

BATS IN NEW ZEALAND

There are two bat species in New Zealand (a third, the greater short-tailed bat is probably extinct) and these two species are found only in New Zealand.



Both are threatened with extinction.

LONG-TAILED BAT *CHALINOLOBUS TUBERCULATUS*

Weights 8 - 10 grams, smaller than a mouse.



Long-tailed bats live in plantations throughout most of New Zealand, where they have been recorded roosting in native reserves and within pinus radiata stands (under the bark of dead spars, cavities of damaged trees, between the two trunks of double-leaders, within the broken tops of spars, and in tree ferns). At night they fly around roads, skid sites, stand edges, and streams looking for flying insects to eat.



LESSER SHORT-TAILED BAT *MYSTACINA TUBERCULATA*

Short-tailed bats are slightly larger, at 10 - 14 grams.

Distinctively, as well as flying, they crawl around on the forest floor on their folded wings looking for insects, pollen, and nectar to feed on. Short-tailed bats typically inhabit indigenous forest and have been found in plantations adjacent to native forest in the central North Island. They may be present in plantations in other regions where populations exist. They are more likely to fly through the interior of forest stands than along roads and streams.

Most of the time bats are seen flying out of trees when they are being felled, and have also been seen flying out of slash or tree ferns.



To help us better understand our special New Zealand bats, report any observations on www.naturewatch.org.nz website, and (if applicable) to your company's environmental manager.



supported by
forestgrowers
commodity levy



Version dated March 2018

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU FIND A BAT AT WORK

During the day, bats will be in cavities, splits, and under peeling (exfoliating) bark of indigenous and exotic trees, large hollow tree stumps, within hollow tree ferns, and in caves or fractures and joints in rocky bluffs.



If you see any bats in the forest report this to your Environmental Manager or consider entering an observation into www.naturewatch.org.nz



Note the location of the bats and what you were doing, e.g. felling a double leader tree. It is helpful to have this information to build up knowledge of how bats are using forests in different parts of the country.



If you find a bat, stop felling or what you are doing, when it is safe to do so. Then search the immediate area for other bats which may be trapped or injured.



Bats rarely bite and bite injuries are not major. New Zealand bats are not blood-suckers, and they will not attack you or get tangled in your hair.



If it does not appear injured, it will usually be best to move the bat to a safe sheltered, place above ground, out of the area that is being harvested that day, so that it can fly away by itself in the evening. Ideally, under shade, within the same stand of mature trees. Mark the location so that you can check the next day whether the bat has left.



If the bat seems to be injured put it in a cool, quiet, dark place, preferably in a cotton bag. If you don't have a cotton bag, then you might be able to tie up an old t-shirt and pop the bat into it. Wet the corner of the bag by dipping it into some water and hang the bag in a cool, quiet, dark place. Heat makes bats more active and burns through their energy quickly. Wetting the corner of the bag gives them water to drink.



Call your Environmental Manager who will contact the Department of Conservation (DOC; 0800 HOTDOC) to see if they are able, or want, to check the bat. Ask Department of Conservation staff about the next steps they want to be taken. Or call one of the animal hospitals below for advice.



Department of Conservation staff may ask you to take the bat to a vet. Vets usually have little or no experience with bats and may in turn refer you to a wildlife specialist, or they may offer initial assistance via email or telephone.

Bats have previously been treated by:

Massey Wildbase Vet Hospital
<http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/departments/centres-research/wildbase/contact-location.cfm>

Auckland Zoo vets
<https://www.aucklandzoo.co.nz/plan-your-day/vet-hospital>

If a bat needs to be kept for more than one day, refer to the Department of Conservation best practice guidelines for advice on keeping bats in captivity:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/science-and-technical/inventory-monitoring/im-toolbox-bats/im-toolbox-bats-doc-best-practice-manual-of-conservation-techniques-for-bats.pdf>

Vets also do indigenous wildlife work at the South Island Wildlife Hospital and may be able to help.

www.wildlifehospital.co.nz

It is illegal to keep bats as pets and a permit is required from the Department of Conservation to hold bats in captivity.

Contact the FOA for more information
www.nzfoa.org.nz

