

Switching on the bat signal: five years of long-tailed bat acoustic monitoring in Auckland

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Previous to 2010, little knowledge was known about long-tailed bats (*Chalinolobus tuberculatus*) within Auckland. Over the last five years, with the assistance from local board and regional funding, Auckland Council has been able to build a picture of long-tailed bat habitat across the mosaic of urban, rural, planted-exotic and native land-use parcels. To date over 80 locations have been accessed using acoustic monitoring across Auckland, particularly in the south and west of the city limits. This is proving to be particularly useful as a reference tool in a growing Auckland, where habitat is under pressure from an expanding human population.

Auckland Council has the unique position of doing this bat monitoring, undertaking public advocacy and considering bats through consent conditions across a broad spectrum of land-uses with many of these areas under heavy development pressure. Bats have been detected more widely and across more diverse habitats and land uses than previously thought for Auckland. There has been significant interest from landowners and community conservation groups in detecting whether there are bats in their area, this has been enabled through council and local board funding of bat detectors and encouraging detections to be reported back to create a 'Bat Map' for Auckland. The learnings from all of this are valuable to share not just for bat conservation but also protection of habitat for many other threatened species.