



2025-26 Program Summary

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Administered by:



BRITISH COLUMBIA
CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

The BC Community Bat Program (CBP) is a network of regional programs that provide a province-wide approach to bat conservation. Established in 2014, it is implemented by local established stewardship organizations or bat projects in each region, who have access to shared outreach and educational resources and support of professional biologists and program advisors.

Our goals:

- ❖ Raise awareness about bat conservation in BC
- ❖ Identify bat roosts in anthropogenic structures
- ❖ Conserve and enhance bat habitat
- ❖ Provide support to landowners with bats in buildings
- ❖ Engage residents in citizen science to monitor bat populations

British Columbia has the highest diversity of bat species in Canada. Bats are keystone species, meaning that they play a key role in our natural ecosystems. Unfortunately, at least half of our 15 species are listed under the Species at Risk Act, COSEWIC or the BC government due to habitat loss, persecution, wind farms, climate change, and white-nose syndrome (WNS).

The BC Community Bat Programs are recognized by the BC Government as an essential network to implement White-Nose Syndrome surveillance strategies and bat conservation. In addition, the BC Bat Action Team lists the program as a high priority action item in the BC Bat Action Plan. Federally, the program is mentioned as an ongoing action to support Little Brown Myotis (Endangered) in the Recovery Strategy.

Our key activities:

- **Toll free bat call line (1-855-9BC-BATS).** The BCCBP fields over 1400 calls per year. The BC Report a Poacher and Polluter (RAPP) toll free line and the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) line forward all bat related calls to us. Sometimes local veterinarians and even the odd medical clinic call us for advice on what to do when there was contact with a bat. The BCCBP works closely with the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to ensure safety measures are followed and have developed a 'BC Sick or Dead Bat Protocol' that is adhered to when replying to calls.
- **BC Annual Bat Counts.** The BCCBP organizes and trains partners and volunteers to conduct four annual bat counts at individual maternity roosts. Currently, it is the only long-term roost-monitoring program in the province. Begun in 2012, the Annual Bat Count has data on seven bat species at 1,079 anthropogenic roost sites. Annual data is submitted to the BC government Wildlife Species Inventory data system to detect population trends. These bat counts will assist in WNS surveillance.
- **Species Identification of maternity roosts in anthropogenic structures (via a DNA test from the bat guano).** The BCCBP organizes guano collection from new roost sites to determine species. The majority are Little Brown Myotis and Yuma Myotis, as well as Big Brown Bat and few Long-eared Myotis, Long-legged Myotis, and Townsend's Big-eared Bats.

- **Assessments of bat colonies in buildings.** The BCCBP provides homeowners and building managers with Best Management Practices for managing bats in buildings. Coordinators also offer site visits to assess bat colonies. Most pest control companies refer clients to the BCCBP and will not respond to bat calls unless they have taken the BC CBP Managing Bats in Buildings workshop for pest control companies.
- **Provide alternative habitat for exclusions from buildings.** The BCCBP coordinates volunteers to build 4-chambered bat boxes to then donate or sell (to cover cost of materials) to homeowners that are doing exclusions of bat colonies. Bat box occupancy studies following over a decade of bat box installations following exclusions indicate over 90% of bat boxes are used by Little Brown or Yuma Myotis.
- **Outreach and Education.** Organize bat presentations to the community, to schools, and to community groups. Raise awareness about the importance of bats, their threats and how to help bats. Participate in community events with an educational booth and presentations. Organize Bat Week (last week of October) and Bat Appreciation Day (April 17th).
- **Conservation Planning with Bat Ambassadors and the Bat-Friendly Communities initiative.** The BCCBP works with community members, local municipal and regional district government bodies to identify bat habitats and promote adoption of the holistic Bat-Friendly Communities approach. Interested citizens are trained as Bat Ambassadors. As of spring 2026, there are 10 Bat-Friendly Communities in BC and 21 that are currently engaged at different levels, including 2 First Nation communities.
- **White-nose Syndrome Surveillance.** Request reports of winter bat activity from the public, collect dead bats in winter. Work in coordination with the BC WLRS and FLNRORD Wildlife Health Program and submit frozen bats to the Animal Health Centre for WNS testing. Work with homeowners who have bat colonies to monitor the return of bats in spring and collect fresh bat guano for Pd testing.

Partner organizations delivering the BC Community Bat Program:

Habitat Acquisition Trust (Vancouver Island South)
 Nanaimo Area Land Trust (Vancouver Island Mid)
 Cumberland Community Forest Society (Vancouver Island North)
 Denman Conservancy Association & Conservancy Hornby Island (Denman Hornby Islands)
 Gabriola Rescue of Wildlife Society (Gabriola Island)
 Mayne Island Conservancy (Mayne Island)
 Thetis Island Conservancy (Thetis Island)
 Scout Island Nature Centre (Cariboo-Chilcotin)
 Lillooet Naturalist Club (Lillooet)
 Kamloops Naturalist Club (Thompson)
 Sunshine Coast Wildlife Project (Sunshine Coast)
 Coastal Partners in Conservation Society and independent biologist (Fraser Valley and Texada Island)

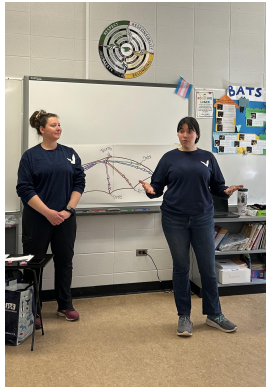
The following regions are delivered by independent biologists:

Metro-Vancouver Sea-to-Sky, other Gulf Islands, Okanagan, Kootenay, Shuswap, Skeena, Peace, and Omineca.

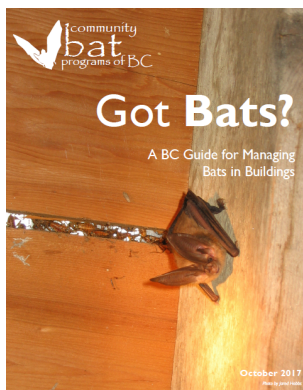
The BC CBP is administered by the BC Conservation Foundation.

Funding partners in 2025 included the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Environment and Climate Change Canada, BC Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship, and BC Conservation Foundation. Regional funding was obtained from RDOS South Okanagan Conservation Fund, Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, RDCK Local Conservation Fund, Comox Valley Community Foundation, Gencon Foundation, BC Gaming Grant, City of Vancouver, myPG Community Grant, Adopt a Bat Campaign, Canada Summer Jobs, Thetis Island Nature Conservancy, Penticton Library and Museum, Osoyoos Desert Society, BC Parks Enhancement Fund, Willowbrook Community Society, Zonal Ecosystem and Wildlife Consultants

Photo montage



Toll Free Call Line to help people with bats, training Bat Ambassadors, delivering community and school presentations



Engaging home owners and providing Best Management Practices for Managing Bats in Buildings



Working with volunteers to make recommended 4-chambered bat boxes used as mitigation if homeowners exclude bats from a building and for habitat enhancement.



Collecting bat guano for DNA testing to identify species of bats in maternity colonies that use anthropogenic structures.



Organizing BC Annual Bat Counts to monitor populations.



Engaging First Nations with site visits, education, inclusion in Bat Ambassador training and Bat-Friendly Communities.



Collecting dead bats in winter and guano in spring for White-nose Syndrome Surveillance.



Working with local governments towards Bat-Friendly Community certification.