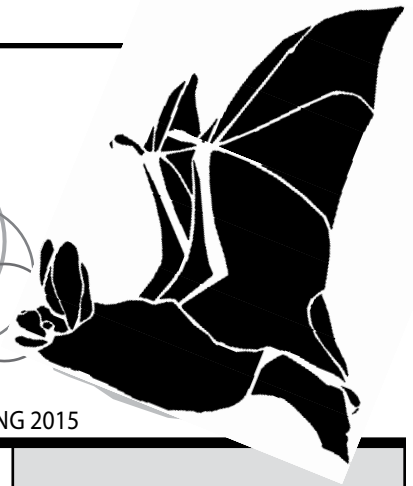


# Bats Northwest

## News



BNW IS A NON-PROFIT, ALL VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

SPRING 2015

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Protects Northern Long-Eared Bat as Threatened Under Endangered Species Act

*Also Issues Interim Special Rule that Tailors Protections to Eliminate Unnecessary Restrictions and Provide Regulatory Flexibility for Landowners.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2015

Contact:

Georgia Parham, 812-334-4261 x 1203,

Georgia\_Parham@fws.gov

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today it is protecting the northern long-eared bat as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), primarily due to the threat posed by white-nose syndrome, a fungal disease that has devastated many bat populations.

At the same time, the Service issued an interim special rule that eliminates unnecessary regulatory requirements for landowners, land managers, government agencies and others in the range of the northern long-eared bat. The public is invited to comment on this interim rule as the Service considers whether modifications or exemptions for additional categories of activities should be included in a final 4(d) rule that will be finalized by the end of the calendar year. The Service is accepting public comments on the proposed rule until July 1, 2015 and may make revisions based on additional information it receives.

“Bats are a critical component of our nation’s ecology and economy, maintaining a fragile insect predator-prey balance; we lose them at our peril,” said Service Director Dan Ashe. “Without bats, insect populations can rise dramatically, with the potential for devastating losses for our crop farmers and foresters. The alternative to bats is greater pesticide use, which brings with it another set of ecological concerns.”

In the United States, the northern long-eared bat is found from Maine to North Carolina on the Atlantic Coast, westward to eastern Oklahoma and north through the Dakotas, reaching into eastern Montana and Wyoming. Throughout the bat’s range, states and local stakeholders have been some of the leading partners in both conserving the long-eared bat and addressing the challenge presented by white-nose syndrome.

“Michigan and other states collaboratively



Northern Long-eared bat. Photo by Pete Pattavina/USFWS.

worked to provide critical information as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service evaluated the status of the northern long-eared bat,” said Keith Creagh, Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. “The decision to list the bat as threatened with an interim 4(d) rule represents a biologically sound determination that will address the conservation needs of these bats while providing flexibility for those who live and work within the bats’ range. Looking ahead, we expect to continue working closely with the Service as we focus on finding the right solutions to this conservation challenge.”

The Service proposed the northern long-eared bat as “endangered” in October 2013 following severe population declines that have seen the species disappear from some traditional hibernation sites. However, during its review, the Service determined the northern long-eared bat meets the definition of “threatened.” Under the Act, an endangered species is currently in danger of becoming extinct, while a threatened species is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.

“In making this decision, we reviewed the best available scientific information on the northern long-eared bat, including information gathered from more than 100,000 public comments,” said the Service’s Midwest Regional Director Tom Melius. “We are listing this species because a disease – white-nose syndrome – is spreading and decimating its populations. We designed the 4(d) rule to provide appropriate protection within the area where the disease occurs for the remaining individuals during their most sensitive life stages, but to otherwise eliminate unnecessary regulation.”



Bats Northwest web  
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you at:  
[www.batsnorthwest.org](http://www.batsnorthwest.org)

Join our monthly  
BNW Meetings!

Second Tuesday,  
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Building 30  
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The listing becomes effective on May 4, 2015, 30 days after publication of the final listing determination in the Federal Register.

Populations of the northern long-eared bat have declined dramatically in the eastern part of the bat's range due primarily to white-nose syndrome, a disease that has killed millions of cave-hibernating bats of many species in the United States and Canada. Impact of disease is among the factors analyzed by the Service under the Endangered Species Act when a species is considered for listing.

The Service, states, federal agencies, tribes, conservation organizations and scientific institutions are working together on a national response team to address white-nose syndrome through disease monitoring and management, conservation and outreach. The Service has granted more than \$20 million to institutions and federal and state agencies for research and response.

Some human activities also impact these species, particularly close to their hibernation sites, creating heightened challenges for bat populations already weakened by disease and underscoring the need to protect important habitat while research continues to develop a cure for white-nose syndrome.

White-nose syndrome has not yet been detected throughout the entire range of the northern long-eared bat, and will not likely affect the entire range for some years. The species appears stable in areas not yet affected by disease, mainly in the western part of its range. It also still persists in some areas impacted by white-nose syndrome, creating some uncertainty as to the timing of the extinction risk posed by the disease.

Under the ESA, the Service may implement special rules under section 4(d) for wildlife listed as threatened. Such rules enable the Service to tailor protections of the ESA to those that are "necessary and advisable to provide for the conservation of such species." They also enable prohibitions that do not further the conservation of the species to be relaxed, reducing the regulatory burden on the public.

For areas of the country affected by white-nose syndrome, the measures provided in the interim 4(d) rule exempt "take" (a term under the ESA that includes harming, harassing or killing a listed species) resulting from certain activities. These activities include forest management practices, maintenance and limited expansion of transportation and utility rights-of-way, removal of trees and brush to maintain prairie habitat, and limited tree-removal projects, provided these activities protect known maternity roosts and hibernation caves. The interim 4(d) rule also exempts take resulting from removal of hazardous trees, removal of northern long-eared

bats from human dwellings, and research-related activities.

These measures are designed to protect northern long-eared bats when they are most vulnerable, including when they are hibernating and during the two-month pup-rearing season from June through July.

In parts of the country not affected by white-nose syndrome, the 4(d) rule recognizes that activities that result in incidental take of bats are not imperiling the species. These activities will be exempt from the Act's prohibitions. Purposeful take, however, other than removal of bats from dwellings, is prohibited.

You may submit comments on the interim 4(d) rule until July 1, 2015 by one of the following methods:

Electronically: Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS-R5-ES-2011-0024, which is the docket number for this rulemaking. You may submit a comment by clicking on "Comment Now!"

By hard copy: Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R5-ES-2011-0024; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

We request that you send comments only by one of the methods described above. We will post all comments on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us.

For more information on the final rule listing the northern long-eared bat as threatened, and the interim 4(d) rule, go to [www.fws.gov/midwest/nleb](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/nleb).

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

Connect with our Facebook page at [facebook.com/usfwsmidwest](https://www.facebook.com/usfwsmidwest), follow our tweets at [twitter.com/usfwsmidwest](https://twitter.com/usfwsmidwest), watch our YouTube Channel at [youtube.com/usfws](https://www.youtube.com/usfws) and download photos from our Flickr page at [flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest).

Last updated: April 1, 2015

# Winter Bat Programs at Mercer Slough, Bellevue

by Sally Lawrence

For 2015, the park rangers and volunteer Master Naturalists for Bellevue's Department of Parks and Community Services chose the Little Brown Myotis as Species of the Year. This means that throughout the year, the parks department will focus a number of family educational programs on bats - their biology, local occurrence and the need to protect them.

In February, the parks department hosted three bat-themed programs. First was a story hour about bats for preschool children, using the classic *Stellaluna*, which attracted a good audience of children and their parents. The kids made bat wings and enjoyed "flying." Later in the month the Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center (MSEEC) showed the movie, *The Secret World of Bats*, a 48-minute documentary originally aired on CBS-TV. It was also well attended. We volunteer naturalists and the park rangers started to get a hint that these creatures are spiking a lot of curiosity among the general public.

Third up was a program titled, "Bat Hike," led by master naturalists Heba Bakhach and myself. We were worried about the February 21st date assigned by the parks department. Who ever heard of going outside to look for bats in winter? Aren't they all hibernating?

Luckily John Bassett and Bernice Tannenbaum from Bats Northwest shared their expertise and told us that local bats may use a "snack and snooze" approach to winter. Because our winters are mild, some bat activity can occur. If it is has been a warm day and there are insects flying about, some bats may come out at dusk to hunt. With the help of Bernice and John and two bat detectors, we did a brief preliminary survey on January 25th, a lovely warm Sunday, at Mercer Slough. Once it was dark and we were on the trails below the center, the bat detectors started clicking, and twice, a small dark shape zoomed over our heads, too fast for recognition. John followed up with an analysis of the recording and the likely identification of a California Myotis.

Our program on February 21st was an hour long and included several indoor and outdoor activities, ending with a 15 minute hike to spot bats in the evening sky. We

used a slide show to explain how bats are different from other mammals and asked the children to compare their arm length, heart rate, and arm-flapping rate to those of bats. In an echolocation game, children pretended to be insects and an adult (in this case, naturalist Heba) pretended to be a bat sending out echolocation "beeps."

Although Heba and I were well prepared, there was a perfect storm of good publicity about this free event for families, combined with a lovely warm and sunny Saturday afternoon (school break week), and no registration requirement. The program broke all records for Mercer Slough public programs – there were 130 adults and children – well over the fire department limit for the room. With two extra naturalists and two rangers, we managed to get through the program and convey some new information about local bats to this crowd of enthusiasts. Even splitting the crowd in two and running two walks in sequence, the kids were overjoyed to be outside among the trees and near the water. They tried hard to be quiet, but couldn't contain their normal human social behavior – they were noisy, wiggly and tossed a few pebbles into the Slough. Not surprisingly, the Mercer Slough bats, with their very good hearing, stayed hidden from this entourage. There were no swoops overhead or clicks on the bat detector.

Having learned some lessons, the parks department will use a registration system to limit attendance at the next evening bat programs, scheduled for May 29th and August 14th at Lewis Creek Park on Lakemont Boulevard. These two programs are designed for families with children age five and older. The programs and their activity codes are described on page 26 of the Parks Connections brochure at:

<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Parks/PksTrimester2-2015-Web.pdf>

Then use the activity code to register online at [www.MyParksandRecreation.com](http://www.MyParksandRecreation.com).

Bats Northwest is providing a bat-observing opportunity August 21st at Kelsey Creek Farm in Bellevue. "Bats at Twilight," for those age 10 and older, is described on page 35 of the Parks Connections brochure (see link above).

Hope you will see some bats in Bellevue this summer!

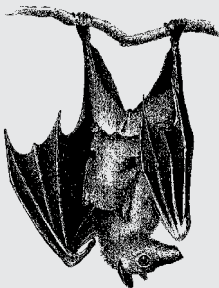
## Our Mission

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 the sites listed on our Resource Page at:

<http://www.batsnorthwest.org/resources.html>



## Project Edubat Inspires Kids to Learn about Bats, White-Nose Syndrome



Contact: Meg Lunnum  
[info@batsnorthwest.org](mailto:info@batsnorthwest.org)

*by Project Edubat*

“Bats ROCK!” said third-grader Samantha Colaw. Samantha, daughter of schoolteacher Julie Colaw, became a bat crusader after her mother discovered Project Edubat, a newly launched educational program about these often-misunderstood flying mammals.

The brainchild of Cindy Sandeno of the U.S. Forest Service and fellow bat enthusiasts, Project Edubat includes curricula that meet national educational requirements for students in elementary grades through high school. Posters, activities and presentations are available on-line and more than 30 educational bat trunks are available across the country for educators to check out for hands-on learning. Trunks include bat skeletons and skulls, books, videos, brochures, and materials to create a bat mural and other fun craft activities. Visit <http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/> for information on the program and how you may borrow a trunk.

Bats Northwest is proud to host a trunk for the Seattle area. Contact us at [info@batsnorthwest.org](mailto:info@batsnorthwest.org) to find out how to reserve the trunk for your classroom.

The on-line Calculate the Value of Bats caught the eye of Samantha Colaw. “Cindy pointed us to the Edubat activities,” Julie Colaw said, “and Samantha took it from there. She was so excited that she did a social studies

project about the economics of bats and won first place at the school level. In March she’ll compete at the county level.”

“This is just what we envisioned when we set out to develop Edubat,” said Sandeno. “As a wildlife biologist, I know that bats are fascinating animals vital to our environment, our economy and us. But I also know that not all people think that way. It’s hard to protect something you don’t feel connected to, so we wanted to foster connections between young people and bats with high-quality easy-to-use, fun tools.”

Such tools have never been more important. Forty percent of bat species in the United States are endangered or considered at risk and about six million bats have recently died from an emerging disease called white-nose syndrome. Project Edubat not only explores white-nose syndrome, but encourages people to become involved in the fight against the disease. “Bats need our help now,” said Sandeno. Project Edubat is conservation through education.”

Project Edubat was funded with a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Other partners include Bat Conservation International, Project Underground, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Organization for the Conservation of Bats, Prince William Network, U.S. Geological Survey National Wildlife Health Center and Speleobooks.





## Project Edubat in the Media

### Project Edubat Inspires Kids to Learn about Bats

Synonymous with a superhero signal in the sky and silhouettes hanging upside down in a darkened cave, bats inspire a long-standing fascination, and with good reason! Bats are vital to healthy environments and human economies worldwide.

That is why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service joined forces to create Project EduBat, an engaging educational program designed to prepare, inspire, excite, and motivate people of all ages to take part in conserving our bats.

Project Edubat includes curricula that meet national educational requirements for students in elementary grades through high school. Posters, activities and presentations are available on-line and more than 30 educational bat trunks are available for free for educators. Trunks include bat skeletons and skulls, books, videos, brochures, and materials to create a bat mural and other fun craft activities. Visit <http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/> for information on the program and how you may borrow a trunk.

### Knowledge is “Bat” Power!

So, you likely know that bats are nocturnal – but there are a lot of other very cool things about bats – here’s just a few:

- Bats play a significant role in science and medicine. Research on bats has enabled advancement in sonar, vaccine development, blood coagulation, and more.
- Bats benefit humans. For example:
- Bats are our most important natural predators of night-flying insects eating mosquitoes, moths, beetles, crickets, leafhoppers, chinch bugs, and much more!
- Many of these insects are serious agricultural or forests pests, and others spread disease to humans or livestock.
- Bats provide at least 3 billion dollars each year in pest control for North America.
- Because of this, bats help reduce the amount of chemicals in the environment
- Some bat species act as pollinators and seed dispersers for important crops such as wild bananas, cloves, carob, balsa wood, and agave.

Visit <http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/> for information on how to teach others about our fascinating bats!

### Learn More About Threats to Bats

Bats are important to ecosystems worldwide, and unfortunately in many areas their numbers have declined. The greatest threat to bats in the U.S. and Canada is a disease called white-nose syndrome.

- White-nose syndrome has killed over 6 million bats in just six years!
- Experts fear that some bats are becoming extinct in certain regions.
- A fungus that is not native to North America causes this disease.
- To learn more about white-nose syndrome and its effects check out the Battle for Bats video <http://vimeo.com/76705033> produced for the Forest Service by Ravenswood Media.
- To teach others about the importance of bats and the threat of white-nose syndrome, visit: <http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/>

### Be a “Robin” to Your Bat Friends!

So, now that you know about the importance of bats & current threats, here are some ways you can help be a friend to bats:

- Share your bat knowledge with your friends & family
- Plant a bat garden – planting flowers that are late day blooming or night-scented
- Build and install a bat house in your backyard ([www.batsnorthwest.org/bat\\_houses.html](http://www.batsnorthwest.org/bat_houses.html))
- Respect cave closures
- Follow protocols recommended by the U.S. FWS to decontaminate clothes, footwear, and equipment used in caves or mines
- Stay out of caves where bats are hibernating
- Encourage teachers to include bats in lesson plans about nature and the environment. You can find great activities here <http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/curriculum.php>.

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

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

Would you like to  
lend a hand?  
Bats Northwest  
would love your  
help.

Would you like to  
build bat houses?  
Write newsletter  
articles?  
Coordinate other  
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Please contact us  
to see how you can  
help us help bats!



## White-Nose Syndrome Confirmed in Iowa; More Than Half of all States Now Affected

Posted: 04/16/2015

DES MOINES - White-nose syndrome has been confirmed in Iowa, making it the 26th state to confirm the disease of hibernating bats that has killed more than 5.7 million bats since 2006.

Three bats collected in Des Moines County were confirmed to have white-nose syndrome (WNS). Two little brown bats and one northern long-eared bat observed near a cave entrance showed visible signs of WNS during monitoring for the disease. The USGS-National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin confirmed that the bats had WNS.

*Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (P. d.), the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome, was also detected on additional samples collected from the cave, which as recently as February 2014 had no visual signs of WNS. WNS was also confirmed in four little brown bats collected in Van Buren County this winter after a concerned citizen reported bats flying around outside.

P. d. had previously been detected in caves at Maquoketa Caves State Park in 2011, 2012, and 2013, but it was not detected in the last two winters.

The Iowa DNR conducted routine monitoring and surveillance at other sites and is investigating an unconfirmed report of possible WNS in another county. Additional samples are still being analyzed by the National Wildlife Health Center.

The confirmation of WNS in Iowa is not a surprise. Monitoring found P.d. in the state in 2011 and the DNR took steps to help delay the arrival of the disease through seasonal cave closures and public education about decontamination procedures to prevent transporting the fungus between sites. The caves at Maquoketa Caves State Park remain seasonally open.

WNS affects bats during hibernation. Bats awaken more often and use up fat reserves needed for survival through winter. They may also emerge from hibernation too early and starve or freeze to death. Mortality

rates for little brown and northern long-eared bats have exceeded 95 percent in infected caves in other states.

Bats are crucial to a healthy ecosystem. They eat insects that can damage agricultural crops, saving us at least \$3 billion annually in pest suppression services. The five bat species known to use caves in Iowa are susceptible to WNS; little brown, big brown, Indiana, tri-colored, and northern long-eared bats. Indiana and northern long-eared bats receive protection by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the Endangered Species Act.

WNS is not known to pose a threat to humans, pets, or livestock. It is transmitted primarily from bat to bat, but fungal spores may be inadvertently carried to caves by humans on clothing and caving gear. Iowa citizens can help bats by following all decontamination requirements if entering caves and continuing to avoid disturbing bats, especially during hibernation.

Iowans can also help bats by volunteering to monitor bat populations in the state. Acoustic monitoring surveys that rely on recording bat echolocation calls are an efficient way to monitor bat populations to identify areas of high bat activity in Iowa. Volunteers are needed in Boone, Clayton, Dubuque, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Lucas, Marshall, Story, and Warren counties. For more information visit the DNR website at [www.iowadnr.gov/volunteerwildlifemonitoring/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/volunteerwildlifemonitoring/) or email the Volunteer Wildlife Monitoring Program at [vwmp@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:vwmp@dnr.iowa.gov). The volunteer acoustic monitoring planned for this summer is funded by a WNS grant from the USFWS.

Do not touch or handle bats. If you see sick or dead bats, please report them to the DNR.

Additional information on white nose syndrome and bats is available at [www.whitenosesyndrome.org](http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org), [www.facebook.com/usfwswns](http://www.facebook.com/usfwswns) and [www.twitter.com/usfws\\_wns](http://www.twitter.com/usfws_wns)

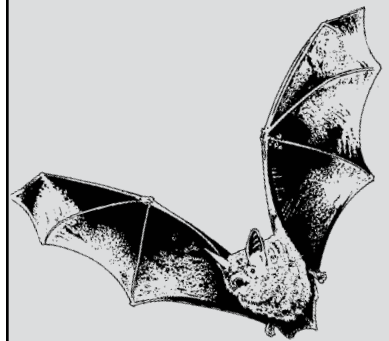
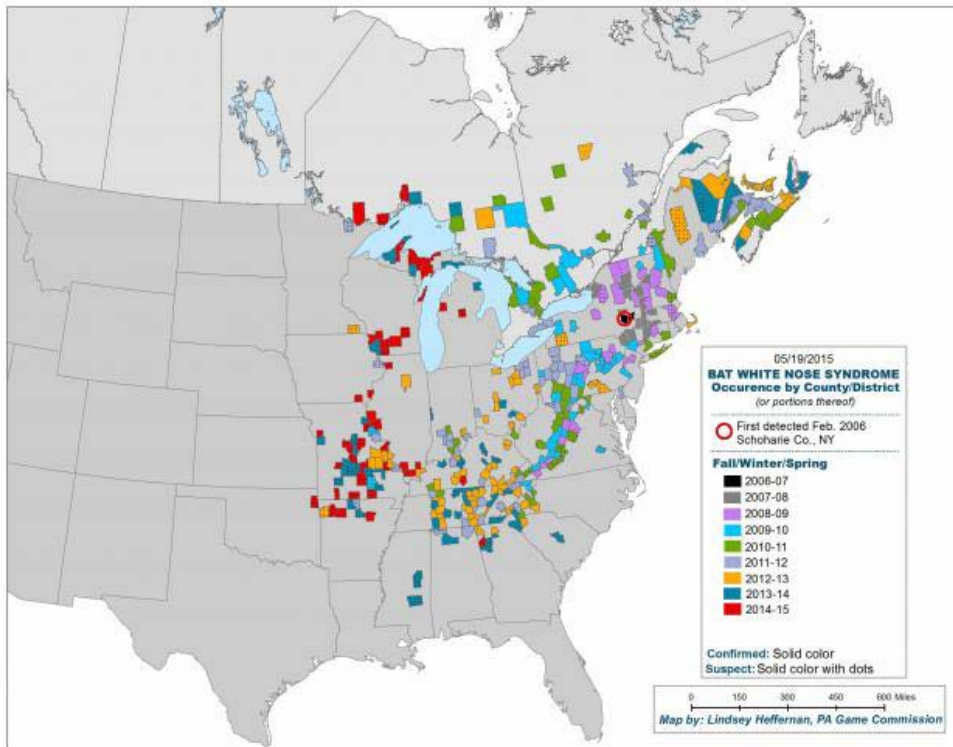


### IOWA DNR NEWS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION



# Latest White Nose Syndrome Spread Map



Bats Northwest

206.256.0406

[www.batsnorthwest.org](http://www.batsnorthwest.org)

Breaking news -- May 19, 2015 -- Oklahoma becomes the third state where the fungus has been confirmed, but the disease is not present. <http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/media/bfungus.htm>

## Green Lake Bat Walks 2015

Day	Date	Sunset Time	Batwalk Start
Tues	June 2	9:00 pm	8:00 pm
Thurs	June 18	9:10 pm	8:00 pm
Wed	July 1	9:11 pm	8:00 pm
Fri	July 17	9:01pm	8:00 pm
Tues	July 28	8:49 pm	7:45 pm
Thurs	Aug. 13	8:25 pm	7:30 pm
Mon	Aug. 24	8:06 pm	7:00 pm
Wed	Sept. 9	7:34 pm	6:30 pm

These public programs will be held near the Bathhouse Theater on the northwest side of Green Lake in Seattle. We will meet on the grassy knoll with picnic tables located across the paved Green Lake walking path from the theater at the Start Times listed above. Since the program will begin before sunset and continue after dark, you should dress appropriately for the weather conditions on the evening of the event. We look forward to seeing all of you at these events and to the opportunity to entertain you and educate you about bats.



Bats Northwest Mailing Address:

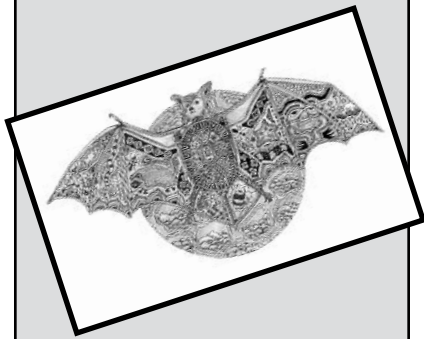
P.O. Box 3026

Lynnwood, WA 98046

206.256.0406

Bats Northwest web site:

[www.batsnorthwest.org](http://www.batsnorthwest.org)



## Become a Bats Northwest Member

Join us in the adventure to learn more about our bat neighbors!

Membership Options:   \_ \$35       \_ \$50       \_ \$75       \_ \$100       \_ Other

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Heavyweight cotton, natural off-white, with a brightly colored bat graphic.

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