

ACT Batwatch results

Dear Red Hill Regenerators,

Thank you for participating in the ACT Batwatch Program it is the very first year we have run this program. In total 5498 bat calls from 10 different microbat species were recorded from 17 locations around the ACT.

You recorded 5 species in the surveys you undertook. Details of the species, locations and number of recordings are given in the table below.

Species	Red Hill 2/3/13	Red Hill 8/3/13
<i>Tadarida australis</i>	3	1
<i>Mormopterus 'species 2'</i>	2	1
<i>Chalinolobus gouldii</i>	32	12
<i>Chalinolobus morio</i>	2	
<i>Vespadelus vulturnus</i>	1	

The most common bat you recorded was Gould's Wattled Bat (*Chalinolobus gouldii*) this bat was recorded at all locations, it was also the most commonly recorded bat in all surveys ACT wide, it appears quite tolerant of a range of habitats including urban streets, parkland and reserves. The White-Striped Mastiff Bat (*Tadarida australis*) was second most commonly recorded in your survey and also in all ACT surveys.

You recorded a little forest bat (*Vespadelus vulturnus*) on the 2/3/13, whilst quite a common bat in bushland areas, little forest bats appears sensitive to habitat types, they were only recorded in larger areas of bushland and were absent from more urban sites in all surveys. The Chocolate Wattled Bat (*Chalinolobus morio*) is another species which also appears sensitive to habitat types, also absent from more urban areas.

The East Coast Mastiff Bat (*Mormopterus 'species 2'* – it has not yet been formally described) was recorded on both nights, it is a woodland species.

The Australasian Bat Society, would like to thank you for your enthusiasm, interest and effort in helping us build a better understanding of Canberra's bats neighbourhood, by neighbourhood.

Thank you,

Michael Pennay ACT Batwatch Coordinator

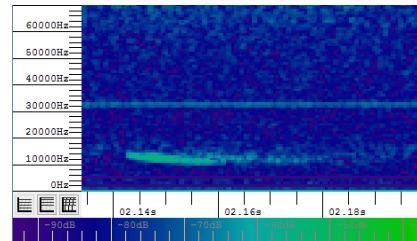
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About the bats you recorded in your batwatch surveys.

Freetail bats (Molossidae)

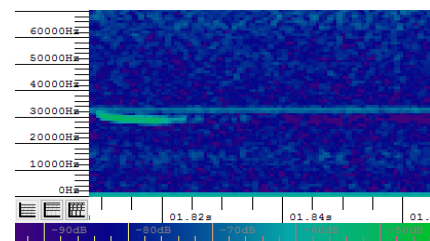
Freetail bats (Family Molossidae) have, as their name implies, a tail which is 'free' from surrounding membranes like a mouse. They tend to have large wrinkled lips, and are often commonly called 'mastiff bats' because of their resemblance to mastiff dogs, they are also sometimes called goblin bats. You recorded two species of freetail bat;

White striped mastiff bat (*Tadarida australis*), one of the largest micro-bats in the Canberra area, and also one of the most distinctive, it has rich dark brown velvety fur with very distinctive white stripes along each side of its body. The white striped-mastiff bat is also one of the most commonly detected bats. It has a very low frequency echolocation call at about 11-12 kHz, which is in the hearing range of many humans. It's 'tink' 'tink' 'tink' call can often be heard on warm nights as it forages for moths, beetles and larger flying insects high above the tree canopy or houses. The white striped mastiff spends its day in communal roosts in tree hollows.



Eastern freetail bat (*Mormopterus* 'species 2') is about ½ the size of the white striped mastiff bat, it has greyish fur. It belongs to a group of bats that have only recently been recognised as separate species and it does not yet have a formal scientific name. They prefer foraging in woodlands and were not recorded very frequently in the urban areas. Its echolocation call is similar to the white striped mastiff bat, but about three times higher (30kHz) which is more than 10kHz above human hearing range .

Eastern free tail bats feed on a range of flying insects including many agricultural pests. They usually roost in tree hollows but occasionally use man made structures like fence posts and under caps on power poles.



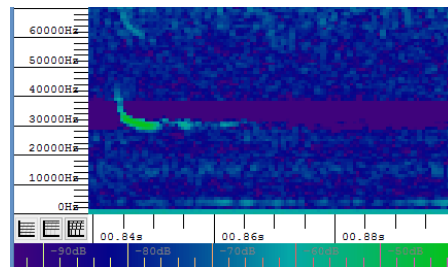
Evening bats (Vespertilionidae)

Evening bats are often called common bats, this is true in the Canberra region, where there are more species of evening bats than other bat families. They are generally small plain looking bats, although some, like the long-eared bats have distinctive characteristics. There are several groups (genera) within the evening bat family .

Wattled bats (genus *Chalinolobus*)

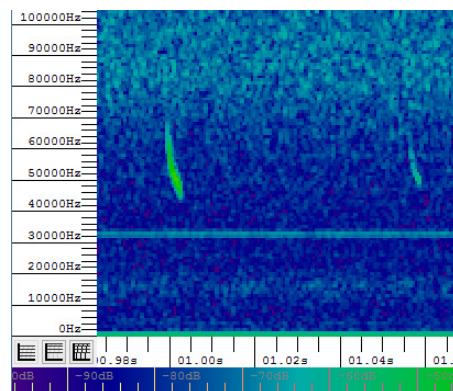
Wattled bats are also sometimes called lobe-lipped bats because they have small fleshy projections on the side of their lips (wattles). You recorded two species of wattled bat in your survey.

Gould's wattled bat (*Chalinolobus gouldii*) this is the bat most commonly seen in Canberra. It is a medium sized bat with a distinctive dark 'mane' covering its head and shoulders. It is often the first bat to emerge in the evening, often before dark when it can be seen flying silhouetted against the last light in the sky. It has a distinctive 'flip-flop' echolocation call with each call alternating in frequency between 28 and 30 kHz. It usually roosts in tree hollows, but appears quite adaptable and will utilise buildings and other structures including bat nest boxes. It is also adaptable in its habitat being recorded in all habitats including suburban areas, sporting fields, town centres and parkland.



Chocolate wattled bat (*Chalinolobus morio*) the chocolate wattled bat is slightly smaller than Gould's wattled bat and has brown chocolate coloured fur.

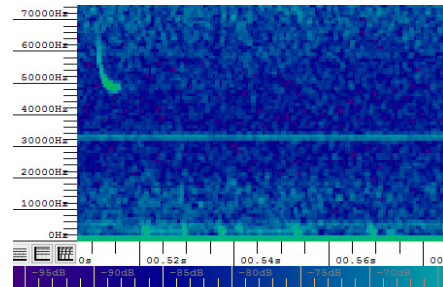
It roosts in family groups during the day in tree hollows (and sometimes buildings). It is particularly common in bushland along the Great Dividing Range, but was not commonly recorded in urban environments in Canberra.



Forest bats (genus *Vespadelus*)

You recorded 1 species of forest bat, the **little forest bat**, (*Vespadelus vulturnus*). The little forest bat is the smallest bat in the Canberra region and amongst the smallest mammals in the world, a full grown adult male weighing about 3 grams (about the same as a 5 cent coin). They feed extensively on small flying insects like mosquitoes consuming hundreds or thousands in a single night.

Forest bats appear to prefer natural woodland and forest areas and were only recorded in areas containing large amounts of bushland.



ACT Batwatch was conducted by the Australasian Bat Society and funded by an ACT Government Environment Grant.