

BATS

We need them...



...and they need us.

Why you should care

Bats are some of the most misunderstood and least appreciated animals, yet they are an essential part of nature. Bats hunt insects, pollinate plants and disperse seeds to grow our forests. They are vital for maintaining healthy ecosystems and many human economies. And they face grave threats around the world.

Right now, bats are vulnerable because people needlessly fear them. They lose their homes to urban sprawl, and they are killed by wind-energy turbines. Now a new wildlife disease, White-nose Syndrome, is killing millions of North American bats.

Bat populations are declining, and we are all poorer for it. But you can help turn the tide – before it's too late.

Bats need us more than ever!



The Truth About Bats

Bats are not:

Blind – Bats not only have excellent vision, but they also use a biological sonar called echolocation to hunt fast-flying insects in total darkness.

Flying rodents – Bats are mammals, but they are not rodents. In fact, they are as closely related to humans as they are to rats and mice.

Dirty – They groom their fur like cats and kittens.

Blood-suckers – Only three of more than 1,250 bat species are vampire bats that feed on blood – and all of them are in Latin America. Only one targets mammals, and it prefers domestic livestock.

Bats are:

Plant pollinators – Bats pollinate wild bananas, cashews, dates, figs, peaches, avocados, agaves and many other important plants.

Seed dispersers – Seeds spread by bats can account for up to 95 percent of “pioneer plants” that begin the regeneration of cleared rainforests.

Insect hunters – More than two-thirds of bat species feed on insects. A mother bat can eat up to her body weight in insects every night, and a million bats can eat as much as 10 tons of bugs!

Economically vital – Bats eat so many insects that they save American farmers more than \$3.7 billion a year.

Important – More than 1,250 species of bats account for about 22 percent of the world's mammal species. Bats live on every continent except Antarctica.

Vulnerable – Bats reproduce slowly. Most species have only one pup per year. This makes them exceptionally vulnerable to extinction.



Bats are in Danger!

Bats are losing their homes

- Forest-dwelling bats lose their roosts and feeding areas as forests are cleared or improperly managed.
- Bats are driven from caves and abandoned mines by human disturbance, closures and changes in air circulation.
- Fruit bats are often victims of unregulated commercial hunting.

A disease called White-nose Syndrome is killing millions of bats

- WNS is the gravest threat ever faced by North American bats.
- WNS has killed more than 5½ million bats, and the disease is still spreading rapidly across the continent.
- Once-common little brown bats have been so devastated that regional extinctions are predicted.
- BCI is working with state and federal agencies and other partners to stop this disease and restore the decimated bat populations left in its wake.

Bats are vulnerable to wind turbines

- Tens of thousands of bats are being killed each year by wind-energy turbines.
- They are killed in collisions with spinning turbine blades and by the rapid pressure change caused by the turbines, which can rupture delicate blood vessels and organs.
- BCI strongly supports renewable energy and is working with government agencies and wind-energy providers to reduce bat fatalities.



You Can Help Save Bats!

- Learn more about bats (batcon.org) and educate your friends and family about the benefits of bats
- Encourage your state and federal representatives to support bat conservation efforts (batcon.org/takeaction)
- Volunteer and donate to help protect bats (batcon.org/volunteer)
- Install a bat house (batcon.org/bathouse)
- Find us on Facebook ([Facebook.com/BatCon](https://www.facebook.com/BatCon))
- Sign up for our e-newsletter (batcon.org/getnewsletter)
- Become a member of Bat Conservation International (batcon.org/joinbci)



Join today!

batcon.org

