

## Organ Pipes Bat box check 18 Feb. 2012

Steve and I arrived at the same time and drove to the bollard. Robert had arrived earlier and came over and we drove down into the valley. Ian Kitchen arrived just as we were about to take off and got annoyed at being left behind, so went home again. So there were only the three of us to empty the boxes, which meant one ladder. Then we found that, as often happens in Feb. when boxes are full of young bats, they got spooked and we estimated by the end of the afternoon around 90 had burst out of their boxes in big groups and flown off across the creek or circled around so we couldn't see where they settled.

At the first tree, about 20 bats burst out of box 14 and flew across the creek. A few more flew out of box 30, the other side of the same tree, but we got the remaining 20. This pattern continued all afternoon, with bats in 22 of the 37 boxes and large or small groups of escapees fleeing from 9 of them.



Steve had brought his sleeve, which speeded up the collection of bats from each box.



One of the glider boxes had a very active bee colony entering and exiting and another, that had two gliders in it last time had fallen to the ground leaving a dilapidated nest and a broken lid. Probably very startling for the gliders.



At the afternoon's end, I dragged big box C41 and a cordless drill up the ladder and re-attached it to its tree. Sally Bewsher was waiting for us at the car park, eager to process bats, so we set up under the rotunda and got to work. A little later Tanya arrived, then Debbie, then Steve and then Robert had to go, so there were four of us for part of the evening and three to finish off after Sally left.



### Sally, Tanya, Steve and Robert

We had 205 bats, of which only 5 still had bands, so must be near ten years old.



Boxes 19 and 20 had Large Forest Bats in them, a total of 20, but nearly all the bats were Gould's.



Sally and Tanya



Tanya and Debbie

We finished up around 11 o'clock and went down for the fun part of the evening, watching little bats fly off the many bags



It took quite a while to get through all our bags so it was a long night's work



We got away about 11:30.

The statistics show some serious problems with bag labeling during the afternoon for 3 of the bags. From the box sheet we seem to have collected 173 bats, but we processed 210 of them, including 21 from C42 that was recorded as empty after its only bat escaped as we placed the ladder, and another 8 from C21, that was also empty and one bag with 3 bats and no label. But, apart from that, we had a busy day and got most of it right

| Box | Bats | Species | Adult |    | Juv |   | Es<br>c |
|-----|------|---------|-------|----|-----|---|---------|
|     |      |         | M     | F  | M   | F |         |
| C05 | 18   | Gould's | 8     | 10 |     |   | 21      |
| C43 | 24   | Gould's | 10    | 14 |     |   | 15      |
| C23 | 12   | Gould's |       | 12 |     |   | 21      |
| C39 | 30   | Gould's | 6     | 14 | 3   | 7 |         |
| C30 | 21   | Gould's | 3     | 15 | 2   | 1 | 4       |
| C14 |      | Gould's |       |    |     |   | 20      |

|     |            |               |           |            |          |           |           |
|-----|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| C19 | 18         | Lge Forst     | 2         | 16         |          |           |           |
| C29 | 11         | Gould's       | 6         | 5          |          |           |           |
| C16 | 10         | Gould's       | 1         | 1          | 3        | 5         |           |
| C38 | 9          | Gould's       | 4         | 5          |          |           |           |
| C20 | 9          | Gould's       | 3         | 6          |          |           |           |
|     | 2          | Lge Forst     | 1         | 1          |          |           |           |
| C25 | 5          | Gould's       | 1         | 3          |          | 1         |           |
| C22 | 4          | Gould's       | 2         | 2          |          |           |           |
| C06 |            | Gould's       |           |            |          |           | 3         |
| C10 | 1          | Gould's       |           | 1          |          |           | 1         |
| C34 |            | Gould's       |           |            |          |           | 2         |
| C42 | 21         | Gould's       | 7         | 14         |          |           | 1         |
| C09 | 1          | Gould's       |           | 1          |          |           |           |
| C13 | 1          | Gould's       |           | 1          |          |           |           |
| C28 | 1          | Gould's       |           | 1          |          |           |           |
| C32 | 1          | Gould's       |           | 1          |          |           |           |
| C21 | 8          | Gould's       | 2         | 6          |          |           |           |
| ?   | 3          | Gould's       | 1         | 2          |          |           |           |
|     | <b>210</b> | <b>Totals</b> | <b>57</b> | <b>131</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>88</b> |

2.5 females to each male, about normal for Feb

| Year       | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Gould's    | 270  | 137  | 200  | 243  | 190  |
| Lge Forest |      | 5    | 1    | 10   | 20   |
| Freetail   |      | 2    | 2    | 1    |      |
|            | 270  |      | 203  | 254  | 210  |

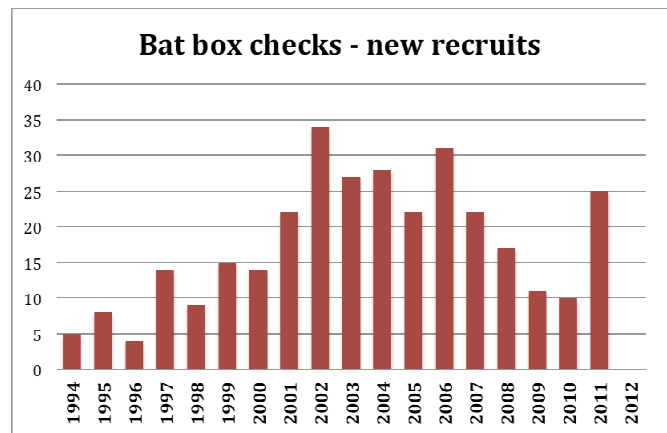
Gould's numbers as always dominate the year-to-year fluctuations.

### Bat box check attendance

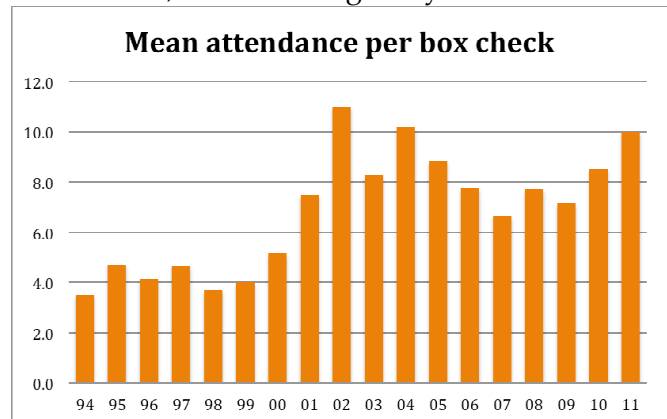
Just for amusement this month, I went through all the monthly bat box reports from Nov '94 to the present, to see how many people we have had join our little project. It turned out to be 318 people, of whom 237 or 74.5% came once only. Only 16 people have come more than 10 times. The most dedicated people have been me, Natasha, Robert Irvine, Debbie, Ian Kitchen and Lisa Evans.

Then there is a bit of a gap to another group of Tanya, Paul Webb, John Smith, Kylie Eklom, Sylvia Zele, Terry, and Mick Johnston, April Reside and Katrina Lovett.

Our effectiveness at recruiting new volunteers seems to have declined from a peak in 2002 of 34 new people to a low in 2010 of 10 new people, then revived last year.



Mean size of the team assembling per year shows a similar pattern, peaking in 2002, going into decline, then reviving last year



Most people come for the evening, to handle bats in the Visitor Centre, but we have had increasing difficulty attracting people to come during the afternoon to help empty the boxes. Probably partly an issue with a very long-term project.

**Next gathering: harp trapping on the weekend of 16 to 18 March: setting up traps Friday and Saturday evening, checking them Saturday and Sunday mornings. Notice out next weekend**