



The Mammals of Texas –Bats- Online Edition

This is one of the best sites on Texas Bats. It has been set up by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department working with Texas Tech University.

<http://www.nsr.ttu.edu/TMOT1/ordchiro.htm>



Texas Bat Emergence Viewing Sites

Texas is home to some of the largest Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) colonies in North America. Many of these sites have become popular tourist destinations as the bats emerge in awe-inspiring numbers each summer. Below is a list of all the different places you can see bat emergences in Texas.

- **◆ Bracken Cave**
 - **Type:** Maternity colony; 20 million Mexican free-tailed bats
 - **Note:** Not open to public; open only to BCI members by reservation
 - **Ownership:** Bat Conservation International
 - **Contact:** Andy Moore (512) 327-9721; www.batcon.org
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- **◆ Clarity Tunnel (Caprock Canyons State Park)**
 - **Type:** Non-maternity colony; half million Mexican free-tailed bats.
 - **Note:** This site is located on the Caprock Canyons Trailway. Visitors can ride mountain bikes, hike or horseback to the Tunnel along the Trailway. This is about 10 miles round trip along the old railway.
 - **Ownership:** Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 - **Cost:** \$2 per person (park entry fee)
 - **Reservations:** Reservations are only necessary for special group tours
 - **Hours of Operation:** open year-round
 - **Contact:** Carolyn Rose (interpreter) (806) 455-1492, www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/caprock/
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- **Congress Avenue Bridge**
 - **Type:** Maternity colony; 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats
 - **Ownership:** City of Austin
 - **Cost:** Free
 - **Reservations:** Reservations not taken
 - **Hours of Operation:** Open year-round; BCI interpreters available to answer questions in the summer on Thursdays through Sundays.
 - **Contact:**
 - Free viewing: Austin American-Statesman/Bat Conservation International Bat Hot Line (512) 416-5700 (category 3636)
 - Viewing by tour boat:
 - Capital Cruises (512) 480-9264
www.capitalcruises.com
 - Lone Star Riverboats (512) 327-1388
www.lonestarriverboat.com

- **◆ Devil's Sinkhole SNA**
 - **Type:** Non-maternity colony; 3 million Mexican free-tailed bats
 - **Ownership:** Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 - **Cost:** Adults are \$10; Over 65 are \$8; Kids 4 to 11 are \$6; Kids under 4 are free
 - **Reservations:** Reservations must be made in advance
 - **Hours of Operation:** Visitor's Center open 7 days a week from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Bat-viewing tours and presentations given Wednesdays thru Sundays from April to October by reservation.
 - **Contact:** Devil's Sinkhole Society (830) 683-2287 (-BATS); www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/sinkhole and www.devilssinkholetx.net
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- **◆ Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve**
 - **Type:** Maternity colony; 4 to 6 million Mexican free-tailed bats and 100,000 Cave myotis
 - **Ownership:** The Nature Conservancy of Texas
 - **Cost:** \$5
 - **Reservations:** Reservations not accepted, except for special group tours
 - **Hours of Operation:** Thursdays thru Sundays from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm; mid-May to early October
 - **Contact:** Information Line (325) 347-5970
<http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/texas/preserves/art6022.html>
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- **◆ Frio Bat Cave**
 - **Type:** Maternity colony; 10 million Mexican free-tailed bats and 1,000 to 10,000 Cave myotis
 - **Ownership:** Private landowner
 - **Cost:** Adults are \$10; Kids under 13 are \$5; Kids under 5 are free
 - **Reservations:** Reservations must be made in advance
 - **Hours of Operation:** mid-March through September
 - **Contact:** Bain Walker, Hill Country Adventures (830) 966-2320, www.hillcountryadventures.com

- **◆ Old Tunnel WMA**
 - **Type:** Pseudomaternity colony: where pregnant females roost but do not give birth to young; 1 to 3 million Mexican free-tailed bats and 3,000 Cave myotis
 - **Ownership:** Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 - **Cost:**
 - Lower Viewing Area - Adults are \$5; Seniors are \$3; Kids 6 to 16 are \$2; Kids 5 and under are free
 - Upper Viewing Area - free
 - **Reservations:** Reservations not accepted, except for special group reservations
 - **Hours of Operation:** Upper viewing area open 7 nights a week; Lower Viewing Area open Thursdays thru Sundays from 1 hour before emergence to 10 pm
 - **Contact:** Old Tunnel Information Line 1-866-990-2287 (-BATS), www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wma/find_a_wma/list/?id=17
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- **◆ Stuart Bat Cave (Kickapoo Caverns State Park)**
 - **Type:** Non-maternity colony; half million Mexican free-tailed bats
 - **Ownership:** Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 - **Cost:** \$5 per person
 - **Reservations:** Reservations must be made in advance
 - **Hours of Operation:** Various, call park for details
 - **Contact:** Mike Knezek (Manager) or Randy Rosales (Assistant Manager) (830) 563-2342, www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/kickapoo

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- **◆ Waugh Drive Bridge- Houston**
 - **Type:** Colony of at least half million Mexican free-tailed bats
 - **Ownership:** City of Houston
 - **Cost:** Free
 - **Reservations:** no reservations are necessary
 - **Hours of Operation:** Open year-round; Houston Bat Team interpreters available to answer questions on the third Friday of every month
 - **Contact:** Diana Foss, TPWD Urban Biologist- Houston 281-456-7029 or check the Buffalo Bayou Partnership website at www.buffalobayou.org



Texas Bats Come Home to Roost (February, 1931)



Texas Bats Come Home to Roost

IN THE vicinity of San Antonio, Texas, is a string of bat roosts, built by the municipal authorities to house the myriads of bats that formerly lived in caves in the vicinity. These bat roosts are peculiarly shaped houses, looking like the cut off steeple of a country church, or like some of the old fashioned square wooden farm silos in the middle west. On one side is a wing-shaped ventilator.

Bats are found all over Texas and the southwest, in huge cave colonies. They come flying out in clouds at twilight to range far over the country, returning at the first flush of dawn to the caves. Instead of being dangerous, as many people believe, bats are not only harmless but benefactors of mankind, for they feed on the vast swarms of mosquitoes that infest not only the swampy places and marshy lakes near San Antonio, but other marshy spots, from the equator to the north of Alaska, and all over the world.

The San Antonio bat roosts are protected by a municipal law.



These 40-foot bat roosts are protected by law.

