

Report under The Conservation of Habitats and
Species Regulations 2017 (as amended),
Regulation 9A

2019-2024

Conservation status assessment for the species:

S5003 - Alcatthoe bat

(*Myotis alcatthoe*)

England



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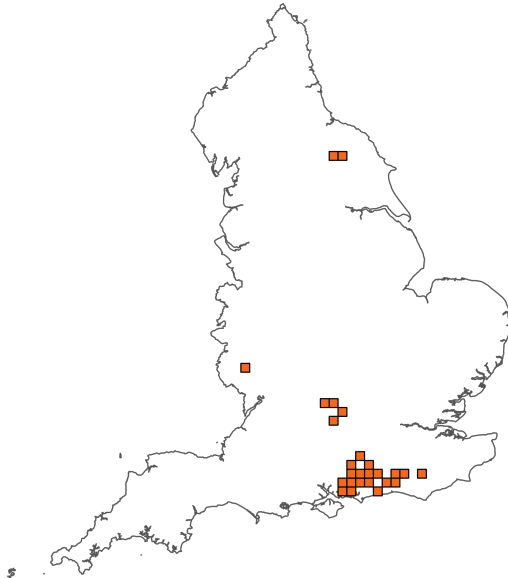
Important note - Please read

- The information in this document represents the England Report under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), Regulation 9A, for the period 2019-2024.
- It is based on supporting information provided by Natural England, which is documented separately.
- The Habitats Regulations reporting 2019-2024 Approach Document provides details on how this supporting information contributed to the UK Report and the fields that were completed for each parameter.
- Maps showing the distribution and range of the species are included.
- Explanatory notes (where provided) are included at the end. These provide additional audit trail information to that included within the assessments. Further underpinning explanatory notes are available in the related country reports.
- Some of the reporting fields have been left blank because either: (i) there was insufficient information to complete the field; (ii) completion of the field was not obligatory; and/or (iii) the field was not relevant to this species (section 12 National Site Network coverage for Annex II species).

Further details on the approach to the Habitats Regulations Reporting 2019-2024 are available on the [JNCC website](#).

Assessment Summary: Alcatthoe bat

Distribution Map



Range Map

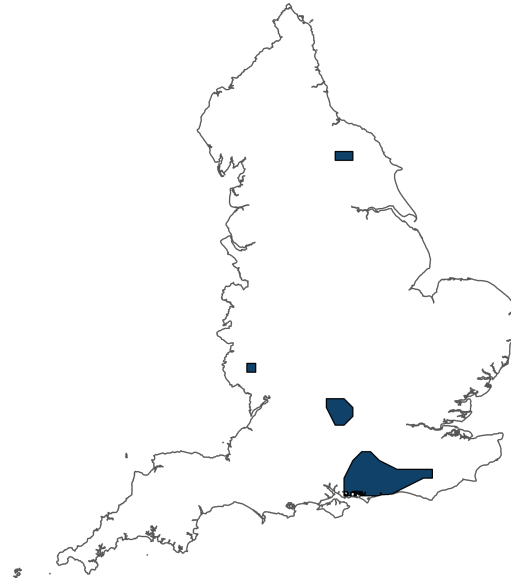


Figure 1: England distribution and range map for S5003 - Alcatthoe bat (*Myotis alcatthoe*). Coastline boundary derived from the Oil and Gas Authority's OGA and Lloyd's Register SNS Regional Geological Maps (Open Source). Open Government Licence v3 (OGL). Contains data © 2017 Oil and Gas Authority. The 10km grid square distribution map is based on available species records within the current reporting period.

Table 1: Table summarising the conservation status for S5003 - Alcatthoe bat (*Myotis alcatthoe*). Overall conservation status for species is based on assessments of range, population, habitat for the species, and future prospects.

Overall Conservation Status (see section 11)

Unknown (XX)

Breakdown of Overall Conservation Status

Range (see section 5)

Unknown (XX)

Population (see section 6)

Unknown (XX)

Habitat for the species (see section 7)

Unknown (XX)

Future prospects (see section 10)

Unknown (XX)

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National Level

1. General information

1.1 Country	England
1.2 Species code	S5003
1.3 Species scientific name	<i>Myotis alcathoe</i>
1.4 Alternative species scientific name	
1.5 Common name	Alcathoe bat
Annex(es)	IV

2. Maps

2.1 Sensitive species	No
2.2 Year or period	2010-2024
2.3 Distribution map	Yes
2.4 Distribution map; Method used	Based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data

2.5 Additional information

No additional information

3. Information related to Annex V Species

3.1 Is the species taken in the wild / exploited?

3.2 What measures have been taken?

a) Regulations regarding access to property

b) Temporary or local prohibition on the taking of specimens in the wild and exploitation

c) Regulation of the periods and/or methods of taking specimens

d) Application of hunting and fishing rules which take account of the conservation of such populations

e) Establishment of a system of licences for taking specimens or of quotas

f) Regulation of the purchase, sale, offering for sale, keeping for sale, or transport for sale of specimens

g) Breeding in captivity of animal species as well as artificial propagation of plant species

Other measures

Other measures description

3.3: Hunting bag or quantity taken in the wild for Mammals and Acipenseridae (Fish)

a) Unit

Table 2: Quantity taken from the wild during the reporting period (see 3.3a for units). For species with defined hunting seasons, Season 1 refers to 2018/2019 (autumn 2018 to spring 2019), and Season 6 to 2023/2024. For species without hunting seasons, data are reported by calendar year: Year 1 is 2019, and Year 6 is 2024.

	Season/ year 1	Season/ year 2	Season/ year 3	Season/ year 4	Season/ year 5	Season/ year 6
b) Minimum	-	-	-	-	-	-
c) Maximum	-	-	-	-	-	-
d) Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.4: Hunting bag or quantity taken in the wild; Method used

3.5: Additional information

No additional information

Biogeographical Level

4. Biogeographical and marine regions

4.1 Biogeographical or marine region where the species occurs ATL

4.2 Sources of information

See section 14 References

5. Range

5.1 Surface area (km²) 3,928.49

5.2 Short-term trend; Period 2013-2024

5.3 Short-term trend; Direction Unknown

5.4 Short-term trend;
Magnitude

a) Estimated minimum

b) Estimated maximum

c) Pre-defined range

d) Unknown

e) Type of estimate

f) Rate of decrease

5.5 Short-term trend; Method used Insufficient or no data available

5.6 Long-term trend; Period

5.7 Long-term trend; Direction

5.8 Long-term trend;
Magnitude

a) Minimum

b) Maximum

c) Rate of decrease

5.9 Long-term trend; Method used

5.10 Favourable Reference Range (FRR)

a) Area (km²)

b) Pre-defined increment

c) Unknown Yes

d) Method used

e) Quality of information

5.11 Change and reason for change in surface area of range

a) Change Yes

b) Genuine change No

c) Improved knowledge or more accurate data

d) Different method Yes

e) No information

f) Other reason

g) Main reason Use of different method

5.12 Additional information

No additional information

6. Population

6.1 Year or period 2010-2024

6.2 Population size (in reporting unit)

a) Unit number of map 1x1 km grid cells

b) Minimum

c) Maximum

d) Best single value 40

6.3 Type of estimate	Best estimate
6.4 Quality of extrapolation to reporting unit	low
6.5 Additional population size (using population unit other than reporting unit)	
a) Unit	
b) Minimum	
c) Maximum	
d) Best single value	
e) Type of estimate	
6.6 Population size; Method used	Insufficient or no data available
6.7 Short-term trend; Period	
6.8 Short-term trend; Direction	Unknown
6.9 Short-term trend; Magnitude	
a) Estimated minimum	
b) Estimated maximum	
c) Pre-defined range	
d) Unknown	
e) Type of estimate	
f) Rate of decrease	
6.10 Short-term trend; Method used	Insufficient or no data available
6.11 Long-term trend; Period	
6.12 Long-term trend; Direction	
6.13 Long-term trend; Magnitude	
a) Minimum	

b) Maximum

c) Confidence interval

d) Rate of decrease

6.14 Long-term trend; Method used

6.15 Favourable Reference Population (FRP)

ai) Population size

aii) Unit

b) Pre-defined increment

c) Unknown Yes

d) Method used

e) Quality of information

6.16 Change and reason for change in population size

a) Change No

b) Genuine change

c) Improved knowledge or more accurate data

d) Different method

e) No information

f) Other reason

g) Main reason

6.17 Additional information

No additional information

6.18 Age structure, mortality and reproduction deviation Unknown

7. Habitat for the species

7.1 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat (for long-term survival)

a) Is area of occupied habitat sufficient? Unknown

b) Is quality of occupied habitat sufficient? Unknown

c) If No or Unknown, is there a sufficiently large area of unoccupied habitat of suitable quality? Unknown

7.2 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat; Method used

a) Sufficiency of area of occupied habitat; Method used Insufficient or no data available

b) Sufficiency of quality of occupied habitat; Method used Insufficient or no data available

7.3 Short-term trend; Period 2013-2024

7.4 Short-term trend; Direction Unknown

7.5 Short-term trend; Method used Insufficient or no data available

7.6 Long-term trend; Period

7.7 Long-term trend; Direction

7.8 Long-term trend; Method used

7.9 Additional information

No additional information

8. Main pressures

8.1 Characterisation of pressures

Table 3: Pressures affecting the species, including timing and importance/impact ranking. Pressures are defined as factors acting currently and/or during the reporting period (2019–2024). Rankings are: High (direct/immediate influence and/or large spatial extent) and Medium (moderate direct/immediate influence, mainly indirect and/or regional extent).

Pressure	Timing	Ranking
PB02: Conversion from one type of forestry land use to another	Ongoing	Medium (M)
PB04: Abandonment of traditional forest management	Ongoing	Medium (M)
PB05: Logging without replanting or natural regrowth	In the past but now suspended due to measures	Medium (M)
PB07: Removal of dead and dying trees (including debris)	Ongoing	High (H)
PB08: Removal of old trees (excluding dead or dying trees)	Ongoing	High (H)
PB09: Clear-cutting, removal of all trees	Ongoing	High (H)
PB14: Forest management reducing old growth forests	Ongoing	High (H)
PE01: Roads, paths, railroads and related infrastructure	Ongoing and likely to be in the future	High (H)
PF01: Conversion from other land uses to built-up areas	Ongoing and likely to be in the future	Medium (M)
PF05: Sports, tourism and leisure activities	Ongoing and likely to be in the future	Medium (M)
PJ11: Desynchronisation of biological / ecological processes due to climate change	Only in future	Medium (M)

8.2 Sources of information

See section 14 References

8.3 Additional information

PF05: Recreational caving can disturb hibernating bats

PJ11: There is limited current evidence on the risks or potential benefits to bats from the desynchronisation of biological and ecological processes due to climate change. While

some changes, such as longer foraging seasons or increased prey availability in certain regions, could have positive effects, there is insufficient evidence to confirm this. Many bat species rely on precise seasonal cues for hibernation and foraging, and disruptions in food availability, such as shifts in insect emergence, could negatively impact their survival. Hibernating bats depend on stored energy and the predictable availability of prey upon emergence. Therefore, despite the uncertainty, it is important to consider this factor when assessing the broader impacts of climate change on bats.

9. Conservation measures

9.1: Status of measures

a) Are measures needed?	Yes
b) Indicate the status of measures	Measures identified and taken
9.2 Main purpose of the measures taken	Maintain the current range, population and/or habitat for the species
9.3 Location of the measures taken	Both inside and outside National Site Network
9.4 Response to measures	Long-term results (after 2036)

9.5 List of main conservation measures

Table 4: Key conservation measures addressing current pressures and/or anticipated threats during the next two reporting periods (2025–2036). Measures are ranked by importance/impact: High (direct/immediate influence and/or large spatial extent) and Medium (moderate direct/immediate influence, mainly indirect and/or regional extent).

Conservation measure	Ranking
MB01: Prevent conversion of (semi-) natural habitats into forests and of (semi-) natural forests into intensive forest plantation	High (H)
MB02: Maintain existing traditional forest management and exploitation practices	High (H)
MB04: Adapt/manage reforestation and forest regeneration	High (H)
MB05: Adapt/change forest management and exploitation practices	High (H)
MB06: Stop forest management and exploitation practices	High (H)
ME01: Reduce impact of transport operation and infrastructure	Medium (M)

MF03: Reduce impact of outdoor sports, leisure and recreational activities (incl. restoration of habitats)	Medium (M)
MJ02: Implement climate change adaptation measures	Medium (M)

9.6 Additional information

No additional information

10. Future prospects

10.1a Future trends of parameters

ai) Range Unknown

bi) Population Unknown

ci) Habitat for the species Unknown

10.1b Future prospects of parameters

aii) Range Unknown

bii) Population Unknown

cii) Habitat for the species Unknown

10.2 Additional information

No additional information

11. Conclusions

11.1 Range Unknown (XX)

11.2 Population Unknown (XX)

11.3 Habitat for the species Unknown (XX)

11.4 Future prospects Unknown (XX)

11.5 Overall assessment of Conservation Status Unknown (XX)

11.6 Overall trend in Conservation Status

Unknown

11.7 Change and reason for change in conservation status

This field is not reported as the period 2019-2024 marks the first instance in which conservation status has been assessed at the national level, meaning no comparisons to previous reports can be drawn.

11.7 Change and reason for change in conservation status trend

This field is not reported as the period 2019-2024 marks the first instance in which conservation status has been assessed at the national level, meaning no comparisons to previous reports can be drawn.

11.8 Additional information

No additional information

12. UK National Site Network (pSCIs, SCIs, SACs) coverage for Annex II species

12.1 Population size inside the pSCIs, SCIs and SACs network

a) Unit

b) Minimum

c) Maximum

d) Best single value

12.2 Type of estimate

12.3 Population size inside the network; Method used

12.4 Short-term trend of population size within the network; Direction

12.5 Short-term trend of population size within the network; Method used

12.6 Short-term trend of habitat for the species inside the pSCIs, SCIs and SACs network; Direction

12.7 Short-term trend of habitat for the species inside the pSCIs, SCIs and SACs network; Method used

12.8 Additional information

No additional information

13. Complementary information

13.1 Justification of percentage thresholds for trends

No justification information

13.2 Trans-boundary assessment

No trans-boundary assessment information

13.2 Other relevant information

No other relevant information

14. References

Biogeographical and marine regions

4.2 Sources of information

Jan, C.M., Frith, K., Glover, A.M., Butlin, R.K., Scott, C.D., Greenaway, F., Ruedi, M., Frantz, A.C., Dawson, D.A. and Altringham, J.D., 2010. *Myotis alcaethoe* confirmed in the UK from mitochondrial and microsatellite DNA. *Acta Chiropterologica*, 12(2), pp.471-483.

Russ, J. 2012. *British bat calls: a guide to species identification*, Exeter, Pelagic Publishing

Von Helversen, O., Heller, K.G., Mayer, F., Nemeth, A., Volleth, M., Gombkötö, P. (2001) Cryptic Mammalian Species: A New Species of Whiskered Bat (*Myotis alcaethoe* n. Sp.) in Europe. *Naturwissenschaften*, 88, 217–223.

Dietz, C., Kiefer, A., 2016. *Bats of Britain and Europe*. Bloomsbury, United Kingdom

Brown, P. A. 2016. *The Cryptic Group of Small Myotis Bats (M. Mystacinus, M. Brandtii and M. Alcaethoe) and Habitat Use by Woodland Bats Species in Britain*. PhD Thesis, University of Bristol.

Mathews, F., Kubasiewicz, L.M., Gurnell, J., Harrower, C., McDonald, R.A., Shore, R.F., 2018. *A review of the population and conservation status of British Mammals. A report by The Mammal Society under contract to Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage.*

Lučan, R.K., Andreas, M., Benda, P., Bartonička, T., Březinová, T., Hoffmannová, A., Hulová, Š., Hulva, P., Neckářová, J., Reiter, A., 2009. *Alcaethoe bat (Myotis alcaethoe) in the Czech Republic: distributional status, roosting and feeding ecology.* *Acta Chiropterologica* 11, 61-69.

Danko, Š., Krištín, A., Krištofík, J., 2010. *Myotis alcaethoe* in eastern Slovakia: occurrence, diet, ectoparasites and notes on its identification in the field. *Vespertilio* 13, 77-91.

JNCC., 2019. *Fourth Report by the United Kingdom under Article 17 on the implementation of the Habitats Directive from January 20013 to December 2018.* <https://jncc.gov.uk/jncc-assets/Art17/S5003-UK-Habitats-Directive-Art17-2019.pdf>

Main pressures

8.2 Sources of information

PJ11: Festa, F., Ancillotto, L., Santini, L., Pacifici, M., Rocha, R., Toshkova, N., Amorim, F., Benítez-López, A., Domer, A., Hamidović, D. and Kramer-Schadt, S., 2023. Bat responses to climate change: a systematic review. *Biological Reviews*, 98(1), pp.19-33.

15. Explanatory Notes

Field label	Note
2.2: Year or Period	The species was first described in 2001 from individuals captured in Greece and was later confirmed in England through DNA analysis of wing biopsies collected primarily at swarming sites between 2003 and 2009 (Jan. 2010). As bats are long-lived, these data remain relevant beyond their initial collection period and are still considered a reasonably reliable indicator of the species' distribution within the current reporting period (2019–2024).
2.3: Distribution map	Identifying this species based on physical appearance alone is challenging, as it closely resembles the Whiskered bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>) and Brandt's bat (<i>Myotis brandtii</i>). However, it has been noted to produce a more distinctive echolocation call, which in some cases allows it to be distinguished from other <i>Myotis</i> species commonly found in England. Despite this, when recorded in cluttered environments, where it frequently forages, its calls show a high degree of similarity to other <i>Myotis</i> bats, making acoustic identification unreliable (Russ, 2012). Even in-hand identification has proven difficult, with genotyping revealing misidentifications, underscoring the challenges of monitoring this group of small <i>Myotis</i> bats (Brown, 2016). The species was first described in 2001 from individuals caught in Greece (Von Helversen et al. 2001) and was confirmed in England through DNA analysis of wing biopsies collected primarily at swarming sites between 2003 and 2009 (Jan. 2010). Given its rarity and the difficulties in identification, it is likely that the species has been under-recorded in England.
4.1: Biogeographic or marine region where the species occurs	ATL
5.11: Change and reason for change in surface area of range	Range was given by Mathews et al. (2018) as 5040 km ² (current distribution based on 20km kernels around all known records since 1995). A17 in 2013 estimated range as 800 km ² . It was thought that the increase in range was

due to improved knowledge of the distribution of this species through intensive survey effort rather than a genuine increase in range. Alcahoie bat is only known in a few regions of England namely Sussex, Surrey, West Kent and Ryedale, North Yorkshire. Whilst some of this patchy distribution may be due to lack of survey effort or misidentification, intensive survey effort at 108 locations across England (largely swarming sites but also woodlands) in 2014, with subsequent molecular analysis of 140 faecal samples, did not identify any further locations outside Sussex and Surrey (Jan et al. 2010; Brown 2016.). It is notable that the cluster of records in the south-east of England is separated from those in Yorkshire by approximately 350km. Although it is possible that this is an artefact of survey effort and/or misidentification, the gap was not filled during surveys with molecular verification of species identity (Brown 2016). Due to the different methods used to create the maps for this reporting round, records in North Yorkshire have been included in this reporting round.

5.12: Additional information

Range is based on presence data collected between 2010-2024. The range map has been produced following the same methodology that was used in 2007 and 2013 whereby a 45km alpha hull value has been used for all species with a starting range unit of individual 10km squares. In 2018 range was taken from Mathews et al. 2018, whereby an alpha hull value of 20km was drawn around the presence records, which represented the best balance between the inclusion of unoccupied sites (i.e. where records are sparse but close enough for inclusion) and the exclusion of occupied areas due to gaps in the data (i.e. where records exist but are too isolated for inclusion). An additional 10km buffer was added to the final hull polygon to provide smooting to the hull and to ensure that the hull covered the areas recorded rather than intersecting them. That process led to the production of much finer detailed maps being produced. However, this approach to mapping was not an option for this reporting round (2018-2024). This has resulted in an apparent increase in

	<p>range due to inclusion of additional records. The range however, is likely to have remained stable and this is an artefact of the differing methodologies used to produce the range map alongside inclusion of further records (see section 2.5).</p>
5.10: Favourable Reference Range (FRR)	<p>Due to the limited knowledge of this species' distribution in England it is not possible to define a reference range.</p>
6.2: Population size	<p>Due to the relative recent discovery of this species and difficulties in identification and survey, it is not possible to estimate population size at this time. The species has been recorded in 40 1x1km grid squares in England.</p>
6.5: Additional population size	<p>The lack of information on roost (or colony) density makes population estimation extremely difficult. Given that at least 8 maternity colonies have been identified, and small numbers of individuals are also captured at swarming sites and other surveys in Yorkshire and the South East of England, the minimum population is likely to be at least 2,000 individuals. However, it must be emphasised that the evidence is extremely poor: further systematic surveys including molecular identification of species is required. No estimation of Alcaethoe bat population size was made for the last Article 17 Report.</p>
6.15: Favourable Reference Population (FRP)	<p>Due to the recent discovery of this species and challenges in its identification and survey, population size cannot currently be estimated. This lack of comprehensive data and knowledge makes it impossible to define a favorable reference population.</p>
6.8: Short-term trend; Direction	<p>The relatively recent discovery of this species and difficulties in surveying and identification means that it is not possible to provide an assessment of the population trend for this species at this time.</p>
7.1: Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat	<p>The specific area of habitat occupied by this species in GB is unknown. It is unknown whether the amount of habitat in GB is sufficient to support a viable population of the species. The sites where the presence of Alcaethoe bats has been confirmed in England are characterised by extensive</p>

areas of seminatural woodland. This broadly seems to fit with the habitat types that the species are found in across Europe. Evidence from elsewhere in Europe suggests a preference for old woodlands, structured edges of broadleaved woodland, and riparian habitats with large trees. Alcathoe bats tend to forage in areas of dense vegetation often near water bodies. Limited radio-tracking data in Europe shows that the animal's forage both in the crowns of trees and over water, and hunting areas are usually within 3km of the roost, though individuals are recorded travelling up to 6km. The roosting habitat of this species are not well characterised. However, it appears to roost almost exclusively in cracks/crevices in trees during the active season, particularly in oak trees. Caves are visited during the swarming period which is how the species was first discovered in this country and are likely to be used for hibernation alongside trees.

7.2: Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat; Methods used

There is limited information on the habitat requirements/ limitations of this species, as such the total area of suitable habitat is unknown. To obtain a proper estimate of suitable habitat used by the species, it would be necessary to first identify all of the foraging and roosting habitat located within the current range boundary; determine whether or not each of these features were being used; and subsequently calculate the combined area of all currently used habitats. This process would require very detailed habitat information at a fine scale across GB. We do not currently have this level of information.

8.1: Characterisation of pressures

Pressures can generally be divided into those that affect roosts and those that affect commuting and foraging (including prey availability). *M. alcathoe* is primarily a woodland species as they use woodland trees to roost in and the wider woodland habitat to forage within. Forestry operations that prevent the maintenance or development of this resource are likely to have an adverse affect on this species. The species also uses caves for swarming purposes and potentially hibernation. Activities which may

	<p>affect future occupation of caves i.e. Mining or recreational activities may have an adverse affect on the population.</p>
9.6: Additional information	<p>Legal and administrative measures continue to be required to ensure that the protection provided by the legislation is effective. Guidance is provided to ensure best practice is followed and legislation is not breached when carrying out woodland and forestry operations in order to maintain the favourable conservation status of the species. Road design construction and operation need to take into account the likely impact on bats, for example, in relation to the provision of safe crossing structures and the loss and severance of bat habitat and lighting. Guidance is available for land managers on how to manage their land holdings for bats.</p>
1.5: Common name	<p>The Alcaethoe bat (<i>Myotis alcaethoe</i>) is one of the smallest and most elusive bat species in Europe. It was only recognised as a distinct species in 2001 (Von Helversen et al. 2001). and later confirmed in England in 2010 (Jan et al. 2010), making it a relatively recent discovery for British fauna.</p> <p>Alcaethoe bats favour ancient woodland habitats, particularly areas near clean, slow-flowing streams or rivers, where insect prey is abundant. They are forest specialists, often roosting in tree cavities, crevices, and sometimes old buildings. Their diet consists mainly of small flying insects like mosquitoes and moths of a body length less than 12mm (Dietz and Keifer 2016). Due to their small size and secretive nature, they are difficult to monitor, and much about their behaviour remains unclear.</p> <p>The species was first identified in North Yorkshire and Sussex, and since then, a few scattered records have confirmed its presence in southern England. Its true distribution may be wider, but it is likely under-recorded due to its similarity to other <i>Myotis</i> bats and the challenges of acoustic identification. Conservation concerns centre</p>

	<p>around habitat loss, especially the degradation of ancient woodlands and water quality in riparian environments.</p>
6.18: Age structure, mortality and reproduction	<p>There is no evidence to suggest any deviation from the normal age structure, mortality, or reproduction rates. However, this assessment is primarily based on anecdotal observations from bat workers in the field. No formal studies have been conducted to confirm these findings</p>
2.5: Additional information	<p>For the 2026 Regulation 9A reporting round, distribution datasets for all features have been generated using existing Natural England source data, along with additional datasets provided under Open Government Licence (OGL) or Creative Commons (CC-BY) licence for Regulation 9A reporting, alongside several records for Alcaethoe provided by expert individuals. A key methodological change involves the reinterpretation of source data, which has led to adjustments in mapped distribution and, consequently, changes in range for some features.</p> <p>In some cases, the available data does not fully capture the complete distribution of a feature. To mitigate this, the presence data collection period for this species has been set from 2010 (when the species was discovered in England) to 2024. Given the long lifespan of bats, this approach is considered appropriate. Where observed changes in distribution are due to the mapping methodology rather than actual shifts in range, these will be clearly identified in the assessment text, with any resulting range adjustments explained.</p>
11.5: Overall assessment of Conservation Status	<p>The overall assessment for Alcaethoe bat is 'unknown' due to the lack of information known about this species.</p>