

Maine Bat Information Sheet

In the spring and summer months, people in Maine occasionally have encounters with bats in or around their homes. This can be from either a stray bat finding its way in or a colony roosting in the house.

Bats and Rabies

Bats are mammals and, like all other mammals, can be infected with the rabies virus. **If you think that you or someone in your care has been bitten by a bat or been in contact with a bat, call the Maine Center for Disease Control (CDC) immediately at 800-821-5821.** The professional staff at CDC can evaluate your situation and advise you on the proper medical treatment.

If possible, capture the bat, and put it in a container such as a coffee can. CDC can assist you in getting the bat to the Health and Environmental Testing Lab in Augusta where it can be tested for rabies. Never handle a bat with your bare hands. Wear leather gloves while capturing and containing the bat.

If a pet has an encounter with a bat, contact your veterinarian for proper guidance.

Stray Bats

People occasionally find a stray bat flying in their home. This occurs more often in the latter part of summer when the young of the year have started to fly and are feeding at night. If you are positive there has been no contact with the bat, it can be returned to the outdoors in several ways. If possible, isolate the bat in a single room and open a window or door to the outside. The bat will most likely find its way out. If the bat is hanging on something, you can place a can or small box over it and then slip a piece of cardboard in behind the can. The bat can then be removed from the house. Never handle a bat with your bare hands. Wear leather gloves.

If you need assistance with stray bats, contact your town or city government. In most cases, the Animal Control Officer should be able to help you.

To avoid a repeat visit, check around the house to be sure that doors, windows, and screens are tight. Bats can slip through a gap of about 3/8 of an inch. While feeding, they will often land on a screen to rest. If there is an opening, they may crawl in and start flying around. Be sure things are tight so they can't get in. Other areas to check are bulkheads, pet doors, and gaps around air conditioners.

If you have outside lights that are positioned near doors, keep them off as much as possible. The light attracts insects and the bats will come to feed on the insects. Also, changing the bulb to a yellow bug light, which attracts fewer insects, will help.

Bats Roosting In Your House

Bats become active in early spring once night flying insects emerge. They roost during the day and feed on insects during the night. The young are born mid June and do not start flying until late July. Bats leave their roosts and migrate to their hibernation sites in late September, when temperatures drop and insect populations die off.

If you have a resident bat colony in a structure you must first get them out and then bat proof the building so they can't get back in. The best time to bat proof is in the fall and winter after the bats have left. If you need to do the work while the bats are in residence, there are several ways to create a one-way door so the bats can exit the structure but can not return. Avoid doing this during the time the young are not flying, otherwise they will be trapped inside.

Some of the more common entrance points are: the flashing around chimneys, attic vents where the screen has deteriorated, and the area under dormers where they meet the main roof and finish boards that have separated or rotted away.

Bats exit the structure at dusk to feed. It is often possible to determine their entrance point by watching at dusk and seeing where they come out. Before excluding the bats by blocking their entrance point, you should inspect the building and seal any other areas that might provide a possible entrance.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU WITH NUISANCE BATS

Government Agencies

USDA—Wildlife Services, 207-622-8263

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 207-287-8000

If You Have a Computer

Bat Conservation International has excellent online information on capturing stray bats in your home and bat proofing your house (www.batcon.org).

Do a search on bat proofing or bat exclusion. There are a number of helpful sites.

Check the Yellow Pages

There are a number of companies and individuals in Maine who do bat proofing work. Several of these are listed below. The Maine Board of Pesticides Control does not recommend these above any others. They responded to a letter asking if they wanted to be listed. Others wanting to be listed should contact the Board.

- Advantage Pest Control, Inc., Scarborough, 888-737-2979, advantagepestcontrol.biz, entire state
- Animal Damage Control, 866-926-9363, York, Cumberland, Oxford, Androscoggin, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec counties
- Benson Pest Management, Milford, 207-827-4961, Bangor, Ellsworth area, Lincoln area
- Bug Busterzzz, Vassalboro, 207-649-1596, entire state
- Colonial Pest Control, Inc., Portsmouth NH, 603-436-6000, www.colonialpest.com, York County
- Critter Catcher, 207-594-2112, www.crittercatcher.org, Knox, Lincoln, Kennebec, Waldo counties and the islands off the mid-Maine coast
- Dependable Pest Solutions, Rochester NH, 603-436-1181, Cape Neddick, York, Berwicks, Kittery, Eliot, Lebanon
- Liberty Pest Control, Lyman, 207-499-2847, York and Cumberland counties
- Elliott Pest Control LLC, Rangeley, 207-864-3695, elliottpestcontrol.com, entire state
- Maine Pest and Turf Corp, Naples, 207-693-6131, entire state
- Maine Wildlife Exclusion Services, Winterport, 207-852-2559, Waldo, Hancock, Penobscot counties and surrounding areas
- Modern Pest Services Wildlife Control, Brunswick, 800-323-7378, entire state
- Pest Pro Exterminating Co., Inc., Sidney, 888-677-5656, www.pestproeci.com, central and southern Maine
- Pestco of Maine, Inc., Hermon, 207-848-2799, www.pestcomaine.com, entire state



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