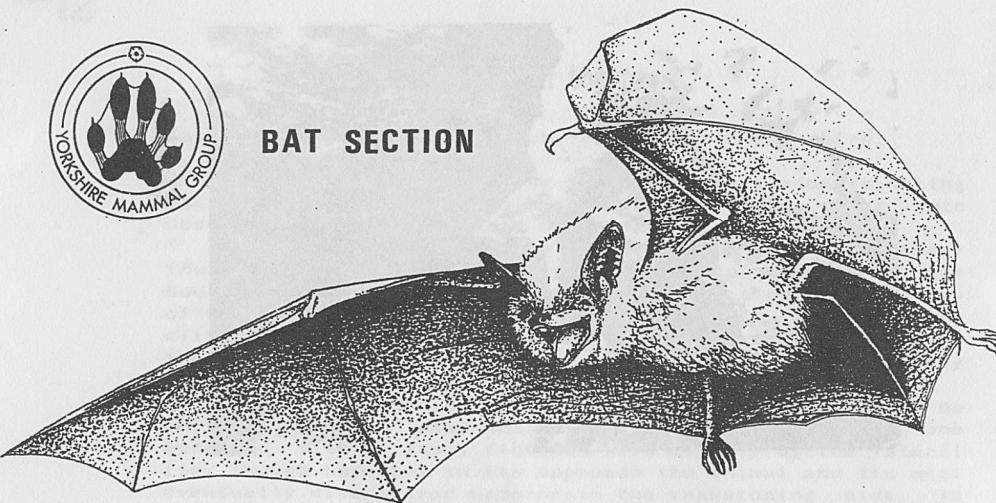




BAT SECTION



During the months leading up to Christmas the Bat Section remained active and was mainly involved in roof surveys for the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC).

Since the beginning of the New Year two meetings have been held in the NCC offices. The first meeting was primarily to discuss plans for the summer. Approximately 17 people attended including several newcomers. It was explained that our work is three-fold. Firstly, the requests from the NCC to visit householders to do roof surveys. Secondly, our heavy commitment to Dr Bob Stebbings' Pipistrelle Ringing and Counting Project during June, July and August. In connection with this he had sent us cards with addresses of all known roosts, including new sites, members were requested to take cards with addresses near their homes. Householders have been asked to count their own bats but if they cannot then the Bat Section will do it. This counting of pipistrelles is very important and it is hoped that each Bat Section member will count at least one roost, at the beginning and again at the end of June. Sheila Walsh will be coming from Peterborough at weekends to do the ringing. Thirdly, our project of looking at churches around York to determine the presence or absence of bats.

The second meeting was on the identification of bats with slides, books and live animals. Lesley Helliwell brought along some captive bats so that members could compare pictures with a bat in the hand. This meeting was much enjoyed.

The next Bat Section meeting is an open air one when we have been asked by the Friends of Fulford Cemetery to survey the trees and buildings there as it may be a potential bat habitat.

Several injured bats have been found during April. They have been either brought to the NCC office in York or collected by us.

We have now lost Dr Sandie Sowler, who has moved away from York, and three members who were very helpful last year will not be readily available this summer, so we hope that those new people who came along to the first meeting will maintain their interest and be able to help. We shall need all the assistance we can get in 1987.

Edna Shann
Bat Section Coordinator

Field Study Courses

7-9th August	"Bats" Bob Stebbings, Preston Montford Field Centre, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury.
19-26th August	"Mostly mammals" David and Petronella Horne, The Leonard Wills Field Centre, Nettlecombe Court, Williton, Somerset.
2-6th September	"Bat ecology" Bob Stebbings, Orielton Field Centre, Pembroke, Dyfed.
4-11th September	"Chanin's mammals" Paul Chanin, Slapton Ley Field Centre, Slapton, Kingsbridge, Devon.
18-20th September	"Badgers and smaller mammals" Simon Perry, Juniper Hall Field Centre, Dorking, Surrey.
21-23rd October	"The red deer of Exmoor" Dick Lloyd, The Leonard Wills Field Centre, Nettlecombe Court, Williton, Somerset.
20-25th November	"Small mammals at Flatford" Rasik Bhadresa, Flatford Mill Field Centre, East Bergholt, Colchester, Essex.

Enquiries about these field courses should be directed to:- The Information Officer, Field Studies Council, Preston Montford Field Centre, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury, SY4 1HW.

Live trapping/infanticide observations

Jerry O. Wolff uncovered an interesting and disturbing ethical issue during a small mammal live trapping study. The animal involved was the cricetid *Peromyscus leucopus* (White-footed mouse). He describes an incident of infanticide he discovered amongst territorial females. It seems an unguarded nest (in a nest box) was attacked by another female - not the mother, as it was not pregnant or lactating - which killed the pups by biting them in the neck but did not eat them. The mother had been away from the nest for less than 10 hours.

This observation has implications for live trapping studies of small mammals in the field. Mice are often in traps for 10 hours or more, which would leave their nests vulnerable to attack from others trying to take over a territory and ultimately infanticide would be committed. Thus trapping could interfere with the demography and social behaviour of the very populations under study.... Yet another controversy in interpreting results and assessing the value of this form of research.

Reference : *Animal Behaviour* 34 (5) 1986, p.1568

Ed.