

Site Name: Mottisfont Bats SSSI **County:** Hampshire

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Notified Under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Local Planning Authority: Hampshire County Council

National Grid reference: SU 314281 **Area:** 230.98 hectares

Ordnance Survey Sheet: 1:50,000: 185 **1:10,000:** SU 33 SW SU 32 NW

Date Notified (under 1981 Act): 6 February 2003

Date Confirmed: 13 October 2003

Reasons for Notification:

The woodland habitat around Mottisfont supports a nationally important population of the rare barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*. It is the only known maternity roost in Hampshire and one of only six known sites in the UK (2002 data). The known breeding colonies in Britain are either in old trees or old buildings.

General description:

These woodlands support a nationally important population of the barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*. Barbastelles are medium-sized bats whose precise ecological requirements are not fully known but has a clear preference for woodland habitats. Mottisfont contains a mix of woodland types including hazel coppice with standards, broadleaved plantation and coniferous plantation which the bats use for breeding, roosting, commuting and feeding.

The barbastelle bat is listed as a rare and threatened species in the European and British Red Data books of rare and endangered animal species. From historical accounts it always appears to have been rare in Britain. It is apparently thinly distributed over England and Wales, most frequently reported from East Anglia and south-west England. Whilst most other British species of bat are considered to be on the edge of their ranges in Britain, barbastelles are an exception to this, being considered rare throughout Europe.

A total of nine bat species have been recorded at Mottisfont, the others being whiskered *Myotis mystacinus*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, the two pipistrelles *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and *P. pipistrellus*, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii* and Natterer's *Myotis nattererii*.

Other information :

All species of bat are protected under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and under Annex IV of the European Community Habitats and Species Directive.