



## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@sPCA.bc.ca  
BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# BATS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

16 species of bats in BC  
(family *Vespertilionidae*)

### Legal Designation

Schedule A, *BC Wildlife Act*, some species also protected by federal *Species at Risk Act*

### Disease Risks

Rabies: Rare, occurs in only ~0.5% of BC bat population

### Seasonal Considerations

Illegal to disturb during breeding season (May through August)



#### Did you know?

BC bats eat large numbers of insects - sometimes more than their own body weight in one night, and their guano makes excellent fertilizer!

Hoary bat

## White-Nose Syndrome

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a fungal disease spread bat-to-bat, that was introduced by people entering caves where bats live. WNS is named for the white fungus that grows on the nose and bodies of infected bats. Bats die of starvation after waking prematurely from hibernation to fight the fungus. WNS has not been observed in BC yet, but the fungus that causes WNS was detected in the Grand Forks area in 2023. If you suspect WNS, find a dead bat, or notice unusual winter bat activity (November through May), contact the BC Community Bat Project. The fungus does not affect humans or pets. Contaminated clothing, shoes, or other gear can spread the fungus. Always decontaminate shoes and gear before and after touring caves.

## Common Conflicts

Bats sometimes enter human structures, either accidentally or to roost, and may become tangled in objects like insect traps, netting, or fencing. When bats roost in houses, accumulated guano and urine may stain walls or ceilings. Sometimes bats are attacked by pets. Although rabies is rare in the BC bat population, if a bat has had direct contact with people or pets, immediately contact your physician, veterinarian, and/or local public health authority.

## Conflict Prevention

Killing bats for nuisance reasons is illegal. Bats do not need to be evicted if there is little chance for human contact, but this may be desirable if guano cannot be regularly cleaned, or if bats continually enter human living spaces. Bats generally do not occupy buildings during winter months, and choose to hibernate in mines or caves from October to March.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing bats

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



[sPCA.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://sPCA.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)





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WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



California Myotis bat



## RECOMMENDED

### Actions & methods for control

Maintain residential structures to prevent bats from entering and roosting. Find entry points by looking for discoloured rub marks or guano around openings; in summer, look for bats exiting before dusk to ~30 minutes after dusk.

If desired, string tarps below roost sites to catch guano for use as fertilizer. Do not transfer or transport guano to different areas to prevent the potential spread of WNS. Provide an alternate exterior bat house to discourage bats from returning to the building. Consult a community bat expert for advice on placement and design.

Do not exclude bats or install one-way doors during breeding season (May through August). If eviction is necessary, the best time is October to March, possibly extending from September to April depending on the colony. One-way doors (including bat cones or PVC tubes) should be left in place for at least 5-7 nights. Before sealing an opening, use a flashlight to thoroughly check any cracks, crevices or corners for bats. Block gaps around chimneys, window air conditioners, and openings in interior walls that lead to cellars or attics. Clean out guano and remove soiled insulation, use a 10% bleach solution to disinfect items contacted by bats – wear a mask and gloves while cleaning guano. Seal all access points larger than 12 mm.

## IF BAT TRAPPED IN BUILDING:

Bats that are accidentally trapped in homes will need to be captured and released as quickly as possible in a safe place, on a tree or other vertical surface so they can fly away. Always wear thick leather gloves before attempting to capture a bat. Bats can be gently captured using a glass or plastic container, and sliding something underneath the opening to contain them, or using a tool like a spatula or folded cardboard to scoop them into the container. If you suspect the bat has been trapped in the house longer than 24 hours, contact a wildlife rehabilitator for advice before releasing the bat.



## ILLEGAL

### Actions & methods for control

Killing bats for nuisance reasons is illegal. Injured bats can be taken to a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator for assessment and/or euthanasia. Blunt force trauma may be used for emergency euthanasia to relieve suffering when bats are critically injured. However, it is illegal to control bats using:

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Carbon dioxide – all bats in BC are CO<sub>2</sub> tolerant
- Carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue traps
- Nitrogen or argon gas
- Captive bolt
- Vehicle exhaust