trees while hunting.</p>	
<p><i>Myotis</i> bats: Bechstein's Brandt's Daubenton's Natterer's Whiskered Alcathoe Whiskered</p>	<p>A group of very similar, small to medium sized bats, which often have pale undersides and darker backs, they are often found in woodlands. They include the 'water bat' (Daubenton's Bat), which can often be found flying low over still or slow moving water. Natterer's Bat (opposite) also feeds close to surfaces and can pick a spider out of a web while flying.</p>	
<p>Barbastelle</p>	<p>The Barbastelle is a very distinctive species, with almost completely black fur, the hair tips being very pale or golden brown. The ears are very broad and join together across the forehead. It is a rare bat but with the help of volunteers we are increasing the number of sites where it is recorded.</p>	
<p>Long-eared bats</p>	<p>With the biggest ears these medium sized bats have excellent hearing and so can be difficult to detect as they don't 'shout' so loudly when echolocating. They feed by pouncing on their prey. The Brown Long-eared Bat (opposite) is much more common than the Grey, which is confined to the south of the country.</p>	
<p>Horseshoe bats</p>	<p>They hang by their feet and echolocate through their 'horseshoe-shaped' noses. They are normally only found in the south and west of the country. The two species include one of our largest and one of our smallest bats.</p>	

(Photos by Kim Taylor)

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Species	Peak frequency /kHz	Identifiable with bat detector?	What does it sound like using a bat detector?
Common Pipistrelle	45	Yes	Slaps loudest at 45 kHz, clicks at 55 kHz.
Soprano Pipistrelle	55	Yes	Slaps loudest at 55 kHz, almost inaudible at 45 kHz.
Nathusius' Pipistrelle	38	Needs confirmation	Slaps loudest at or below 40 kHz.
Noctule	18-25	Yes	Very loud slaps at 18-20 kHz, alternating calls ('chip-shop').
Leisler's Bat	25-30	Yes	Loud slaps at 25 kHz. Almost inaudible at 18-20 kHz. No clear pattern of alternating calls.
Serotine	30-35	Yes	Characteristic irregular rhythm of slaps, single type of call.
<i>Myotis</i> group of bats (Bechstein's, Brandt's, Daubenton's, Natterer's, Whiskered and Alcathe Whiskered)	32-50	Only as one of this group (but see Daubenton's below)	Rapid regular sharp clicks or ticks. Does not sound like slaps at any frequency (Bechstein's Bat is not found in the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire or Northamptonshire).
Daubenton's Bat	32-45	Yes	Very regular and moderately loud series of clicks.
Barbastelle	33	Yes	Ticks - heavy, moderately loud slow rattling ("castanets").
Brown (and Grey) Long-eared Bats	30-45	Only as a 'long-eared' bat (possible confusion with Natterer's)	Almost inaudible rapid ticks (Grey Long-eared Bat not found in the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire or Northamptonshire).
Greater Horseshoe Bat Lesser Horseshoe Bat	83 110	Yes	Musical warbling with narrow frequency range (rarely if ever found in the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire or Northamptonshire).

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