



Protect the Bats



What is White-Nose Syndrome?

Help us protect bat species in the West. Stay out of all caves and abandoned mines that have been closed to avoid the risk of spreading the devastating fungus – White-nose Syndrome (WNS).

More than one million bats across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic United States have died from complications of WNS during the past four years. Bats with WNS are infected with a newly-discovered fungus, *Geomyces destructans*, which causes them to starve to death after coming out of hibernation early and severely underweight.

Although there is no known human health risk associated with WNS, people can potentially spread the fungus between caves, mines and other bat roost sites on their clothing or gear. The fungus thrives in the cool, moist underground conditions of caves and mines.

Bats in Colorado help control nocturnal insects that are both agricultural pests and vectors of human diseases. An individual bat can eat its body weight in insects every night. Many forms of cave life depend on nutrients brought in by bats and released from their guano (feces).

Where can I find out more about WNS and bats?

- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
<http://www.fws.gov/WhiteNoseSyndrome/>
- Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/>
- Bat Conservation International:
<http://www.batcon.org>

