



Lesser Horseshoe Bat

Rhinolophus hipposideros

Quick facts

Order Chiroptera

Conservation status

GB *Least concern*

RE CE E V NT **LC** DD

England *Least concern*

Scotland *N/A*

Wales *Least concern*

Global *Least concern*

GB trend *Increasing*

Size

Head & body 35 - 45 mm

Forearm 35 - 42 mm

Wingspan 200 - 250 mm

Weight 5 - 9 g

One of Britain's smallest bats, the lesser horseshoe bat has a characteristic horseshoe-shaped nose-leaf. The fur is brown. Distribution is mostly restricted to the south-west of England and Wales, and it is absent from Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Habitat

Deciduous woodlands, riparian corridors, scrub, wet pasture with hedgerows; requires a mosaic of habitats.

Behaviour

Hibernates during winter in caves, mines, other underground sites. In summer (and year-round in warmer areas) uses old buildings. Requires sites with large entrances for uninterrupted flight into the roost. Feeding areas and alternative roosts are accessed by commuting along mature hedgerows and treelines. Like the greater horseshoe bat, it is a low-flying species that avoids well-lit areas.

Diet & Feeding

Small flies and moths.

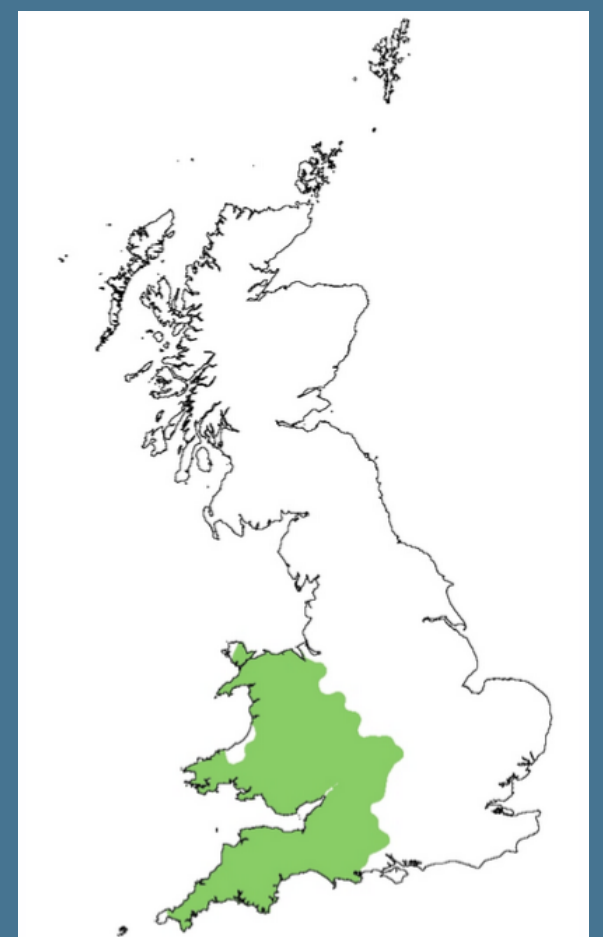
Reproduction

Maternity roosts, often in old buildings and heated cellars, are predominately female and range from 30 - 500 individuals.

Conservation & Threats

Underwent a major decline and range contraction in the 20th century, restricted to Wales, south-west England, and West Midlands by 1970s. Regular monitoring indicates population is increasing by 3.6% per year in Britain. Despite this, they are still threatened by agricultural intensification, artificial night lighting, and vehicle collisions.

Range



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