



Why Bats Matter

Bats are among New York's most beneficial wildlife species. A single colony can consume hundreds of thousands of mosquitoes and other insects each summer, helping reduce nuisance insects and agricultural pests. They play an important role in maintaining healthy forests, farms, and ecosystems. [\[Bats-Curtis 2012 | PDF\]](#)

Common Bat Species in New York

The two species most often found in homes and buildings are:

- **Little Brown Bat** (*Myotis lucifugus*)
(left photo by Sandy Repp)



- **Big Brown Bat** (*Eptesicus fuscus*)
(right photo by Don Pfitzer)

Both species commonly use attics, soffits, wall spaces, and other protected structures as summer roosts.

If You Find a Bat in Your House

Many individual bats that enter homes are young bats learning to fly during July and August. They are usually harmless and can often leave on their own.

Never handle a bat with bare hands.

Health and Safety Information

Rabies and Bats

Most wild bats are not rabid. However, any bat that has had potential contact with people or pets should be treated cautiously. Surveys show rabies occurs in a very small percentage of wild bats, but bats submitted for testing after human contact are more likely to test positive.

[\[Bats-Curtis 2012 | PDF\]](#)

Seek Medical Advice If:

- You are bitten or scratched by a bat.
- A bat is found in a room with a sleeping person.
- A bat is found with an unattended child.
- A bat is found with an intoxicated or cognitively impaired person.

If exposure may have occurred:

1. Capture the bat if it can be done safely.
2. Contact the Chemung County Health Department.
3. Follow medical guidance regarding rabies testing and treatment.

For a Flying Bat

1. Close doors to other rooms.
2. Remove pets.
3. Open windows and exterior doors.
4. Leave lights on and remain calm.
5. Allow the bat to find its own way outside.

Do not chase, swat, or attempt to herd the bat.

For a Resting Bat

1. Wear leather gloves.
2. Place a container over the bat.
3. Slide cardboard between the container and wall.
4. Carry outdoors and release from an elevated location.

Bats in Attics and Buildings

Signs of a bat colony include:

- Bats seen entering or exiting at dusk.
- Small black droppings (guano) beneath roost sites.
- Squeaking or scratching sounds in walls or attic spaces.
- Brown staining around entry holes.

Bat-Proofing Your Home

The most effective solution is **exclusion (bat-proofing)**.

Step 1 – Find Entry Points

- Roof peaks
- Loose flashing
- Vents
- Soffits
- Cracks as small as ¼ inch by 1½ inches

Step 2 – Seal Openings

- Hardware cloth
- Window screening
- Caulk
- Copper mesh

Bats do not chew through building materials, so sealing openings will be effective. [\[Bats-Curtis 2012 | PDF\]](#)

Step 3 – Consider a Bat Box Installing a bat box provides an alternative roost while keeping bats out of living spaces.

Important Timing

Do NOT exclude bats from late May through mid-August.

During this period, young bats cannot yet fly. Sealing entrances can trap pups inside walls or attics, creating health and odor problems.

Chemung County DEC-Licensed Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators

The following operators are listed for Chemung County and can provide bat removal, exclusion, or wildlife-control services for a fee. [\[dec.ny.gov\]](https://dec.ny.gov)

Operator	Location	Phone	Email
Emily Moon	Van Etten, NY	(607)351-7242	info@wildliferesolutions.com
Daniel Drake	Lehman, NY	(931) 249-3934	drakedj11@gmail.com
Michelle Buchanan (The Critter Chicks)	Elmira, NY	(607) 973-0202	mmb555@aol.com
Kevin Smith	Erin, NY	(607) 739-5409	
James Sincok (NY Bat Proofing)	Elmira, NY	(607) 738-4672	nybatproofing@gmail.com
Chico Wright	Elmira, NY	(607) 331-9458	cc.wright4@yahoo.com
Michael Burhans	Elmira, NY	(570) 604-6802	michael.burhans@orkin.com

Sources:

Chemung County list of DEC Licensed Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators and NYS DEC NWCO Program
<https://appfactory.dec.ny.gov/SpecialLicensesSearchSystem/Nwco>

Curtis, P. D., K. L. Sullivan. (2012). *Wildlife Damage Management Fact Sheet Series Bats*. Cornell University Department of Natural Resources. Accessed July 2026 from:
<https://cornell.box.com/s/cmf6plgciyfp1fd1ivo6eqkh26bpedan>