

## Photographing small mammals with infrared laser technology

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It brings a lot of satisfaction I reckon, to photograph topics or subjects that remain rarely seen.

Maybe that is why I like to picture smaller mammals such as bats and mice. Unseen by most people, yet they occur in and around every house.

Together with my good friend Pieter-Jan D'Hondt, I have been working on incorporating Infrared technology into mouse photography. The best of both worlds we think...

As such we tried to photograph jumping mice. The mouse must jump from one branch to another (convincing the mouse often takes a while!), thereby triggering the laser system, connected to a master flash which triggers all slave flashes.

The camera is operated in bulb mode.

Here are two images PJ and I made last weekend, showing a Wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus*.



Fly my pretty



Jumping sequence “strobelighted”

Another example is high-speed photography on bats.

This takes time, skill, lots of gear and quite some practice, but after several years we finally start getting decent flying bat images.

The principle of bat photography is to make an infrared system which triggers a master flash, subsequently triggering many slave flashes. Your camera is in bulb mode and is operated manually. Always better to use as much cameras as possible, to increase the chance of getting a fullframe image.



Testing the gear



First bats arriving whilst testing



Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*



Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*





Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*



Bechstein's bats tend to inhabit older forest



Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* hunting insects



Self portret.