

Can

Bats & Humans Coexist?



What do YOU think of bats?

Many people have come to believe certain stereotypes about bats: that they are blind, flying rodents; that they carry disease; and that they suck blood. While some of these ideas are rooted in fact, they are highly distorted, exaggerated, or simply wrong. Bats are beneficial creatures and an important part of the ecosystem, but many bats are in danger. There are, however, many ways to help them.

Bat Preconceptions & Facts

Bats are blind, flying rodents

X



Bats see well

Order Chiroptera, grand order Arconta (primates and lemurs)

Bats are disease-ridden

X

Bat guano (droppings) can contain a fungus that causes Histoplasmosis



If you **MUST** handle a bat, always wear gloves

A low percentage of bats do contract rabies, but rabies is well-controlled in the US

Most bats suck blood

X

3

1260

Species of bats feed on blood, and they don't suck, but lap, tiny amounts

How Bats Benefit the Ecosystem

Bats pollinate



about **528**

species of plants worldwide

Bats distribute seeds



and Bats prey on insects:

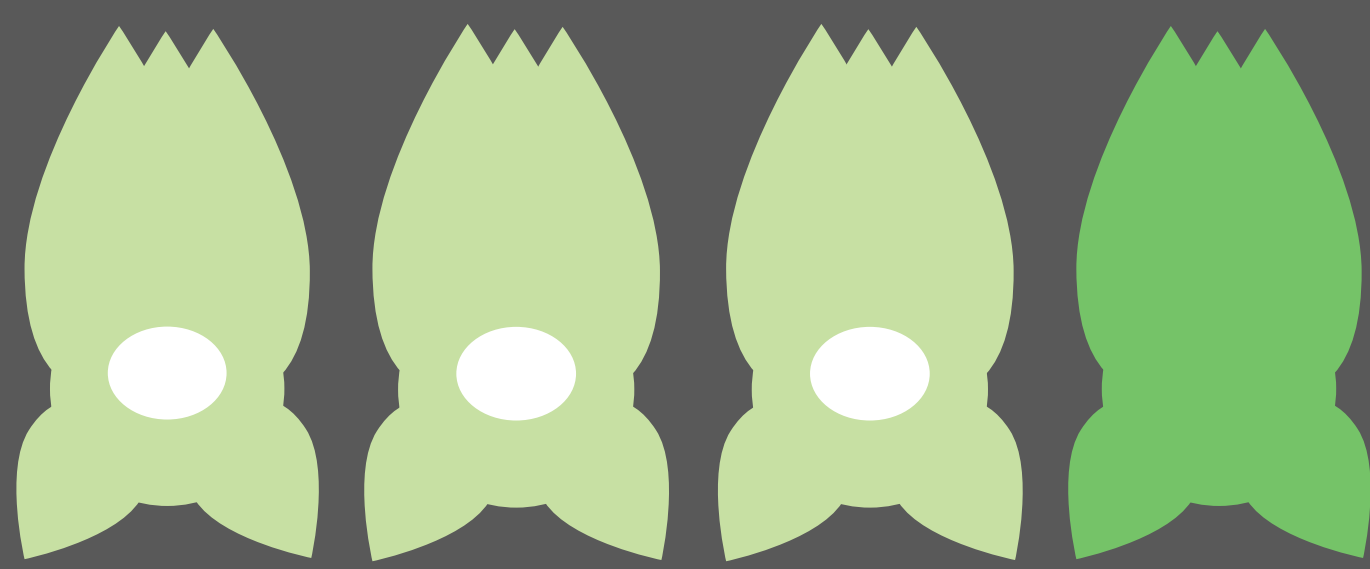


Bats' pest control on farms in the continental US is worth equivalent to more than **\$3B/year**

and reduces the need for pesticides

Threats to Bats & How You Can Help

White Nose Syndrome



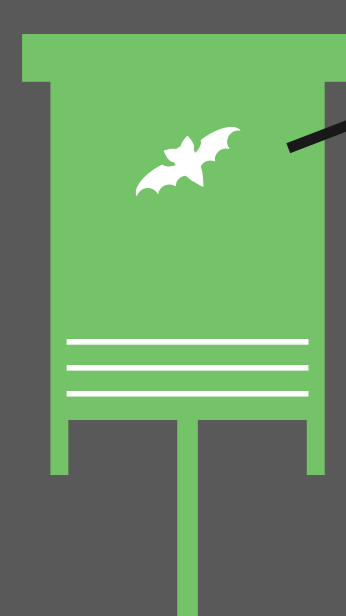
WNS, caused by a fungus that disturbs bats' hibernation, has spread rapidly in the US since 2006. WNS effects at least seven species of bat, and where it has occurred, it has caused an up to **73% decrease** in bat numbers (about 3 in 4 bats)

WNS spreads in part due to bat migration, but you can minimize spread from humans by staying out of known bat caves and bat hibernation sites, and not entering closed or gated caves. You can also help by reporting unusual bat behavior (daytime flying especially when bats should be hibernating or the inability to fly) to your state natural resource agency

Habitat Loss due to urbanization, pollution, and cave destruction

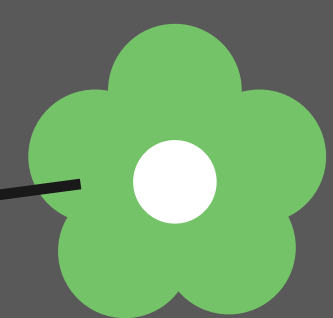
Displaced bats roost in homes, sometimes bringing them into conflict with humans

There are many ways to create new habitat areas:



install a bat box

grow a wildflower garden with a water feature for bats to drink from



Bat-proof your home to reduce risk to both bats and your family

If bats have already taken up residence, call a professional for help to remove bats safely and clean. They will have special training and gear



Sources:

- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4730123/>
- https://batworld.org/myths_facts_page/
- <http://wildliferemovalusa.com/bat-dangerous.html>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/features/bats/>
- <http://www.clayton.edu/faculty/sburnett/Bat-Visits/Are-bats-good-or-bad-to-have-around>
- <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/what-can-you-do-help>

Poster Design by Amanda Bouvette