



# 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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## The Amazing Bracken Cave Bat Emergence

By Jennifer Smith

On August 8<sup>th</sup> I was able to witness one of the most spectacular bat sites in the United States. The famous Bracken Cave, owned by Bat Conservation International, is located just outside of San Antonio, Texas and is home to the largest colony of bats in the world. On average, the cave holds 22 million Mexican free-tailed bats (*Tadarida brasiliensis*). At the time I was there, however, there were an estimated 35 million bats due to the birth of new pups. The bats began emerging before 6 PM and the emergence lasted until well after 9 PM.

It was absolutely amazing to see millions of bats flying at once! It was mind boggling to think of how many individuals I was watching fly out of the cave. At times the bats would be flying as close as ten feet above my head. I could hear the crackling noise of their wings flapping as they passed by and the high pitched chirps of their roost chatter. I like to think they were saying hello as they flew by!



As they flew out of the cave, they circled around in a tornado like vortex for a while before flying off in a thick stream behind the cave. They would then disperse to forage for insects for the night. Because there are so many bats in one area, the bats have a long feeding range so they can find enough insects for the night. The bats will catch the jet stream which will carry them over 100 miles to their feeding grounds.

Bracken Cave is an amazing example of how dedication and vision from bat enthusiasts can protect natural habitats for bats and allow for the enjoyment of bat watching for generations to come. For more information about Bracken Cave, check out BCI's website: [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org). I encourage everyone to experience this amazing natural phenomenon!



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## FBC IN THE COMMUNITY

**October 3 : Bat Program at Temple Terrace Public Library.** 2:30 PM; 202 East Bullard Parkway, Temple Terrace; Phone: 813-506-6770 *Registration required.*

**October 3 : Hummingbird Festival.** 9:00-4:00; Visit our bat booth! Pioneer Florida Museum, 15602 Pioneer Museum Road, Dade City; Phone: 352-567-0262.

**October 7: Bat program at Tarpon Springs Public Library.** 7:00 PM; 138 East Lemon Street, Tarpon Springs Phone: 727-943-4922.

**October 9: Heart of Darkness Gothic Club's fundraising event for the Florida Bat Conservancy.** 10:00PM—2:00AM Location: The "Attic", just above the "Venue" 232 West University Avenue, Gainesville. Admission \$5.00. Must be over 18. ID required. For info visit: [www.heartofdarkness.com](http://www.heartofdarkness.com)

**October 10: Lubee Bat Fest.** 10:30-3:30; 1309 NW 192nd Avenue, Gainesville, Visit: [www.lubee.org](http://www.lubee.org)

**October 17: Creepy Creature Feature, Hobe Sound Nature Center.** 6:30– 8:30 PM; 13640 S.E. Federal Highway (U.S. 1). An evening of fun and educational activities! FBC will present a bat program during the event.

**October 24: Bat Program at Dunedin Community Center.** 10:30 AM; 1929 Pinehurst Road, Phone: 727-812-4530.

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

## UF Bat House Update

On August 16, 2009 two sets of roosting crevices added underneath the University of Florida bat house collapsed. Unfortunately, some media releases implied, and consequently rumors spread, that the entire UF bat house had collapsed. Actually, the bat house is still standing and the colony is still residing within it. Regrettably, some bats were injured and killed during the collapse. The modules, containing partitions spaced  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches apart, were installed in 2005 and 2006 to provide additional roosting surfaces for the colony until a new bat house could be built. The old roosting surfaces had grown worn with time and young bats were falling out during the maternity season. The collapse of the modules brings the issue to a head, and the time has come to build a replacement bat house.

Fund raising is under way and the Lubee Bat Conservancy has agreed to collect the donations for its replacement. If you would like to make a contribution, please designate it for the UF Bat House Project and mail it to the Lubee Bat Conservancy, 1309 NW 192<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Gainesville, FL 32609, or you can donate through their website: [www.lubee.org](http://www.lubee.org). The UF bats will be happy you did!





## *The Occasional Bat* a Hit for All Bat Lovers

By Jennifer Smith

When I first started working at the Florida Bat Conservancy I was delighted to discover *The Occasional Bat* run by Ed and Theresa Frederick. Their entire business consists of bat pillows! I checked out their website ([www.theoccasionalbat.com](http://www.theoccasionalbat.com)) and discovered that the sky was the limit when it came to making these pillows! Ed and Theresa got into the bat pillow business when one Christmas they decided to get creative and made their first bat pillows for their family. Their family loved them so much they suggested that they make a business out of it. They took the advice and *The Occasional Bat* was born!



*Ed and Theresa Frederick surrounded by bats.*



Ed and Theresa shop for creative fabrics at craft stores and make the pillows right out of their home. Every bat pillow is made with love and given their own special name before being shipped to their new owners.



Part of their proceeds are donated to the Florida Bat Conservancy and



to Bat World. Between birthday bats, Christmas bats, wedding bats, etc., browsing for the perfect pillow was difficult because I wanted them all! I immediately fell in love with the gorgeous and unique mermaid bat. With her shell bikini top, hand stitched sequined tail, and curly golden locks, I knew this was the bat for me! Unfortunately at the time the bat was out of stock. So I contented myself to wait and hope it would be in stock and ready to ship soon. A couple of weeks later I met the Fredericks at a bat festival in Gainesville. I got to see all their bats close up and have a great chat with the

Fredericks. I found out that the mermaid bat is one of their top sellers so I opted to be put on the waiting list. It was worth the wait! I now have a fabulous mermaid bat and a couple of ornament bats hanging on the wall in my living room. I plan to have other bats too, like the Easter bunny bat, the princess bat, and the snowman bat.

**The Occasional Bat**

**[www.occasionalbat.com](http://www.occasionalbat.com)**



## Helping Baby Bats

By the beginning of May, we were busy answering phone calls about baby bats. While we rescue many bat pups that are orphaned, the best thing we can do is get the pups back with their mothers. Often, female Seminole and yellow bats fall from their tree roosts with their pups attached. Usually we can instruct callers on how to safely return them to a tree.

Sometimes pups fall out of building roosts or bat houses. Two



weeks into the season we received a call from a couple in Lutz. Two newborn evening bat pups had fallen out of their backyard bat house. We were able to explain to them how to get the pups safely back into the bat house. Thankfully the little pups scrambled back up into the bat house and back to their mothers. What a relief! The next day we

received an email with pictures of the rescue. What a great story! FBC would like to thank Jeannie, Sarah, Monica, and Chris for helping the pups!



## Friends of Bats saves the day! And the bats!

When we received a call about a colony of bats that was trapped in a two-story pool enclosure in Bradenton, we knew we needed extra help. Approximately 200 bats had been trapped for five nights and many had already died. The majority of bats were wedged into nooks and crannies that would require very tall ladders to reach. We contacted Friends of Bats, a bat exclusion company in Palm City. They rearranged their schedule and drove across the state to help! The bats were then taken to back to FBC where they



Dan Bozone, owner of Friends of Bats, helps with the rescue.

received medical care and food for several days before their release. A huge thank-you to Dan and David from Friends of Bats!

## Temple Terrace and University of South Florida Receives "Green Project" Award



Temple Terrace Parks and Recreation and USF's School of Architecture and Community Design re-

ceived an award for the newly built Temple Terrace Riverfront Park Pavilion. The pavilion was designed and constructed with natural and recyclable materials by 14 USF graduate students and was completed last spring. The pavilion is envisioned to be a place for people to enjoy the outdoors and also will serve as a viewing area for the upcoming reconstructed Temple Terrace Bat Tower. Congratulations to Temple Terrace and USF for all your hard work!

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS...

**Bat Supporters:** David and Helene Valentine, Florida Keys Audubon Society, Lauren McFarland, Debbie Chayet

**Bat Friends:** Tara Christou, Lisa Marie Phillips, JoAnne Hartzler, Gary Krotz, Gita Ramsay, Tim Andera, Joan McIntyre

**Regular:** Becky Cafiero, Linda Carol Aguilar, Twila Beachy, E. H. Crow, Jacquelyn Joan Esco, Rhea Hurwitz, Wayne Douchkoff, Richard Bunting

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

**Bat Conservationist:** Lynn Huber, Barbara Hoelscher

**Bat Patrons:** Larry and Fran Norman, David Redfield, Larry Linn, Charles and De An Winton, Backyard Bird Company, Kirk and Tina DeVries

**Bat Supporters:** Kirk and Laura Stanford

**Bat Friends:** Lee Bloomcamp, Marcie Clutter, Edward Beatty, Steve Mathis, Florida Pest Control, Brian Greenwood

## And Special Thanks To:

Drew Van Pelt for the donation of walkie-talkies. These will be very useful during our bat surveys!

Charles and De An Winton, and Lisa Olsen for their donations to help the UF Bat house.

Dr. Peter Helmer and Dr. Janine Cianciolo for veterinary services.



### Remembering Ann Harris Walker

Oct. 7, 1942 - July 25, 2009

We are saddened by the loss of our board member, friend, and volunteer, Ann Walker. Ann was born into a circus family on October 7, 1942 in Sarasota. She graduated from Sarasota

High School in 1960, then received degrees from Florida State University, the University of South Florida, and Nashotah House Seminary with a Masters of Divinity degree in Christian education. Her illustrious three-decade teaching career was devoted to special needs children.

Ann loved bats and began working with FBC in 2002. She had a special affinity for the Seminole bats (*Lasius seminolus*). Ann took meticulous care of injured and orphaned Seminoles, which are notoriously difficult to keep healthy in captivity. They flourished in her care, and one in particular would sing as Ann groomed her fur. Her devotion to Florida's flying mammals and her service to FBC serve as inspirations to all whose lives she touched. She will be greatly missed.

## Beauty

By Janell Jambon

Every evening when a purple blanket covers the orange that the sunset left behind, the tree that was struck dead by lightning comes to life.

Every twilight, about thirty bats emerge from this dwindling pine tree in my backyard.

The big-eared animals glide a few at a time from underneath the receding bark into the dark sky.

They fly around spastically using their high-pitched to locate their inspect prey.

The synchronized air show ends as the thin-winged creatures blend into the black space, fluttering wildly off into the night to hunt.

*Janell is a teenager from Naples, Florida. A colony of bats took up residence in a dead tree branch in her back yard. Janell and her family enjoy watching the bats emerge in the evening.*



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

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