

# BLUEBERRY RIVER FIRST NATIONS BAT STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Photo Credit: Jonaki Bhattacharyya

## The Project

Blueberry River First Nations is developing a bat stewardship project, with a focus on the Pink Mountain area. The goals of the project are to:

- Provide opportunities for community involvement in bat stewardship and knowledge sharing;
- Improve roosting for bats in the Pink Mountain area by installing bat boxes; and
- Monitor the use of these sites by various bat species.



Photo Credit: Michael Durham, Bat Conservation International

## Threats to Bats

- **Habitat Loss:** Land alterations from forestry, agriculture expansion, and other forms of development or industrial activity.
- **White-nose Syndrome:** Caused by a fungus that can spread quickly throughout a roost.
- **Climate Change:** Deaths from increased extreme weather events
- **Wind Farms:** Changes in air pressure around the blades can kill bats by affecting their lungs.
- **Predation:** House cats.



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BLUEBERRY RIVER  
FIRST NATIONS



## Why Care about Bats?

### Pest Control

Who needs pesticides when you have bats? Bats in BRFN territory eat insects, helping to keep insects like mosquitos under control. This reduces the need for pesticides and helps keep ecosystems healthy.

### Pollination and seed dispersal

While the bats in BRFN territory eat insects, elsewhere in the world bats have other important roles too:

- Some bats feed on nectar, like bees. These bats pick up a dusting of pollen from one flower and move it to another flower as they feed - helping with the pollination process.
- Fruit eating bats drop seeds back into the ground and help to re-vegetate areas. While flying, bats poop out seeds, helping the plants spread, especially in deforested areas.

### Inherent and Ecosystem Value

Bats are beautiful creatures that are intrinsically valuable and a part of the ecosystem.



Photo Credit: Government of Canada

## Endangered Species Alert!

We have two endangered species in the Pink Mountain Area: Little Brown Myotis (above) and Northern Myotis (below)



Photo Credit: Dave Thomas, NWT Species at Risk



## How are we Helping?

- **Sharing knowledge and information:** BRFN will hold a workshop with BRFN staff, monitors, and Elders to talk about bats in BRFN territory, their habitat, and key threats. This will help guide decisions about where to place bat boxes and how to monitor.
- **Building bat boxes:** BRFN will install and monitor 11 community owned bat boxes. Sites will be selected with BRFN monitors and Elders.
- **Monitoring:** We will monitor the bat boxes for signs of bat use. BRFN will also monitor bat activity in the surrounding area using devices that can pick up the echolocation signals of bats to identify which species are there.
- **Leaving roosting areas alone:** Bats are very sensitive to disturbances when they're hibernating in the winter, so if you know of a roost - leave it alone and steer clear of the area!





Photo Credit: Jonaki Bhattacharyya

# Contact Us!

If you are interested in being involved in this project and would like to participate in the workshop discussion, bat box installation, or monitoring, please contact Bryan:

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