










Lake Erie Nature & Science Center
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LIVING WITH BATS

A How-to Guide on Humanely Handling Bats in Any Situation

Bats are an important part of our ecosystem! A single bat can eat over a thousand insects in one night! Bats are frequently found in homes and buildings. They can use these structures for raising their young and hibernating. But sometimes, bats find their way into a home but can not get out.

IF BATS ARE ROOSTING IN YOUR HOME, YOU CAN HUMANELY EVICT THEM YOURSELF

-  Do NOT exclude bats from May to August as some may have young that are not able to fly and will become trapped and die.
-  First, find all openings that are used as entrances and exits. There are a few ways to do this: Watch for bats to leave 30 minutes before sunset and up until 30 minutes after sunset. It only takes a few seconds for a bat to leave! Look for discolored holes in the house eaves, as this may be the result of oils rubbing off the bats body as it enters and exits.
-  Once entrance routes have been determined, seal up all holes except for one. Place a piece of netting over this last hole, and secure all sides, except for the bottom. This will allow the bats to exit, but not re-enter.
-  A piece of PVC piping that is 2 inches in diameter and 10 inches long may also be used. Squeeze the tube into the hole. If it does not fit, cut the end into flaps and secure it to the building. Bats are not able to cling to a smooth surface and will not be able to re-enter.
-  Leave the exclusion devices in place for 5-7 days to ensure all bats have left. After 5-7 days, permanently seal all holes 1/4"x1/2" or larger that may give bats (or other animals) access to your home.
-  To encourage bats to exit, leave attic lights on 24 hours and set up fans to bring the temperature down. Bats love to roost in warm, dark, quiet places!
-  Since bats are beneficial to the environment (they love to eat those pesky mosquitoes!), before eviction, it's a good idea to put up a bat house to give them another roosting option.

***Our Mission:** The nonprofit Lake Erie Nature & Science Center educates and inspires each of us to understand, appreciate and take responsibility for our natural universe.*

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IF A BAT GETS INTO A ROOM OF YOUR HOUSE, STAY CALM!



Do NOT stand in the center of the room. Bats swoop down to gain altitude and this is often confused with a bat trying to attack.



Close all windows and doors except for one. Give the bat time to find its own way out.



If it is dark outside, speed up the process by turning off all inside lights and turning on outside lights.



If the bat does not leave on its own, wait for it to land. CAREFULLY, place a small box over the top of the bat and slide another piece of cardboard underneath.



NEVER touch a bat without wearing leather gloves. Take the bat outside and place it at the base of a tree, so it can crawl up the tree trunk. A bat must be in vertical position in order to take flight.



If a bat is found active in the house during the winter or accidentally awakened from hibernation, then it should **not** be placed outside or allowed to go back into hibernation. When a bat wakes from hibernation it uses much of its stored energy. If allowed to re-enter hibernation, it will not have enough energy left to stay in hibernation very long. If it wakes up before insects are available, it will starve to death. Bats found active inside during the winter should be safely captured and brought to Lake Erie Nature & Science Center to be examined and artificially hibernated.

3 COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT BATS

1. All bats have rabies: Yes bats may carry rabies however less than 1 % of bats tested are found to be rabid. When bats contract the rabies virus, they often show symptoms quickly. There is no reason to believe that a healthy appearing bat has rabies. Since rabies can be a fatal disease for humans, it is important to understand the disease. The only way to get rabies is from direct contact with the saliva or brain tissue of an infected animal. Unfortunately, the only sure way to tell if a bat is positive for rabies is to submit the dead bat to a laboratory for testing. If a bat bites you or if you think a bat may have bit you, attempt to safely capture it and contact your local health department and family physician right away.

2. All bats drink blood: Only vampire bats drink blood. There are just three species of vampire bats in the world, and they are found in Mexico, Central America and South America. They feed on animal blood by biting the animal and licking (not sucking) the blood as it drips down the animal's body. All 11 species of Ohio's bats are insectivores and consume fifty percent or more of their body weight in insects each night. In other parts of the world, there are species of bats that eat fruit, nectar and pollen.

3. Bats are blind: Bats can see. However, all species of bats found in Ohio have very small eyes. Most bats rely more on echolocation than their vision to locate food and avoid obstacles during flight. Bats emit high frequency sounds (inaudible to the human ear) and listen for those sounds bouncing back off objects. Through this echolocation, bats can find an object as small as a piece of human hair.

**If you have a bat dilemma, please try to handle it in a humane manner.
Please call us at 440-871-2900 if you have any questions.**