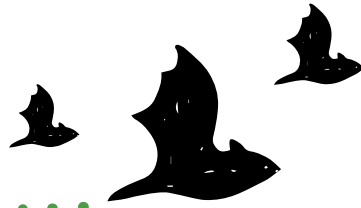


How to Become a Bat Advocate



Bats need your help! Throughout the world, bats are seeing their homes and habitats destroyed at a huge rate, and the use of pesticides is limiting bats' access to healthy food. In North America, bat populations are declining at an even faster rate due to a deadly fungus known as *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* that causes the devastating illness known as White-nose Syndrome.

Now, more than ever, getting involved as a bat advocate can make a real difference in the lives of thousands, and perhaps even millions, of bat lives. An advocate helps by protecting natural spaces, influencing government legislation and raising funds for critical research.

Advocates are needed to speak for bats within government, business and public spheres. Becoming an ambassador means taking a stand and becoming a voice for bats to save them from White-nose Syndrome, wind turbines, residential and commercial development, pollution and other devastating factors.

Being a bat advocate can take many professional forms. Common career paths include:

- Environmental law and environmental policy
- Research
- Education

Your career path may take you to work with environmental groups such as Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society and World Wildlife Federation. College preparation in communication, economics, political science, biology or environmental studies can prepare you for a career in these important areas.

Outside the professional environment, bat advocates serve many roles including:

- Fundraising
- Educating informally
- Working with local media
- Volunteering with environmental organizations

Donations to nonprofits can support important research on solutions to the problems facing bat populations as well as fund the outreach needed to change public perception about bats. Teaching people in your community at a library or festival can introduce children and adults to the importance of bats. Download sample presentations and handouts at www.batweek.org. Contacting your local media, including newspapers, radio and bloggers, can help to educate your community about the threats facing bats, particularly in your state.

Your voice is crucial in any capacity you are able to take on. Get started today standing up for bats and make the environment healthier for bats and all of us. Check out these great resources for more inspiration:

Project EduBat - www.batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/

BatsLive! - www.batslive.pwnet.org/edubat/index.php



For more information about bats, visit batweek.org and batslive.pwnet.org

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