

## Organ Pipes bat box check 10 Feb 2013

We had an early start as Tanja Straka was hoping to capture Freetails to get scat samples, but there were none. A good crowd of helpers gathered at 8 a.m. and we split into two groups & two ladders



My group did the very large boxes, two of which were crowded with Gould's bats, mostly banded



There were two Large Forest bats for the day, all the rest were Gould's, so very small species range



We had several new people, including Michelle Bond who works in the acquisitions department at the National Gallery in Canberra.



As we finished emptying bat boxes, I found a glider box with a little family in it and there was sudden enthusiasm for climbing ladders and taking a peek



Steve took everyone up to the Visitor Centre while I re-attached a lid to box 21. We had 20 people coming and going over the long day's work.



Ruth and Vicky helped with scribing while Caragh got started on being trained as a bat bander by Lindy Lumsden. Tanja also got halfway to the quota of 50 bats needing to be banded under super-vision. Steve did most of the banding.



Eva has been vaccinated and had her first bout of bat-handling, needing much advice and help in making judgments and finding nipples etc., along with Thea and Katie from Biosis, who were so helpful last October.



During the afternoon we had several groups of visitors so the show-and-tell program helped them to see what beautiful and interesting little animals microbats are



Later in the afternoon a group of Turkish people, mothers and children, arrived and stayed to learn about little bats, Thea and Katie again looking after them.



Pia processed bats with Kate Senior next to her.



Box	Bats	Species	Adult		Sub		Juv	
			M	F	M	F	M	F
C07	40	Gould's	7	20	3	1	4	5
C01	35	Gould's	2	22	3	6		2
C43	29	Gould's	2	13	3	3	4	4
C16	26	Gould's	1	10	5	5	1	4
C17	24	Gould's	3	6	2	7	4	2
C29	17	Gould's	6	3	4	1	1	2
C05	16	Gould's	7	9				
C27	15	Gould's	3	7	3	2		
C42	13	Gould's	1	8	3	1		
C37	10	Gould's		3	3	4		
C14	9	Gould's	1	6	1	1		
C25	8	Gould's	3	5				
C28	4	Gould's	3	1				
C22	3	Gould's		3				
C23	3	Gould's		2				1
C20	2	L Forest		2				
C34	2	Gould's			1	1		
C40	2	Gould's	1	1				
C03	1	Gould's		1				
C09	1	Gould's		1				
C15	1	Gould's		1				
C32	1	Gould's		1				
C41	1	Gould's			1			
263		Totals	30	168	32	32	14	20

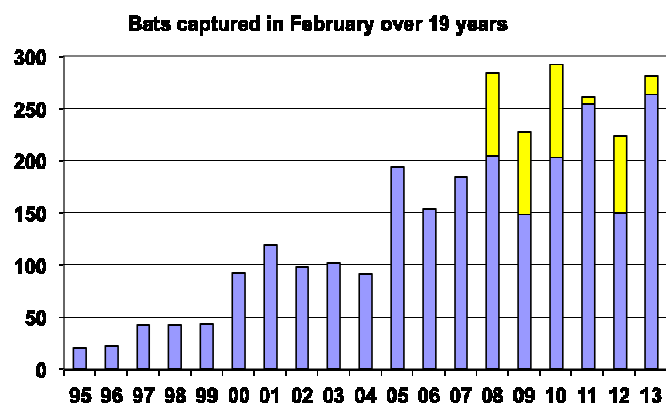
We arrived at the visitor centre at 11, and still did not finish until well after 6 p.m. as with so many learners, and so many wriggly bats, progress was slow. But with so many scribes and helpers, it all moved along pretty steadily. 150 bats got new bands over the day, of which about 4 were retraps found to have banding injuries, so bands were removed, inflamed arms medicated and new bands placed on the other wrist. We had 263 bats altogether for the day, which makes for a lot of work.

The ratio of adult females to males was 5.6:1, but the number of adolescents and juveniles was near 1:1

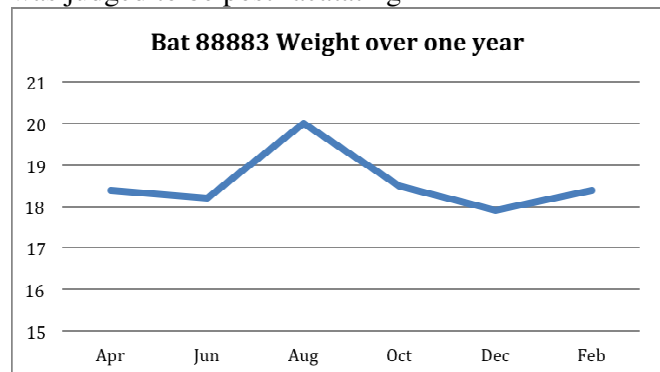
Large Forest and Freetail bat numbers are always small in Feb., and the Gould's have been steadily increasing except for last year

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gould's	137	200	243	178	261
Lge Forest	5	1	10	8	2
Freetail	2	2	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>263</b>

The chart shows total captures (blue) and escapees (yellow) since the project began. The adolescents seem particularly easily spooked and liable to fly off when they hear a ladder placed against their tree

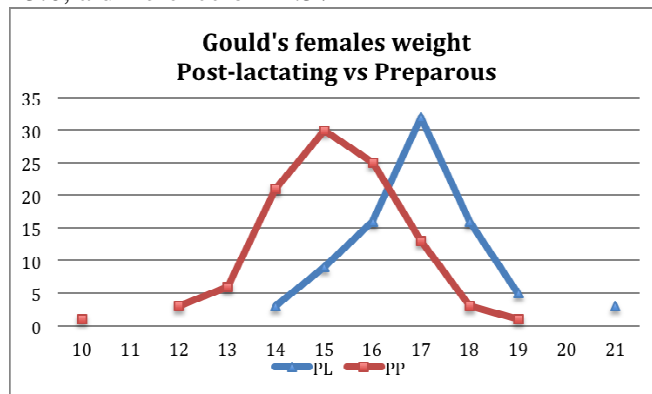


The two Forest bats were newly banded, and of the 261 Gould's 148 were new and the other 113 had already been banded. These included six bats banded by Natasha many years ago, one of which, 88883, has been captured each box check since April '12. She was judged to be post-lactating



each check except December, when she was lactating, so although she must be near 10 years old, she is still bearing pups and has a very healthy weight.

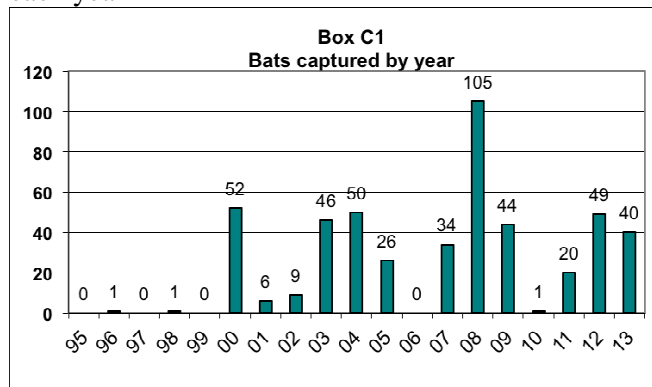
The new year's young, as usual, reach adult forearm length quite fast, but put on weight more slowly, as shown by the different distributions of weights for prepartous and post-lactating females. The post-lactating mean was 17.4 and the prepartous mean was 15.6, a difference of 11.5%



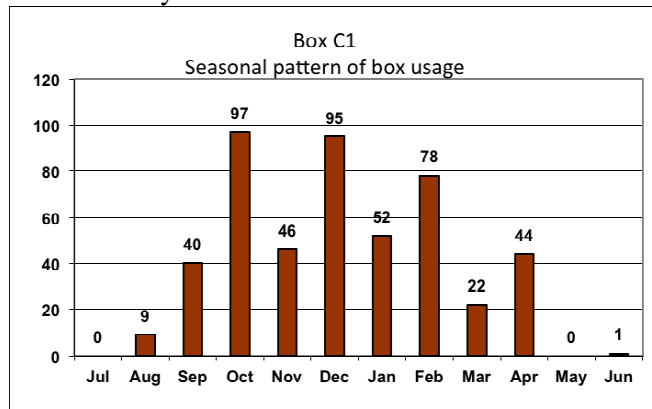
By contrast forearm means were 45.3 for post-lactating and 44.8 for prepartous bats, a difference of only 1%.

### Box 1

This is one of the original 10 boxes installed in Apr '92. We have recorded 484 bats in it over the 18 years since it was first used. Usage was minimal for its first five years, then took off in 1999-0, peaked in 2007-8 but has fluctuated mainly between 20 and 50 bats each year



It is used most intensively in spring and summer and almost totally avoided in winter. The even-numbered



months have taller columns as we stopped checking boxes monthly from Feb '08, so the even-numbered months have had more box checks. It has had big groups of 30+ bats four times, twice in Feb, once each in Dec and Sep., and always attracts only Gould's.

Thanks to all the people who came along to help this month: Lindy Lumsden, Stephen Griffiths, Tanja Straka, Caragh Threlfall, Pia Lentini, Kiri Matthews, George Symeou, Michelle Bond, Bryony Retter, Eva Reda, Ben Espinoza, Katie Stevenson, Thea Shell, Ruth Glass, Erika Roper, Vicky Bywater, Kate Senior, Tanya Loos, Robert Irvine

**Next batting day is harp trapping on  
Saturday night/Sunday morning 16-17  
March**