

BAT ROOST MONITORING



Report individual bats

Report individual bats by adding an observation using the free iNaturalist app or online at [iNaturalist.ca](https://www.inaturalist.ca). These could be bats you spot while they're roosting (like in a patio umbrella, a bat box, a tree, or side of a building) or flying by in the evening (if you can get a photo!). This information helps researchers and the public alike to know what species of bat are in an area, where they are roosting and species distributions. You can also join **CWF's Help the Bats project on iNaturalist.ca** to be part of a citizen science bat community.

Register and Monitor your Roost

By registering a roost and reporting on its use, you can contribute information on the distribution of roosts and the species that use them. This is extremely valuable for research and conservation; such as allowing us to refine our research on optimal bat box designs. Even if a bat box isn't being used, we still want to know about it.

GET TO KNOW CANADA'S BATS

Benefits of bats:

There are 19 species of bats in Canada and they play a vital role in our ecosystem:

- Bats are the primary predators of night-flying insects, including moths, beetles, flies and mosquitoes.
- Bats consume hundreds of insects per hour and can eat 30 to 50 per cent of their body weight in insects in a single night.
- A pregnant female bat can consume 100 per cent of her body weight every night.
- Bats save the agriculture industry tens of millions of dollars each year by acting as nature's insect control and a source of natural fertilizer.

Bats face several threats:

- White-nose syndrome is an invasive fungus that has killed millions of bats in North America and continues to spread.
- Pesticide use decreases food availability and contaminates the insects that bats feed on.
- Windmills can kill bats that come in the vicinity of turbines.
- Loss of habitat has made bats more reliant on human-made structures for annual roosting sites, including homes, garages, barns and buildings.
- Extermination or eviction of bats from structures can have direct and indirect consequences.

Living with bats:

Many people live harmoniously with bats in their homes or outbuildings and may not even know they have guests. Bats can sometimes become a concern if they gain access to the living area of your house. If you have bats in your home, you are in a position to make a real difference.

For additional information on bats: [HelpTheBats.ca](https://www.HelpTheBats.ca) | info@cwf-fcf.org

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MONITORING

Be a citizen scientist!

Without the participation of community groups and homeowners, CWF's bat house program would not be successful.

Monitoring bat roosts is as simple as identifying the entry/exit points of the roost and counting how many bats emerge.

Checking the roost during the day with a light is a good way to know if bats are present (ex. looking up into a bat box to see if it's occupied), but avoid shining lights at the entrance often or while bats are emerging.

When to monitor?

Monitoring sessions start at sunset and can last up to an hour or until you haven't seen a bat exiting the roost for at least 10 minutes. Ideally roosts should be monitored four times per summer (spread out from late May to October). But at minimum once in June and again in early August. The latter session will account for new pups.

How to monitor?

Information to collect will include:

- Location
- Date/Time
- Weather
- Amount of Wind
- Temperature
- Number of Bats

Familiarize yourself with the following steps:

- 1 | Identify entry/exit points prior to your survey night and plan to have one person monitor each point.
- 2 | Select an evening to monitor. Ideally each month from May to October or at minimum one in June and one in August. Ensure weather is favourable (no rain or high winds and clear skies).
- 3 | Just before sunset, situate yourself at least 10 metres from the roost so you don't disturb the colony's activity.
Tip: use the sky as a backdrop behind the bats to increase your visibility.
- 4 | Begin your tally as soon as you see the first bat leave the roost and **record the time**. This is typically at sunset, and your monitoring may take up to 60 minutes for all bats to leave the roost.
- 5 | Count each bat that emerges. If bats re-enter the roost, be careful not to count them again.
- 6 | If bats emerge quickly and simultaneously, do your best to estimate how many emerged.
- 7 | End the survey once you have not seen a bat emerge for 10 minutes and **record the time**.
- 8 | Register your roost and record your monitoring results directly online at **HelpTheBats.ca**.

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