



Citizen Scientists Needed to Monitor Bat Population

Wainfleet has a wealth of wildlife and residents are very aware of the need to protect the migrating birds, butterflies and resident amphibians that we see. We are also fortunate enough to have a bat population that returns each summer to consume tons of insects and help with plant pollination and seed dispersal. Although bats tend to have a bad reputation they are an essential part of our ecosystem.

Over the past decade a fungus called White Nose Syndrome has been killing the bats of North America by the millions. The Little Brown Bat, once one of the most common bats, has been hit especially hard by this fungus and may be facing extinction. Although research continues, at this point, there is no cure for White Nose Syndrome.

There are several ways that citizen scientists can help bats.

1. If you see a bat flying or roosting, the bat sighting can be reported to Neighbourhood Bat Watch (www.batwatch.ca). Click on the "Participate" tab and information is provided on how to report your sighting.
2. If you have a maternity colony of bats, this information can also be reported to Neighbourhood Bat Watch.
3. PhD students from Trent University are looking for colonies of bats to identify and tag. They are especially interested in bat colonies that are located near wind turbines. If you have a bat colony and are willing to have the students come to your property, please contact Barbara Kurpita at wainfleetwillie@gmail.com