

Summer Surveys 2018

As I write, the Nathusius' Pipistrelle Survey and Woodland Bat Survey are on hold for the bat birth season to prevent undue disturbance to heavily pregnant females or those suckling small young. As we enjoy/endure temperatures which recall the long, hot summer of 1976 it takes a bit of a mental effort to remember what cold weather is like. Last winter was not a long, hard one despite the media hype over a week-long cold spell (the "Beast from the East") but we certainly had a cold spring and it delayed the start of the summer survey season. In the rather short time between the late start and the birth season Ross Baker and Lynn Whitfield were out an astonishing number of evenings per week, harp trapping until the small hours.

I only attended two of these sessions both of which were decidedly cold which kept the bat numbers low. The first was just over the county border in Hampshire at Alice Holt. This was actually the second session there that week and during the first one John Dixon managed to get the superb photograph below. It is a soprano pipistrelle, taken as it was released after being examined.



Soprano pipistrelle, photo John Dixon

A couple of Alcaethoe bats were caught in the first Alice Holt session but not so the one I attended, when I had to be content with Natterer's bats and pipistrelles. The other session I was in on was at Bookham Common where whiskered bats provided the main interest.



4 Wrapped up warm at Alice Holt Whiskered bat, Bookham Common, photos Derek Smith

Here's looking forward to lots of interest when the surveys continue.

Derek Smith