

10 The Echo Bat News from Home and further afield Hibernation Highlights

The bat group has completed its annual hibernaculum check. Full details will be given in the Annual Report. There have been some unusual results this year – here’s just a taste of some of them

1. Braystone



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This site has always had a special place in the heart of the bat group, because it was an early example of the Whipsnade hibernaculum ethos.- that enthusiasm can move mountains. It’s a vision thing. This issue’s visionary is Phillip Clark, an agricultural contractor developed his love of wildlife from his days working on the Graywell Tunnel. Being a practical man he decided to try to make his land wildlife friendly. Such was his success that it has recently been classified as a County Wildlife site In 1990 he built a hibernaculum. made of scavenged material to encourage bats Two Milton tube found in a hedge slopes down into a brieze block chamber topped with reclaimed railway sleepers. The whole lot was covered with soil It also has a purpose build pond in front of it to discourage rats from entering. This has added excitement to hibernaculum checks over the years as workers have had to pick their way cautiously through icy stagnant

water to reach the chamber. Over the years the bat group waders, and for those with larger feet, the patent two fertilizer sacks have been used to good effect, and some one usually ends up getting soaked

And in all those years of drenching there has only ever been a single bat found.

So you can probably picture the smile on the face of Tony Aldhous who has checked the hibernaculum man and boy for 15 years when a brown long eared bat was found in a gaps between bricks at the rear of the chamber



There is a bat here honest



A nervous Andy Swan, donning the high tech equipment



Tony Aldhous and Bob playing “pass the fertiliser bag”



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In the years that followed this barbaric practice of ordeal by freezing water continued



Soggy Sabiniarz 2007

unexpected leak and it was back to bailing out, at least until we bought a puncture repair kit.

This is the view once you have fought your way into the Braystone Hibernaculum



Since 2005 we have regularly found one or two bats in Braystone. In 2008 a Myotis had moved in following modifications to improve ventilation. The most bats we have found at any one time is 5



Michelle Henley drains her waterfilled welies in 2007. It was not long after she migrated to Canada.

In 2008 the bat group finally saw sense and bought some waders. All seemed well until one pair sprung an