



HUMAN-BAT CONFLICTS

The BC Community Bat Program responds to over 1,200 calls each year. Most are about finding a live or dead bat or reporting bat colonies in houses.

A bat inside a house is no cause for alarm – open windows and doors at dusk and it will likely fly out. A bat that has landed can be moved like a bee: put on gloves and invert a container over it, gently slide cardboard under, and release it outside. Bats should be placed at least 2 metres high to assist in flying away. Never leave them in a bucket or pail – they may become trapped and die.

In summer, tiny grey pups occasionally fall from maternity roosts. If you find a pup on the ground, you can put on gloves, gently place the pup into a soft pillow case and tack it up near a roost or on a tree so the pup can crawl out.

To keep bats from taking up residence in your home, in fall or winter you can seal openings that may provide access to roost sites. Bats can squeeze through openings as small as a dime.



The BC Conservation Foundation is a not-for-profit, registered charity that has been working in BC since 1969.

www.bccf.com

For information about bats in BC or to report bats in conflict, contact:

BC Bat Action Team
www.bcbats.ca



To report wildlife in conflict contact the Conservation Officer Service at

1.877.952.7277

WildSafeBC is funded through the Province of British Columbia and in partnership with communities and organizations throughout BC.



British Columbia Conservation Foundation

www.wildsafebc.com

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photos by Jared Hobbs and Jordi Segers



BC BATS



British Columbia Conservation Foundation





MANAGE YOUR BATS

Bats need our help and protection, and can make excellent neighbours, but must be restricted from entering human living spaces.

- 1. Separate human and bat spaces** - if bats are entering your house, immediately seal openings between your living space and attics or roofing used by bats. This protects you and your family and pets from contact.
- 2. If you have a bat colony**, consider keeping it!
- 3. Work in appropriate timing windows** if you are doing any re-roofing, renovations or choose to exclude bats from a roost site. Trapping bats inside can lead to dead bats or bats finding their way into other regions of a house. See the Bat Exclusion Calendar and contact the BC Community Bat Program for guidance on methods and timing.
- 4. Consider installing an alternate habitat** such as a bat box if exclusion is necessary – visit www.bcbats.ca for plans and installation advice.
- 5. Get fertilizing** with an NPK ratio of 10-3-1; bat guano is a potent garden fertilizer. Wear a mask when sweeping to avoid inhalation of dust or guano particles, then sprinkle guano around plants, work into soil or steep in water and apply as a 'tea'.

! BATS AND HUMAN HEALTH

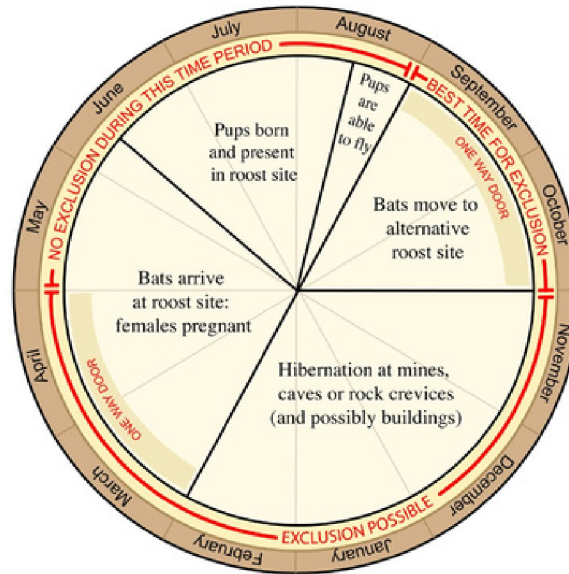
Rabies is a serious illness that can be fatal and can be transmitted through a bat bite or scratch; nevertheless, contracting rabies from a bat is extremely rare. Less than 0.5% of BC bats test positive for rabies and many may never show symptoms.

Bats with rabies may appear sick and weak, and be more likely to be in places where people can come in contact. Be wary of bats that act strangely, such as bats flying during the day. NEVER pick up a sick or dead bat with bare hands; use gloves or a shovel to gently move the bat away from human activity if possible. Use a plastic bag to collect a dead bat.

Protect your pets and family by ensuring all pets are vaccinated for rabies and by keeping cats indoors.

The risk of acquiring a disease through bat guano in BC is minimal. Spritz guano with water before sweeping it up, and wear a mask.

Contact BC Community Bat Program at 1-855-922-2287 for more information about bats.



Bat species that frequently roost in houses and outbuildings in BC are Little Brown Myotis, Yuma Myotis, Big Brown Bat and California Myotis. You may also find colonies of Townsend's Big-Eared Bats. Contact the BC Community Bat Program (www.bcbats.ca) to learn more.

There are 15 species of bats that breed in BC. Almost half are provincially at-risk; two are federally endangered, including the Little Brown Myotis. Bats in BC face many threats, including habitat loss, direct persecution from humans and White-Nose Syndrome (WNS). WNS is a devastating disease that has killed more than 6 million bats in North America. It causes high mortality in some bats, but does not affect humans. WNS is caused by a fungus which attacks bats during hibernation. Providing secure habitat for bats may help species recover from WNS. In summer, you can help bats by providing roosting and foraging habitat, including retaining snags and wetlands or installing bat boxes. Visit www.bcbats.ca for more information.

If a pet or a person comes in contact with a bat:

- Rabies is a preventable disease but must be treated immediately. It is very serious and a delay in treatment could result in death. If you are bitten or scratched, immediately contact a doctor and/or public health office. The human vaccine is excellent, involving shots in the arm, and not in the stomach like older versions of the vaccine.
- If your pet has had contact, or suspected contact, with a bat, immediately contact a vet. Untreated, your pet could pass the virus on to you or others.

For more about bats and rabies, visit: www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/rabies

! HOW TO REPORT BATS:

With the growing number of bats with White Nose Syndrome in Washington State, you can help by reporting dead or sick bats to the **BC Community Bat Program**. This can be done either online at bcbats.ca, by email at info@bcbats.ca, or by calling 1-855-922-2287. You can also contribute to citizen science by reporting sightings through **iNaturalist**.



BAT FACTS:

- All bats in BC are insectivores, eating only insects and arachnids (spiders and scorpions).
- Our bats range in size from the tiny western small-footed (3.5 g) to the hoary bat (26 g) – all smaller than a house sparrow.
- Bats eat more than half their body weight in insects each night, including many agricultural, forest and urban pests.
- Although bats mate in the fall, females do not initiate a pregnancy until spring, and then only if they have sufficient fat reserves.
- Most species of bats in BC produce only one pup each year. Born in late May or June, pups learn to fly in about 3 weeks.
- Colonies in buildings are usually maternity colonies housing females and their pups, and are re-used year after year.
- The oldest-known wild little brown myotis was 31 years old when last captured.
- Bats may spend up to six months of the year hibernating, but we don't know where - very few hibernacula have been identified in BC.



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