



Bat Boxes

Bat boxes are human-made, wooden structures for bats, designed to allow for roosting and, depending on the species, for raising young.

Provides: Shelter

Supports: Bats (especially crevice-dwelling bats)

NOTE: Bat species that hibernate for the winter months are susceptible to white-nose syndrome (WNS), a fungal disease that can cause death. As of May 2016, more than 6 million bats have died as a result of WNS, and WNS has been detected in 29 American states and 5 Canadian provinces. However, to date, bats using bat boxes are not susceptible to WNS.

For more information about WNS, please visit: www.whitenosesyndrome.org



Implementation Steps:

1 Designing the Bat Box – Most bats roost in groups (colonial roosting), so a good bat box will offer both protection from the elements and space for multiple bats.

- Boxes with at least 3 chambers provide bats the greatest opportunity to find a comfortable temperature range within the box and more easily accommodate large numbers of bats known to inhabit nursing colonies.
- Bat boxes should be at least 14 inches wide and 20 inches tall, with a 3-6 in. landing area extending below the entrance of the box.
- The partitions that separate the inside chambers should be 0.75-1 in. apart.

2 Location, location, location – A good location for a bat box includes the following:

- An area that receives 6-8 hours of direct sunlight, facing either east or south. If this can't be achieved, try to maximize morning sun exposure.
- Avoid exposure to bright, artificial lights.
- Install your bat box 20-25 ft. from perches that could be used by predators (such as power lines or tree branches).
- When possible, bats prefer roosts that are close (within ¼ of a mile) to water.



(Implementation Steps continued)

3 Installation and Bat Box Design –

The design or type of bat box will influence where and how you mount it. Single-chamber bat boxes should only be installed on pre-existing buildings to help maintain a steadier internal temperature in the bat box. Multi-chamber boxes are ideal for pole installation. Bat boxes should NOT be installed on trees because trees can hide predators, block valuable sunlight, and limbs can obstruct a bat's entrance/exit from the box.

- Installing on a house:
 - Can mount either multi-chamber or single-chamber bat boxes to a house or building.
 - Do not install bat boxes above doors, windows, or other high-activity areas where guano could accumulate and become inconvenient.
- Installing on a post or pole:
 - ONLY mount multi-chamber bat boxes (that are more thermally stable) on a post or pole.
 - Mount AT LEAST 10 ft. above the ground (between 12-20 ft. is ideal).

Other Resources:

- Visit Bat Conservation International (batcon.org) for these resources:
 - *Installing Your Bat House: Wooden Post or Steel Pole Installation pdf*
 - *Installing Your Bat House: On a Building pdf*
 - *Bat House Plans – Pole Mounting Instructions pdf*
 - Tips and guidelines
 - Frequently asked questions



**URBAN WILDLIFE
PROJECT**
Knowledge • Habitat • People



COLLEGE OF
AGRICULTURAL & LIFE SCIENCES
University of Wisconsin-Madison



GRAPHIC DESIGN: UW Environmental Resources Center

urbanwildlifeproject.org



Copyright © 2016 · All Rights Reserved

As EEO employers, our partner institutions provide equal opportunities in employment and programming and meet Title IX and ADA requirements.