



# THE NIGHT FLYER

## NEWS FROM THE FLORIDA BAT CONSERVANCY

### FLORIDA BAT



### CONSERVANCY

#### OUR MISSION

To preserve & protect native bat populations within the state of Florida.

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## MUSICAL MARK TO BRING BATTY SONGS AND STAGE SHOW TO LOCAL FANS AND HELP FLORIDA BATS

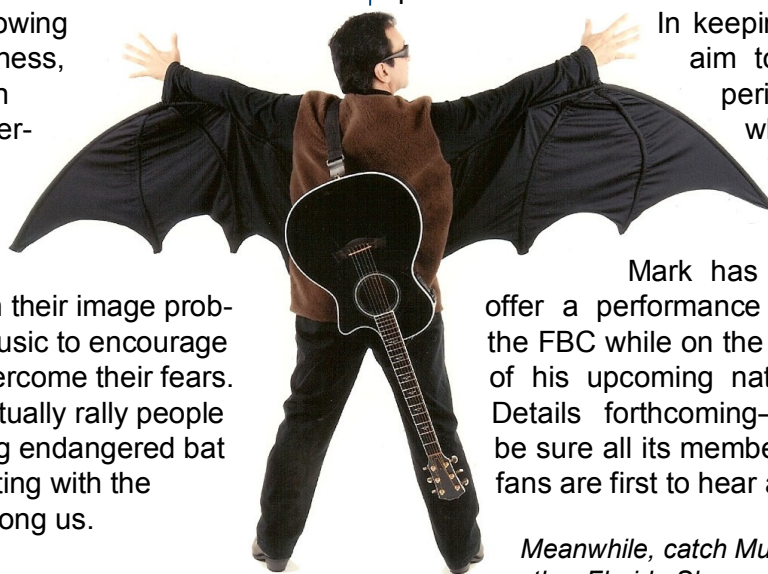
If Elvis were alive today, he might just recognize Musical Mark as his long-lost cousin. And the children's singer / songwriter has just released his 3rd CD with all the songs about...bats!

Even with growing public awareness, bats are often quite misunderstood. This artist has set out to lend a wing to bats and help with their image problem, using music to encourage people to overcome their fears. His songs actually rally people toward saving endangered bat species, starting with the youngest among us.

His new CD, in the works for over a year and a half, features ten songs, including: "Bat Bop Boogie," "Cool Bats," and the classic, "Got Guano?" It is hailed as his most creative effort to date. (To preview these tunes and more, visit his website: [www.batsongs.com](http://www.batsongs.com))

Working with nature centers, bat conservation groups, and other environmentally-savvy organizations worldwide, he performs the songs in a cho-

reographed multi-media show wearing his custom designed bat costume. He believes that teaching peace through understanding bats is a great metaphor for helping achieve peace among people.



In keeping with his aim to help imperiled bats wherever he finds them, Musical

Mark has agreed to offer a performance to benefit the FBC while on the Florida leg of his upcoming national tour. Details forthcoming—FBC will be sure all its members and bat fans are first to hear all about it!

Meanwhile, catch Musical Mark's other Florida Shows (times TBA):

April 4: Bradenton—South Florida Museum

April 5: Juno Beach—Loggerhead Marine Museum

April 11: Boca Raton—Gumbo Limbo Nature Center

April 18: Lakeland—Explorium V

April 19: Sarasota—Marie Selby Botanical Gardens



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## FBC IN THE COMMUNITY

### March 14 & 15 : Boyd Hill Wildlife

**Weekend - St. Petersburg.** 9 AM to 5:30 PM both days; 1101 Country Club South; Phone: 727-893-7326. Visit [stpete.org/boyd](http://stpete.org/boyd) for more information.

### March 20: Bees, Bats, and Butterflies: the Pollinators, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota.

6 to 8 PM, 811 South Palm Avenue; Phone: 941-366-5731.

Come learn about the benefits and importance of pollinators in our ecosystem! FBC is offering a bat program at 7:00 pm.

See live and preserved specimens of a variety of pollinators. For more information, visit [selby.org](http://selby.org)

### March 25: Bat Program at George C. McGough Nature Park, Largo. 7:00 PM

11901 146th St. North, Phone: 727-518-3047.

### March 27: Bat Program at Oxbow Eco Center, Port St. Lucie.

6:30-8:30 PM, 5400 N. E. St. James Drive, Phone: 772 785-5833. For more information, visit [stlucieco.gov/erd/oxbow/index.htm](http://stlucieco.gov/erd/oxbow/index.htm)

### April 2: Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park Wildlife Festival, Wakulla Springs (registration required!).

Bat Program offered as part of the festival; 550 Wakulla Park Drive, Phone: 850-926-0700. For more information, visit [WakullaWildlifeFestival.org](http://WakullaWildlifeFestival.org)

### April 4: Earth Day / Enchanted Forest Festival, Titusville. 10 AM—4 PM; Bat program time TBA; 444 Columbia Blvd., Phone: 321-268-5888.

For more information, visit [nbbd.com/godo/ef/](http://nbbd.com/godo/ef/)

### April 3–6: Big “O” Birding Festival. Bat watching at OK Slough on April 5; Phone: 863-612-4783.

For more information, visit [bigobirdingfestival.com](http://bigobirdingfestival.com)

### April 17–18: Chinsegut Birding and Wildlife Festival, Chinsegut Nature Center, Brooksville.

On the 17th from 8—9:30 PM, bring a flashlight and join us for the Chinsegut Owl and Bat Prowl; Bat program on the 18th, time TBA; 23212 Lake Lindsey Road. For more information, visit [myfwc.com/chinsegut/schedule.html](http://myfwc.com/chinsegut/schedule.html)

### April 25: 6th Annual Dark Sky Festival, Harmony. 6–11 PM; 3500 Harmony Square Drive West; Phone: 407-891-8358.

The purpose of the Dark Sky Festival at Harmony is to expose the general public to the marvels of astronomy and the importance of protecting dark skies - not just for astronomy purposes, but also for the values that darkness provides to area wildlife. Bat program time TBA. For more information, visit [darkskyfestival.com/index.html](http://darkskyfestival.com/index.html)



Wildlife biologist, Selena Kiser, introduces guests to a yellow bat at the FBC booth hosted at the Space Coast Birding Festival.

For more information on any program, you may also call FBC: 727-710-2287

## FBC RECEIVES GRANT FROM TAMPA BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM

The Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) Mini-Grant Program has selected FBC's *Bats of Tampa Bay* project for 2009 funding. The project will provide workshops for organizations involved in conservation and environmental education. The focus of the project is to train and educate environmental professionals about bat species through protection, creation, and enhancement of bat habitat and ongoing bat programs. The first part of the project will be a workshop that will discuss the natural history of bats, habitat conservation, echolocation, identifying local bat species, bats and public health, bat houses, and bat monitoring techniques. The second part of the project will be ongoing bat monitoring programs in each of the three counties. It is anticipated that this project will create an interest in adding bat conservation to land management and environmental education.



TBEP, founded in 1991, is in partnership with Manatee, Hillsborough, and Pinellas counties along with the South Florida Water Management District, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Their overall mission is for the conservation and restoration of the Tampa Bay Estuary. TBEP offers grants of up to \$7500 each year for community based restoration and education projects focusing on areas in the Tampa Bay region. The money is financed from the sales of the Tampa Bay Estuary specialty license plate. The Florida Bat Conservancy greatly appreciates being awarded this grant and looks forward to getting it started!

## FLORIDA BONNETED BATS DISCOVERED ALONG THE KISSIMMEE RIVER

The endangered Florida bonneted bat is found only in south Florida. Until May 2008, the northern-most extent of its range was considered to be the Babcock/Webb Wildlife Management Area (WMA) just south of Punta Gorda. On May 13, Cyndi and George Marks were conducting acoustical surveys in the Kissimmee River area for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) when they recorded a single call sequence of a Florida bonneted bat along the river in the KICCO WMA south of State Road 60. Not willing to declare the presence of a previously unrecorded species in the area based on a single call, they hoped to record additional calls on subsequent survey nights. On the sixth night of surveys along the river, they recorded nine calls at Platt's Bluff, north of State Road 70, confirming that Florida bonneted bats were foraging along the Kissimmee River north of Lake Okeechobee.

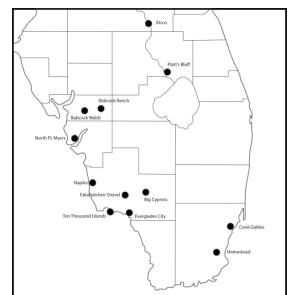
"This is a significant finding and extends the range of the Florida bonneted bat 50 miles north of where it had been previously documented," states George. "Discovering bonneted bats along the Kissimmee River opens up new opportunities for conservation of the species."

Additional studies are needed to assess the abundance of the species in the area. Questions remain, such as: are they found only along the river? What are they using as roost sites? What insects are they feeding upon? The FBC will continue to conduct surveys along the river to learn more about the Florida bonneted bat population in this area.



Florida Bonneted Bat

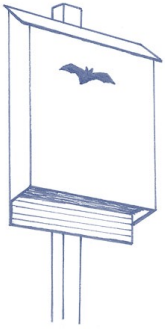
Photo by Ralph Arwood



- Florida bonneted bat calls have been recorded at these locations.



# BAT HOUSE NEWS



## FLORIDA BONNETED BATS MOVE INTO BAT HOUSES AT BABCOCK WEBB

In an effort to support the population of Florida bonneted bats in the Babcock Webb Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) purchased eight single-chambered bat houses from the Florida Bat Conservancy. Single-chambered bat houses were chosen because a colony of Florida bonneted bats had moved into a bat house of this design in North Fort Myers several years previously. In fact, up until this time, bat houses at that site were the only known roosts of Florida bonneted bats. FWC installed the houses at four locations mounted back-to-back on tall poles in November 2007. In early December 2008, the FWC notified FBC that guano had been found under two of the bat houses, and requested that FBC identify the inhabitants. Later that month, FBC staff and volunteers set up their acoustical equipment and recorded bat echolocation calls as bats emerged. Cyndi Marks reported, "We were so excited when the echolocation calls confirmed there were Florida bonneted bats in both bat houses. We counted twelve bats exiting from one of the bat houses and fifteen emerging from the other. An additional six bats were counted in the second bat house after the initial emergence for a total of 33 individuals." These two bat houses join those in North Fort Myers as the only known Florida bonneted bat roost sites.



*An exciting find: Guano!*

## BAT HOUSE DAY AT THE CITY OF DELTONA

In keeping with its goal of environmentally-friendly pest control by encouraging bats, the Beautification Advisory Board of the City of Deltona is planning to install twelve bat houses throughout the city.



Al Manassa at Bat House Day installed the first bat house at City Hall.

Bat friendly organizations and the media were present to bring bat awareness to the public. Chairman of the Deltona Beautification Advisory Board, Al Manassa, is also a member of the Florida Bat Conservancy. We applaud Al and the city for initiating this great project.

## UPDATE: CHASSAHOWITZKA WMA BAT HOUSE INSTALLATIONS

As reported in the Autumn 2007 edition of *Night Flyer*, Eagle Scout Dean Linton constructed and installed eight triple-chambered bat houses at four locations in the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area during July 2007. In November 2008, FBC received word that at least one of the bat houses, all of which were mounted on 21-foot poles, was occupied. In February 2009, George and Cyndi Marks checked each of the four and confirmed that two are occupied. The droppings beneath the houses suggest they are occupied by Brazilian free-tailed bats. FBC commends the FWC and the management team at the Chassahowitzka WMA for agreeing to have the bat houses located on their site, and for their continued bat conservation efforts. FBC also extends a special commendation to Dean Linton for this successful Eagle Scout project!



## MEMBER NEWS

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS...

**Bat Patrons:** Elane and Ron Nuehring

**Bat Supporter:** Patricia L. Howell

**Bat Friends:** Shari Blissett Clark, Laura Osteen, Fred Wiechmann, Fred Santana

**Regular:** City of Bonita Springs, Carrie Call, Harry and Meg Edwards, Betsie Hiatt, Beth Kring, Eirlys Rawcliffe

### ... AND A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR RENEWING MEMBERS!

**Bat Conservationists:** Ralph and Gisela Arwood

**Bat Patrons:** Gwen Burzycki, Dr. and Mrs. Russ Reiling, Gene and Carol Loibl, Mark Patterson, Barbara Hoelscher

**Bat Supporters:** Ted Andresen and Chris Cargo, George and Deborah Copeland, Dave and Sylvia Phillips, Bob and Mary Rude

**Bat Friends:** Prof. Tom Cravens, Mauri Peterson, Richard Potter, Jonnie Swann

**Regular:** Ron and Carmen Austin, Chris Corral, John Churchwell, Sandra Dussault, Mary Gaber, Randall Havens, Dr. Chuck Holley, Tracy Hood, Tom and Jane Pafford, Vera Zimmerman



**NEW!**

### FBC Gear

FBC is proud to offer its members and supporters embroidered hats and shirts, reasonably priced with a variety of shirt colors and fabrics. Proceeds support FBC activities, including rescue / rehabilitation, education, advocacy, and more.

In addition, FBC is now set up to accept both Visa and Mastercard for merchandise transactions, member fees, and donations.

*To get your gear, please call the FBC hotline 727-710-2287 today!*

## WHITE NOSE SYNDROME SPREADS SOUTH TO PENNSYLVANIA AND WEST VIRGINIA

White Nose Syndrome (WNS), which was first documented in the winter of 2006 and has since killed tens of thousands of bats across New England, is now confirmed south of the original affected area. Many of the dead or dying bats have a white fungus on their nose and occasionally on their wings or tail membrane. The affected bats are emaciated and do not have the fat reserves needed to survive through hibernation. The cause remains unknown. The endangered Indiana myotis is one of the species affected, although little brown myotis populations have been the hardest hit. The northern long-eared myotis, eastern pipistrelle, and small-footed myotis have also been affected.

Unfortunately, WNS has been documented in Pennsylvania (Mifflin County) and West Virginia (Pendleton County). According to biologists from the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Wildlife Diversity Unit, Pendleton county has the highest concentration of Virginia big-eared bats anywhere, and the largest remaining Indiana bat hibernacula in the region. Another cave in the area, known as Hellhole, is probably the most important bat hibernaculum in the eastern United States.

Many caves in the northeast have been closed to cavers in an attempt to keep the disease from spreading. While there is no evidence that people are affected by WNS, the fungus may be spread between caves or mines on shoes or clothing. Strict protocol has been set up for WNS researchers and anyone working with bats in the affected areas. FBC will continue to monitor and report on this threat to native bats.



HELPING FLORIDA'S BATS

*Florida Bat Conservancy*

*Post Office Box 516*

*Bay Pines FL 33744*

## NEWS FROM THE FLORIDA BAT CONSERVANCY



### ***Join us and help protect these fascinating, beneficial mammals!***

Please consider helping Florida's bats by becoming a member. We are a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization working hard to protect bats by means of public education, conservation projects, rescue, rehabilitation, and research.

☐ *New*

☐ Regular \$15    ☐ Bat Friend \$30    ☐ Bat Supporter \$50

☐ *Renewing*

☐ Bat Patron \$100    ☐ Bat Conservationist \$250 or more

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Make checks payable to: Florida Bat Conservancy, P.O. Box 516, Bay Pines, FL 33744*