

Bats Northwest

News



BNW IS A NON-PROFIT, ALL VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

SUMMER 2016

Bat With White-Nose Syndrome Confirmed in Washington State

NEWS RELEASE WDFW

March 31, 2:00 pm EST

OLYMPIA – White-nose syndrome (WNS) has been confirmed in a little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) found near North Bend – the first recorded occurrence of this devastating bat disease in western North America. The presence of this disease was verified by the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Wildlife Health Center.

WNS has spread quickly among bats in other affected areas, killing more than six million beneficial insect-eating bats in North America since it was first documented nearly a decade ago.

WNS is not known to pose a threat to humans, pets, livestock or other wildlife.

On March 11, hikers found the sick bat about 30 miles east of Seattle near North Bend, and took it to Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) for care. The bat died two days later, and had visible symptoms of a skin infection common in bats with WNS.

PAWS then submitted the bat for testing to the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, which confirmed through fungal culture, molecular and pathology analyses that it had WNS.

“We are extremely concerned about the confirmation of WNS in Washington state, about 1,300 miles from the previous westernmost detection of the fungus that causes the disease,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe. “Bats are a crucial part of our ecology and provide essential pest control for our farmers, foresters and city residents, so it is important that we stay focused on stopping the spread of this fungus. People can help by following decontamination guidance to reduce the risk of accidentally transporting the fungus.”

First seen in North America in the winter of 2006/2007 in eastern New York, WNS has now spread to 28 states and five Canadian provinces. USGS microbiologist David Blehert first identified the unknown fungus, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, which causes the disease. WNS is named for the fuzzy white fungal growth that is sometimes observed on the muzzles of infected bats. The fungus invades hibernating bats’ skin and causes damage, especially to delicate wing tissue, and physiologic imbalances that can lead to disturbed hibernation, depleted fat reserves, dehydration and death.

“This finding in a far-western location is unfortunately indicative of the challenges we face with the unpredictability of WNS,” said Suzette Kimball,

director of the USGS. “This underscores the critical importance of our work to develop tools for early detection and rapid response to potentially devastating wildlife diseases.”

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leads the national WNS response effort, working with state and federal partners to respond to the disease. The Service’s National White-nose Syndrome Coordinator Jeremy Coleman said the first step will be to conduct surveillance near where the bat was found to determine the extent of WNS in the area. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is responsible for bat management and conservation in Washington and will coordinate surveillance and response efforts.

WDFW veterinarian Katie Haman said the disease is transmitted primarily from bat to bat, although people can carry fungal spores on their clothing, shoes or caving gear.

“The bat found near North Bend most likely had been roused from hibernation and was attempting to feed at a time of very low insect availability,” Haman said. “At this point we don’t know where the infected bat may have spent the winter, but it seems likely that it was somewhere in the central Cascades.”

Haman said Washington state has 15 species of bats that benefit humans by consuming large quantities of insects that can impact forest health and commercial crops.

WDFW advises against handling animals that appear sick or are found dead. If you find dead bats or notice bats exhibiting unusual behavior such as flying outside during the day or during freezing weather, please report your observation online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/wns> or contact the WDFW Wildlife Health Hotline at (800) 606-8768.

To learn more about WNS and access the most updated decontamination protocols and cave access advisories, visit www.whitenosesyndrome.org.

Contact:

Katherine Haman, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Katherine.haman@dfw.wa.gov, 360-870-2135

Catherine Hibbard, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, catherine_hibbard@fws.gov, 413-531-4276

Marisa Lubeck, U.S. Geological Survey, mlubeck@usgs.gov, 303-526-6694



Bats Northwest web
site is waiting for
you at:
www.batsnorthwest.org

Join our monthly
BNW Meetings!

Second Tuesday,
6:30-8:30

Sand Point-
Magnuson Park
Building 30
Conference Room



Bats Northwest
Envisions a Future

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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
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206.256.0406
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What's Living on Bainbridge Island?

by Meg Lunnum

IslandWood, The Grand Forest/Hilltop Meadow and Blakely Harbor Park were locations for the Bainbridge Island BioBlitz. Taxa Teams were created to look for and identify species of plants, animals, insects, fungi, and everything in between. There were over 200 BioBlitzes across the country in May. This is REAL citizen science supported conservation work.

The Welcome Center at IslandWood Outdoor Learning Center was transformed into "Base Camp" for the day and evening. While participants checked in for their Taxa Team, several conservation organizations were offering up close and personal visitations with Ambassador animals and educational opportunities: West Sound Wildlife brought Princess Remi, the Turkey vulture; Pogo, the opossum; and a Great Horned owl. The Burke Museum brought their "BurkeMobile" to discuss insects. The Woodland Park Zoo taught about local wildlife tracking. The National Park Service and Paul Brian Wildlife Photography Gallery were also present.

Of course, Bats Northwest had their display of bat myths and bat houses; including Barb Ogaard and Meg Lunnum talking about bats to all the BioBlitz participants. Since the discovery of a bat with White Nose Syndrome in Washington, several people were very concerned. We were able to discuss the latest information about this deadly fungus.

At 8:00 p.m., we met our Taxa Team for a hike to Mac's Pond to listen for bats with detectors. Mac's Pond was once part of the Port Blakely Mill, one of the world's largest



sawmills in the late 1800's. We had access to a floating classroom anchored to the shore and were able to watch as the swallows gave way to the bats.

During our bat detecting session, we were able to record echolocation calls from silver-haired bats (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*), California myotis (*Myotis californicus*) and Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*). The larger bats, big brown and silver-haired were foraging high above the pond and the little bats, California and Yuma myotis, were flying low over the water to find their evening meals. As it began to get darker we hiked back to "Base Camp" to add our discoveries to the large list of species that were identified during the day. There were over 300 different species recorded by all the Taxa Teams.

The team at IslandWood was exceptional, they gave us a delicious dinner, rooms for the night, and breakfast before we left to head back home. Thank you to Christine and Becca for making Barb and I feel so welcome.

The Bainbridge Island BioBlitz was a wild success with over 300 participants, 11 partner organizations (including Bats Northwest!) and over 20 volunteer scientists who led teams throughout the 24-hour survey period. Late evening on the 14th, the species count was up to 400 and data sheets were still coming in. Four bat species were acoustically identified during the survey period. Since this BioBlitz was one of the 200 BioBlitzes partnered with National Geographic, the data was projected at the White House BioBlitz on May 20th/21st on a jumbotron at the National Mall in Washington DC. Even the Obama family participated.

Entiat Earth Day



by Meg Lunnum

Entiat, Washington is a small town along the Columbia River north of Wenatchee. The population is about 1,153 and of those 1,153 residents, 164 kids participated in Earth Day when Patrick Herman, visitor services information assistant for the Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest, Entiat Ranger District, came to Paul Rumberg Elementary School to talk about bats. The kids were pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade. Carly Reed, public information officer and Haley Watson, biological technician from the Entiat Ranger District also assisted in Earth Day at the school. Their response—“The kids were fascinated with the bat exhibit.”



Bats Northwest provided the “*Bat Trunk*” for Patrick to use in support of the bat awareness exhibit. Patrick used trunk contents to make bat coloring books for the younger kids. The kids were able to see a bat skeleton and displays of preserved bats. There is a fabric bat outline of the world’s largest bat, a flying fox, that enables people to see the width of this bat’s wing span. Incorporated in the interior of the flying fox are cut outs of local bats and the smallest bat in the world so there can be a comparison. Instructions for how to make your own outline can be found [online](#). (Scroll down to the bottom of the web page for directions and outlines.)

The Bat Trunk is available from Bats Northwest for bat education on a “first come, first served” basis. If you might be interested in using the trunk, please contact Bats North-

west at info@batsnorthwest.org. To access the list of trunk items: http://batslive.pwnet.org/Dreamweaver/pdf/trunk_contents1.pdf. If you have any questions about the bat trunk, please contact Bats Northwest at the above email address. There is also a list of the agencies where the bat trunk is available at: <http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/trunk.php>.



Patrick Herman is planning on further expanding bat knowledge to the public when the public visits the Entiat Ranger Station this upcoming season. He would like to be able to give something to kids who visit, if you would like to donate to bat awareness on the Columbia River please send some [bat tattoos](#): Patrick Herman, Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest Entiat Ranger District, PO Box 476, Entiat, WA 98822.

Our Mission

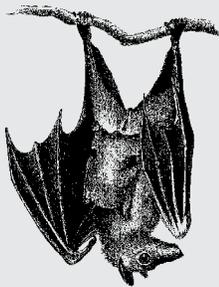
Bats Northwest
Envisions a Future . . .
Where the Essential Role
of Bats is Understood
Where the Public Recognizes
the Vital Place of Bats
In Our Environment
and Economy
Where all are Inspired by
the Remarkable Attributes
and Invaluable Contribution
of Bats to Our Natural
Heritage

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>



DEM Confirms Presence Of Fungal Disease Affecting Bats In Rhode Island

News Release

For Release: May 5, 2016

Contact: Gail Mastrati
222-4700 ext. 2402

PROVIDENCE – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) announces that white-nose syndrome (WNS), a fungal disease that is an often fatal to bats, has been confirmed for the first time in Rhode Island. A tri-colored bat hibernating in Newport County has tested positive for the presence of the disease, and soil samples collected from two other locations in Newport County confirmed the presence of fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd), which causes the disease. There is no evidence that the disease poses a threat to humans, domestic animals, or other wildlife.

The finding was not unexpected, as WNS is present in all other New England states. Rhode Island is the 29th state to confirm the presence of the fungus; the disease has killed approximately six million bats across the eastern US and eastern Canada since its discovery in eastern New York State in 2006. WNS disrupts the behavior and metabolism of bats during hibernation, causing them to deplete their fat reserves. Symptoms include deterioration of the wing membranes or uncharacteristic behavior such as flying outside during the daytime in winter.

A white fungus that often appears on the muzzle, forearms, or wings of affected bats during hibernation in the cold, humid environments of caves and mines. The fungus is primarily transmitted from bat to bat by direct contact; fungal spores can also be spread to caves and mines by humans on clothing, footwear, and equipment.

The fungus was found in swab samples collected in Rhode Island as part of a national research study at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Wildlife Health Center in Wisconsin. In early February when the samples were collected, and again in March the bats

in question showed no visible signs of the disease; however, further testing confirmed that one bat was infected with WNS and that two other bats were suspected of infection.

Three additional locations where bats are known to hibernate were also surveyed this winter. Soil samples collected at two locations in Newport County confirmed presence of the fungus, although none of the bats at these two sites tested positive for the fungus or exhibited signs of the disease. The sampling procedure does not injure the bat and causes a minimal amount of disturbance to the bat. DEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife continues to monitor known bat hibernation sites for the presence of WNS and its impact on the bat population.

Rhode Island does not host a large number of hibernating bats as there are no mines or natural caves in the state. Some man-made structures, however, provide a similar environment and small numbers of bats often utilize these structures for hibernation.

For more information on WNS visit the USGS National Wildlife Health Center website.

Follow DEM on Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM) or Facebook at www.facebook.com/RhodeIslandDEM for more information on wildlife in Rhode Island as well as other timely updates.

Rhode Island Department of
Environmental Management
235 Promenade Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02908-5767





Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Washington Bats Need Your Help!

A devastating bat disease called **White-Nose Syndrome** is now in Washington

Report Your Bat Sightings

- **If you find sick/dead bats or a group of live bats, report your observation** to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at wdfw.wa.gov/bats or **(360) 902-2515**.
- **Do not attempt to handle a live bat.** If you find a sick or injured bat, report it to WDFW and visit wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/rehabilitation to find a wildlife rehabilitation center near you.
- **Never handle a dead bat with your bare hands.** If you must touch a dead bat, wear durable gloves for protection.

What is White-Nose Syndrome?

- White-Nose Syndrome is a fungal disease that has killed millions of bats in eastern North America.
- The disease has been confirmed in 29 states and five Canadian provinces since it was first documented in New York in 2006.
- In March 2016, the first case of the disease was confirmed in Washington.
- White-Nose Syndrome does not pose a threat to humans, pets or other animals.

How does White-Nose Syndrome affect bats?

- The fungus can grow on the nose, wings and ears of an infected bat during winter hibernation, giving it a white, fuzzy appearance. After bats wake from hibernation, this fuzzy white appearance goes away.
- Even though the fungus may not be visible, it invades and damages deep skin tissues. Infected bats arouse more often during hibernation which causes them to use crucial fat reserves, leading to possible starvation and death.
- Infected bats may also die from wing damage, inability to regulate body temperature, breathing disruptions, and dehydration.

For more information please visit: wdfw.wa.gov/bats



How you can help

- **Whenever possible, avoid entering areas where bats may live** to limit potential of spreading disease and disturbance of roosting bats.
- **If you come into contact with crevices in rock cliffs, talus areas, caves or mines, please clean your gear.** If possible use the decontamination guidelines at www.whitenosesyndrome.org.
- **Improve bat habitats.** Reduce lighting around your home, minimize tree clearing, and protect streams and wetlands. For more information on living with bats, and instructions for how to build a bat house, visit: wdfw.wa.gov/living/bats.html



Little brown bat found in western Washington in March 2016. The fungus damaged the bat's wings making it unable to fly.

Photo: Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)

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

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

Help Bats Northwest Help Our Bats

Members of Bats Northwest are assisting the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife with acoustic survey work in King County on WDFW lands. We are also assisting the City of Bellevue Parks Department in learning about their bats. If you would like to learn how you can assist as a citizen scientist, please email info@batsnorthwest.org with the subject "Acoustic survey volunteer". At this time we are seeking adult volunteers who can commit to nighttime surveys and can transport themselves to sites reachable by car. Thank you for your support!

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
volunteers?

Please contact us
to see how you can
help us help bats!



Washington Bats Need Your Help!

A devastating bat disease called White-Nose Syndrome is now in Washington

- White-Nose Syndrome is a fungal disease that has killed millions of bats in eastern North America.
- The first case was confirmed in Washington in March 2016.
- The disease does not pose a threat to humans, pets, or other animals.

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wdfw.wa.gov/bats or (360) 902-2515

NEVER ATTEMPT TO HANDLE A LIVE BAT!

If you must touch a dead bat, wear gloves for protection.



Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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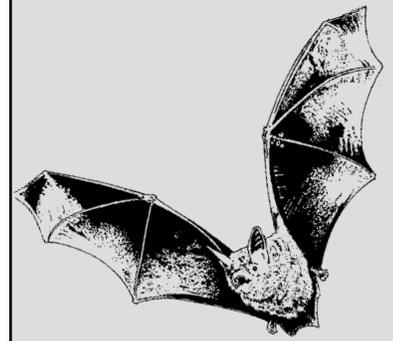
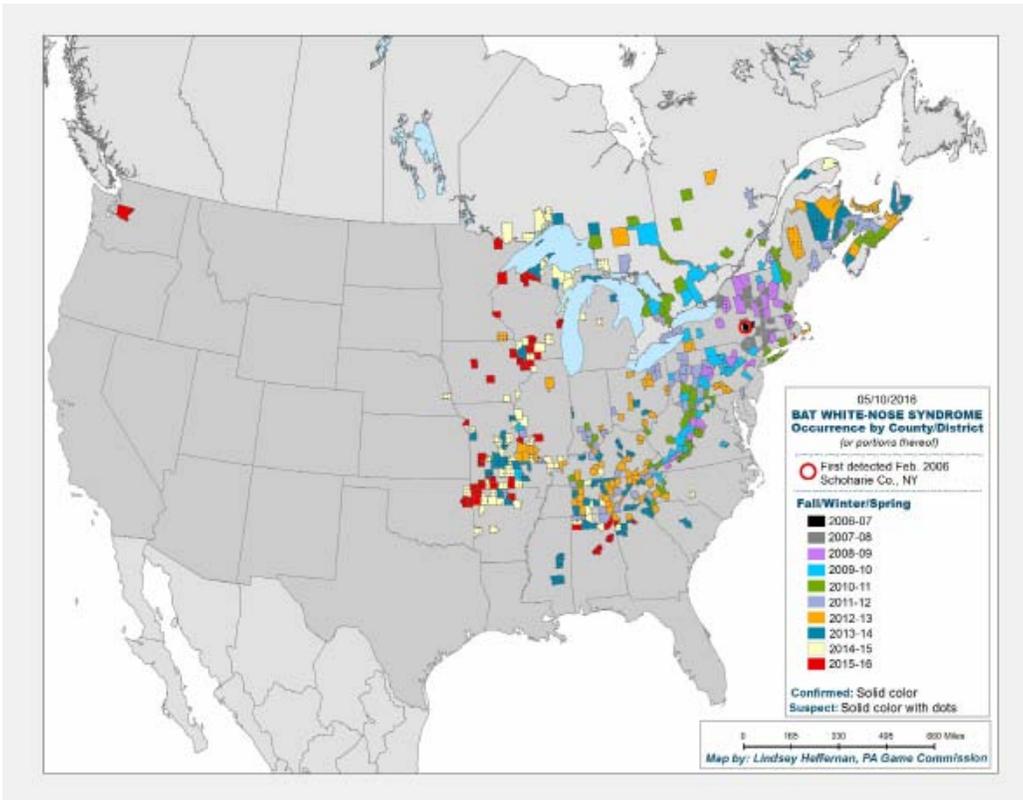


To learn more about White-Nose Syndrome
and Washington bats visit:

wdfw.wa.gov/bats



Latest White Nose Syndrome Spread Map



Bats Northwest

206.256.0406

www.batsnorthwest.org

Green Lake Bat Walks 2016

Day	Date	Sunset Time	Batwalk Start
Wed	June 15	9:09 pm	8:00 pm
Wed	July 13	9:04 pm	8:00 pm
Wed	August 10	8:29 pm	7:30 pm
Wed	September 7	7:37 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.

The program will go on rain or shine. Look for us by the trees if it is raining. All ages welcome. Recommended for ages 10 and up.



Bats Northwest Mailing Address:

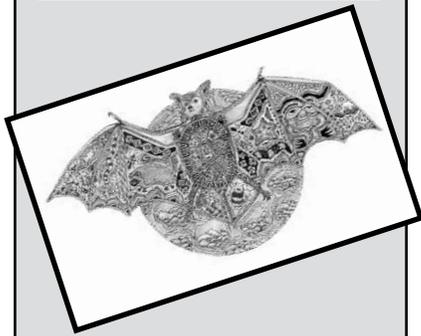
P.O. Box 3026

Lynnwood, WA 98046

206.256.0406

Bats Northwest web site:

www.batsnorthwest.org



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

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

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