

DOEE- Fisheries and Wildlife Division

Bat Conservation Research in the District

Mist Net Surveys

DOEE researchers from the Fisheries and Wildlife Division conduct summer mist net surveys each year to assess changes in bat population sizes and distributions. Thin polyester nets are established across flyways to catch bats as they forage for insects during the night. Researchers carefully remove bats from the net, take various measurements, and record any notable observations before releasing them back to the wild. Some species whose populations are declining will be fitted with radio transmitters to track their roosting habits.



Acoustic Monitoring



Coupled with mist net surveys, DOEE researchers additionally conduct acoustic monitoring studies to examine bat activity and community assemblages. Passive acoustic studies involve deploying an acoustic bat detector at a fixed location to record echolocation calls in a given area. Active acoustic surveys involve moving the detector to new locations throughout the night to survey bat activity. For example, the detector may be mounted on top of a vehicle to cover large areas.

Radio Tracking to Roost Locations

If a bat is captured in a mist net whose population size is declining, a radio transmitter may be attached for further monitoring. These bats can be tracked back to their summer roost locations. Obtaining this type of data gives researchers a better understanding of how bats use their surrounding environment. Subsequently, habitat conservation recommendations can be made, giving the population a better chance of survival.



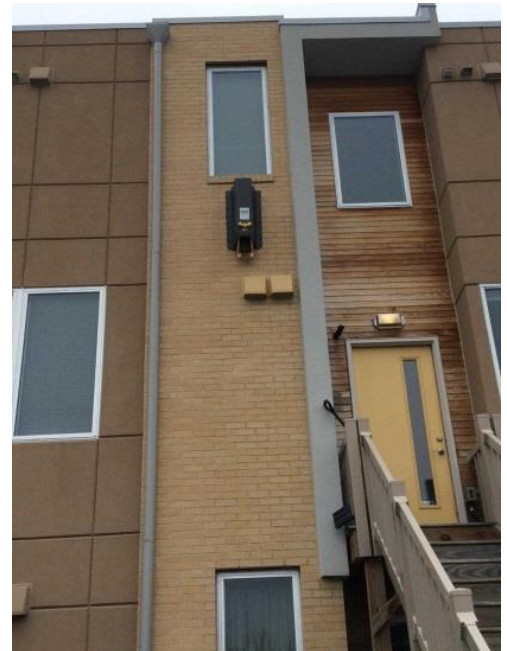
Winter Hibernacula Monitoring

DOEE surveys for potential winter hibernacula and employs acoustic monitoring to detect bat roosts. Habitat structures that have been surveyed in Washington, D.C. include rocky outcroppings, culverts, buildings, and the undersides of bridges.




Bat Boxes

DOEE staff have established bat boxes in various locations throughout the District to provide an alternative roosting structure for D.C.'s bat populations. Bat boxes are an excellent way for the community to get involved in local bat conservation. As bats' natural forest habitats are degraded or reduced, there may be a lack of suitable roosting locations. Bat boxes mimic the tight spaces where bats roost, such as under bark or inside tree cavities. Therefore, bat populations may continue to exist in increasingly urban environments.



Community Outreach

DOEE biologists offer bat walks to the public during the summer survey season. Participants have the opportunity to learn about bats' ecological importance, various threats to bat health, and ways that humans can help to conserve their local bat populations. Community members are able to see bats up close and observe the surveys methods used to study them.



**KINGMAN
ISLAND
BAT
WALKS**

**Thursday,
August 23
&
Thursday,
August 30**

7:00 - 9:30 pm

**Kingman Island
Benning Rd. NE
Washington, DC**

Join wildlife biologists, from the Department of Energy and Environment for a special "bat walk" to discuss local DC bats.

Find out how bats navigate the night skies, avoiding predators and catching insects on the wing.

Test out electronic bat detectors that pick up the ultrasonic calls that bats emit to navigate the darkness.

Come see live bats fly around Kingman and Heritage Island.

If you have any questions, please contact:
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REGISTER HERE

*** DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

living classrooms learning by doing

To report a bat colony or learn more about the District's bats, please contact:

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