

WHISKERED BAT IN NORFOLK

A specimen of the whiskered bat, *Myotis mystacinus* (Kuhl), was caught and examined recently by Mr. R. P. Bagnall-Oakeley at his home at Brinton Hall, near Melton Constable, in Norfolk. Several are believed to be roosting in the roof there. Identification was based upon the length of ear and tragus, the extension of the long dark brown fur on to the wings above and below and on to the upper surface of the interfemoral membrane, the fringe of hairs on the lips, and the relatively small size. The wing-span measurement was slightly larger than that of the normal pipistrelle, being $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches from tip to tip. This constitutes the first record for Norfolk.—J. H. TAYLOR-PAGE.

BADGERS AND FOXES EATING WHORTLEBERRIES

On 18th August, 1953, my younger son and I, in company with Mr. David Griffin, watched one of the few badger sets to be found in the centre of Dartmoor. Two adult badgers emerged while the light was good and went 50 yards or so from the set where we watched them at close quarters (down to 6 yards), picking and eating whortleberries. They seemed to be expert at using their teeth to pull these small berries rapidly off the bushes. Many would obviously be required for a satisfying meal. We camped out on the moor and the next day found further evidence of a whortleberry diet in badger droppings near another set. As far as I know this food has not previously been recorded for the badger. It is not mentioned in Ernest Neal's book, *The Badger* (1948), and only under most favourable conditions could it be proved by direct observation.

We noted, too, that fox droppings contained a large proportion of whortleberries, and eventually, in full sunlight, we watched two foxes for twenty minutes steadily picking and eating whortleberries. The berries were pulled off the low bushes with a backward movement of the head. A forepaw was occasionally used to steady a berried spray or to bring it closer to the mouth. The loud noise of a low-flying aeroplane was disregarded except for a most casual glance by one fox as it receded.—H. G. HURRELL.

[In *Wild Exmoor through the Year* (1930), the late E. W. Hendy records that a friend of his saw an Exmoor cliff fox pulling whortleberry stems through its mouth and licking up any fruit that fell to the ground.—*Ed.*]