

General Bat Proofing Schedule:

Remember it is best to install a bat house a year in advance.

<p>April to early-May</p> <p>Bats may be present but no pups yet</p>	<p>Install one-way doors in identified openings. The one-way door will let bats exit the building but not reenter.</p>
<p>mid-May to mid-August</p> <p>Bats and flightless pups present</p>	<p>Bats and their flightless pups may be present so do not seal them in.</p> <p>Watch the bats exit at dusk to identify openings.</p>
<p>late-August to November</p> <p>Some bats may remain</p>	<p>Some bats may remain in the attic or basement so bat proof with one-way doors.</p>
<p>December to March</p> <p>Big brown bats may remain for the winter</p>	<p>Seal entrances to your living space before bats arrive in the spring. If one-way doors were used in the fall to exclude over-wintering bats, seal all entrances to complete bat proofing.</p>

For more information about rabies call:
1-800-4RABIES.

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“Wildlife Damage Management Fact Sheet Series: Bats,”
Curtis, P.D. and K.L. Sullivan 2001.

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY.

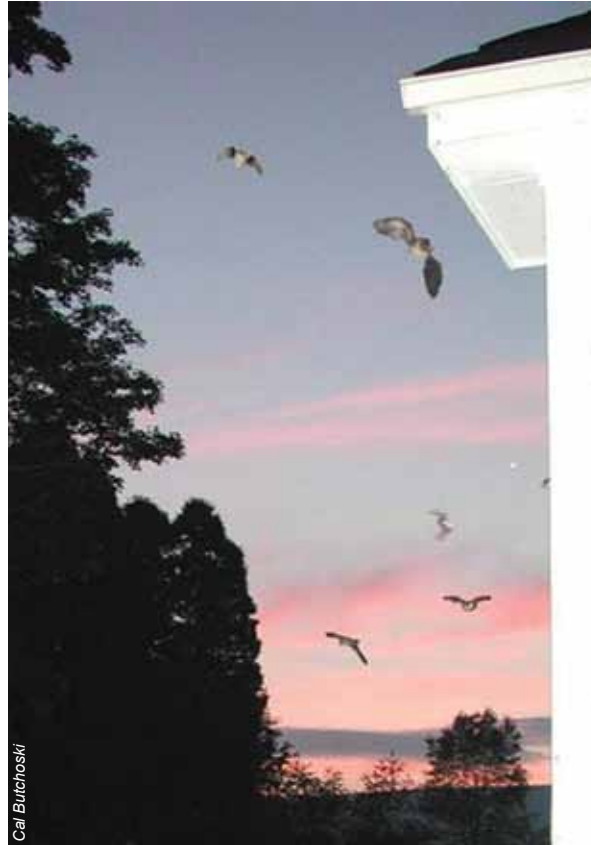
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Bats in Your House

Dealing with unwanted guests



Cal Butchowski

How to Evict Uninvited Guests

Human-bat conflicts were once a common occurrence in Vermont during the summer months. Vermont’s big brown bat and little brown bat commonly live in buildings. Since the deadly fungal disease known as White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) has devastated Vermont’s bat populations, these conflicts are less common. The little brown bat, now state endangered, has suffered a 95 percent population decline due to WNS so care is required to avoid harming these rare mammals. This guide will help you deal with unwanted guests while keeping both you and the bats safe.

SINGLE BAT IN THE HOUSE

Individual bats occasionally enter houses, most often during evenings in July and August. These wayward bats are often the year’s young that are just beginning to fly. If you encounter

a bat flying in a room, **make sure no person or pet has had contact with the bat.**

Capture the bat using the following methods but do not release the bat if it was found in a room with a sleeping person, a previously unattended child, a mentally disabled or intoxicated person, or an unvaccinated pet.



James Parnell

If there is any question about possible contact with the bat, do not release it. Call 1-800-4RABIES or contact your local health department as soon as possible. Call 1-800-640-4374 (VT) or 1-802-863-7240.

Removing a Flying Bat

Remain calm! Do not chase or swat at the bat. This will only cause it to panic and fly erratically around the room.

Shut all doors leading into other rooms to confine the bat to a single area. Remove pets from the room.



James Kiser

Open all windows (without screens) and doors leading outside to give the bat a chance to escape. There is little chance of other bats flying in from outside, so don’t worry.

Leave the lights on, stand quietly against a wall or door, and watch the bat to be certain it actually flies outdoors.

Do not try to herd the bat toward a window. Allow it to get its bearings calmly, and don’t worry about it swooping at you. It is not going to get tangled in your hair! When indoors, a bat makes steep, banking turns, so it flies upward as it approaches a wall and swoops lower near the center of the room.

Within 10 to 15 minutes the bat should settle down, locate the open door or window, and fly out of the room. If it does not, wait for the bat to rest and follow the instructions for removing a resting bat.

VERMONT
FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT
www.vtfishandwildlife.com
(802) 241-3700



Removing a Resting Bat

✈ Put on a pair of heavy leather or work gloves. ***Never handle a bat, or any other wild animal, with your bare hands.***

✈ Place a container, such as a large plastic bowl or coffee can, over the bat as it rests on the wall. The bat will likely be exhausted and disoriented and should not fly when you approach it.

✈ Slide a piece of rigid cardboard (or a magazine or lid from a bowl) between the container and the wall to trap the bat. Hold the cardboard firmly against the container and carry it outside.

✈ If the bat is in a hard-to-reach place, use a fine-meshed insect net with a long pole.

✈ Once you have captured the bat and are certain no people or pets have come into contact with it, place the container on its side on a secure place above the ground – such as on a ledge or against a tree. Be sure the opening is facing away from you, then slide away the cardboard.

✈ Releasing the bat above the ground will keep it safe from predators until it has its bearings. Unlike birds, most bats must drop from a perch and catch air under their wings before they can fly.

If bats continue to enter your home, inspect it, including the attic, to determine if you are housing a bat maternity colony.



BAT COLONIES

Because bats have only one or two pups per year, the destruction of just one maternity colony can have long-term impacts on the local population of bats and insects.

Colonies greater than 100 bats should be reported to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

Follow these simple instructions to bat-proof your home.

Bats, Birds or Some Other Critter?

Be sure you really do have bats. It is important to correctly identify the animals causing a problem. Bats do not damage or destroy property by gnawing or chewing. Squirrels and mice in an attic make scurrying and squeaking noises that sound like bats, and chimney swifts look like bats when they fly out at night.

✈ The best way to tell if you have a bat colony is to look for roosting bats or bat droppings in your attic. During the day, bats usually roost in narrow crevices in the attic walls and between the rafters. When you enter the



Cal Butchoski

attic, the bats will quickly retreat out of sight, rather than take flight.

✈ If you are uncomfortable entering the attic when bats are present, inspect the attic at night for bat droppings. The dry, black droppings are about the size of a grain of rice and are soft and easily crushed, revealing shiny insect parts. Bat droppings accumulate in piles below areas where bats roost. Mouse droppings look similar, but would be scattered in small amounts throughout the attic.



Scott Darling

✈ Bats can sometimes be detected by the presence of black or brown stains from body oils.

✈ Watching for bats outside your house at dusk or dawn also will reveal where bats are getting in.

BAT PROOFING BASICS

Once you know there is a bat colony, the best way to bat proof your house is through exclusion. It is a safe, effective, and humane way of evicting unwanted bats.

Full details on how to exclude bats (exclusion methods) can be found on the Bat

Conservation International's web site at www.batcon.org. Just type "do it yourself" in the search box and click on Bats in Buildings: Do-It-Yourself Guidelines.

Here are a few things to remember when excluding bats:

✈ ***Exclusions should never be done between mid-May and mid-August.*** This is when the bats are having their pups and the young would be trapped inside.

✈ It is a good idea to put up a bat house before your exclusion to give the bats a safe place to go. You will still benefit from the bats' insect control without having unwanted guests in your house.

✈ Bat houses suited to Vermont's northern climate can be purchased or plans for building your own can be found online at www.batcon.org.

✈ It is best to install your bat house during May through August, ***a year prior to bat-proofing.*** This will give the bats time to become accustomed to it.

✈ Be sure to place the house where it will receive at least eight hours of sunlight.



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