



Join Arborpolitan as we go batty!

Hand-made Bat Boxes can help curb garden pests while supporting the survival of bats in our urban ecosystem.

In an effort to better incorporate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices into our Plant Health Care programs, we are introducing a new biological pest-control option, while also seeking to increase public awareness about a threatened and often stigmatized local species.

Bats!

Fear not, no vampire bats here! In fact, it's those other blood-suckers that should be afraid! A single bat can eat up to 1,200 mosquito-sized insects every hour, and each bat usually eats 6,000 to 8,000 insects each night.

Unfortunately, at least 12 types of U.S bats are endangered, and more are threatened, including all 9 species of bats that call New York home.

Populations are threatened due to factors such as habitat loss and fragmentation, diminished food supply, destruction of roosts, disease, and hunting or killing of bats — however, you can help increase the chances for species conservation in our area by installing a Bat Box!

Arborpolitan's Bat Boxes can be installed with minimal equipment and little to no upkeep, hosting populations for years. While habitation can take some time depending on the location's suitability, providing roosting space within the urban landscape is a simple way to encourage the bat population already in our area to “hang out.” ;)

Encouraging friends and neighbors to join in will help as well! If we work together as a community and provide more options for our furry flying friends, the chance for Bat Box occupancy increases, all while decreasing pest populations, no chemicals required!

Beyond these benefits, by simply providing protected roosting space within a larger network of habitats, you will be contributing to the conservation and de-stigmatization of these important and vulnerable species which are critical to a healthy ecosystem. Now that's symbiosis.

Still not convinced? Check out these awesome bat facts!

- Over 300 species of fruit depend on bats for pollination. Bats help spread seeds for nuts, figs and cacao — the main ingredient in chocolate. Without bats, we also wouldn't have plants like agave or the iconic saguaro cactus.
- There are over 1,400 species of bats worldwide. Bats can be found on nearly every part of the planet except in extreme desert and polar regions. The differences in bat size and shape are equally impressive. Bats range in size from the Kitti's hog-nosed bat (also called the Bumblebee Bat) that weighs less than a penny — making it the world's smallest mammal — to flying foxes, which can have wingspans up to six feet. The U.S. and Canada are home to about 45 species of bats, and additional species are found in the U.S. territories in the Pacific and Caribbean.
- It's said the smaller the animal, the shorter its lifespan, but bats break that rule of longevity. Although most bats live less than 20 years in the wild, scientists have documented six species that live more than 30 years. In 2006, a tiny bat from Siberia set the world record at 41 years.
- Although often described as "flying mice," bats are not rodents and are more closely related to primates and people. In fact, bats' wings are similar to the human hand, having a thumb and four fingers.
- Far from being dirty, bats spend a lot of time grooming themselves. Some, like the Colonial bat, even groom each other. Besides having sleek fur, cleaning also helps control parasites.
- About 80 medicines come from plants that rely on bats for their survival. While bats are not blind, studying how bats use echolocation has helped scientists develop navigational aids for the blind. Research on bats has also led to advances in vaccines.

More information can be found at:

- Batcon.org
- Gothambatcon.org
- Wildlifeny-c-nyc.gov
- Habitatforbats.org

If you're curious about the bat population in your area, join your citizen-scientist neighbors at:

- Inaturalist.org



To participate in Arborpolitan's Bat Box initiative, or to ask any questions, reach out!
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