



BATS

KEY FACTS

- Bats are flying mammals. Their wings are thin membranes and they have four fingers and a thumb on each wing.
- There are nine species of bats in Massachusetts but the most common are the little brown bat which is between 4 ½ and 5 ½ inches long, and the big brown bat, which is 5 ½ to 8 inches long.
- Bats live in large colonies; females form nursery colonies when they are getting ready for birth.
- Female bats give birth in late spring and summer in hot spots like attics, and garages.
- Gestation period is between 50 – 60 days
- Little brown bats have one baby; big brown bats can have one or two.



Wildlife Rehabilitators' Association of Massachusetts

HIBERNATION

Bats hibernate when the temperature drops to between 30- and 40-degrees F. They will move into caves to stay warm. Their breathing slows down, and their body temperature drops.

IF YOU FIND A BAT IN WINTER

Occasionally a bat will be found outside in the winter. This will need immediate attention. There is no food for bats in winter months, and they cannot survive the cold temperatures.

RECENT ISSUES WITH BATS

White-Nose Syndrome

Millions of bats have died from this disease in the Northeast. A white fungus appears on their nose and they may be seen in the daytime or in the winter. There is no cure.

If you see dead or dying bats with a white powdery area around their nose, notify the [Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife](#).

COVID-19

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife has recently set a policy for bat rehabilitation in our state. The risk of humans infecting bats with SARS-CoV-2 is high. Considering the devastation of the bat populations from White-nose Syndrome, the DFW has created a policy to protect this species.

To prevent any transmission of COVID-19, only specific rehabilitation facilities can take bats into their care:

1. **Ceacy Henderson:** State and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator and bat specialist of Colrain. Accepts bats from western part of the state, including Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties. **(413)768-8928.**
2. **New England Wildlife Center's Cape Cod Branch:** Accepts bats directly from the southern part of the state, including Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket counties **(508)362-0111.**
3. **Tufts Wildlife Clinic:** Will accept bats from Worcester, Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex counties. They will transfer bats to either Ceacy or NEWC on the Cape for long term care. **(508)839-7918.**

Bats are a rabies vector species and must never be touched with bare hands. Please wear gloves and use extreme caution when handling a bat.

If a bat is found in a bedroom, in an area with pets, people, and/or children, the Department of Public Health must be called at 617-983-6385 in order to determine if rabies testing is needed. If a bat licks, scratches, or bites someone, the bat must be submitted for rabies testing.