



Little brown bats are common in Aurora. They weigh less than an ounce and have a wingspan of about 10 inches.

Open Space and Natural Resources Division

We are Stewards of Natural Resources Essential to Aurora's Quality of Life

Natural Resource Bulletin

Sharing Your Neighborhood with Bats

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Quick Facts:

What kinds of bats live in Aurora?

The most common bats in Aurora are the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) and the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*). All Aurora bats are insect eating bats.

When can I see bats in Aurora?

Bats arrive in Aurora in April or May. They will stay through September or early October. Before cold weather returns, bats migrate to winter hibernation areas.

What is rabies?

Rabies is a viral disease that infects the central nervous system of mammals. It is most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal, ultimately causing disease of the brain and death.

What can I do to protect my family and pets from rabies?

AVOID ALL DIRECT CONTACT with all wildlife.

- Vaccinate your pets against rabies
- Do not allow pets or children to chase, play with or handle bats.
- Do not allow pets or children to play with or handle dead bats.
- Call the health department or animal control if you see a suspect animal.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION if you suspect you've had direct contact with a bat. SEE A VETERINARIAN if your pet comes in contact with a bat.

Bats are beneficial neighbors.

Bats provide important pest control services while most of us sleep. A small, 50-bat colony of little brown bats can eat 2250 mosquitoes in just 15 minutes. Imagine what they can do with an entire evening of work in your community!

Tips for coexisting with bats:

Grounded bats

Never handle a bat that is on the ground. For the most part, bats are very healthy. A bat that is on the ground is very likely injured or sick. Never let children or pets handle a grounded bat. Never touch a bat with your bare hands.

Accidental guests

One very easy way to keep bats out of your house is to ensure all open windows and doors are screened. If a bat accidentally finds its way into your home, shut all doors to the rest of house, then open any doors leading outside or open and remove screens from large windows in the room where the bat is located, dim or turn off the lights, and give the bat a chance to find its way outside safely.

Bats and disease

Less than 1/2 of 1% of bats will contract rabies. Statistically, bat rabies accounts for about one human death per year in the United States. As with any wild animal, the best way to prevent exposure to disease is to eliminate direct contact with the animal. Be sure children are aware they should never handle a bat and make sure your pet's rabies vaccinations are up to date. Avoid direct contact with bat feces (guano) and urine.

Discouraging bats

If you find bats are roosting in your attic or other shared home space, you can deter them by making the area less welcoming and comfortable. Installing bright lights or flashing lights (like a string of holiday lights) and leaving them on all day is one way to discourage bats from otherwise dark daytime roost sites. A radio tuned to a talk station can also reduce their comfort level and encourage them to move on. You can also try scent deterrents such as moth balls or ammonia soaked rags. The idea is to make the area less inviting and to encourage the bats to find a more appropriate place to roost.

Excluding bats

Bats can squeeze their bodies into tiny cracks and gaps. For this reason, you may find that bats that have taken up residence in an undesirable place. To effectively exclude bats, you first want to figure out where they are gaining access. Listen for vocalizations or watch for entry and exit points at dawn and dusk, May – October. Once you know where the entry/exit point is, wait until after your bats have left for the season, and completely seal the area. Contact an animal removal specialist if you are not sure your bats have left for the season before you seal entry points. Be a good neighbor. Place a bat box near the area you sealed so your insect controlling troops have a place to stay when they return next spring

Sources: Colorado Parks and Wildlife, *Bats and Rabies* brochure; Center for Disease Control and Prevention rabies webpage: <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>

