



La Pélite

The red gorge shows up in your mailbox when you least expect it.

Discovering...

Bats

The Haut-Var and Cians valleys are home to an especially large variety of bats. **25 of the 34 species living in France can be found there!** Due to the many different habitats (forested or rocky areas, heathland), many bat species live in the Gorges de Daluis Nature Reserve.

Moreover, the reserve is characterised by the presence of cavities and ancient mines that are ideal for some species to go into hibernation, like the common pipistrelle. Indeed, during winter, bats enter a torpor state and seek calm, cool, and humid places. Other species are less sensitive to changes in temperature and can also hibernate in buildings or tree hollows, like the Leisler's bat.

All of the bats living in Europe and in our regions are **insectivores**. They mainly eat mosquitoes, aphids, or other small invertebrates. They can eat as much as 600 insects per night, which help control population size. Therefore, they can be considered as formidable natural insecticides! They are also **excellent indicators of the global wellbeing of a habitat**.

Meeting...

A chiropterologist

As part of the Natura 2000 action program, **David Sarrey**, a bat expert working for the GCP (Provence Bat Association), spent last summer looking all over the Haut Var valley with a team of volunteers.

To study the species present in a territory, chiropterologists use different methods.



Parti-coloured bat © M. Corail LPO

Receptors can be placed in strategic locations to record the **ultrasounds** that bats make at night. By analysing them, we can identify which species are present in the area. In addition, some bats are caught by setting large nets between their roosts and their hunting grounds. Once caught, scientists can study its morphology, and it can be equipped with a transmitter to keep track of it. This method is mainly used to discover where they roost. Studying said roosts is also a good way to learn more about a species.

Upcoming...

The reserve and ecotourism day in Guillaumes

On 10th September from 10 to 12, at the *Maison des gorges* in front of Guillaumes town hall, the nature reserve introduces you to its patrimony.

The Maison des gorges in Guillaumes is freely accessible during Guillaume town hall's opening hours.

The Reserve team is grateful to Elisabeth Beneventi for her work and expresses their deep sorrow to her family during this difficult time.

Did you know...?

The parti-coloured bat (*Vespertilio murinus*)

Last summer, a parti-coloured bat was caught at the Roua Pass during an inventory. It is only the fourth time this species is found in the PACA region!

The parti-coloured bat is characterised by a dark-brown fur with light silver tips. The membrane and head are black. It mainly roosts in buildings and rocky crevices.

It seems like it prefers to hunt by catching insects in midair. This "high flight" behaviour makes it harder to identify.

Pictures: © Clémentine Ageron