

Bats in Alberta

What to do if you find a bat

Bats in Alberta

There are at least nine species of bats in Alberta. All are small and use echolocation to find and catch insects. They play an important ecological role by helping to keep nocturnal insect populations in balance.



What to do if you find a bat and there was **contact** with a human or domestic animal

If there was suspected or confirmed contact with a human

Contact Alberta Health Services and/or a physician to report the incident and receive medical advice. Post-exposure treatment may be required. Contact the Rabies Hotline if there are questions. If Public Health recommends the bat be tested for rabies, take the bat to the nearest Fish and Wildlife office or Veterinary clinic to be sent for testing. If the bat tests

negative for rabies, post-exposure treatment can be stopped.

If there was suspected or confirmed contact with a domestic animal

The animal's owner should contact a veterinarian for instructions. If available, the bat may be sent away for rabies testing.

Alberta Health Services and Rabies Information:

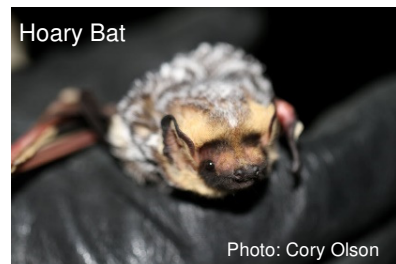
Health Link – 811

(toll free throughout Canada 1-866-408-5465)

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/>

Rabies Hotline – 1-844-427-6847

Bats usually avoid people but will bite in self-defence. Less than one percent of bats have rabies, however, as a precaution, you should always avoid direct contact with bats.



What to do if you find a bat and there was **no contact** with a human or domestic animal

If the bat is dead

No medical intervention is required. There is no need to report the dead bat to the nearest Fish and Wildlife office except between December 1-June 30, when bat carcasses can be submitted to Fish and Wildlife to test for White-nose Syndrome.

If the bat is alive

If the bat appears sick or injured, contact a veterinarian or Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre approved to accept bats. Bats can be successfully treated and released, unless severely injured, in which case the bat needs to be euthanized.

If the bat appears healthy, you can carefully pick up the bat with thick gloves or a towel and place it in a tree or other protected high spot that is shaded and not accessible by cats. You can also move a bat the same way as moving a bee: place a container over the bat and gently slide a piece of cardboard underneath.

Never handle a bat with bare hands because it is likely to bite in self-defence.

The bat should fly away at night. If it is there the next day, it may be sick or injured.

Alberta Community Bat Program:

- Outreach and information about bats
- Citizen science to monitor bat roosts
- Advice for people with bats in buildings
- How to help bats

What to do if you find a bat:

<https://www.albertabats.ca/foundabat/>

White-nose Syndrome

This disease is caused by a fungus that can grow in caves where bats hibernate. The fungus irritates bats and causes them to arouse from hibernation at a time when no food is available, so bats die of starvation. Millions of bats in North America have died from the disease. The disease does not affect humans.

The fungus is not found in Alberta at this time, but is spreading across North America and expected to reach Alberta soon.

Questions about bats?

Alberta Community Bat Program

- ❖ 1-866-574-1706
- ❖ info@albertabats.ca
- ❖ www.albertabats.ca

For wildlife rehabilitation centres that accept bats, visit the website above.

Alberta Environment and Parks

- ❖ Toll Free in AB: 310-3773
- ❖ AEP.Info-Centre@gov.ab.ca
- ❖ www.AEP.alberta.ca

