



Habitat types

Habitat type	Description / Examples
Open	e.g. grassland, heathland, pasture
Closed	cluttered e.g. treetops, woodland
Edge	linear habitats e.g. hedgerows, a line of trees, woodland edge
Water	ponds, reservoirs, wide (>4m) rivers and canals

Identifying bats in flights

Bat species	Habitat type (typically)	Flight patterns
Pipistrelles	Water – especially soprano and Nathusius' pipistrelles Edge	Erratic zigzag flight. Over water at head height.
Long-eared bats	Closed	Capable of hovering in the air around trees before gleaning prey from leaves and branches.
Noctule	Open	Fly fast above tree line with sudden steep dives for prey. Narrow pointed wings.
Leisler's	Open	Similar to noctules but exhibits a shallower dive.
Serotine	Edge	Often flies at eaves height. Long, broad wings so manoeuvrable flight.
Daubenton's	Water Closed – occasionally in woodland Edge – linear for commuting	Fly 5–10cm above water surface of calm rivers and canals.
Natterer's	Closed	Emerge and fly into woodland canopy. Will fly close into hedgerows and tree canopy for insects.
Whiskered/ Brandt's	Edge	Remain at a steady height and feed around an area in circles. Feed along hedgerows. Easy to miss amongst pipistrelles. Brandt's more associated with woodland.
Bechstein's	Closed	Slow flyers that glean prey from leaves and tree branches. Usually high in canopy.
Barbastelle	Edge	Wings broad and pointed. Usually fly fairly low, beside rivers close to overhanging trees, up and down rides and along hedgerows.
Horseshoe bats	Edge/open – greater horseshoe bat Edge – lesser horseshoe bat	Greater – low flying over meadowland, in amongst trees and buildings. Lesser – along tree lines. Both tend to follow linear flight lines faithfully.

See also

- [B.2.g – Bat identification table](#)