

Bat Boxes

This box:

- ✈ Can hold up to 40 females and offspring, or 10 males.
- ✈ Is most successful when installed at least 12 feet off the ground.
- ✈ Should be placed near a water source, within ¼ mile.
- ✈ Will reach temperatures between 80 to 100 degrees.
- ✈ Is best when it has at least six hours of sunlight per day.
- ✈ Provides adequate housing for bats out of hibernation.
- ✈ Will be the bats home after migration each year.
- ✈ Should be cleared of wasp nests, if present, in early spring or late winter before bats return.

Benefits of Bats

The Little Brown Bat, which inhabits most of the country including the Midwest, is a necessity to our region's ecosystem. Their diet consists of many harmful insects including beetles, mosquitoes, leaf hoppers, and moths. A single Little Brown Bat can eat up to a 1000 insects an hour each night. This makes bats beneficial to farmers, because they reduce the need for harmful pesticides.

If a bat box is installed in a certain area and is successful, the insect population will decrease in the area of the bat box. Some insects can hear a bat coming from 100 feet away. This causes the insects to leave and stop breeding in that location.

Rabies and Bats

Many people dislike bats in fear that they carry rabies. This is a very common misconception.

A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stated less than 1% of the total bat population carry rabies. Six percent of tested bats carried rabies, but all the tested bats showed signs of illness and were unable to fly. A grounded bat could have been victim to a predator, developed any number of illnesses specific to bats or had another accident, like being impaled on barbed wire.

If a bat is flying, it is healthy. There is a very slim chance of catching rabies from a bat, but to be safe, don't handle a grounded bat. Always alert the proper authorities if you come in contact with a grounded bat.

The White-nose Syndrome

White-nose Syndrome (*Geomyces destructans*) is a fungus that grows over bats during hibernation. This fungus irritates and wakes the bats. The bats awake dehydrated and hungry. With no insects to eat, more than 90% of the bats affected die of starvation.

Many caves in the Midwest are being closed to the public hoping to keep the syndrome from entering the caves on humans.



The Little Brown Bat

- ✈ Weigh between a ¼ - ½ oz.
- ✈ Live 7-8 years, but can live over 10 years.
- ✈ Can eat up to 1000 insects per hour.
- ✈ Are located throughout the United States except Florida, Texas, and Southern California.
- ✈ In Indiana, bats either migrate or hibernate.
- ✈ Males and females live separately.
- ✈ Bats mate in the fall, then hibernate.
- ✈ Females often return to raise offspring where they were born.
- ✈ Typically females have one offspring per year.
- ✈ Bats are full grown and able to fly after four weeks.
- ✈ Bats are the only flying mammals
- ✈ Bats are most active when insects are available, at dusk and before dawn.
- ✈ Locate food using echolocation
 - the sonar like system used by dolphins, bats, and other animals to detect and locate objects by emitting usually high-pitched sounds that reflect off the object and return to the animal's ears or other sensory receptors

Bats

Nature's Bug Zappers



Brochure by Duncan Moran

Information from
Bat Conservation International &
Wikipedia.Org