

Roosting

'Roosting' is the word used for bats at rest, which is, of course, during the daylight hours. The roost is a place where one or more bats congregate to sleep. These little creatures like to roost under fascia boards on the outside of houses, or in barns or churches. Almost anywhere will do -even crevices in trees. They roost upside down, hanging by their feet. From this position they will groom and sleep. If they do find their way into your attic there is no need to worry, they will not chew electric cables or damage the area in any way.

Hooks

As you can see in the picture, the bat has hooks on the ends of its wings. These hooks are used by the bat to hold on to ledges, trees, or walls. They can also help the bat with its grooming.



Nocturnal

Bats are nocturnal: this means that they are active at night, rather than during the day. The pipistrelle lives strictly on insects.

Take care

The pipistrelle is Britain's smallest bat and sometimes needs a helping hand, just like the one in the photograph below.

NEVER pick up a bat, or any other wild creature, unless you are wearing a stout pair of gloves; it may feel threatened enough to bite you.



Remember assistance is only a phone call away

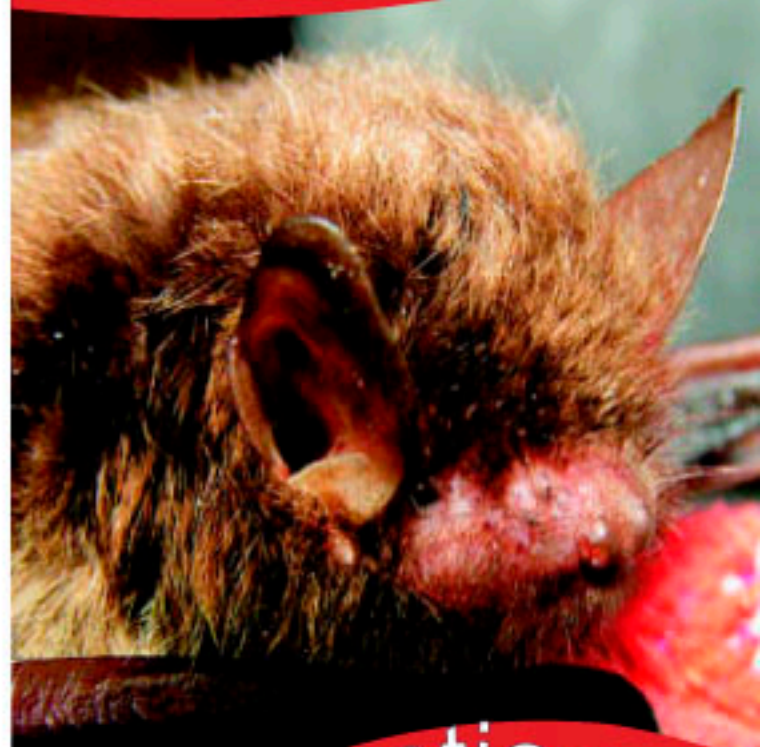
Some useful telephone numbers

RSPCA	0300 1234 999
British Hedgehog Society	01584 890801
RSPCA North Wilts Branch Mon - Fri	10am - 12 noon 01793 640136

Please remember all volunteers work very hard for no pay. Thankyou

Photographs and Text © Sue Hulbert 2004

The Pipistrelle Bat



Information



**In conjunction with the
North Wilts RSPCA**



**THE SOUTH WEST
SWAN SANCTUARY**

Eyesight and hearing

The eyesight of bats is very good, but their hearing and sense of smell are exceptional. They use a combination of these senses to catch their food-how can they fail?



Hibernation

Bats hibernate in winter in this country. This means that they sleep for a while when the insects they feed on are in short supply. Although they sleep from October to March, they will awake on warmer winter nights to fly and take food.

Radar

Some people have a fear of bats becoming entangled in their hair-but this will not happen. Bats have a built-in 'radar' system, which works by letting out a clicking noise which bounces off anything in their path, so giving a warning, just like an echo-sounder. This high-pitched sound can be heard by dogs-and sometimes by people.

Wings and flight

Their wings are called membranes. These are attached to their limbs and give bats the power to glide over water, where insects will be in abundance.

The law and bats

Bats are protected by law and disturbance of colonies can be an offence. For more information and advice contact the Wildlife Group. The photographs on this leaflet were taken while the bat was in a rehabilitation centre. It is needed to take photographs of bats and they should not be disturbed in their roosts on any account. If a bat is awakened while hibernating, it will lose vital energy which could result in its death.

Other leaflets in this wildlife care series include: Hedgehogs in your back yard, Fledglings, Prevention is better than cure.

These leaflets are to assist you with our wildlife. They hopefully will give you useful information and assistance when you really need it.



Being helpful

The pipistrelle can often be glimpsed skimming insects from areas of water at dusk but, being the most common of bats, it can be seen almost anywhere. Mealworms are used as part of their diet during rehabilitation.

