



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**Ministry for Health & Environment**  
**Joshua Hassan House**  
**Secretary's Lane**  
**Gibraltar**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

No. 396/2014

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014

### **Gib-Bats Project gathers momentum this weekend**

The Gibraltar Bats study aptly named 'Gib-Bats' will be hard at work over this coming weekend with members of its specialist team from the UK arriving in Gibraltar tomorrow.

Gib-Bats is a collaborative study between the Gibraltar Museum, the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society and specialists from the UK, with the backing of HM Government of Gibraltar through its Department for the Environment. The project was set up in 2013 to monitor species in Gibraltar, protect their roosts and encourage them to re-use sites which were abandoned in the past due to human disturbance. Bats unfortunately are mammals which have been largely forgotten in Gibraltar for many years and it is our community's duty to help protect these wonderful animals which are so important to our local biodiversity.

James Shipman, the project's leader, arrives this Friday to assist the local team made up of members of the Gibraltar Museum and the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society, following on excellent progress that has been made since a previous visit in April. The team has been working hard on monitoring areas in Gibraltar which these animals are using for feeding and roosting and have also found a few interesting species using the Rock.

Among the tasks being undertaken during the visit, are assessing sites where they will be installing bat boxes - man made roosts these animals will hopefully use to shelter and breed over the winter months and also, hopefully, help the colonies reach the numbers they were once at during the 1980s and before. The team will also be looking at the progress the local sites have made since their last visit and assessing the state of the current summer population seeing as the bats have just had their young pups.

Minister for the Environment, the Hon. John Cortes said: "I am very pleased to support this work, which adds to the knowledge and conservation of Gibraltar's biodiversity, which is important for its own sake, and is in keeping with Gibraltar's international obligations."