



Photo of a red bat courtesy of © Bat World Sanctuary/www.batworld.org

Bats hold a unique place in the animal kingdom by being the only flying mammal. They are beneficial to the ecosystem as pollinators, seed dispersers, and insect predators. Of the 11,000 bat species found throughout the world, 16 species can be found in Orange County: Mexican long-tongued, Western yellow, Western red, Hoary, Townsend's big-eared, Western pipistrelle, Big brown, California myotis, Western small-footed myotis, Long-eared myotis, Yuma myotis, Pallid, Mexican free-tailed, Pocketed free-tailed, Big free-tailed, and Western mastiff.

Bats leave their roost at dusk and will hunt throughout the night until dawn. They can navigate and find food in the dark by sending out sound waves and listening for them to bounce back. They seek out areas that are dark, quiet, and well ventilated during the day. If you observe a bat acting abnormally during daylight hours contact your local animal control.

Bat-proofing your home is essential. Bats can fit into surprisingly small spaces and openings. Denying them access can be as simple as using caulking or sealant for smaller openings or it might require mesh or netting for larger spaces. Close up all outside openings in roofs, walls, and floors that are larger than $\frac{3}{8}$ " of an inch. Put screens on all windows and doors. For more information, please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, www.cdc.gov/rabies/bats.html. If you awaken and find a bat in your room, see a bat in the room of an unattended child, or see a bat near a mentally impaired or intoxicated person, seek medical advice and notify animal control to have the bat tested.

Rabies, a virus which can be transmitted by bats, can affect people and animals. The virus typically enters the body through a bite or a scratch. Ensure that all domestic animals in your care have current rabies vaccinations. If you suspect a human or domestic animal has been exposed to a bat, notify your local animal control immediately. Never touch a bat with your bare hands!

In areas served by OC Animal Care, we will respond to and impound any bat that is:

- Injured / Sick / Dead
- Involved in a bite with a human or animal
- Trapped in a home where people or domestic animals have possibly been exposed

If any of these conditions exist, please call OC Animal Care at (714) 935-6848.

The following advice should be taken when bats are located on your property:

Never touch or pick up a bat with bare hands, even if it appears dead.

Have all domestic animals in your care currently vaccinated for rabies.

Immediately notify your local animal control if you suspect exposure to a human or domestic animal.

Bat-proof all dwellings to deny access.

For more information, contact:

County of Orange
OC Community Resources
OC Animal Care
Phone: (714) 935-6848
Website: www.ocpetinfo.com

