

Bat boxes at Organ Pipes 15 Aug 2010

We had a good-sized team as several students from Monash, Deakin and Swinburne came to join us, as well as Kelly Dalton, zoologist.



Catherine Payne inspects a box, Steve on ladder duty



Kelly Dalton inspects a box, Natasha on ladder duty



I went up a ladder to photograph a bunch of Gould's in C23. We collected 113 bats in August 09, down from a peak of 147 in Aug 07 but only 49 bats this time, which was something of a surprise, but maybe the spike in the August capture rate is just a short-lived phenomenon. Box C43 had fallen to the ground,

but is so strongly made it was intact, though its upper screw had pulled through the timber and enlarged its hole. Box C32 had rotted at the top so Steve pulled it off the tree and I took it home for repairs.

With several new vaccinated recruits, opportunities are opening up, but Natasha was understandably cautious after one Forest Bat escaped into the tube supporting the data projector in June, got jammed in there and died. But Catherine did some of the bat assessing under supervision. Debbie came along and took over from me, and we got through them all quite early, soon after 6 o'clock



The students were all on their first visit, and we hope they will return for many more bats in October.



We finished with 49 bats of two species

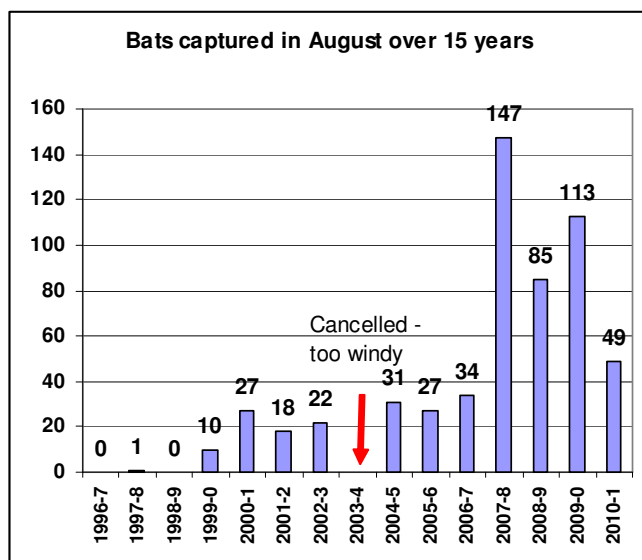
Box	Bats	Species	Adult	
			M	F
C36	13	Gould's	2	11
C36	2	Lge Forest	2	
C22	12	Gould's	2	10
C23	12	Gould's	3	9
C19	4	Lge Forest		4
C43	3	Gould's		3
C14	1	Gould's	1	
C16	1	Gould's	1	
C30	1	Gould's		1
	49	Total	11	38

Compared with August in earlier years, this year's result is a return to the early 2000s

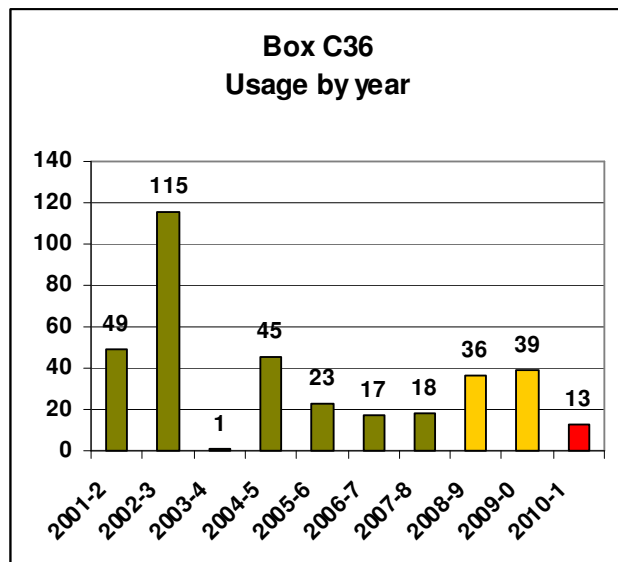
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Bats	27	34	147	85	113	49
Incr		+26%	+332%	-42%	+33%	-57%

The species distribution is always much the same, with big fluctuations in Gould's the main reason for the ups and downs.

	Aug 07	Aug 08	Aug 09	Aug 10
Gould's	147	76	109	43
Freetail		5		
Large Forest		4	4	6
Chocolate				
Total	147	85	113	49

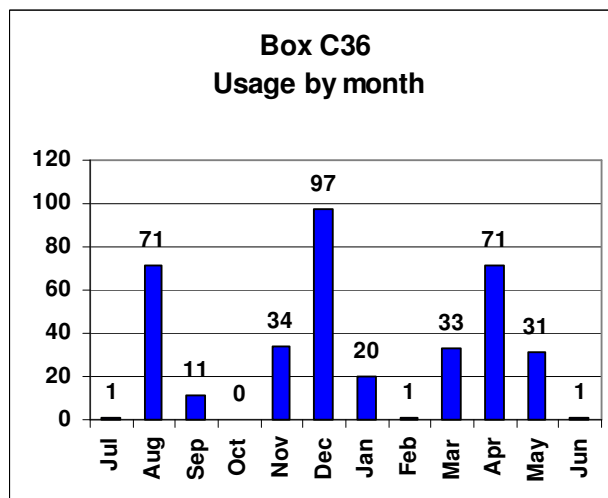


Box C36



This is almost the last of the 9 thick-walled boxes installed over three years from 98 to 01, in the hope of attracting bats during winter months. It proved quite

attractive to bats in its first couple of years, but has declined in usage since then. But as since 2008 we have only checked the boxes 6 times a year instead of 12, the figures since then should be doubled to make them comparable. We have caught 371 bats in it, compared to the most-used thick-walled box, (C30) with 555 and the least-used (C33) with 151. It faces west.



It has three peak usage months, in August, December and April, but the December figure is a bit misleading as most of it was one big group of 56 bats in 2002. Nearly all of the bats have been Gould's with only a couple of Large Forest Bats and a solitary Freetail.

Group sizes show it mostly attracts quite small groups. Half the bats were in groups smaller than 20.

Fewer than	10	20	30	40	50	60
Bats	18	11	2	2		1

Next box inspection: Sunday 10 October 2 p.m.

Who was there? Natasha, Debbie, Catherine, Steve, Adam and Ben (Monash), Cassie, Taras and Mijail (Deakin), Kelly, and me