

## Bats

**Note – bats are very beneficial animals to have around. They eat vast quantities of night flying insects such as moths, beetles, mosquitoes, termites and flies. Most concerns about bats are due to misconceptions.**

### **Issue – Rabies!**

#### **Information –**

- ▶ Rabies has not been reported in bats on the San Juans, and is rare on the adjacent mainland.
- ▶ Even in areas where rabies occurs in bats, it is only found in a tiny percentage of the population and is almost always transmitted to humans by a bite (not just being in the same area as bats), or to a cat or dog if they eat a sick bat.
- ▶ Bats are only likely to bite if they are handled.

### **Issue – bats living in the attic**

#### **Suggestions –**

- ▶ Consider allowing the bats to stay. They are not rodents, so don't cause damage by gnawing, and their droppings are mainly dried insect parts, so are not as smelly as mouse poop. Many people have bats living in their house for years without noticing!
  - ▶ Hang up bat boxes in the area as alternative accommodation for the bats. (Designs for bat boxes can be found at [www.eparks.org/wildlife\\_protection/wildlife\\_facts/bats/bat\\_house.asp](http://www.eparks.org/wildlife_protection/wildlife_facts/bats/bat_house.asp).)
  - ▶ Be sure there are actually bats in the attic – not other animals. Bats will emit squeaks, clicks, and quiet chatter. If scratches and thumps are heard, another type of animal is in the attic
  - ▶ Humanely exclude the bats – This should not be done during breeding season (~mid May to mid August) when youngsters in the roost would die if mothers were excluded. Detailed instructions on how to safely exclude bats can be found on the web sites of a number of bat conservation groups including Bat Conservation International. <http://www.batcon.org>.
- Bat exclusion devices and repellents can be found at <http://www.nixalite.com/batcone.aspx> and <http://www.nixalite.com/bataway.aspx>.
- In the San Juans contact Kwiaht's Bat Survey program at [lopezbats@yahoo.com](mailto:lopezbats@yahoo.com) for information on local bats and help with bat exclusion.

