



1200 Pioneer Circle, Watkinsville, GA 30677
www.letsgetwild.net 866-880-9453

BAT FACTS AND AMAZING TRIVIA

Amazing Bat Trivia

- The world's smallest mammal is the bumblebee bat of Thailand, weighing less than a penny.
- Giant flying foxes that live in Indonesia have wingspans of nearly six feet.
- The common little brown bat of North America is the world's longest lived mammal for its size, with life-spans sometimes exceeding 32 years.
- Mexican free-tailed bats sometimes fly up to two miles high to feed or to catch tail-winds that carry them over long distances at speeds of more than 60 mph.
- The pallid bat of western North America is immune to the stings of scorpions and even the seven-inch centipedes upon which it feeds.
- Fishing bats have echolocation so sophisticated that they can detect a minnow's fin as fine as a human hair, protruding only two millimeters above a pond's surface.
- African heart-nosed bats can hear the footsteps of a beetle walking on sand from a distance of more than six feet.
- Red bats that live in tree foliage throughout most of North America can withstand body temperatures as low as 23 degrees F. during winter hibernation.
- Tiny woolly bats in West Africa live in the large webs of colonial spiders.
- The Honduran white bat is snow white with a yellow nose and ears. It cuts large leaves to make "tents" that protect its small colonies from jungle rains.
- Disk-winged bats of Latin America have adhesive disks on both wings and feet that enable them to live in unfurling banana leaves (or even walk up a window pane!).
- Frog-eating bats identify edible from poisonous frogs by listening to the mating calls of male frogs. Frogs counter by hiding and using short, difficult to locate calls.
- Vampire bats adopt orphans and have been known to risk their lives to share food with less fortunate roost-mates.
- Male epauletted bats have pouches in their shoulders which contain large, showy patches of white fur that they flash during courtship to attract mates.
- Mother Mexican free-tailed bats find and nurse their own young, even in huge colonies where many millions of babies cluster at up to 500 per square foot.

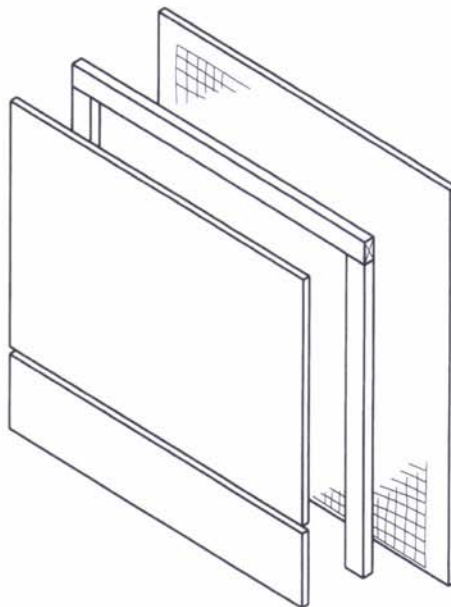
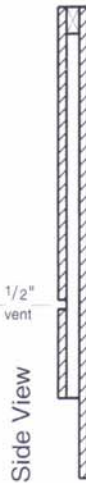
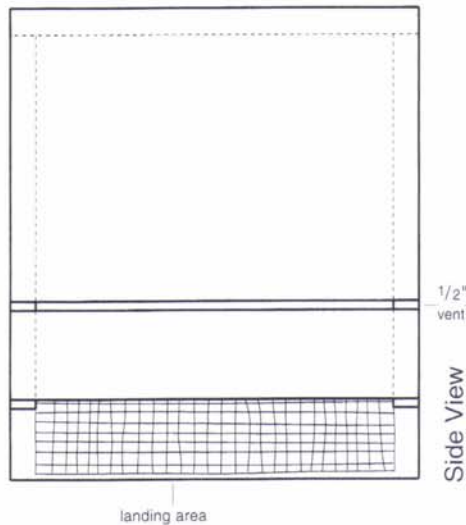
Important Bat Facts

- Nearly 1,000 kinds of bats account for almost a quarter of all mammal species, and most are highly beneficial.
- Worldwide, bats are important natural enemies of night-flying insects.
- A single little brown bat can catch 1,200 mosquitoes-sized insects in just one hour.
- A colony of 150 big brown bats can protect local farmers from up to 33 million or more rootworms each summer.
- The 20 million Mexican free-tails from Bracken Cave, Texas eat approximately 200 tons of insects nightly.
- Tropical bats are key elements in rain forest ecosystems which rely on them to pollinate flowers and disperse seeds for countless trees and shrubs.
- In the wild, important agricultural plants, from bananas, breadfruit and mangoes to cashews, dates, and figs rely on bats for pollination and seed dispersal.
- Tequila is produced from agave plants whose seed production drops to 1/3,000th of normal without bat pollinators.
- Desert ecosystems rely on nectar-feeding bats as primary pollinators of giant cacti, including the famous organ pipe and saguaro of Arizona.
- Bat droppings in caves support whole ecosystems of unique organisms, including bacteria useful in detoxifying wastes, improving detergents, and producing gasohol and antibiotics.
- An anticoagulant from vampire bat saliva may soon be used to treat human heart patients. Contrary to popular misconception, bats are not blind, do not become entangled in human hair, and seldom transmit disease to other animals or humans.
- All mammals can contract rabies; however, even the less than a half of one percent of bats that do, normally bite only in self-defense and pose little threat to people who do not handle them.
- Bats are exceptionally vulnerable to extinction, in part because they are the slowest reproducing mammals on earth for their size, most producing only one young annually.
- More than 50% of American bat species are in sever decline or already listed as endangered. Losses are occurring at alarming rates worldwide.
- Loss of bats increases demand for chemical pesticides, can jeopardize whole ecosystems of other animal and plant species and can harm human economies.



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SMALL ECONOMY BAT HOUSE



Materials Needed (makes 1)

- 1/4 sheet (2' x 4') 1/2" cdx (outdoor grade) plywood
- 1 piece 1" x 2" (3/4" x 1 3/4" finished) x 8' pine (furring strip)
- 1/8" mesh HDPE (plastic) netting, 20" x 22 1/2"
[such as Internet product #XV-1670 (1-800-328-8456)]
- 20-30 1 1/4" coated deck or exterior grade screws
- 1 quart flat water-based paint or stain, exterior grade
- 1 pint water-based primer, exterior grade
- 1 tube paintable latex caulk
- 5/16" Monel™ or stainless steel staples
- 1" x 3" x 28" board for roof (optional, but highly recommended)

Recommended tools

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| table saw or handsaw | caulking gun |
| variable speed reversing drill | scissors |
| Phillips bit for drill | staple gun |
| tape measure or yardstick | paintbrush |

Construction procedure

1. Measure and cut plywood into three pieces:
26 1/2" x 24" 16 1/2" x 24" 5" x 24"
(optional: paint interior surfaces twice with dark color).
2. Measure and cut furring into one 24" and two 20 1/4" pieces.
3. Screw back to furring, caulking first. Start with 24" piece at top. Roosting chamber will be 3/4" deep.
4. Staple the netting to inside surface of back, starting at the bottom. Be sure netting lies flat (curve down) and does not pucker.
5. Screw front to furring, top piece first (don't forget to caulk). Leave 1/2" vent space between top and bottom front pieces.
6. Caulk around outside joints if needed to seal roosting chamber.
7. Attach a 1" x 3" x 28" board to the top as a roof, if desired.
8. Paint or stain exterior three times (use primer for first coat).

Optional Modifications to the Small Economy Bat House

1. Wider bat houses can be built for larger colonies. Be sure to adjust dimensions for back and front pieces, ceiling furring strip, and netting. A 3/4" support spacer may be required in the center of the roosting chamber for bat houses over 24" wide.
2. Two bat houses can be placed back to back mounted on poles. Before assembly, a horizontal 3/4" slot should be cut in the back of each house about 9" from the bottom edge of the back piece to improve ventilation and permit movement of bats between houses. Two pieces of wood, 1" x 4" x 4 1/4", screwed horizontally to each side will join the two boxes. One 1" x 4" x 34" vertical piece, attached to each side over the horizontal pieces, blocks light but allows bats and air to enter. Leave a 3/4" space between the two houses, and roughen the wood surfaces or cover the back of each with plastic netting. Do not cover the vents. A tin roof covering both houses protects them and helps prevent overheating. Eaves should be about 3" in southern areas and about 1 1/2" in the North.
3. Ventilation may not be necessary in colder climates. In this case, the front should be a single piece 23" long. Smaller bat houses should not be used in northern areas.