Bat Conservation International's

"Bat Approved" Certification

This bat house has been evaluated by BCI's Bat House Certification Program, and has earned the "Bat Approved" certification.

Approved Model built by:

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BAT CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

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Dear Friend:

Thank you for purchasing this quality bat house. This bat house, built by Pikes Peak Market, has been evaluated by Bat Conservation International. It has earned our “Bat Approved” certification, meaning the design, materials, construction and instructions have met our quality standards. Most commercially-produced bat houses are not suitable for bats, and often lack proper instructions. While there are never any guarantees, BCI-approved bat houses are likely to be used by bats when properly installed in a suitable location. Please follow the recommendations enclosed with your bat house for best results.

Providing new roosts for bats is one of the most rewarding ways that we can help wildlife. Many bats have lost their natural roosts, and by putting up this bat house, you are making a difference. You will also benefit from having fewer yard and garden pests.

Please visit www.batcon.org/bathouse for more information about bats and bat houses. Thanks again for your efforts to help bats.

Sincerely,

Dianne Odegard
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Triple Chamber Certified Bat House

Features of Your Quality Built Bat House

I made your bat house with Cedar, a wood that is noted for its durability when exposed to the weather. We imported a unique Cedar wood that has no scent that might discourage bats. The horizontal boards are interlocked with tongue and groove construction and the ends are protected by being fitted into the channeled sides. All interior surfaces are grooved so the bats can easily grip the wood. A half-inch slot between the lower front panels provides ventilation. Warmer-climate bat houses (dark brown or unfinished), provide additional ventilation with vertical slots on the lower sides of the bat house. With proper maintenance, I expect your bat house will last 20-30 years.

Changing Attitudes Towards Bats

Considering all the negative myths about bats, you could say that bats have the worst public relations agents in the world. Almost every myth about bats is untrue. Bats are not blind. There are no North American species of bats that drink blood. Bats won't attack your hair. Bats are a key part of the ecosystem and are actually very helpful to humans in controlling pest, reseeding lands that have been deforested, and pollinating plants that are beneficial to humans. Bat populations are currently dwindling, and these animals need our help to safeguard the health of the environment. Whether you're buying a bat house to help conserve bats or for their reputation as a natural means of pest control, we thank you for your enlightened support of bats.

Finding Bats for Your Bat House

Not all bat houses successfully attract bats. The first known bat house was built only at the turn of the last century, so there is still some experimentation and learning going on as to what works best. What we do know is that poorly-constructed or poorly-located bat houses have almost no chance of attracting bats; well-made bat houses correctly mounted in known bat habitats will likely be inhabited within the first couple of years.

If bats already live on your property, attracting bats is much easier. Clearly, those who with populated bat houses filled with bats probably have a good idea of what they are doing. Many newcomers to bats consider installing a bat house after they discover that they have bats in undesirable location, such as their attic. (Successfully relocate bats to the bat house by first mounting the bat house nearby; after two weeks, install a one-way door over the bats' attic entryway. More details and instructions on building a one-way door are available on the Bat Conservation International website, http://www.batcon.org.)

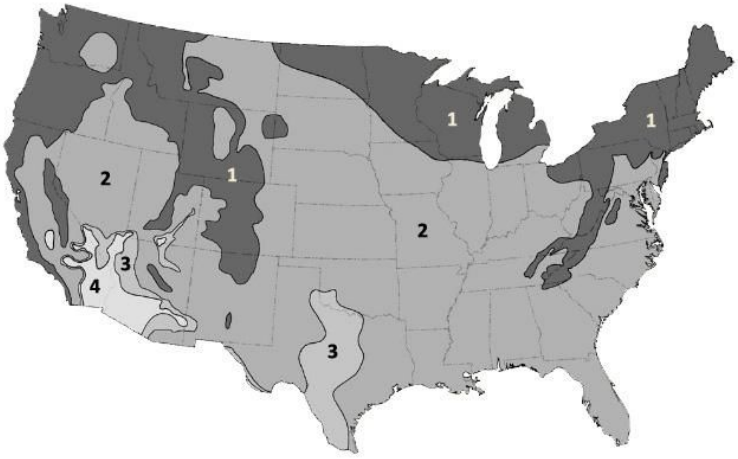
If bats do not already live on your property, I advise following these instructions to achieve your best odds for success. You have already made the first step by purchasing a quality-built, BCI Certified Pikes Peak Market Triple Chamber Bat House.

Preparing Your Bat House before Mounting

If you purchased an unfinished bat house, you will most likely need to prime and paint your bat house before you mount it. Only in certain warm areas of southwest United States, is there the option of either painting the bat house a light shade or just letting the cedar wood weather naturally. The color, or more accurately the darkness, of the bat house's exterior is important because this determines the interior temperature of the bat house. Bats will not take up residence in the bat house if its interior temperature is either too hot or too cold. The darker the color, the more heat the bat house will absorb. Paint bat houses in the cooler climates black so that the interior stays warm. For most of the rest of the USA a dark shade (I use dark brown) is recommended. Please see the map for guidance on whether your bat house should be a light shade, a dark shade, or black.

If bats don't move in and you suspect the house may be too hot or cold, a black bat house can be painted brown, and a brown house can be painted black. Vents can be covered or added. Bat Conservation International recommends that you do not use oil based products since these products may be toxic to the bats. Use only a water-based primer and a water-based (latex) exterior paint and apply these coating only to the exterior of the bat house. Do not paint the landing pad area at the bottom of the bat house or any other part of the interior.

Bat House Color Recommendations Map



1 = Black **2 = Dark Shade** **3 & 4 = Light Shade or No Coating Needed**

Attaching the 'L' Brackets for Mounting the Bat House

Attach the bat house to a wall or mounting board using the supplied 'L' brackets. Attach the brackets near the top and the bottom of the sides of the bat house (about three inches down from the roof and three inches up from the bottom). There are four 'L' brackets, two for each side; use two small screws for each 'L' bracket. It is best to attach the 'L' brackets to the bat house before attempting to mount it to a wall or pole.

Note: Predrill holes in side of bat house before attaching "L" bracket.

Mount the bat house to either a wall or your mounting frame using 4 large screws or nails (not provided due to variations). Easy mounting is possible by positioning the bat house, to mark hole locations, drilling your holes in the mount, and then screwing or nailing your bat house to the mount. Large screws may be perfect for mounting the bat house to your wall, or depending on the mounting surface, large screws may not work at all. You may need to purchase additional attachment hardware at your local hardware store.

Important: Do not drive screws or nails into the bat house without first drilling pilot holes. Without a predrilled hole, a screw or nail driven into the dry cedar will likely split the wood.

Where to Mount Your Bat House

Your success in attracting bats to your bat house greatly depends on choosing the right location.

First location issue is proximity to water. Nursery bat houses, capable of supporting hundreds of bats, need to be close to water. This is because the female bats do not like to be away for very long from their flightless newborn pups. The adult bats drink by skimming water into their mouth as they fly low over a body of water. The water source can be a lake, pond, or a stream that is at least several feet wide. Nursery bat houses that are within a quarter mile of a water source have the greatest potential for success.

If you place your bat house more than a half mile away from a water source, it may still attract a few bachelor bats.

The next location issue has to do with temperature. Bats are small warm-blooded mammals. Because they are so small, they lose a large amount of heat through their skin. They replace this lost energy by eating thousands of mosquitoes and other insects every night. However, in the morning when the bats return home to sleep their house may be uncomfortably cold. They will huddle together to stay warm and yet this alone may not be enough. You can assist them in staying warm by placing your bat house in a location where it will receive the warmth of the sun. Specifically the bat house should face south or southeast so that it receives the warmth of the sun.

While the sun's warmth is welcomed in the morning, the heat from the sun in the afternoon may be a bit too much. If possible, the bats will be more comfortable if they get some late afternoon shade to keep the bat house from becoming excessively hot. A bat house mounted on the southeast side of a building naturally works well since in the late afternoon the building will shade the bat house. In the cooler climates, afternoon shade is neither needed nor desired; bat house in the cooler climates (regions marked as one on the map) need at least eight to ten hours of direct sunlight.

There are just a few more location topics to consider that include bat house discovery, line of flight, and security. Bats use sight to locate their new homes. Generally, a bat is more likely to spot your bat house as being a possible home if it is high up and out in the open.

Another reason for placing the bat house at a high open space is to avoid predators. Hawks will often pick off bats as they leave their home. The danger of ambush by hawks may be the reason why bats avoid flying through tree branches.

Mounting Your Bat House

The most common mounting location for a bat house is up high on the south or southeast exterior wall of a barn or large shed. The wall should be made of wood, stone, stucco, or any other surface that stays cool to the touch on warm days. Another common practice is

to mount the bat house at the top of a long metal or wooden pole. Sixteen to twenty foot metal or wooden poles can be special ordered at most lumbered yards or fencing companies. It is important that your bat pole is not flimsy. Wood poles should be at least 4 x 6 inch treated lumber while metal poles need to be at least two inches in diameter. If stormy winds or mischievous kids shake your bat house, the bats will leave and they will not return. If you are lucky enough to have a telephone pole in a good location and the utilities company does not mind, then this can save you the trouble of installing a pole. Bats do not like light at night so do not mount your bat house on a light post. Likewise, mounting your bat house on the trunk of a shade tree is just asking for failure. Bats need to be up high, about fifteen feet above the ground, away from the tree branches, and they need to feel the warmth of the sun.

If you plan to mount your bat house on a pole, it is a good idea to purchase two bat houses and mount them back-to-back. By placing a metal roof over both bat houses and drilling holes in the lower portion of the bat houses, two bat houses effectively become one large bat house better able to maintain near-constant warm internal temperature. There are several resources giving details on how make a back-to-back mounting.

If you mount your bat house on a pole, install a predator guard a few feet up from the base to prevent snakes from climbing the pole. Be aware that bat guano will accumulate under your bat house once bats take up residence, so do not place your bat house above doors, windows, sidewalks or other places where this might be a problem.

Final Step: Patience

Almost anytime of the year is a good time to set up a bat house. Spring is their most active season for searching for a new home, yet bats will continue to look for new homes throughout all the warm months of the year. If your bat house is in a good location, they will most likely find it within the first year. If your bat house is still empty after two years, you may have better luck by moving it to another location.

If wasps move into the bat house before the bats then this will discourage the bats from moving in. The three-quarter inch partition spacing tends to discourage wasps from building their nest in the bat house, but it might happen. Until the bats move in, inspect the bat house weekly to ensure there are no intruders.

Health Concerns

The likelihood of contracting rabies from bats is highly unlikely. In the USA, only two or three people die from contracting rabies from bats per year. This compares to thousands of fatalities due to allergic reactions to bee stings. Nevertheless, one should minimize their risk by exercising common sense. Bats are not pets. Bats are like other wild mammals in that a small percentage of them have rabies or other diseases. A rabid bat will not attack people; however, a sick bat may be found lying on the ground. To avoid a bite, a bat found on the ground or otherwise easily captured should not be handled with bare hands. Warn children that they should never touch or pick up bats or any other small wild mammals that they find.