

# Northern Long Eared Bat

NLEB04142023

**Identification:** A medium sized bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) with a body length of 3 to 3.75 inches and a wingspan of 9 to 10 inches. The bats fur is dark to medium brown on the back and pale to tawny on the underside. This species of bat is easily distinguished from other species of *Myotis* by its long ears. During the winter these bats hibernate in caves and mines, called hibernacula. The hibernacula have constant temperature, high humidity, and no air currents. The bats hibernate in small crevices and cracks. During the summer, these bats roost singly or in colonies. They roost under the bark of trees, in cavities, or in crevices of live or dead trees. They will also roost in caves or mines during the summer. It is uncommon for this species of bat to roost in human structures.



**Importance:** The northern long-eared bat is [federally listed](#) as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. Endangered species are species that are in danger of becoming extinct. The northern long-eared bat had been listed as a threatened species until uplisting to endangered status in March, 2023.

**White-nose Syndrome:** Northern long-eared bat populations have declined sharply, up to 99%, across a large portion of its range. The decline is being caused by white-nose syndrome, a disease caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* which affects hibernating bats. The disease is named for the white fungus that appears on the muzzle and other parts of the bat. The fungus has caused significant mortality and was first documented in New York in 2006. Currently, it has spread west as far as Missouri and spread south to Mississippi and Alabama. Alabama has twelve counties with infected hibernacula as far south as Bibb County. White-nose syndrome causes bats to behave strangely during the winter months, they will fly out during the middle of the day or cluster at the entrance of the cave/mine. The disease is known to have killed millions of bats in the United States and Canada. White-nose syndrome has been confirmed in the following species of bats: Big brown bat, Eastern small-footed bat, Gray bat (endangered), Indiana bat (endangered), Little brown bat, Northern long-eared bat (threatened), and the Tri-colored bat.

**Forestry Considerations:** Monoculture pine stands are generally characterized as poor bat habitat but protecting hibernacula and maternity roost sites within plantations is very important. If roosting bats are found during harvest or site clearing activities, protect the tree and area around it until a determination of the bat species is made. Areas containing northern long-eared bat roost sites should be managed to ensure an adequate number of roost trees, and sufficient wooded area within the bat's home range to support the colony. Northern long-eared bats can be adversely affected by forestry operations if their roost sites are disturbed or if wooded corridors that provide them with cover on nightly flights between roosting and feeding sites are removed. Protect hibernacula that are inhabited by bats and leave a buffer of undisturbed vegetation around the entrance. Wooded corridors between roost sites and feeding areas should also be protected. The use of herbicides and insecticides in areas adjacent to foraging and roost sites should be carefully controlled and monitored for unanticipated adverse effects. Consult with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources if forestry operations are planned within 0.25 miles of a known hibernaculum.

**Distribution by County:** Lauderdale, Limestone, Madison, Jackson, Colbert, Lawrence, Morgan, Marshall, DeKalb, Franklin, Marion, Winston, Cullman, Blount, Etowah, Cherokee, Lamar, Fayette, Walker, Jefferson, St. Clair, Calhoun, Cleburne, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, Shelby, Talladega, Clay, Randolph, Sumter, Greene, Hale, Bibb

**Counties with Hibernacula where the Fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* has been Found or White-nose Syndrome has been Confirmed:** Bibb, Blount, Calhoun, Colbert, DeKalb, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, Morgan, Shelby

Additional information is available online at: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/>



**This information has been provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission.**

For more information please visit: [www.forestry.alabama.gov](http://www.forestry.alabama.gov)