

## You Can Help Bats

- ✓ Build a bat house to provide roost sites for Little Brown or Big Brown bats
- ✓ Plant native flowers to attract insects for bats, and remove invasive plants
- ✓ Plant trees to create habitat for bats
- ✓ Support bat habitat conservation through the Edmonton and Area Land Trust

## Bat Facts

- There are over 1,000 species of bats in the world. They are the second most abundant type of mammal, behind rodents.
- Bats belong to the Order *Chiroptera*, which means “hand-wing”. They are the only mammal that can fly.
- Bats in Alberta are insectivores, meaning they only eat insects.
- Bats hang upside down in order to drop into flight and let gravity help them, rather than fighting gravity to lift off.
- Bats aren’t blind. They can see with their eyes in the day, but use echolocation at night to locate prey and navigate their surroundings through high frequency sounds.
- Some bats in tropical regions are known as “flying foxes”, because of their large size and fox-like faces.
- Some bats migrate to southern locations in the winter, but others hibernate. In summer, some bats roost in colonies, but some live alone.



The Edmonton and Area Land Trust is a charity dedicated to conserving important natural areas in the Edmonton region. Our conservation lands provide essential habitat for wild species, opportunities for local residents to connect with nature, and provide numerous environmental, social and health benefits for everyone.

You can conserve local nature by volunteering or donating!

Visit [www.ealt.ca](http://www.ealt.ca)

Contact us for more information:

#101, 10471—178 street  
Edmonton AB T5S 1R5  
(780) 483-7578  
[info@ealt.ca](mailto:info@ealt.ca)  
[www.ealt.ca](http://www.ealt.ca)

Photos: Ann Froschauer-USFWS (Creative Commons license 2.0), USFWS (Creative Commons license 2.0), Al Hicks NYDEC



## Alberta Bats



[www.ealt.ca](http://www.ealt.ca)



## Bat Importance

Despite their reputation, bats are nothing to be scared of—they play many important roles in ecosystems around the world.

- Controlling night-flying insects and other pests, which protects agricultural crops
- Pollinate plants and crops to produce food and maintain natural areas
- Disperse seeds helping plants to regrow, including tropical forests

There are nine species of bats found in Alberta, but only two of them are commonly seen, as these are the ones that are found in large colonies—the Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) and Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*).

Other species live solitary and somewhat secretive lives, and are rarely seen. These include the Long-legged Bat (*Myotis volans*), Silver-haired Bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), Long-eared Bat (*Myotis evotis*), Eastern Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*), and Western Small-footed Bat (*Myotis ciliolabrum*).

Most bat species are listed as Sensitive or Secure in Alberta, but two species—Little Brown Bat and Northern Bat—are listed as Endangered under the *Species at Risk Act*.

## Common Bat Species



### Little Brown Bat

*Myotis lucifugus*

The most common bat in Alberta. Adults weigh about 8.5 grams and have a wingspan of 20 cm. Roosts in colonies in buildings or bat roosting boxes. Feeds on night-flying insects over water. Secure in Alberta, but endangered in Canada due to white nose syndrome and habitat loss.



### Big Brown Bat

*Eptesicus fuscus*

Widely distributed throughout North America, most common in Southern Alberta. Adults weigh 15-25 grams and have wingspan of 30 cm. Roosts in colonies in buildings or bat roosting boxes. Feeds on mainly small beetles.



### Northern Bat

*Myotis septentrionalis*

Found in the boreal regions of Alberta. Usually roost alone but sometimes breed in smaller colonies. Catch insects off trees and leaves. Secure in Alberta, but Endangered in Canada due to white nose syndrome and habitat loss.

## Bat Conservation and White-nose Syndrome

Bats in North America are under threat because of White-nose Syndrome, a fungus (*Pseudogymnoascus destructans*) that disturbs bats during hibernation and causes them to die from starvation and dehydration. While the disease is most common in eastern North America and currently not found in Alberta, it has recently been found in the northwest United States.



Little brown bat with white-nose syndrome

To help reduce the spread, comply with all cave closures and clean your gear afterward. Visit Bat Conservation International ([www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org)) for more information.

Most bats reproduce slowly, with only one pup per year, which makes it even more important to protect bats from disease or destruction and create habitats for them.