

The East Cleveland Batscape project.

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The two year project aims to increase appreciation and understanding of the number of different bats in East Cleveland and how they are using the landscape to roost, forage and commute. The wooded nature of East Cleveland and the rural character of the landscape give it the potential to be important for more than eight species of bat including some of the rarer North East bats. The project is working with local communities and volunteers to provide training in field skills and the use of detectors to record bats.

Following two very successful launch events in May 2015, the project has acquired many enthusiastic volunteers within the local community. Thanks to these volunteers, the plan to survey the whole of the East Cleveland area for bats, by kilometre square, is going well with 39 of the 119 of the kilometre squares already surveyed.

Events within the community have varied from walks in the woods with Brownies, to workshops on how to use bio-acoustic software to analyse the data collected by volunteers on surveys. The project has so far focused on the larger towns of East Cleveland, Loftus and Saltburn, but will engage with the more rural areas from now on.

Some data has already been analysed, but the majority will be a job for the winter months. The project is using Anabat Express and SM2 bat detectors. Data from the Anabats is being analysed using Analook, with software to analyse the SM2 data still to be purchased.

So far, a few interesting observations have been made from the data already analysed. Loftus is a particularly good area for bats, with many bats recorded during every survey undertaken in this area. Good numbers of *Myotis* species bats have been detected in the various woods surrounding Loftus. There have so far been very low numbers of soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* detected throughout the whole of East Cleveland.

Several probable Nathusius' pipistrelle *P. nathusii* calls were detected on a heterodyne detector at the cliffs at Saltburn on the 22/09/2015. Unfortunately the Anabat detectors were all out on loan at the time. This area will be surveyed thoroughly towards the end of next season.

Achievements of the project so far:

New website now online: www.clevelandbats.org.uk

45 active volunteers. Volunteers have undertaken surveys, web work, helped with events, bat data analysis, data management, design and photography.

Six workshops held with 63 volunteers trained in surveying and data analysis methods.

26 events held with 603 individuals engaged through those events.