

BAT-FRIENDLY BUILDING MANAGEMENT



Why are bats important?

- Bats are essential for the environment & economy
- Can consume their body weight in insects nightly
- Bats help protect crops & forests from pests
- Bats save billions of dollars for farmers & forest managers annually across North America
- Bats consume insects that pose a risk to human and livestock health
- Bats contribute to Canada's biodiversity

*Managing bat issues in buildings in a bat-friendly way is good for bats and people. These methods work and can be **cost-effective** too.*

Threats to bats

- Canadian bats that are most often found in buildings are affected by White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) a disease specific to bats
- Human activity is one of the main causes of declining bat populations, these include:
 - Habitat destruction, improper management of building colonies, fatalities caused by wind turbines & persecution due to fear & due to fear & disinformation
- Bats reproduce slowly (often only a single pup per year) but live long lives (up to 39 years!)



Bats use echolocation to catch insect prey at night - bats "SEE" with SOUND!



Frequent concerns we hear about bats in buildings:

Rabies

While bats are considered a rabies vector animal, the incidence of this disease is very low (less than 0.5%). However, precautions should always be taken. Rabies is a fatal virus but vaccines are safe & effective. Vaccinate pets against rabies and refrain from handling bats. No bare-skin contact with bats means no risk from rabies.

Bat Bugs

Bats have parasites that only live on bats. Bat bugs look like bed bugs but only persist in the presence of a bat colony. They are not a health hazard for people and they are easy to eliminate (unlike bed bugs).

They smell bad

Bat urine and guano can accumulate in large colonies and it can smell bad! Annual clean up of guano will eliminate this issue (if colonies are managed in place). Bats are quite clean and will groom themselves regularly.

They will fly in my hair

This is a myth! Bat echolocation systems are highly sophisticated. Bats can sense the differences in texture of their insect prey. They see you and have NO interest in flying in anyone's hair.



BEING BAT-FRIENDLY

Using the Bat Calendar

- The “Bat Calendar” indicates the dates when exclusion work will have the least impact on bat colonies (dates may vary by region)
- For most bats, simply avoiding the period of late pregnancy and when pups are present and unable to fly, is the recommended plan
- Big Brown Bats may use buildings in winter. To avoid leaving bats stranded in sub-zero temperatures, this species should not be excluded during winter nor during pup season

Offering Alternate Roosting Habitat

training.canadabats.org/batboxes

- Bat houses can be purchased or built
- Size, design and placement are important if you want bats to use them
- Installing bat houses during six months (or more) prior to exclusion will allow bats to find the structures and are more likely to use them
- See the resources link for free plans and advice

Keeping Colonies

Sometimes, structures are almost impossible to seal up to keep bats out. If the roosting space can be cleaned annually; keeping colonies can be a cost-effective option. A maintenance and safety plan should be in place for this option.

Using a Pest or Wildlife Control Operator with Bat-friendly Training

Wildlife and Pest Control Operators who have completed the online “Bat-friendly Canada Managing Bats in Buildings Course” will be familiar with practices that support bat conservation and effectively exclude bats. Individuals who have completed the course will have a certificate.

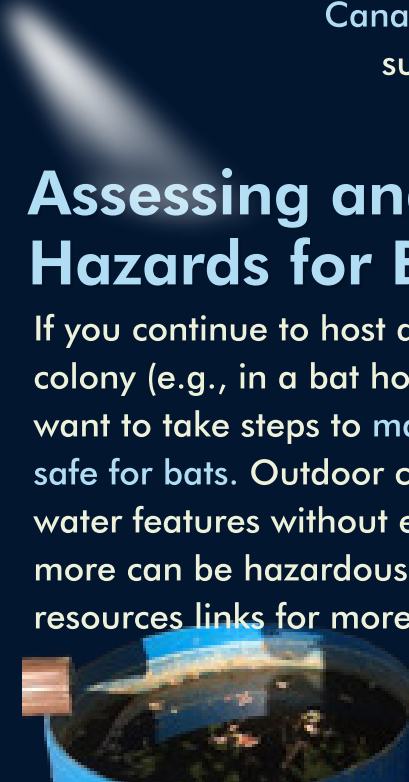
Assessing and Removing Hazards for Bats

If you continue to host a nearby bat colony (e.g., in a bat house), you may want to take steps to make your property safe for bats. Outdoor cats, lighting at night, water features without escape ramps and more can be hazardous to bats. See the resources links for more information.



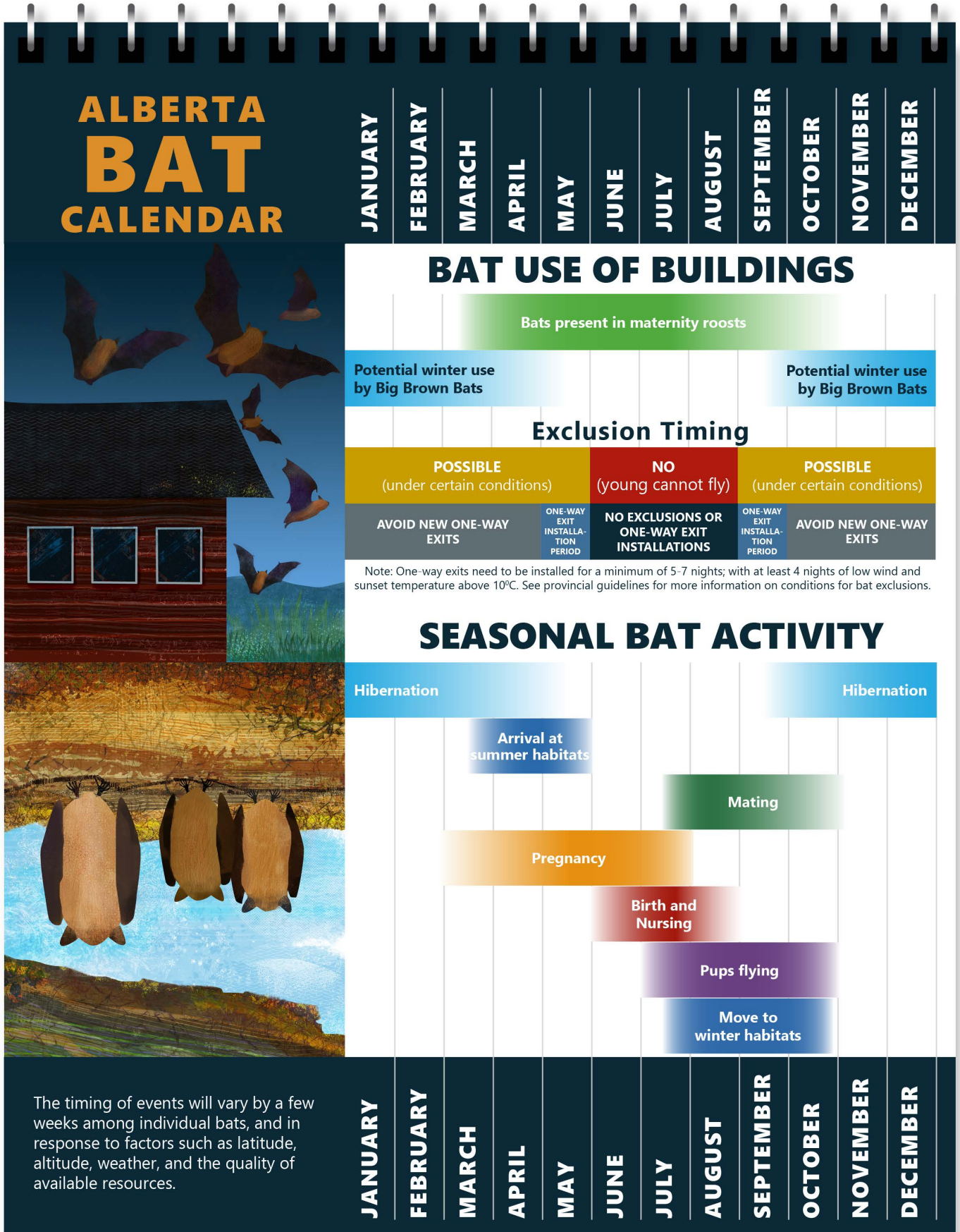
**TRAINING PROGRAM
FOR MANAGING BATS IN
BUILDINGS**

training.canadabats.org



"THE BAT CALENDAR"

This calendar may need to be adapted to your region if seasonal environments are significantly different from Alberta. However, the sequence of events will be the same across Canada.



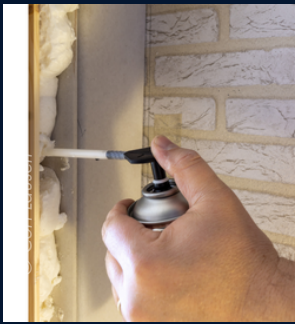
MANAGING BATS SAFELY

Signs of Bats in Buildings

- Bats flying around inside the home or building is often the first sign that you may have a colony. However, bats sometimes randomly fly inside, especially if a door or window has been left open.
- Smell or guano (bat poop) are also common indications of a bat colony in a building. Pellets of bat guano will crumble into a rough powder (similar mouse poop is hard and clay-like).
- Sounds of bats, especially during the nursery period. Baby bats making peeping sounds and females may be heard crawling around and arguing.



Guano or "bat poop"



Things You Can Do From Inside the Building

Block or seal any gaps that provide access for bats from inside the house (including gaps under doors and windows). Specifically, look under sinks or any spot where pipes or electrical wiring perforates the walls providing a potential point of entry for bats. If using spray foam or caulking during this process, ensure that sticky surfaces are not available to bats

If you leave a porchlight on, don't leave your nearby doors or windows open; bats hunting near lights might accidentally "swoop" in!

Learn More About Bats

WCS Canada's Alberta bat program provides free resources on bat houses, managing bats in buildings and bat-friendly backyards that can be useful across Canada.



**ALBERTA COMMUNITY
BAT PROGRAM**

www.albertabats.ca

