

# Bats

## Natural History

### Bats

are nocturnal. They usually nest in attics and under eaves. Bats can eat up to 3000 insects per night. Like any mammal, bats can carry rabies, although less than 1% of all bat populations, actually do carry the virus. The rabies virus is found in the saliva and can be transmitted through an infected animals bite. Non &ndash; bite exposure can occur when saliva or brain tissue from an infected animal enters through open skin or mucous membranes. It is extremely important to reduce any risk of human contact with bats. It is also important to prevent your pets from having contact with bats.

### Bat Bugs

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bugs are small bugs similar to bed bugs. They are relatively common in the Midwest where they are found in houses or outbuildings that are occupied by bats. The bugs feed on bat blood, but in the absence of bats, they will feed on other warm-blooded animals, including humans. No known cases of disease transmission have occurred from bat bugs, they are more annoying than dangerous. To get rid of bat bugs, you must first eliminate the bats.

### Excluding Bats

### Exclusions

are easily done after bats have migrated in the fall (usually October). This also prevents disturbing nursing colonies. It is illegal to kill or exterminate bats in most states without appropriate permits.

### Bats

can squeeze through openings as small as 1&frac14; inch in size. Pay special attention to cracks under eaves. Outside the house, bats will hide under shingles, roofing, awnings, ivy, and shutters. Stains from body oils or bat droppings may help in identifying the location at which the bats are entering and exiting the building.

Once the entrance(s) have been found, eliminate access by following these steps:

- Close off all but one access in the den area.
- Gather all materials needed to close the entrance &ndash; sheet metal works best &ndash; or use sturdy wire mesh or wood.
- If bats are in the area, do one or more of the following to clear bats from the den.

- Brightly

light up the area day and night, since this is annoying to nocturnal animals. You can tape a mechanics light or trouble light to a 2 X 4 ft piece of wood and slide it into the area.

- Cool the attic with fans to make the temperature unsuitable for bats

- Make

a temporary one-way exit door by attaching bird netting or flexible plastic strips above the opening using staples or duct tape. The sides may be attached, but leave the bottom loose. As bats leave in the evening to feed, they will drop out of the roost but will be unable to get back inside. Leave the one-way door in place for a few nights to ensure that all have left.

- When all bats have left, close the opening securely with caulking, screening, wood, or sheet metal, as appropriate for the location.