

# Brown Long-eared Bat

*Plecotus auritus*

Mammal · Active Apr-Oct · hibernates in winter



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Unmistakable when seen properly: a medium-sized bat with enormous ears almost as long as its head and body combined, curled back like a ram's horns when at rest and tucked under the wings in hibernation. The fur is a soft grey-brown. Brown long-eared bats roost in older buildings, churches and barns, and hunt the woodland and mature treelines around Dumfries.

## BEHAVIOUR

Those ears allow it to hunt by listening rather than shouting: it echolocates very quietly and can instead pick up the faint sounds a moth or caterpillar makes moving on a leaf, then hover and pluck the insect straight off the foliage. Prey is often carried to a favoured feeding perch, and the accumulated discarded moth wings beneath it are a reliable sign the species is using a building.

## WHEN TO SEE IT

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| J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
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## QUICK FACTS

|           |                                          |
|-----------|------------------------------------------|
| FAMILY    | Vesper bats (Vespertilionidae)           |
| SIZE      | Wingspan 24–29 cm · ears up to 4 cm long |
| UK STATUS | Protected under UK and European law      |

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