

Nathusius' Pipistrelle

Description

Bats are the only true flying mammal in Northern Ireland and there are eight species recorded. All our bats are insectivorous; they only eat insects and they use echolocation to build up a 'sound picture' of their environment and prey.

Weighing in at between 8 and 15g, the Nathusius' pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus nathusii*, is a small bat but larger than the common pipistrelle. It tends to share a roost with the soprano pipistrelle. The fur colour ranges from reddish-brown to dark brown and the hair can be pale at the tips. The fur on the underside is somewhat shorter and paler. They like to hunt for flies, midges, small moths and mosquitoes along woodland or parkland edges generally in close proximity to water. They usually roost in cavity walls in older dwellings.



Little is known about the reproductive life of the Nathusius' pipistrelle. They were only discovered in Northern Ireland in 1997. Their life cycle is likely to be similar to that of all other bats although it is possible they may seasonally migrate into Northern Ireland and out again travelling as far as Scandanavia. However, they may hibernate locally from November to March or early April with the young being born into the nursery roost from June to July and independent about six weeks later.

Distribution

Nathusius' pipistrelles have been recorded breeding in county Antrim and there are individual records from counties Fermanagh, Armagh and in the Republic of Ireland.

Action

The Northern Ireland Bat Group and CEDaR collates records for this species

Implementation of the Northern Ireland Habitat Action Plan for Species Rich Hedgerows and the Woodland Habitat Action Plans.

Annual monitoring of this species in Northern Ireland is required to detect population trend.

Further Information

<http://www.habitas.org.uk/priority/species.asp?item=5100>

MLA Species Champion

