

## Roosting

Microbats compete with many other wildlife species for decreasing availability of branch and tree hollows. They can be found roosting in tunnels, caves, under bridges, in closed garden umbrellas and in the roof cavities of houses.

Their roosts can often be discovered or disturbed by accident, during tree pruning or home renovations.

Allowing the bats to remain will be repaid with their voracious insect control services. However should you wish to evict them from your roof, a special permit will be required and the process must be conducted humanely. Bat boxes should also be installed in advance to provide alternative artificial roosts.

Visit: [www.hollowloghomes.com](http://www.hollowloghomes.com)

## Disease Risks

Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV), which can be transmitted by a bite or scratch from an infected bat, has only been found in one species of microbat. However, it is assumed that any bat can potentially carry the virus. Public health advice is that unvaccinated people should not handle any bats, and all bites or scratches must be reported to Queensland Health.

Microbats are not associated with Hendra Virus.

Histoplasmosis is a rare lung infection caused by a fungus that can grow in large undisturbed deposits of bird or bat guano in old chicken coops, pigeon roosts or bat caves.

## Random Batty Facts

Microbats can each eat more than 600 insects per hour. This is equivalent to a human eating 20 pizzas in one night!

The fear of bats is known as Chiroptophobia.

There are more than 1,200 species of bats in the world. Bats make up around 20% of the world's classified mammal species.

Bat poo (guano) is high in phosphorus and nitrogen and is an important fertilizer in many tropical regions. The potassium nitrate (saltpetre) was extracted from guano for use in gunpowder and explosives during the American Civil War.

The smallest bat in the world is the Bumblebee Bat from Thailand, weighing only 1.5 gms.

The agave plant, from which tequila is made, is pollinated only by bats. No bats = no tequila!

## Found a Bat?

### SEEK HELP - PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH

Any wild animal in pain or frightened may struggle or try to bite if handled incorrectly. Keep children and pets away and contact your local wildlife rescue organisation for assistance.

#### BAT RESCUE INC. 24 HOUR HOTLINES:

Sunshine Coast (via WILVOS)	Ph. 07 5441 6200
Ipswich	Ph. 07 3062 6730
RSPCA (1300 ANIMAL)	Ph. 1300 264 625

Bat Rescue Inc.



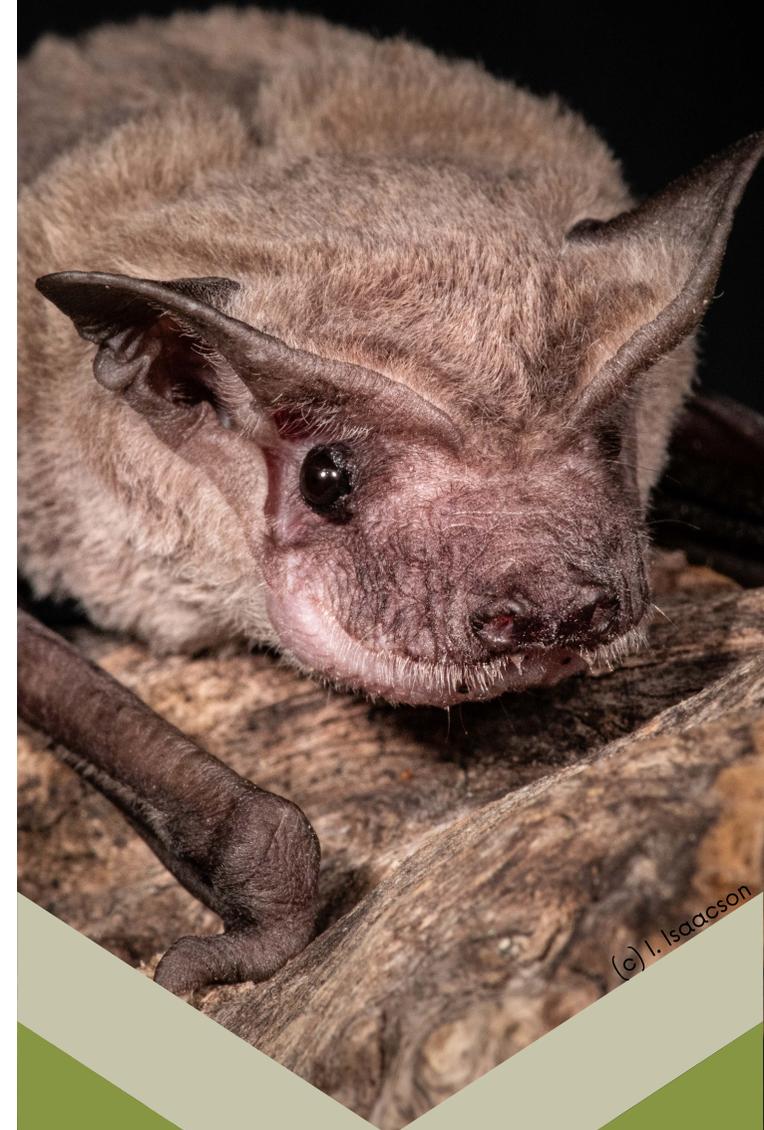
[www.batrescue.org.au](http://www.batrescue.org.au)

P.O. Box 4625 Sunshine Coast MC 4560



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# Microbats

## About Microbats

South-East Queensland is home to approximately 30 different species of microbats varying in size from the Little Forest Bat (3 gms) to the Yellow-bellied Sheathtail bat (60gms). Most commonly microbats are mouse-sized, with a wingspan of around 25cm.

## Diet

Most microbats are insectivorous, feeding on lawn grub moths, weevils, caterpillars, midges, flying termites, mosquitoes and other insects. They can each eat as much as 40% of their own bodyweight in a single night, or several hundred insects per hour.

Some species catch insects in their mouths, while others use their tail membrane as a catching basket and then consume their prey - all while still in flight. The small carnivorous Ghost Bat (although no longer classified as a microbat) feeds on animals such as rodents, frogs, birds and other bats. There is even a fish-eating bat that scoops small fish and aquatic insects out of the water with its oversized feet!

## Torpor

To conserve energy, microbats are able to lower their body temperature and metabolic rate, and go into a mini-hibernation state called 'torpor'. This happens frequently in colder months. After a sudden cold snap, stranded bats may be found that have gone into torpor overnight. Bats can appear almost lifeless, barely moving and are cold to the touch.



## Echolocation

Contrary to the myth, microbats are not blind. However they navigate and feed using echolocation. This is a sophisticated method of emitting high frequency sound waves and listening for the echo bouncing back from surrounding objects. The bat can determine the prey's distance, size, shape and speed.

## Reproduction

Microbats are placental mammals. Most species give birth to a single young through October to December. The young are born furless with eyes closed, and depend on their mothers for milk and warmth. By 6-8 weeks the young are fully developed and able to fly and feed themselves.



## Threats

Of the 68 (approx.) species of microbats found in Australia, 35 are classified as threatened. Reasons for the population decline include:

- habitat destruction
- bush fires
- pesticides
- predators
- competition for roosting hollows
- disturbances at caves and other sites
- persecution driven by fear and ignorance of bats.

Bat numbers have declined drastically in many parts of the world. It is estimated that millions of bats worldwide are killed every year by wind turbines.



## Common Hazards

### CAT ATTACKS

Due to their small size, microbats are often victims of domestic cat attacks and invariably do not survive. Keeping pets confined at night allows bats, and other nocturnal wildlife, to feed in safety.

### TRAPPED

Occasionally microbats can become trapped indoors. After dusk, open all doors and windows to allow an escape route. Turn off all indoor lights and ceiling fans and switch on an external light to attract insects and entice the bat outside.

### GARDEN UMBRELLAS

Droppings around the base of a closed outdoor umbrella are usually a sign that bats are roosting inside. Opening the umbrella could be disastrous if a maternity colony with flightless dependent young is in residence. Contact your nearest wildlife organisation for advice.

### FLY PAPER

Old-fashioned sticky flypaper is another surprisingly common hazard for microbats. Attracted by struggling insects, the bats then themselves become trapped and can become injured trying to escape. The glue is also highly toxic if ingested.

### COLLISIONS WITH OVERHEAD FANS

Microbats cannot properly detect spinning overhead fans and can be seriously injured. Fans installed above outdoor dining areas are particularly hazardous. Bats can collide with the blades while in pursuit of insects attracted by the lighting.