

## The Word on Bats

By Eric Caldwell

County Extension Director, Transylvania County, NC

The health concern with bats is primarily rabies; a secondary but real concern is *Histoplasmosis* (if bats have been allowed to roost in a structure for long periods of time).

As always, I'm happy to try to answer any questions that folks might have.... County Environmental Health Offices (Co. Health Departments) may assist as well and will definitely get involved if a "bat exposure" incident takes place.

My mantra to folks is to be aware and EXCLUDE!! (BTW this is true with any wildlife pest) AND Report any "Bat incidents" exposures etc.

1. Practice good surveillance and maintenance on buildings.
2. Seal cracks and openings (a bat can enter a hole the diameter of a quarter).  
*Use caulk, spray foam, or copper mesh materials (Stuf-Fit) that you stuff into openings. For larger openings you can use heavy screening like hardware cloth.*
3. Pay attention to eave vents...bats like to get up under the louvers. Over time they can push through the insect screening that is normally there.  
Covering the louvers with hardware cloth is best; however if its too unsightly you can reinforce the insect screening on the inside.
4. Keeping doors and windows closed is always a good idea.
5. Checking cabins etc. prior to lights out is a good precaution to avoid the dreaded "waking up with a bat" scenario.
6. If you have bats roosting in a structure then removal, exclusion AND cleaning will be in order.... give us a call or contact a Certified Wildlife Damage Control Agent  
<http://www.ncwildlife.org/Trapping/WildlifeDamageControlAgent.aspx>
7. REPORT any bat incidents, sick or dead bats, bat exposures, etc. to the proper camp staff and Public Health Authorities!

Web-links of interest:

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/wild/wildlife/animals/mammals/bats.htm>

(This will also link you to other wildlife damage control info. from NC State University.)

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/pcbats.htm>

[http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/pdf/bats\\_final\\_508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/pdf/bats_final_508.pdf) (CDC Info.!)

[http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/rabies/docs/Bat\\_Memo\\_at\\_Camp.pdf](http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/rabies/docs/Bat_Memo_at_Camp.pdf)

( 2011 NC Public Health Memo abt Bats and Camps)

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/cdc/rabies/bat-proof-summer-camp.pdf>

Bat removal from buildings:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg342>

Hope this helps!

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Eric Caldwell  
County Extension Director  
Transylvania County  
NC Cooperative Extension  
NC State University  
[\(828\) 884-3109](tel:(828)884-3109)

<http://transylvania.ces.ncsu.edu>