



BAT FACT SHEET

BENEFITS of BATS

Bats are beneficial neighbors and they are tireless in their pursuit of prey. No not blood (as in vampire bats) but insects. The bats that are native to New Jersey are voracious insect feeders and actually are the only major predator of night flying insects.

Can anyone say "mosquito"? Those pesky night flyers are actually a tasty delicacy to our native bats and one big brown bat can consume as many as 500 insects an hour or 3000 every night! How's that for BENEFICIAL?

In addition to being the "bane" of the New Jersey State insect, bats in agricultural areas feed on many pests that are destructive to our food crops. A colony of big brown bats living and feeding in farming areas can consume mass quantities of pests, such as cucumber beetles, June bugs, stinkbugs and leafhoppers. Who needs pesticides with these hard working neighbors around?

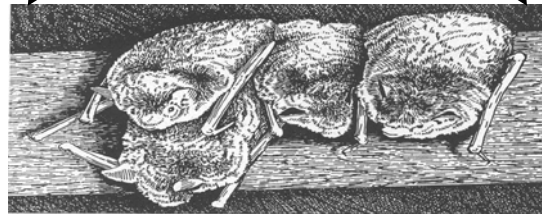
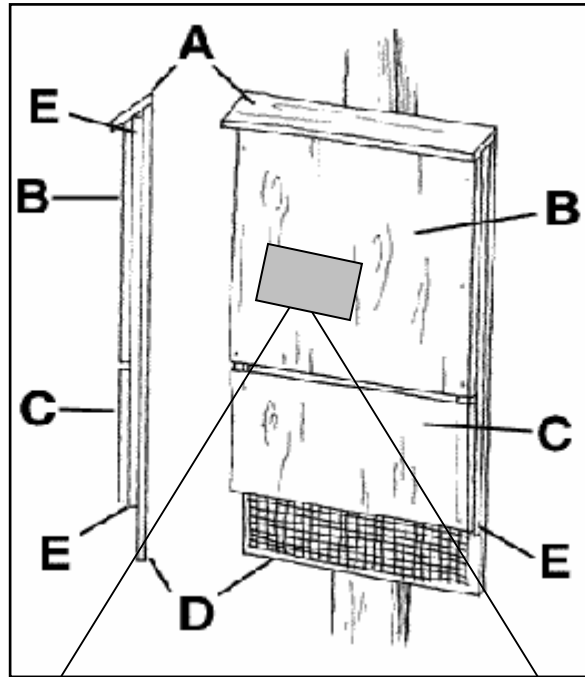
Two of the more common bats native to New Jersey are the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) and the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*). These bats will roost during the summer in an attic or barn to take advantage of the heat these areas trap during the warm months. This unique habitat requirement can be used by gardeners to attract bats to the home landscape and take advantage of their natural insect control abilities while providing an alternative to home attic roosting. By building and placing a bat house in a desirable location in your yard you can put those hard working bats to work clearing your yard of unwanted pests like mosquitoes, cucumber beetles and stinkbugs.

BAT HOUSE INSTALLATION TIPS

1. Paint the top half of the box a dark color to allow the bats to take advantage of the temperature layers this will create within the box.
2. Place the box 14-16 feet high in a sunny location. Be sure there are no obstructions below the bat house.
3. Avoid placing the box near bright floodlights.
4. Be patient, it may take several seasons for bats to find your box.
5. If wasp nests accumulate remove them in winter prior to the bats returning for the season.

Small Bat House

1. Use rough-cut lumber or exterior grade plywood (1/2" thick minimum). The furring strip (E) should have a finished thickness of approximately 3/4".
2. Staple 1/8" mesh (HDPE plastic) netting to back and front 2 sections. Make sure mesh extends to bottom of back.
3. Caulk all pieces and assemble with drywall screws to prevent wood from splitting. Apply additional caulk to outside joints as needed.
4. Apply dark stain to exterior surfaces and use tarpaper or shingles on the roof and the top half of the bat house to increase interior temperatures.



Dimensions

- a) Roof 4" x 14"
- b) Upper front 12" wide x 20" tall
- c) Lower front 12" wide x 10" tall
- d) Back 12" x 36"
- e) Furring strips (spacers) $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" thick:
 - 1) 2" wide x 12" long for the top
 - 2) 2" wide x 30.5" long for the sides

Small or shallow bat houses such as the one above will serve as a summer roost for male bats or non-breeding females. Maternal bat houses need to be large enough to attract breeding females and house a colony and require several internal dividers. The minimum size is 24" wide 7" deep and 24" tall. The height and installation tips remain the same as the smaller "bachelor pad" above.

For More Information:

A Homeowners Guide to Northeastern Bats and Bat Problems:

<http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/uh081.html> This helpful guide from Penn State is available free online or by calling, 814.865.6713 or 877.345.0691.

Bat Conservation International: <http://www.catcon.org/> This site contains a tremendous amount of information including tips on attracting bats, what to do if you find a bat in your house, and rabies facts.

BATS Fact Sheet: CT DEP Wildlife Division:

<http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife/factshts/bats.htm>

Bat Conservation in NJ: Division of Fish and Wildlife: www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/bat.htm