



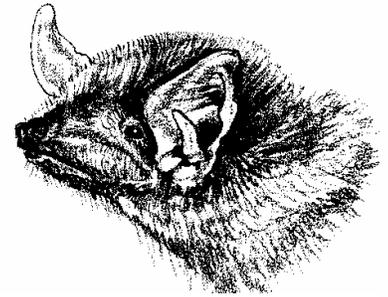
Andy's Garden

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BATS

Bats are important indicators of a healthy environment and they should be a welcome part of our neighborhoods. Like canaries in a mine they serve as early warning systems for dangerously high pesticide and pollution levels. The occasional bat in the house situation can be remedied often easily, without having to fear or declare war on bats. Their presence is clearly beneficial - bats will leave you alone, but mosquitoes won't!



BAT MYTHS

1. A bat is not a rodent. It is a flying mammal, in fact the only true flying mammal.
2. Bats are no more prone to carry rabies than cats, dogs or any other mammal.
3. Bats are not blind. They not only see well, they have a sophisticated sonar system that makes them the best "bug zappers" on earth.
4. Bats do not get in people's hair. Can you imagine anything that has the ability to see, use sonar and catch up to 3000 insects per night just blundering into someone's head? This just does not happen.

BAT REALITIES

There are about 39 species of bats in the United States with 36 of these species doing a remarkable job of eating mosquitoes and other flying insects. Lab experiments have shown that mouse eared bats (the little brown bat most common in our area) may catch up to 600 mosquitoes an hour. Bats also eat numerous agricultural pests such as corn borers, grain and cutworm moths, potatoe beetles, and grasshoppers.

In most species the female bat has only one baby per year and without the help of man-made bat shelters these gentle, beneficial creatures are running out of housing in today's modern world.

INVITING BATS TO YOUR YARD

If you would like to attract bats to your yard, you can do so by putting up a bat house. Bat houses have been used in Europe for nearly 70 years but have only recently become popular in the United States. Mount the house 10 - 15 feet off the ground on the side of a building or in a tree protected from prevailing winds. Though a few houses have been used right away, most will not be occupied for a year or more so be patient and you may have some wonderfully helpful neighbors!



*Making the world beautiful
one flower at a time.*