

REPORTS FROM SPECIALIST GROUPS

SOMERSET BAT GROUP

The Somerset Bat Group is a specialist group within the Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) and affiliated to the Bat Conservation Trust. Membership is open, without payment, to any SWT members interested in taking part, whatever their knowledge or experience.

Through the winter months the Group offers lectures on subjects relating to bats and their conservation, and during the summer undertakes roost surveys and emergence counts. Members of the Group are also available to give talks on bats to other bodies. Public awareness of bats is also improved by displays at shows and public 'bat walks'.

Many of the Group's members work with English Nature as Voluntary Bat Wardens, visiting roosts and advising roost owners. The Group can organise training for those interested in doing such work. As an 'outstation' of the Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC), the Bat Group is collating roost and flight records and hopes in time to publish information on the distribution and abundance of bats in Somerset. We monitor a number of sites for both summer breeding roosts and winter hibernacula. Where appropriate the Group has helped to improve bat habitats by the use of bat boxes and by putting grilles over cave-mouths to reduce human interference.

The Somerset Bat Group is dedicated to helping and informing the public about these fascinating creatures but above all it is dedicated to securing a better future for Somerset's bats themselves. Anyone interested is invited to contact the Bat Group through the Honorary Secretary, Edward Wells, 20 Station Road, Ilminster, telephone (01460) 53029.

ED WELLS