



May 28, 2021

It's warming up at last which is good news for wildlife as well as our morale! With much warmer nights promised, it's especially good news for 'creatures of the night'.

Our human view of the world is dominated by day time vision, so we often forget that many animals are most active at dawn or dusk or even at night where they use senses other than sight.

Hedgehogs and badgers, for example, mostly rely on their sense of smell to get about, find food and a mate and avoid predators. Moths don't have noses but still use smell receptors to find food and mates. But the most alien to us must be bats' use of echolocation. We all know that bats use echolocation but perhaps don't appreciate how amazing that is. To fly at up to 30 mph (faster than Usain Bolt runs!) and get quick detailed feedback to enable you to avoid obstacles, navigate your broader environment, find and be nimble enough to catch moving prey items (moths, beetles, flies etc) and then find your way 'home' - awesome!

And with over 1000 species globally, echolocation has enabled bats to be the second most successful/diverse mammal group after rodents.

Bats are very active in May in the UK with the females especially in need of food as they are eating for two - with a single pup usually born in June when the females often group together in maternity roosts.

The recording attached was taken by the Rec at 9.55pm on wednesday evening. So, in the words of 'Springwatch', time to experience a mindfulness moment. Close your eyes, pretend you are a Noctule bat and play the recording of yourself echolocating around the trees and trying to find a juicy cockchafer to eat! Enjoy!!

Noctule bats are the largest bats we get in Clifford and often the first to come out at dusk. The Rec is a good place to see and hear them.

WAC has a bat detector you are welcome to borrow if you want to hear more of our furry friends – we have five species in Clifford.