



BAT EXCLUSIONS

Courtesy of the New Jersey Wildlife Damage Control Association

Identify the entry holes:

A colony of bats living in a structure must exit every day or so to eat and drink. This event can be observed around dusk (just after sunset). The bats can be seen swooping from a hole somewhere in the structure. The hole can be as small as 3/4 inch in diameter. If you can stick your little finger in the hole, a bat can squeeze through.

Where to look for bats exiting the structure:

- 1) The ends of the ridge vent may be open
- 2) The seam where the shingles meet the rake board.
- 3) The seam between the rake board and the wall.
- 4) The gable end vent (may have a defective screen behind the louvers).
- 5) Anywhere along the eaves where there is an opening due to rotted wood, squirrel chewed hole or separated joints (age warping, etc.).
- 6) All flashing on the roof (around the chimney, around valleys, etc.).
- 7) Any gaps in seams between the wall and the trim boards.
- 8) The joint between the chimney and house may develop a crack if the chimney pulls away over time. Again, look for a small crack.
- 9) Behind shutters.
- 10) Where a dormer roof meets the main roof.
- 11) Slate or cedar shingles may have gaps big enough for bats. Shingles may be broken or missing.

These are typical places to look. If you have no idea where the bats are leaving the structure, where do you start to look? Look for bat droppings at ground level. These droppings are a little bit larger than a grain of rice. The color is brown to black. There may be a taper at one end. A bat dropping will crumble to dust if slight pressure is applied to it. This is because they eat nothing but insects and the bat dropping is made of insect scales. Bat droppings accumulate under the hole they are using to exit the structure. You may see them on window ledges, or on top of window-mounted air conditioners. The area around the bat exit may be stained a dirty brown. This is caused by bat urine and/or the oil from the bat's fur constantly rubbing off when the bat brushes against the surface.

Next Step - seal all secondary holes:

OK, you have identified the hole(s) where the bats leave from. This is called the primary exit. Every other opening big enough for a bat to use is a secondary hole. The bats do not necessarily use the secondary holes at the moment, but these openings must be sealed now to prevent problems later.

Use whatever sealant material is appropriate; i.e., caulk, expanding foam, 1/4 inch mesh weld wire, wood, steel wool, liquid nails, etc. Bats do not make holes, they only use what is available. However, squirrels and birds do make openings. If squirrels and birds are a concern, be sure to use a sealant that these creatures cannot chew, claw or peck open.

After sealing secondary holes:

Install bat excluders where bats are exiting the structure. Some companies make their own. Commercial excluders are also available. Give excluders a few days to work. Remove excluders, then seal the openings. This is the only way to achieve long term goal on bat abatement.

The New Jersey Wildlife Damage Control Association would like to thank the New Jersey Pest Management Association for allowing us to provide this information via your newsletter. Recently, many of our members have contacted me about illegal activities regarding bat exclusion. The fogging of bats in any form, along with tracking powder or any chemical repellants, are not legal uses or methods for bat exclusions.

Please use the above legal methods. Our wildlife industry is always under scrutiny. There are many who would destroy our industry if given the chance. Our industry cannot withstand a bloody nose.

If you have additional questions, please contact me at NJWDCA@yahoo.com.

John Shamro

Editors Note: Exclusion/eviction should **NOT** be done during the sensitive months of May, June, or July, when maternity colonies are active and flightless young bats could become trapped inside the building.