

### What is White-nose Syndrome (WNS)?

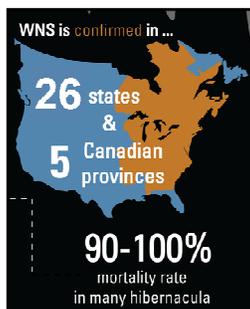
- ◆ A disease that affects cave- and mine-dwelling bats during winter hibernation
- ◆ Named for white fungal growth on the nose and other skin tissue of hibernating bats
- ◆ Disrupts bats' hibernation causing them to use up stored fat needed to survive winter

### Where is WNS?

- ◆ First documented in New York in 2006; as of summer 2015 it has spread to 26 states and 5 Canadian provinces
- ◆ First detected in Indiana in 2011; as of summer 2015 it has spread to at least 38 caves in 11 southern counties

### What are the signs of WNS in winter?

- ◆ White fungal growth on a hibernating bat's nose, wings, ears, or tail membrane
- ◆ Bats flying in daytime and/or becoming unusually active in cold temperatures
- ◆ Dead or dying bats on the ground or hanging on buildings, trees, or other structures



### What should you do if you encounter a dead or sick bat?

- ◆ **Do not attempt to handle a live bat.** Call your local animal control agent for help.
- ◆ **Never handle a bat with your bare hands.** If you must touch a dead bat, wear heavy leather gloves for protection.
- ◆ **Consult your local health department immediately if:** you are bitten by a bat, you handle a bat with your bare hands, or a bat is found in the same room with someone who was unaware (e.g., a child or someone sleeping).
- ◆ **Photograph the bat if you can do so safely,** for species identification, and email it to the DNR at: [dfw@dnr.in.gov](mailto:dfw@dnr.in.gov)
- ◆ **If you are directed to dispose of a dead bat,** use a trowel or other tool to scoop it into a plastic bag. Place the bagged bat into another plastic bag, close it securely, spray with disinfectant, and dispose of it in your trash.
- ◆ **Complete an online "Dead/Sick Bat" report** with the DNR at: [www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/6386.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/6386.htm)

### Is WNS a risk to human health?

- ◆ There is no scientific evidence that humans can contract WNS
- ◆ Bats affected with WNS may be debilitated, increasing the chance for humans or pets to encounter bats in winter

### Why should you care and what can you do to help bats?

- ◆ WNS is estimated to have caused the death of approximately 6 million bats across eastern North America
- ◆ Bats are an essential, beneficial part of a healthy ecosystem. All bats in Indiana eat insects; they help control insect populations, many of which are harmful agricultural and forest pests
- ◆ Do not disturb bats during hibernation, and reduce disturbance to natural bat habitats around your home