



Barbastelle Bat

Barbastella barbastellus



Description: The barbastelle is a medium-sized bat, distinctive by its pug-shaped nose. The ears are broad, joined across its head by skin, and covered in gingery-brown fur on the rear surface.

National status: The barbastelle is a very rare, UK Priority Species, found in southern and central England and Wales.

Local status: Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC is designated for this species, however, individuals are wide ranging turning up across the County in suitable foraging habitat.

Associated habitats: Barbastelle ecology is relatively poorly-known. It seems to prefer wooded river valleys. They forage in mixed habitats, usually over or near water. Barbastelles appear to select cracks and crevices in wood for breeding, mostly in old or damaged trees, but cracks and crevices in the timbers of old buildings may also be used. The species is very sensitive to disturbance, together with the loss of roost-sites and food resources.

Key sites: Known sites include Wimpole SAC, Monks Wood and the hinterland of Cambridge.

Suggested actions to benefit this species:

- Protect the condition of woodland and wetland habitat. Ensure management retains sufficient tree roost potential and a diverse structure to maximise invertebrate prey.
- Encourage woodland expansion and hedgerow linkages to help buffer core woodland areas for adaption and dispersal.
- Consider foraging bats when scoping river and stream restoration works to ensure the proposals protect or enhance the bat habitat value.
- Barbastelles foraging over wet meadows mostly prey on micromoths, therefore measures to improve the quality of water meadows for the benefit of micromoths will provide better foraging opportunities.
- Ensure proposed developments undertake sufficient survey to identify, protect and enhance important commuting and foraging routes for all bat species.
- Provide new potential roost sites in the form of bat lofts and hibernaculum sites in large developments.
- Report sightings of barbastelles to local records centre: <http://www.cperc.org.uk/>

Sources of further information:

JNCC UK Priority Species <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5717>

Bat Conservation Trust <http://www.bats.org.uk/>