

The Australasian Bat Society (ABS) is writing to you with news of a resource for Councils who may be contacted by residents who have, unexpectedly, found a bat (or bats) inside their home. Many councils and land managers have also discovered bats roosting inside government managed buildings, and can directly benefit from these guidelines. Following these guidelines helps keep the public safe

It is not only in rural and remote areas that bats may find themselves inside, also unexpectedly, someone else's home.

So whether you are a City, Municipal or City Council, this resource is something you and your staff will find useful.

AND ITS FREE!

That resource is at <https://www.ausbats.org.au/bats-in-buildings-faq.html>

Here are some example questions (and a summary of the answer) the resource can help you with:

## **There's a bat inside my house. What should I do?**

There's no need to panic. As soon as you see a bat inside:

- Close any doors to other rooms to confine the bat to a single room.
- Turn off any overhead fans.
- Remove pets and/or children from the area. This makes it much easier to deal with and reduces stress for you and the bat.
- What should I do?

## **I've found a bat trapped in a jar/vase/bucket/sink/light fitting or similar container. What should I do?**

First, try to assess whether the bat is trapped or simply roosting temporarily. If you are unsure, it is safest to contact a wildlife rescue group, bat carer or bat expert for advice as soon as possible. While waiting for advice:

- Keep the bat somewhere quiet, cool, and undisturbed.
- Keep pets and people away.
- Do not handle the bat with bare hands.

## **Do bat colonies cause structural damage?**

Bats are not rodents, and do not nibble or gnaw wood or wires, and will not generally cause any structural damage. However, bat urine has high concentrations of uric acid, which corrodes metal and in high volumes can rot timber and stain ceilings

### **WHAT'S IN THE FAQ**

Section 1: BATS INSIDE THE HOUSE

Section 2: PREVENTING ENTRY INTO LIVING/WORKING SPACES

Section 3: IDENTIFYING A BAT ROOST IN A BUILDING

Section 4: BATS ROOSTING IN OR AROUND BUILDINGS (CONFIRMED ROOST)

Section 5: CONCERNS ABOUT HEALTH AND SAFETY

Section 6: COEXISTENCE AND EXCLUSION

Section 7: BAT WASTE / CLEANING UP

Section 8: PETS AND BATS

Section 9: SUPPORTING AND ATTRACTING BATS

Section 10: LEARNING MORE ABOUT YOUR BATS

## What we're trying to prevent

- A chocolate wattled bat maternity roost inside a bridge being destroyed and replaced with unmonitored bat boxes. A bridge with a large footed myotis maternity colony underwent repair work without relocating bats in advance - and dozens of bats were injured, killed or displaced, and expensive construction work was delayed while wildlife carers and ecologists were called. If the department coordinating the infrastructure repair had kept records of known microbat roosts, or noticed the large amount of bat droppings and audible squeaking sounds of the large colony during site visits, they could have been relocated by a qualified specialist, saving significant money, time, and preventing unnecessary mortality.
- A 'good news' story, of a 'successful relocation' of a Southern forest bat maternity colony, which turned out to be carried out without permits, where mothers were literally giving birth as they were evicted into an artificial roost that didn't resemble their original one. Unsurprisingly, the colony didn't survive.
- A white striped freetail bat maternity roost torn open during maternity season. Around 300 bats were suddenly exposed - pups too young to fly, mothers returning in distress, some bats trapped inside after the roof was sealed with expanding foam, leading to a mass mortality event.

Most people want advice, or reassurance, or simply to avoid making things worse. But without clear initial guidance, avoiding damage becomes difficult, often leading to dead pups, displaced colonies, and the loss of critical roosting habitat.

## Need more?

1. Use the ABS Bat Finder

The [Australian Bat Society's Bat Finder tool](#) lets you explore bat species known to live in your local area.

2. Connect with citizen science and ID tools

[Atlas of Living Australia](#): Browse recorded bat sightings in your region. [iNaturalist](#): Upload photos or recordings and get ID help from the community. Facebook groups like [Australian Mammal Identification](#) or [the Australian Bat Identification page](#) can also help with bat identifications,- especially if you've found one roosting or grounded.

3. Bats in the classroom or community

Check out the [resources](#) and [bat fact sheets](#)

Keep an out for an [Australasian Bat Night event near you here](#).