

Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

Areas and status: Distributed throughout Britain and Ireland, though less common in northern Scotland.

Woodland type: Lowland Broadleaved Woodland, Wood-pasture and Parkland

Preferred habitat niches: High forest, veteran trees, wood-pasture, parkland, dead wood, edges, closed canopy, and wet woodland. Frequently roosts, breeds and hibernates in tree crevices, rot hollows, etc (as well as buildings). When foraging, it favours deciduous woodland with well-developed shrub layers but it will also feed in a wide range of habitats. It also feeds in orchards, brownfield sites, wetlands and parks; also alongside hedgerows, tree lines and herb-rich meadows, gardens and wetlands. It has a typical nightly foraging radius of 1.5km.

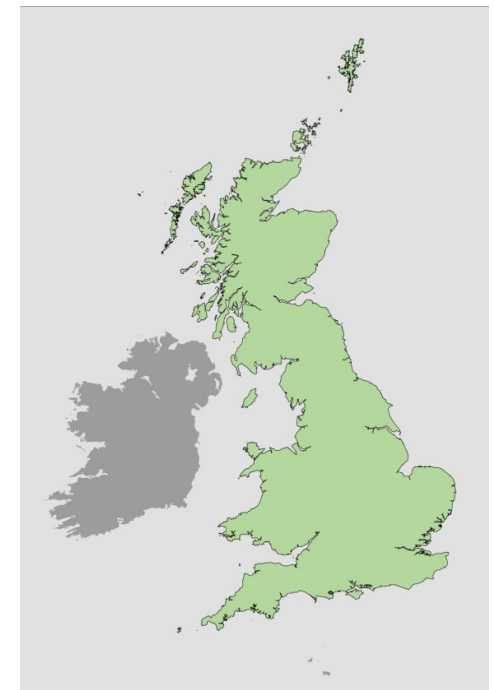
Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Loss of roost sites due to inappropriate management, e.g. over-zealous tidying of woodlands, reduction in understorey layer
- Inappropriate woodland management, e.g. drainage of wet woodlands and overgrazing
- Loss of linear landscape features (hedges, shelterbelts, rows of riparian trees, etc) linking woodlands to roosting and foraging sites
- Other reasons for declines are: agricultural intensification and loss of roosts in buildings (e.g. barn conversions).



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Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Deadwood	Retain standing and fallen deadwood and where suitable retain surrounding understorey growth.
Minimal intervention	Protect existing/potential roosting sites in trees - retain dead and dying trees, trees with cracks or woodpecker holes, ivy-covered trees, storm-damaged trees, etc. Do not carry out works with high levels of disturbance close to known roosts.
Drainage	Retain/enlarge areas of wet woodland and create ponds and lakes in areas with little ecological value.
Grazing	Control grazing and browsing by livestock and deer to retain good shrub, scrub and field layers
Connectivity	Manage woodland on landscape-scale to ensure good links with foraging areas and other roosting sites. Protect networks of mature hedgerows, tree lines, woodlands, meadows and wetlands.
Woodland creation (native species, variable density)	Create woodland on areas of low ecological value to enlarge existing woodland, link nearby woods and create additional foraging habitat. Allow natural regeneration or plant a diverse mix of locally native trees and shrubs.
Bat boxes	If wood has few existing roosting opportunities, assess the use of bat boxes (consider impacts on other species).



■ Current distribution
Source: Bat Conservation Trust