

Skipton Castle Woods bat trail

BEYOND THE BAT CAVE...

A bat trail around Skipton Castle Woods for families.

Allow an hour for your twilight adventure and expect a few short steep hills and some bumpy paths.

STAY SAFE

- Take a torch on your adventure (unless you can echolocate (find your way in the dark) like a bat, in which case, you'll be fine without one),
- Always go with an adult,
- Wear sturdy footwear and
- Watch where you put your feet especially around steep slopes and water.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

Bats go into a kind of sluggish, cold sleep in winter. To have the best chance of seeing bats, visit on a summer's evening. Some bats start to come out at around sunset, so that's a good time to start your walk.



Loved this trail?

Download more free activities and walks at woodlandtrust.org.uk/skiptoncastlewoods

BEYOND THE BAT CAVE...

Skipton Castle Woods is great to visit in the day, all year round. But come at twilight and you're bound to glimpse some of its more intriguing and unique nocturnal residents.

What comes to mind when you think of bats?

Halloween?

Vampires?

Skipton Castle Woods is home to **5** species of bat!

Follow the numbered glow-in-the-dark signs around the woods to uncover more about these curious woodland residents.



Maybe the caped crusader's secret lair should have been in a wood not a cave. Bats love woods and trees and Skipton Castle Woods is no exception. The woods provide food, cosy homes and hotels and even maternity wards for bats.

Batman in his bat cave?

1

All our UK bats are insectivores (eat insects) so sorry, no gruesome blood sucking! Broadleaved woods, like this one, are home to more types of insects than other types of woodland. So that means more yummy dinners for bats. No wonder they like it here.

2

Pipistrelles are our commonest bat and the best bet for spotting. As these tiny bats dart through the night sky they can catch up to 3,000 insects in one night. All that flying gives them a big appetite!

3

The water at Skipton Castle Woods is like a giant buffet counter for a special kind of bat called **Daubenton's**. Keep an eye out for a bat acting like a mini hovercraft, zigzagging over the water. They fly very low and catch insects with their feet.

4

Noctules visit these woods and are one of the UK's biggest bats. They like to live in trees. Can you spot any holes where Noctules might sleep? Don't disturb them though – all our bat species are protected by Law.

5

You can't see very well at night, but bats use their super ears to find their way. Bats make shouting sounds and listen to the echoes (echolocation) that return to help them find things. **Natterer's** bats like the edge of woods where the trees meet farm land. They use their very quiet echolocation to find their favourite foods; midges, moths and wasps.

6

As you walk back through the woods, stay alert and don't forget to look up. **Brown long-eared** bats (yes, they have really big ears!) love woods like these. They fly in and around the trees in a slow, fluttery way. Sometimes you can even see them hovering and picking insects off leaves and bark.

