

# BATS WANTED

*Building a bat house is a great family project. Bats are fun to watch and may help keep insects under control.*



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**W**hy build a bat house? The simple answer is because having bats in the area is an easy way to observe nature at her finest, and the bats will provide a guaranteed show every warm evening of the summer season. Bats are insect eating-machines that may help keep troublesome insect populations in check. In addition, providing bat houses is one method of encouraging bats to relocate their colonies out of buildings.

The key to a successful bat house in the northeast's cooler climate is to keep the house hot. Be sure to seal the upper portions so that warm air cannot escape, paint the house a dark color, and place it in the sunniest location you have that is near cover and not far from water. Maintenance, such as repairing a warping exterior that no longer traps warm air, will be an issue over time, so consider providing some kind of protective cover.

In New York, bat houses are most likely to attract either little brown or big brown bats.

So grab a hammer and join the growing number of people who have discovered how nice it is to have bats around. You'll love watching their evening aerial acrobatics, and they might even keep your mosquito population in check!

Visit Bat Conservation International's website ([www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org)) for additional information on bat houses like the one on the right, or constructing other styles such as the simpler, less expensive rocket box type.

— Al Hicks & Eileen Stegemann

**Be sure to read the article *White Nose Syndrome Endangers Bats* in Briefly on p. 37**



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