



BatBox

A way to control mosquitoes

from The Main Ridge Mens Shed

Bats are important consumers of nocturnal insects. Micro bats which are only 50mm long can devour up to 1000 mosquitoes per hour and sometimes roost in extremely small spaces. Where hollows are not readily available you can encourage their presence by providing a bat roost box.

There are about nine species of bats and they are all insectivorous and they all use trees for shelter. However different species find shelter in different places within trees. There are two basic types; those that use hollows at the end of branches or in trunks and those that use crevices. The latter includes species that live under strips of bark shedding from dead trees and, often, under paperbark. The bats that use holes may adopt nest boxes.

Many of these bats fly in relatively open spaces in woodlands, along roads or over the tree tops. The nest boxes should be placed fairly high up and where flight is uninterrupted; maybe on the trunk of a tall tree but avoid exposure to the hot sun. Others fly in or near dense undergrowth so the boxes should be placed near thickets. They need not be much more than a couple of metres off the ground so long as access is easy for a flying bat. Again avoid exposure to hot summer sun although the low winter sun can be advantageous.

Do not open the box when it is occupied by bats. Watch at dusk for their exit.