



Devon Bat Survey (DBS) : Quick Start Guide

A full instruction manual is provided. However, for those of you who have taken part in the Devon Bat Survey before, you might prefer this quick start guide to completing the survey. Page/paragraph numbers refer to the full instruction manual.

You may prefer to watch this 5-minute set-up video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A38bPYUTn7s>

Please remember that the detector must only be placed in a secure location such as private land (most frequently this is your back garden). You must have landowner permission to locate it on land that is not your own.

Before you start

Please ensure you have:-

- a 'MyBTO' account that you can access (<https://bto.org/my-bto>)
- downloaded/updated the BTO Acoustic Pipeline desktop app to your Windows or Apple computer (see Appendix to Instruction Manual).
- registered on the Acoustic Pipeline for the Devon Bat Survey (https://app.bto.org/acoustic-pipeline/account/project_registration.jsp?code=DWT&ref=booking&k=MTYwM3wxMDV8)
- read the Risk Assessment (available on our webpage) <https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/devon-bat-survey-2025>
- obtained written permission from any landowner (if the bat detector is not being placed on your own land and email copies of completed forms to bats@devonwildlifetrust.org. Forms are available from the webpage listed above).

Setting up your detector (page 2, paragraph 5 onwards)

Check your kit box contains everything it should.

- Place fully charged batteries inside the bat detector.
- Ensure power switch is set to 'INT'.
- Enter the 4-figure grid reference of your survey location (e.g. SX9192 as follows:



- From main menu scroll down to 'settings' & press enter
- From settings menu scroll to 'Location' & press enter
- Scroll across 'prefix ...' and use the arrow keys to change the letters and numbers to your grid reference. Press the right arrow key to save (the cursor should reappear at the start of the prefix row).
- Check you have an empty SD card then insert it into slot 'A'.
- Connect the microphone cable to the bat detector securely.
- Press 'schedule start' button.

You will see a message that says the screen will go to sleep until XXXX (time). This time will be approximately 30 mins before sunset at your location. The display will then go blank.

- Place your detector outside (page 5, para.15). Place the box on the ground and attach the microphone to the bamboo cane (or another suitable object) using the re-useable cable ties to hold it in place. The microphone should be at approximately chest/head height and angled towards open ground and upwards at a 45-degree angle.
- Ensure the detector lid clicks firmly closed to protect from water ingress.
- Leave undisturbed for 3 nights.
- Charge the spare batteries ready for the next person and leave them in the battery charger.

Fire warning: Take care when charging batteries. Do not leave unattended. Do not over-charge. Check with the battery tester and do not rely on the battery charger telling you when the batteries are fully charged.

At the end of your survey (page 6, para. 19)

- Please disassemble the bat detector.
- Remove the batteries from the detector and leave them loose in the kit box.
- Remove the SD card.
- Copy the **data folder** from the SD card to the hard drive of your computer or external media storage device (using the SD Card reader provided if necessary).

Uploading your data to the Acoustic Pipeline (Please see pages 8-12 of the Instruction Manual).

When you have finished with the SD card, please reformat it (delete ALL its contents) and return it to the small box inside the bat detector kit box, replacing it in its plastic cover.



If you cannot upload your data to the Acoustic Pipeline (e.g. if there is a lot of data and/or you have slow broadband) please return the SD card (in its protective case) to the DBS Coordinator at DWT in one of the pre-paid jiffy envelopes provided. Please add a note with your name, survey grid reference and survey date.

Returning the kit to your Host Centre

Please return all the bat detector equipment, as received, including the bamboo cane if you borrowed one, to your host centre before their closing time on the final day of your equipment hire. It will be collected by another surveyor the following day.

Please check your host centre's opening times on their website.

Please let the host centre know if you have sent an SD card back to DWT so that they can replace the card and envelope with new ones in the kit box for the next person.

Please email Lindsay on bats@devonwildlifetrust.org with any other time-sensitive feedback. You will receive a general feedback request at the beginning of the month following your survey.

Your Results

Please see pages 12-14 of the Instruction Manual for information about accessing and interpreting your survey results.

REMEMBER: The results are produced for your information only and are indicative of the species present in the vicinity of your survey. As these results have been produced by the classifier and are not yet verified, they should not be reproduced or used without prior approval by Devon Wildlife Trust and must not be used for any development planning purposes. The data will be manually verified at the end of the survey season before it will be used scientifically.

Species notes.

Your results have been produced by auto-identification.

To reduce errors in species identification, please: -

- **Disregard all records with a probability of 0.7 (70%) or below.**
- **Consider all species of Myotis bats as one group (this includes Brandts, Daubentons, Whiskered, Bechsteins, Natterers) i.e. 'we have Myotis bat species flying near us'.**
- **Consider all records of long-eared bats together (grey long-eared bats are quite rare).**



As a general guide, the more bat passes you have for a species, and the higher the probability scores, the more likely it is that you have that bat near you. Devon Biodiversity Records Centre uses a threshold of 0.7 (70%) probability for its heat mapping work. Even 0.7 leaves a 30% chance that the species has been mis-identified, so do remember the results are not guaranteed.

Helpful Contacts

Your host centre acts **only** as a point of collection and return for the bat detector. Please do not ask them for help setting up your detector or uploading results.

If you require help, please note that:-

We have made the **Instruction Manual** as comprehensive as we can over time. It is revised each year in response to feedback. Please consult that in the first instance.

The **Devon Bat Survey Coordinator** is Lindsay Mahon. Lindsay works Monday-Thursday and is available during working hours (approx. 0830-1630) by phone (07909 490278) and email (lmahon@devonwildlifetrust.org). Please note that there will be times Lindsay is unavailable, due to planned time off or other duties (including in the field). She will get back to you as soon as she is able. We cannot provide a 24/7 helpdesk. Unless you receive an out of office message when trying to contact Lindsay that directs you to someone else, please don't call DWT Reception, as they will only be able to pass on a message.

For **My BTO** or **Acoustic Pipeline** download or registration queries, forgotten passwords etc., please email acoustic.pipeline@bto.org who will respond as soon as they are able.

Copies of the Instruction Manual, this quick guide, landowner permission forms, the risk assessment, host centre details and other information about the survey are available on the [Devon Bat Survey webpage](#), so please do check there.

If you would like to share thoughts, results and photos of your bat detector set up, then you are welcome to join our **Devon Bat Survey WhatsApp group**. Please email lmahon@devonwildlifetrust.org with your mobile number and ask Lindsay to add you.

Thank you for taking part in the Devon Bat Survey!