

Bat box check: Organ Pipes NP 8 Sep 2013

The box monitoring postponed from August finally happened 3 weeks later and a big team of about 20 people turned out to help on a fine spring afternoon. Steve had a large following for his ladder and filled many bags with bats including some quite large groups of females



Some of the helpers hoped to see Sugar Gliders and the 4th box we inspected had a family of them



There were about 3 kg of bats in 40+ bags by the time we gathered back at the cars. Anthea and Rachael posing with their bag hangers



We were joined by Dr Wojtek Michalski, from the Animal Health Lab who is doing a study of bat milk

and hopes to get some milk from our bats in December. He chatted with Tanja and Pia



In the Visitor Centre we had 7 bat handlers and 7 scribes so work proceeded rapidly



Five the bats were very old, banded by Natasha possibly a decade ago. This is 88883, an elderly female Gould's, still a good weight so healthy in old age



And this is 88866, also a good weight and another matriarch of her clan. Almost all the bats already had bands on them, so only 7 new ones needed banding this month, plus Stephen microchipped three Freetails.



Claire Jones and Anthea Gurr, both animal carers, sat next to Lindy and got advice when unsure of repro con



Ruth's scribe was Ibrahim, a student hoping to study biology



We had just over 200 bats, and only two had any banding injuries but one was a very serious issue, with a large swelling of fluid on the wrist and a very tight band. But Lindy and Tanja managed to remove the band and the swelling almost instantly receded. Stephen took the little bat home where it gobbled enormous numbers of mealworms and he is to release it at the park next week. It must have been in considerable pain before the band was

removed



There was one Chocolate Wattled bat in the bags



Ben Espinoza arrived and scribed for Lindy when Wojtek left for home



Despite over 200 bats we were all done by 8:25 and drove down to the valley to release all the bats except the injured one. So there was the usual line-up and bats flying everywhere. Most of my photos were of bags a second after the bat left the field of view, but some were well-timed to record release. One of Eva and one of Ibrahim. S usual the Free-tails took their time to make up their minds to take off.



Eva started working with us while in high school and Ibrahim said he too is keen to return for more.

Box	Bats	Species	Adult		Esc
			M	F	
C41	60	Gould's	10	50	
C34	25	Gould's	2	23	
C27	23	Gould's	5	18	
C01	20	Gould's	1	19	
C20	18	Gould's	10	8	
C30	18	Gould's	5	13	1
C40	10	Gould's	3	7	
C23	7	Gould's	7		
C32	3	Gould's	3		
	2	Lge Forest		2	
C25	2	Gould's		2	
C38	2	Gould's		2	
C24	2	Gould's	2		
C42	1	Chocolate	1		
	1	Gould's	1		
C05	1	Freetail		1	
C09	1	Freetail	1		
	1	Gould's	1		
C10	1	Gould's		1	
C22	1	Gould's	1		
C31	1	Gould's		1	
C15	1	Gould's	1		
C37	1	Gould's	1		
C28	1	Gould's	1		
C43	1	Freetail		1	
C03		Freetail			1
	204	Totals	56	148	2

So there were bats in 23 boxes of the 35 up at present, but some of those had escapees from other boxes. The solitary bat in box 10 was the escapee from box 30, for example.

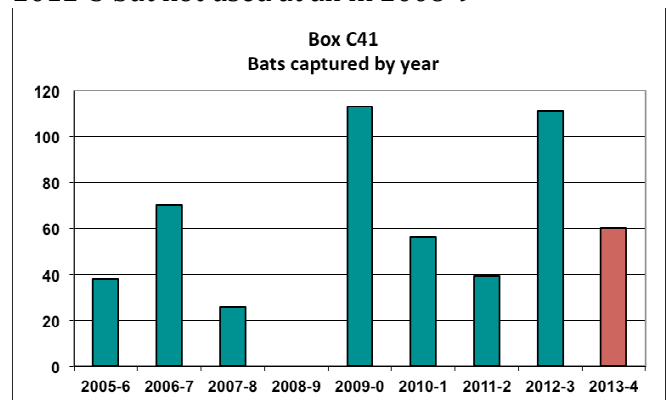
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gould's	109	43	113	101	196
Lge Forest	4	6	3		2
Freetail			3	1	3
Chocolate					1
Total	113	49	119	102	202

This moth's result is a very large increase on normal experience for August, which may be due to it being the first week of September, when the bats normally return to the boxes after wintering elsewhere.

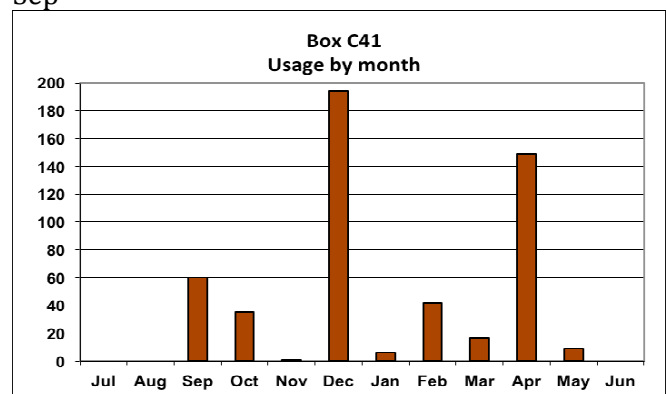


Box 41

This is one of the three very large boxes (300 mm wide installed in 2005 in the hope they would attract larger groups. It has clearly been successful with 60 Gould's in it this month. Each of the three now has a record of over 500 bats. This one varies widely in usage by year, peaking in 2009-0 and 2012-3 but not used at all in 2008-9



It has been most used in December and April. This is the first time we have found bats using it in Aug/Sep

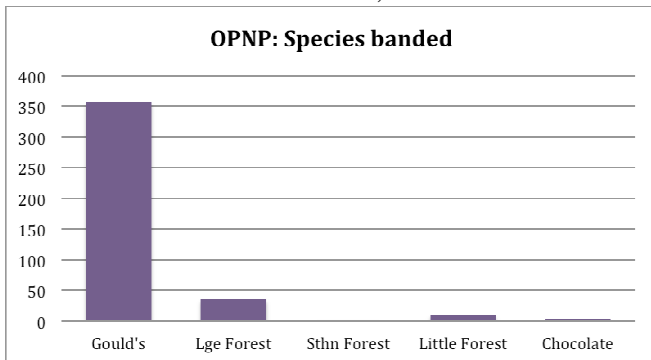


It has had solitary bats only four times and is most often used by large maternity groups.

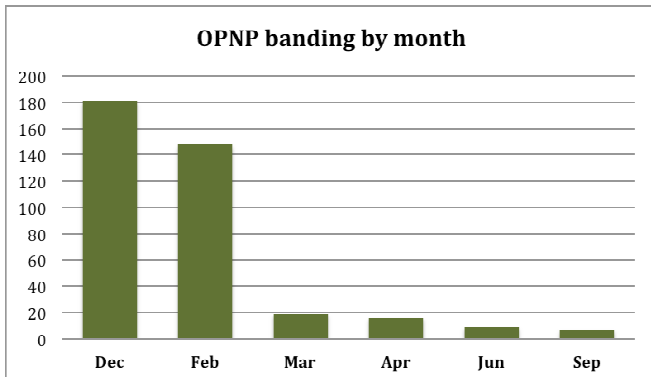
Banding

We recommenced banding in December and still catch a few old bats banded by Natasha around 2004-5. This month there were five old bats, 7 were newly banded and 204 bats altogether.

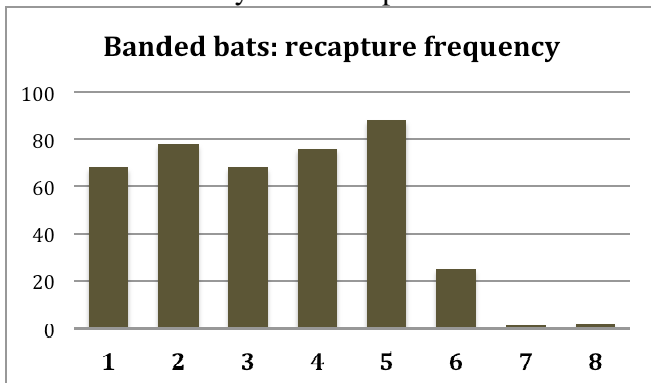
We now have 406 banded bats, 357 of them Gould's



Most of the banding was done last summer, with just a trickle since



Since summer we have had 3 more box checks, so bats which form part of the ongoing colony have had 5 opportunities to be recaptured. Plus the old bats were recorded last year from April.



The bats captured 8 or 7 times are the old females, plus one of those captured 6 times. The others in the 6 column are all new bats banded since Dec '12, and all but two are female, which suggests that females form the core of the long-term colony and remain members of it far longer than do the males.

Next box check is Sunday 13 October at 2 p.m.