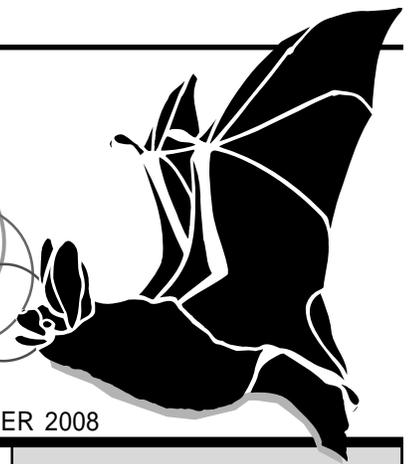


Bats Northwest

News



BNW IS A NON-PROFIT, ALL VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

SUMMER 2008

Bat Gridding Across Washington

by Michelle Noe

Some of you might have noticed that the board meetings in June and July didn't happen. So, where did all the board members go? Summer is the busy time for bat research and activities. Most of us were out on the "Bat Grid".

The Bat Grid is a systematic sampling design and protocol developed by the Forest Service to determine the current geographic distribution of the bat species in the Northwest. The goal is to have consistency in collection methods to ensure that data can be combined and analyzed together. Surveys have been conducted using the Bat Grid since 2002 when it was initially developed in Oregon. There are three methods used under the protocol: morphology, acoustics and genetics. Since its inception in 2002, researchers from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and South Dakota have been trained in the protocol.

In June, many of the board headed to Ephrata, WA for a refresher on protocol and our first sampling nights of the summer. Interest in the program is still strong and



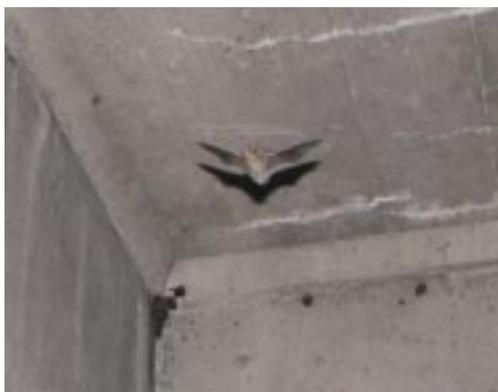
Townsend's Big-Eared Bat

growing so the training sessions were packed. After days in the classroom we headed out to the field to dust off our mist-net survey skills. John Bassett went all the way out to training near Burns, Oregon and got the opportunity to sample eastern Oregon bats. Fun and learning was had by all!

Throughout the rest of the summer, we surveyed both eastern and western Washington sites. Michelle Noe and John Bassett traveled from the southern end of the Olympic Peninsula across the mountains all the way to Moses Coulee and back sampling bats at many sites along the way. Meg Lunnum and Barb Ogaard stayed on the west side of the state and helped on the military bases and up north. Other "Bat Gridders" spread out throughout Washington and Oregon and monitored sites involved in the continuous inventory effort along with surveys of their own.

Though the weather wasn't always cooperative and the terrain difficult at times, we all persevered and worked hard to complete the surveys necessary to keep the Bat Grid program going strong.

See the article in BATS, Spring 2008 for more details on the Bat Grid program.



Myotis species bats fly under a bridge.



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www.batsnorthwest.org

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BNW Meetings!

Second Tuesday,
6:30-8:30

Sand Point-Magnuson
Park
Building 30 Conference
Room



Bats Northwest Envisions a Future

Where the Essential Role
of Bats is Understood

Where the Public Recognizes
the Vital Place of Bats In Our
Environment and Economy

Where All are Inspired by the
Remarkable Attributes and
Invaluable Contribution of
Bats to Our Natural Heritage

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Community Spotlight: Guys Read Club Goes Batty at Discovery Elementary

by Ron Witter

A group of fourth grade students at Discovery Elementary in Gig Harbor have gone batty about bats! Fifteen boys who were members of the Guys Read Club devoured the bat-starring fictional series of books written by Kenneth Opiel: *Silverwing*, *Sunwing* and *Firewing*. These exciting books tell the incredible adventures of a colony of bats with a little bit of fact and a lot of fantasy. Meanwhile students also learned a lot of factual information about Northwest bats, their contribution to the area's ecosystem and the challenges of ever-decreasing habitat that bats are experiencing. Through independent research and instruction led by their teachers, one of whom participated in Bat Ambassador Training offered through Bats Northwest, students became junior bat experts at Discovery.

In order to promote the conservation of bats near Gig Harbor and provide needed habitat, students organized themselves into five teams, each of which constructed their own rocket-type bat house. Some of the bat houses were placed at Kopachuck State Park and can now be

enjoyed and appreciated by the community at large as well as visitors to the area. Students are also planning an educational display which will be constructed near the bat houses at Kopachuck so that anyone who wants to learn about bats can do so. Other bat houses will be placed elsewhere in the community.

This was a very successful project which motivated the boys to read and learn about bats while contributing to their community and the conservation of this incredible flying mammal. Next year's 4th graders will follow in the footsteps of this year's group and will also read the Opiel series, learn about bats, and construct five more bat houses which will also be placed in the community. Who knows, one of these days Gig Harbor may become bat-central in the South Sound. Anyone interested in the Guys Read project at Discovery Elementary is encouraged to contact their teachers, Ron Witter, at witerr@peninsula.wednet.edu or Ben Knodel at knodelb@peninsula.wednet.edu for more information or phone 253-530-1200.



*The Guys Read Club and their excellent Rocket Boxes!
Great job guys!*

I've got a _____ in my _____. Help!

by Kathleen Bander

When a young woman meets a Marine at a Peace Rally in Honolulu, and they subsequently marry, you can surmise that their offspring will also take some unexpected paths.

Sean Met, founder and owner of Wildlife Pros, was this couple's first son, and after growing up in Ohio, Hawaii and Oregon, Sean made his way south through California, pursuing his love of volleyball and beaches. All the jobs he worked had a common link: customer service. He sampled the building trades, and the restaurant and banquet business, to mention just a few.

The day came when he met a young woman who was eventually to become his wife, and they moved to Los Angeles. In spite of loving the sun and the warm waters, they decided that L.A. simply wasn't the best place to raise a family. Becca, his wife, was able to transfer from her job location in L.A. to Redmond as she worked as a researcher for Microsoft.

Determined to get a "real" career, Sean became intrigued with his brother-in-law's company in Orlando, Florida. His brother had trained under a fur trapper turned wildlife expert, helping people deal with problems they encountered with wildlife. At the time, this was a new concept, as the main tenet of pest control was extermination. Sean shadowed his brother for four months, learning the business inside and out, from accounting to marketing, from wild animal biology and habits to customer relations.

In Florida many of the calls they received had to do with armadillos and poisonous snakes. But Sean really lit up when he went on his first bat call, and he made it his business to begin to learn more about bats.

Finally, Sean was ready to begin his own business. He joined his fiancé in Seattle, began his new career and business, got married, and bought a new house. All within one year. If you are familiar with the Holm's Stress Chart, you can just guess the score Sean would have gotten that year!

"A Wildlife Pro" is now in its third year of business, and things are going well. The Puget Sound has its share of wildlife, and as people move further and further into

its' territory, there are bound to be problems. And Sean has never stopped learning about the habits of wildlife, which he considers key to his success. Pursuing the what (kind of animal?), the where (did you see it?), the in and out (how it got into and out of the house, basement, etc.?), and the basic biology of the animal, gives Sean the information he needs to help people with wildlife problems.

A primary goal for Sean is finding a permanent solution for a problem. He doesn't want to be called back for the same problem later on, and knows that the customer wants closure. To that end, he will share his knowledge of the animal with the client, and if necessary, postpone his work until it will be most effective, and least harmful to the wildlife. A good example of this is when he gets bat calls in the early spring from people who have bat maternity colonies. Rather than doing an exclusion in early spring, thus effectively killing the baby bats who starve to death when their mothers are excluded from the roost, Sean waits until early fall when the babies have flown to do the exclusions. Clients are happy with this solution, as the specter of dead babies in their attics isn't too pleasant a consequence for hurried action.

Soon after moving to Seattle, Sean became involved with Bats Northwest. We welcomed having A Wildlife Pro, as we often get calls from people looking for wildlife experts, and we appreciate Sean's commitment to find solutions that work for people and wildlife mutually. Most companies in the Puget Sound are pest controllers and exterminators, though they advertise they handle bat problems. Hard to believe that is true, as they don't seem to know much. Sean recently arrived on a job to check out a problem, only to find out that one of the major pest control companies had already been there. The technician had not the faintest idea what to do, so in hearing distance of the customer she called back to her office to get direction. What was it? She said they'd be back the next day with a leaf blower to frighten the bats away! Like that could ever keep a mother bat from her baby!

A Wildlife Pro discussed with the client what was really going on, and the man readily agreed to wait until fall

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Our Mission

***Bats Northwest
Envisions a Future . . .
Where the Essential Role
of Bats is Understood
Where the Public
Recognizes the Vital Place
of Bats
In Our Environment
and Economy
Where all are Inspired by
the Remarkable Attributes
and Invaluable
Contribution of Bats to Our
Natural Heritage***

Many bat sites on the Web provide worthy information and great photos from around the world.

BATS NORTHWEST is focused on our regional bats, but there is so much to learn about bat conservation worldwide. You may enjoy visiting some of these sites.

www.batcon.org
www.wa.gov/wdfw/wildwatch
www.batsound.com
www.lubee.com
www.athertontablelands.com/bats
www.batbox.org
www.batworld.org
www.californiabats.com
www.batcrew.com
www.warksbats.co.uk



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to do an exclusion. Leaf blower...! But Sean runs into this situation frequently, where a pest control company (or two, or three) will have been called for a bat problem, but have inadequate or total lack of information needed to solve the problem.

Sean knows, however, that he doesn't know it all. He also has a sense of humor, which in this following example was a fortunate thing. Sean's new neighbor soon learned Sean was a wildlife specialist, and asked for his help with the bats living in the attic of his brick Tudor. Obliging, at the right time of year (the fall) Sean did a simple exclusion, thus quickly solving the neighbor's problem. Yet the following spring the neighbor mentioned to Sean that he was still seeing bats flying between their houses. Surprised, Sean stayed out late one night to see where the bats were going: yes, they were there, but they weren't going into his neighbor's attic, they were going into Sean's attic! Abashed, Sean told the news to his wife. Her response? "All right, you'll take care of it." And of course, parents of a newborn themselves, they agreed to wait until the fall to do the exclusion.

With his interest in bats, it isn't surprising that he is continuing his association with Bats Northwest. Nor is it surprising that Sean was seen outside his house, on a ladder, catching a bat in a butterfly net so he could identify the species he had in his attic. But then, he's used to the work. If you aren't, and you have a bat (or raccoon, or bird, or wild cat, or rat, or squirrel) problem, call Sean and A Wildlife Pro at (206) 799-6403. Oh, and the bats he has in his attic are Big Browns!

Science with a Twist!

by Meg Lunnum

Bats Northwest was invited to the Pacific Science Center's "Science with a Twist!" to be a lead-in to the PSC's showing of the newest Batman movie, "The Dark Knight". Science with a Twist is a 21+ event every third Thursday. They offer music, food, drinks and fun with a science theme. The Science Center had a table set up with an easel showcasing the fact we were from Bats Northwest.

Sean Met and Meg Lunnum enjoyed talking about bats during this event. We handed out brochures and business cards to those who were eager to learn more about our local bats. Batman was also available for pictures with the guests, including Sean.

The exciting end to the evening was that Sean and I got to go to the movie. We were in the first row at the IMAX theatre. The crook in the neck was worth it, the movie was very good.



Sean Met with Batman

CATS: Good Pets...Lousy Outdoor Companions

by Chris Anderson

Recently, I talked with a person that was extremely concerned over the six (yes, count them...six) dead bats they had scattered on their porch and out into the lawn. Hmm...what was going on here? It was obvious that the locusts were soon to follow according to this, understandably, concerned person. However, what is the actual situation; maybe we have a bit less of a doomsday explanation? We started to discuss the neighborhood. There were birds, bats, cats, rats, raccoons, cute little squirrels...sounds nice (except for maybe the rats, but hey — they can't help it). The discussion steered towards the possibility that there was a situation which allowed a house cat, a very effective potential predator, the advantage over this newfound collection of deceased bats. That wasn't readily accepted...at first.

Why Should Kitty Be Confined?

It is estimated that at least 100 million cats exist in the United States, both free-rangers and household pet kitties. Up to 70% of a cat's diet consists of small mammals if Garfield is allowed to exist in the great out-of-doors, even if he comes home later. The rest of this wild food source consists of birds and other small beasts. Further, behavioral research shows that domestic cats, being of predator ancestry and retaining the psychological drive and biology to function as such, do in fact still prey upon items even if well fed through the love of people and commercial pet food. It is their nature to stalk and catch prey, cache prey as items are caught, and stalk some more. It makes sense for a wild cat. Food is a limiting factor for all wildlife, the more opportunities capitalized on, the more food acquired. Problem is, our little cute tabby is fed daily with quality pet store food. She still, however, likes to chase and play with her kitty toys — wild animals are equivalent in her eyes to her favorite toy.

In addition, it is proven that kitty lives longer if kept indoors, or at least kept under supervision outside. Keeping your cat on a lead or in a cat enclosure is not difficult, and allows one to constantly be aware of where their pet is and ensure that it is safe. The dangers for both wildlife and free-roaming domestic pets abound: traffic (the biggest culprit for urban animals' demise), disease, direct and indirect poisoning,

parasites, scuffles with other animals that are being territorial or want a cat dinner, being taken home by another person, or malicious activities by folks who unfortunately do not understand that cruelty to animals is unacceptable in our society. Estimates show that free-range cats live 5 years or less, on average. Indoor cats can live up to 17 years or more!

I own a cat; I would like to keep him as long as possible. He enriches my life and is a great pet. He goes out on a leash and harness at times to watch the world...and chew on some grass. He didn't like the lead when we first adopted him, but he adjusted to it (and my two dogs). There were moments of scowling and klutzy locomotion, but what great stories we have now! I wonder if he ever feels embarrassed when I tell of him flopping over a two-foot high gate because of the strange purple harness around him. It just felt funny at first, apparently. I thought riding a bike felt funny at age six...but this awkwardness isn't the case anymore for either of us. In fact, this familiarity and routine of using a harness to keep watch on my cat enriches both of our lives. My cat enjoys the outdoors safely and comfortably, and I enjoy spending time with him — watching the world together, talking (of some sort), and learning about each other. It is relaxing. Research shows that spending time with pets as well as wildlife watching lowers stress levels. Why not promote sustainability of both activities. I like my birds and squirrels (as does my cat), but I want to keep them both around!

More Facts Come to Light

A few days later, the folks with the six dead bats called back with an interesting update. They had been watching the backyard in the evenings for bats due to the recent morbid events. The previous night they witnessed a local free-range cat, which often came around, hide right by their flowering yucca plant. Yuccas flower both day and night and are great nectar sources for butterflies and moths. It became apparent that the cat was waiting for bats that were taking moths while they were visiting the yucca for nectar. They witnessed two more bat victims that night. They hadn't realized that some of their garden plants were so attractive to such wildlife, which was exciting and something

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Keep up to date!
Check out
Bats Northwest's
Website.

Watch our
Events Page
for news on
upcoming
presentations and
field trips.

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new to delve into and expand on as a hobby. While unfortunate for the eight now deceased bats, the backyard yucca allows other bats to live in the area if kitty's hunting instincts are properly restrained. With understanding and appropriate measures, cats and people can enjoy wildlife watching from a safe spot for many more evenings to come. Mystery solved, immediate problem still there.

We discussed the issues and best options to deal with free-ranging cats. They decided it best to take the nice cat to a shelter that would examine it, give it appropriate medical attention and quarantine, and then place it up for adoption since it was tame and would make a nice pet for someone. At times, due to health or behavioral reasons, free-roaming domestic animals do need to be humanely euthanized. However, this is still the best option for an animal that otherwise would exist with potential to spread disease to other pets, people or wildlife. Cats that are trapped, spayed or neutered, and released are still an unnatural predator for local wildlife populations, promoting an out-of-sync ecological situation due to domestic cats' behavioral drive to seek wildlife as prey. Wildlife are not adapted to existing with a predator population that is generally quite prolific in urban and suburban areas, largely due to the tendency for cats to form colonies and therefore exist in high numbers often aided by direct and indirect supplemental feeding by humans.



Photo courtesy of The Joy Of The Mundane

The folks who called with the cat-bat situation planned to discuss this recent happening with their neighbors as well. They knew a few neighbors that were also surrogate people for this particular cat, and attached to it. They felt it best to pass along the happenings and the issues surrounding it. Due to their efforts and understanding, more bats and other wildlife will have opportunity to exist in their neighborhood for all to study and enjoy. Their efforts will promote a better understanding among their neighbors of what to do to give stray cats a better option than existing in the wild.

For more information on how, why, and what to do to promote humane welfare of free-ranging cats for the betterment of wildlife, the cats, and people see:

Cats and Wildlife – A Conservation Dilemma (University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension)

<http://wildlife.wisc.edu/extension/catfly3.htm>

Cats and Wildlife – A Lethal Combination (Humane Society of the United States)

http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/urban_wildlife_our_wild_neighbors/coexisting/pets/cats_and_wildlife_a_lethal_combination.html

Cats and Wildlife – A Compilation of References (California Dept. of Fish and Game)

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/species/nuis_exo/dom_cat/index.html

How To Make Your Outdoor Cat a Happy Indoor Cat (American Bird Conservancy)

<http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/materials/outin.pdf>

Love Wild Birds? Keep Your Cats Indoors (Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife)

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/do/newreal/release.php?id=jun0600a>

Cats & Wildlife (Portland Audubon Society)

<http://www.audubonportland.org/backyardwildlife/brochures/cats>

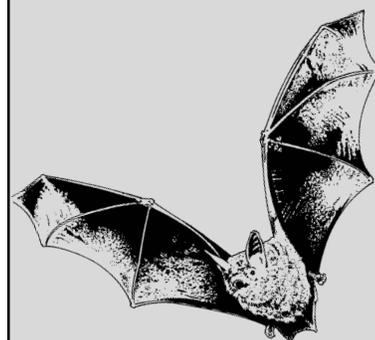
WASHINGTON

Submission from Chris Anderson, WDFW

Bat Encounter Report Card for Washington State Caving Community

Chris Anderson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 4 Office, 16018 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek, WA 98012 (425) 775-1311, ext. 111, andercda@dfw.wa.gov; Greg Falxa, Cascadia Research Collective, 218½ W. 4th Ave., Olympia, WA 98501; and Lori Salzer, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Headquarters Office, 600 Capitol Way N., Olympia, WA 98501.

Chris Anderson and Lori Salzer (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) have been working with Ron Zuber and the Cascade Grotto to create a mail-in bat observation card for northwest cavers, as well as any other similar interest groups. The card allows for easy reporting of the presence or absence of bats in caves or any other potential roost site. The card and related collaborative efforts came about due to ongoing discussions between WDFW Headquarters and Region 4 biologists, Cascade Grotto, and Bats Northwest. Recently, the card was introduced at the Cascade Grotto March meeting for discussion and comment. Barb Ogaard, of Bats Northwest, presented a slide show on western Washington bats, general bat ecology, as well as local and international bat conservation. Greg Falxa, of Cascadia Research Collective, discussed research findings and current knowledge of bats in western Washington, as well as techniques to minimize disturbance in situations where cavers and similar groups might encounter an unknown bat roost. Chris Anderson discussed ongoing collaborative efforts of the Cascade Grotto, Bats Northwest, and WDFW regarding sharing of presence or absence type observations of bats at potential roost sites. Field-ready forms are available online at http://www.batsnorthwest.org/BATFORM_WDFW_FINAL.pdf.



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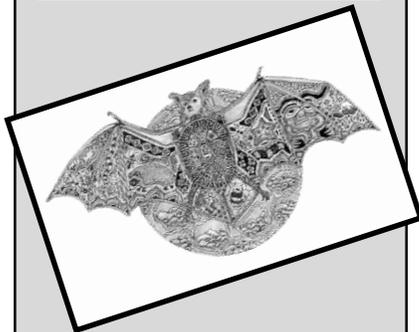
www.batsnorthwest.com



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Bats Northwest web site:
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