



# Facts on the Fly!

## THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROMOTE BAT CONSERVATION

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You don't need to travel far or have a degree in biology to help bats. You can make a difference for bat conservation by working on local projects. Every community has unique needs. These suggestions may apply to the bats where you live.

Much more information and downloadable publications are available at BCI's website: [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).

### Things EVERYONE can do for bats:

*After centuries of myths and misunderstandings, bats have acquired a poor public image. You can help counter these myths by raising public awareness about bats in your community. Because bats are mammals, they are susceptible to the rabies virus, making sick individuals a possible risk to people who know little about them. Due to fears that are often greatly exaggerated, many bats are needlessly killed. You can help save bats from misguided persecution by:*

- **Joining** Bat Conservation International and obtaining the most up-to-date information about bats and bat conservation. To join, visit [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).
- **Giving** bat lectures to local schools, nature centers, zoos, museums or libraries. Presentations and videos are available through BCI's catalog.
- **Donating** books and other educational materials about bats to local libraries, resource centers or schools.
- **Writing** a positive article about bats for your local newspaper (especially for Halloween).
- **Helping** people safely remove stray bats from living quarters. This can be done easily by covering the bat with a coffee can when it lands and slipping a piece of cardboard between the wall and the can. Then the bat can be released outside. Do not attempt to handle bats without gloves, as they may bite in self-defense.
- **Answering** questions or directing people to BCI during public health scares.
- **Educating** local pest-control operators about humane exclusion techniques. Exclusion is the only effective way to remove a nuisance colony of bats from a building. Poisons, naphthalene flakes and harmless repellent devices do not deter bats and may actually harm humans.
- **Providing** facts about bats and rabies to local health

departments, veterinarians and personal physicians. To obtain detailed information about bats and public health issues, visit [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).

- **Installing** a bat house as part of an exclusion project or just to bring bats into your backyard. BCI's website provides designs and detailed instructions for building and installing bat houses. You can also order a ready-made bat house, the *Bat House Builder's Handbook* or the *Building Homes for Bats* DVD from BCI's online catalog.
- **Learning** more about the bats in your state by visiting the 'Species Profiles' section of [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).
- **Volunteering** to advocate for bats in your community.

### Things TEACHERS and STUDENTS can do for bats:

*Bats rank among the world's most diverse and fascinating mammals, yet few people know anything about them. People must first understand bats before they can really care about their survival. You can increase bat awareness by:*

- **Teaching** a unit on bats. Exciting curricula aids are available through BCI.
- **Learning** more about the bats in your state by visiting the 'Species Profiles' section of [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).
- **Researching** specific bat-related topics. Archived issues of BATS magazine issues can be found at [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).
- **Organizing** a bat-appreciation day at your school and educating other students about the importance of bats.
- **Promoting** the "Look, but do NOT touch" approach of respecting wild animals.
- **Adopt-A-Bat** for the classroom. Students can take part in conservation efforts, learn about a bat species of their choice and receive a certificate and photo of the bat.

### Things LANDOWNERS can do for bats:

*Bats are losing their natural habitats around the world because of increasing land development, agriculture and deforestation. In many cases, bats can adapt to such changes if their needs for water, insect prey and roosts are taken into consideration. To mitigate the loss of natural roosts, many people also now provide bats with alternative roosts, such as bat houses. All this and more is available online at [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org). You can help by:*

- **Planting** or preserving native vegetation that attracts and supports a diversity of non-pest insects for bats to feed on.
- **Decreasing** disturbance and destruction of cave and abandoned-mine roosts via education, fencing or gating.
- **Protecting** roosting bats in abandoned buildings or providing artificial alternatives when such buildings must be torn down. BCI can provide suggestions for construction of artificial roosts.
- **Leaving** snags in forests and woodlands to serve as natural homes for wildlife. Bats often roost in tree hollows, under loose bark and in old snags, which are frequently removed.
- **Supplying** open water resources where bats can drink on the wing. Even a pool just ten feet by five feet can be a big help to bats in need of a drink if the approaches are not obstructed by vegetation.
- **Constructing** and **installing** a bat house. BCI's website provides designs and detailed instructions for building and installing bat houses. You can also order a ready-made bat house, the *Bat House Builder's Handbook* or the *Building Homes for Bats* DVD from our online catalog.
- **Modifying** a bridge to serve as a home for bats by working with your local highway department.

### Join Bat Conservation International – Our members and donors make our conservation successes possible.

*Bat Conservation International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to conservation, education and research initiatives involving bats and the ecosystems they serve. For more information visit: [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org)*

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