

# Bats Northwest

# NEWS



BNW IS A NON-PROFIT, ALL VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

SPRING 2010

## Washington State Bats in Peril

by Meg Lunnun

Excerpts from: Scott Sandsberry, Yakima Herald-Republic

Boulder Cave is usually closed from November 1st to April 1st in order to protect a colony of hibernating Townsend's Big Eared Bats.

*Corynorhinus townsendii* are a State Candidate species for Washington and will be reviewed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. They are recommended for management via the WDFW Priority Habitats and Species program, which considers their hibernacula as a "vulnerable aggregation" and any occurrence of this species is mapped by WDFW. They are also a federal species of concern. In WA, communal roosts include hibernaculum like Boulder Cave.

Boulder Cave is home to the only known population of Pacific Western "Townsend's" Big-Eared Bats in the Yakima-Naches area of Washington State. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Boulder Cave bat population numbered in the thousands. These bats have used Boulder Cave during the summer, but presently do not. The big-eared bat is extremely intolerant to human disturbance. It appears the heavy human use during the summer has discouraged the big-eared bat's use.

At one time, the cave chambers were used by more than 2,000 bats for winter hibernation; we probably will never know how many bats used the cave historically. After 1937, when people began touring the cave and killing bats in huge numbers, the population was fewer than 75.

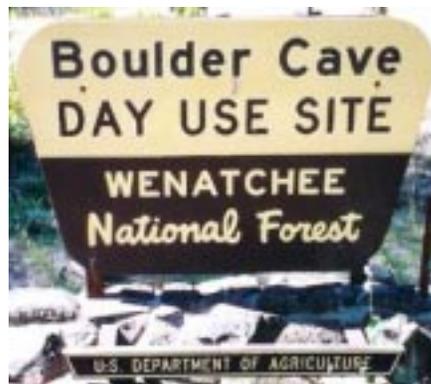
In the Pacific Northwest, bats only eat insects and most insects affect the human population in different ways. Townsend's big-eared bats are thought to feed on moths that hatch from the spruce budworm; other bats eat mosquitoes and other small flying insects.

The Naches Ranger District of the US Forest Service is considering restricting Boulder Cave to only ranger-led interpretive tours. Wildlife biologist Joan St. Hilaire and new District Ranger Irene Davidson discovered human abuse of the

cave area during a recent hike. Someone had dug a tunnel under the gate that was erected to specifically protect these bats.

One of the ways to protect the bats in specific caves is to erect signs, large signs, that emphasize the fact that bats are protected and interlopers can and will be prosecuted for disturbances of any kind. Bats Northwest hopes to work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to help install signs at other bat caves in the state. These signs will hopefully educate people about bats and create an awareness of White Nose Syndrome concerns.

White Nose Syndrome has increased awareness in bat fragility in the United States. Over 1 million bats have died as a result of being infected by the *Geomyces destructans* fungus. As the number of infected caves and bats increase in a westward direction, it is imperative that the West be vigilant in case White Nose Syndrome is discovered in our area.



Bats Northwest web  
site is waiting for you  
at:  
[www.batsnorthwest.org](http://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

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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## Bats Northwest Helps Edmonds Celebrate

by Michelle Noe

On April 24th & 25th the city of Edmonds celebrated becoming a Community Wildlife Habitat City! They were the 9th community recognized in Washington, 41st in the country.

Edmonds, WA received Community Wildlife Habitat certification from the National Wildlife Federation following almost two years of dedicated work by the Backyard and Community Wildlife Habitat team, the support of almost 181 residents, 5 schools, and 20 common places/parks who had registered their property as Backyard Wildlife Habitats through National Wildlife Federation, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

On Saturday, April 24th, 2010 the Community Wildlife Habitat certification celebration took place at Yost Park during the City of Edmonds annual Watershed Fun Fair. On Sunday, April 25th, 2010 the grand opening of the Edmonds Wildlife Habitat & Native Plant Demonstration Garden took place. During the opening the Rocket Box that is prominently placed at the ADA accessible trail near the entrance to the garden was unveiled to a large group of interested visitors.

Chris Anderson of the WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (and Bats Northwest board member) spoke to the crowd gathered at Yost Park on the importance of backyard wildlife habitat and gave Laura Spehar two wildlife related books to be shared with the community. A "wild" cake was shared amongst the community in celebration.



# Green Lake Bat Walks 2010

Day	Date	Sunset Time	Batwalk Start
Thurs	June 3	9:01 pm	8:15 pm
Wed	June 16	9:11 pm	8:30 pm
Tues	June 29	9:11 pm	8:30 pm
Wed	July 14	9:04 pm	8:15 pm
Mon	July 26	8:52 pm	8:00 pm
Fri	August 13	8:25 pm	7:45 pm
Thurs	August 26	8:01 pm	7:15 pm
Tues	Sept. 7	7:38 pm	6:45 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.



Bathhouse Theater  
Photo courtesy of Seattle.gov

## Our Mission

*Bats Northwest  
Envisions a Future*

. . .

*Where the  
Essential Role  
of Bats is  
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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](http://www.batcon.org)  
[wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living/bats.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living/bats.htm)  
[www.batsound.com](http://www.batsound.com)  
[www.tolgabathospital.org/](http://www.tolgabathospital.org/)  
[www.batbox.org](http://www.batbox.org)  
[www.batworld.org](http://www.batworld.org)  
[www.californiabats.com](http://www.californiabats.com)  
[www.batcrew.com](http://www.batcrew.com)  
[www.warksbats.co.uk](http://www.warksbats.co.uk)



## Kentucky Residents Sentenced After Pleading Guilty to Killing Endangered Bats

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2010

Contacts:

Tom MacKenzie, FWS, 404-679-7291

Bob Snow, Special Agent, 502-582-5989 ext 29

One Kentucky man will spend the next eight months in jail, and another will receive three years probation for killing more than 100 endangered Indiana bats in Laurel Cave, Ky.

Lonnie W. Skaggs, Olive Hill, Ky., and Kaleb D. Carpenter, Grayson, Ky., today were sentenced in U.S. District Court, Ashland, Ky., for violations of the Federal Endangered Species Act. U.S. Magistrate Judge Edward B. Atkins sentenced Skaggs to two eight-month Federal prison sentences, to run concurrently, for a total of eight months. Carpenter received three years probation.

The investigation began in October 2007 when Carter Caves State Park employees documented that visitors had entered Laurel Cave on two occasions and had killed a total of 105 Indiana Bats; a federally-listed endangered species. It was later revealed that Carpenter and Skaggs had killed the bats with flashlights and rocks; and had crushed bats they knocked from the air and from the cave walls with their feet.

Following the initial incident where 23 bats were killed, Skaggs returned to the cave a few nights later with another Olive Hill resident and killed 82 more.

“This senseless act of killing dozens of endangered Indiana bats cannot be tolerated,” said James Gale, Special Agent-in-Charge for the Service’s Southeast Region. “These bats are endangered and this reckless behavior is particularly grievous considering the current health of its population and our work with partners to recover the species.”

The Service designated the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) as in danger of extinction in 1967, prior to the enactment of the Endangered Species Act.

In the fall Indiana bats migrate to caves, called hibernacula, and by mid-November enter hibernation where they remain for the duration of winter. In the summer, female Indiana bats form maternity colonies in roost trees, where they give birth to a single “pup,” and raise their young. Roost trees generally consist of snags, which are dead or dying trees with exfoliating bark, or living trees with peeling bark. Bats are the only major predators of night-flying insects.

In just one hour a single bat can eat between 600 and 1,000 insect pests.

The Indiana bat population has declined since it was listed as an endangered species in 1967, and was estimated by the Service in 2009 to be about 391,163 individuals.

The case was investigated by the Service, Kentucky State Parks, and the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Roger West and Rob Duncan.

A significant challenge bats face is White Nose Syndrome (WNS), which has been decimating bat populations in the East.

WNS was first discovered near Albany, N.Y. in February 2006. It has been confirmed or suspected in 11 states in the Eastern United States from New Hampshire to Tennessee. Since 2006, biologists across the Northeast have reported as much as a 100 percent decline in hibernating bats in affected caves.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requests that cavers do not enter caves in all WNS affected states and adjoining states. The Service request cavers refrain from caving anywhere during the hibernation period (September – May) to minimize disturbance and mortality to bats.

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. Visit the Service’s websites at <http://www.fws.gov/> or <http://www.fws.gov/southeast>.

## May Cave Gating Presentation

*Please join Bats Northwest for a cave gating presentation by Ron Zuber.*

*May 11, 6:30pm-8:30pm*

Location: Building 30, 7400 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA

Ron Zuber will share his caving expertise with us through pictures and stories.  
Come see how gates are put in place to protect vital bat habitat.

### Directions:

\* By Bus: Metro bus #74 or 75. Get off at 74th, near the 7-11.

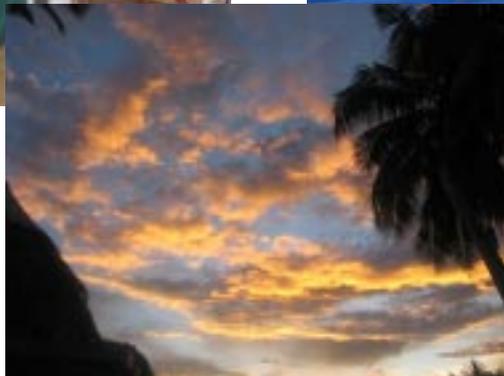
\* By Car: Exit I-5 at NE 45th St, go E on 45th past University of Washington and downhill to merge with Montlake Blvd NE, which shortly curves N and becomes Sand Point Way. Continue 2 miles and turn E into Magnuson Park at 74th St. and drive through the main gate. Drive straight to stop sign; Building 30 is the former airplane hanger on your L. Turn L, then immediately L again into the parking lot. Plenty of free parking in area. Enter through the glass doors and join us upstairs.

Remember to check the Events page at <http://www.batsnorthwest.org/events.html> to see all of the activities that Bats Northwest is participating in. We'd love to see our members attending! Please send us an e-mail if you would like to volunteer to help.

## Kathleen and Bill's Samoan Adventure

*by Kathleen Bander*

Finally we've finished our initial 2-month training, and moved into our permanent Peace Corps destination: Siumu, a village on the south side of the main island of Upolu. At initial view, it is hardly even a village, as it has just a few houses strung along the road, a primary school, where we will be teaching, a high school, and a few family-run small grocery stores. There is nothing resembling a center, though a family-run taxi stand, a police quasi sub-station, and a never-open medical clinic are down the road a bit.



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

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

## Some of the Most Recent News on WNS

*compiled by Michelle Noe*

White Nose Syndrome, first discovered in February of 2006 west of Albany, NY, is causing even more devastation in 2010. Below you will find some of the headlines from the Web site of the Northeast Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. [http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white\\_nose.html](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white_nose.html)

Missouri Department of Conservation has confirmed early signs of WNS on a bat in a Pike County cave. This brings the WNS count to 12 states and two Canadian provinces, and it marks a jump of some 300 miles from the closest confirmed site in Tennessee.

The U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center has confirmed WNS in a bat from White Oak Blowhole cave in Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee. The cave contains the largest known population of endangered Indiana bats in the state.

Ontario has confirmed WNS in Renfrew and Hastings counties. Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources confirmed the first case of WNS in Canada. The infected hibernaculum is located in the Bancroft-Minden area.

WNS has been confirmed in two locations in Québec.

Maryland Department of Natural Resources has confirmed the presence of WNS.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources is closing state-owned hibernacula to help forestall the spread of WNS.

The latest population estimates for endangered Indiana bats show an overall 17.2 percent decline from 2007 to 2009 in 16 states from Maine to Missouri.

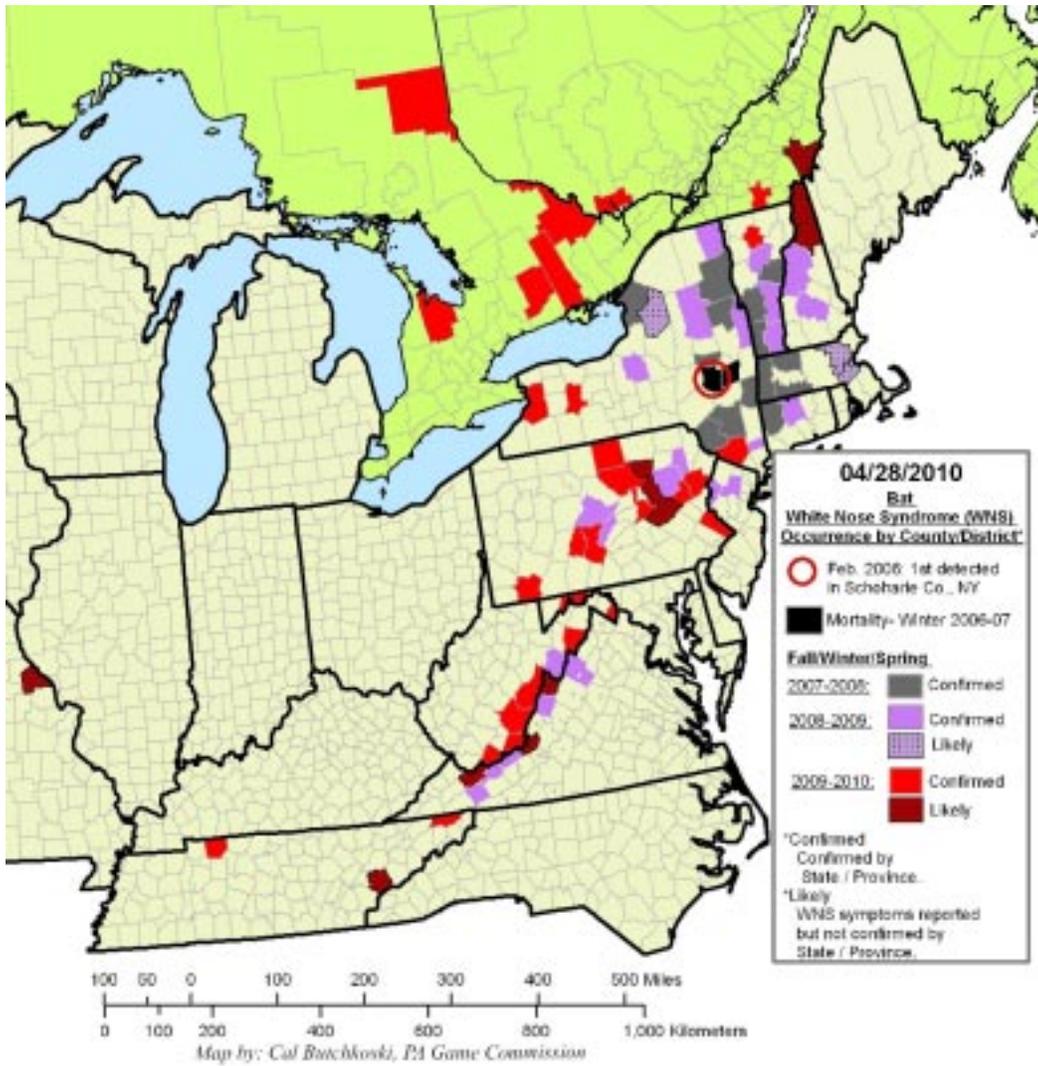
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is closing state owned and state managed caves used as bat hibernacula.

Connecticut bat surveys show WNS is having a catastrophic impact.

\$1.4 million in Service Preventing Extinction funding will go to WNS work.

To learn more or stay abreast of the latest breaking news go to: [http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white\\_nose.html](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white_nose.html)





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Photo: Jeff Hajenga/WVDNR  
 Healthy Virginia big-eared bat in Hellhole,  
 Pendleton County, WV.



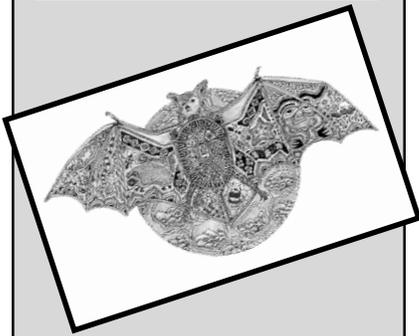
Likely WNS symptoms at Breathing Cave,  
 Bath County, Virginia, late February 2009  
 Credit: Wil Orndorff, Virginia Department of  
 Conservation and Recreation



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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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## BATS NW T-SHIRTS

*You'll look great in our Bats Northwest short sleeve T-Shirt!  
It also makes a wonderful gift.*

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

I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER \_\_\_\_\_ (QUANTITY) BATS NORTHWEST T-SHIRT(S)  
AT \$22.00 EACH FOR A TOTAL OF \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (AMOUNT).

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