

JUNE 2020 MOP-BAT INTERACTIONS

NOTE: in each of the cases outlined below, the bat rehabilitator advised the finders to contact his/her local health department and their personal physician to see if post-exposure rabies vaccinations are warranted.

Rabies suspect bat handled bare-handed by MOP

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A MOP found a young adult eastern red bat on the ground and contacted a nearby bat rehabilitator. There were no injuries noted when the bat arrived at the bat rehabilitator's facility. When questioned by the bat rehabilitator, the MOP stated she had not been bitten or handled the bat barehanded.

The next morning the bat was lethargic and had bitten itself to the point of breaking bones. The MOP, meanwhile, sent the photo on the right. The bat was euthanized as suspect for rabies, submitted for testing with results pending. The bat rehabilitator has provided information on the MOP to the health department.



Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A bat was rescued by a member of the public by after he was discovered with a torn wing membrane. After not being able to find help in CT due to the restrictions placed on rescuers in that state, the finder reached out to us after several weeks of having the bat in care requesting information on how to release the bat.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A Seminole pup was found by a MOP. The woman showed it to her children, photographed herself holding it barehanded and posted to FB. At midnight, she finally contacted a local rehabilitator who advised her not to handle the bat at all and to not feed it anything. The woman then admitted she had fed the pup canned whipped topping every two hours throughout the day, but had not been bitten. Despite being told to stop touching the bat, when the rehabilitator arrived, the woman stated she gave the bat water every two hours.



Wildlife Rehabilitator statement:

Received from MOP: I received a call about a bat pup that was found on the second floor of a home that was having some construction done. The finder told me there were bats in the attic so I advised to try and place the bat pup there in hopes of reuniting. I also explained that due to current restrictions we could not take in bats for rehab and that reuniting was our best and really only option. Reuniting unfortunately did not work and the finder had grown attached to this bat pup and reached out to tell me the following:

"I just wanted to give you an update. No bats have come for him so far. I gave him the electrolytes and that helped but he was extremely weak this am. He is fighting for his life so i will too. While i realize you are probably not allowed to advise public on any of what I'm doing i wanted to share this with you in hopes that if i can keep him alive and well maybe when the covid ban you are on is lifted you could help me place him in a rehab somewhere? I am willing to drive him and fund his care. I am amazed at his resilience and I'm just not willing to give up on him."

The message was then followed by a photo of the finder holding the bat pup on a towel with no gloves or other PPE.

Does anybody know a good rescue/ rehabilitation center in northeast Alabama? My in-laws found this poor baby boxed up in a parking lot and I'm doing the best I can but I'm far from a trained, experienced professional. When we opened the box he took a second to try to back away then he crawled to my lap and climbed my shirt!



Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A homeowner in DE found a grounded and severely injured bat in his back yard. He was unable to find help due to the restrictions placed on rescuers in their state so he attempted to care for the bat himself. On the second day of care the bat went rapidly downhill so the finder contacted us asking what he could do. Unfortunately the bat passed away during our phone call.



Received this in my inbox today, sender asked to remain anonymous. Sending out love to all who are trying to help these babies!

Message:

A good friend of mine found a mother bat who had been killed by a cat. Attached to her was a tiny baby about the size of a tootsie roll. We searched for someone to help get her ready to release to no avail so she has been very much loved for a month and it looks like she's going to be too bonded to be released. She loves her human!!

When we called the "rescue" we were told to call animal control!! Well, we all know what that means so that's NOT an option. I'm not comfortable with posting but would you mind sharing info? She's really precious and deserves to live!!



Wildlife Rehabilitator statement:

Red bat pup found, no help so public fed goats milk and mealworms. Had the bat for three weeks and eventually released it after she discovered it could fly.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A MOP found a red bat pup and could find no help in DE. She brought it home and tried to feed him earthworms "he didn't seem to like that very much I tried canned dog food pedigree. I put a tiny bit on the end of a chopstick and he loved it! He licked it like an ice cream cone with his tiny tongue- it was soo cute! So since last night I've been giving him some of that every 3 hours. This morning I mixed goat milk and the dog food and sucked it up in a small syringe and he at 2 syringe fulls. ... He's now eating meal worms and drinking mostly water now. He knows my smell and climbing on my hand to eat-upside down. He's pooping good on his own too".

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A family in ME found a red bat with fish hook in her tail and they rescued her using gloves. They were unable to find help so they cared for the bat themselves. A few days after being rescued the bat gave birth to triplets, The bat healed well and the babies were trying to fly, so the family contacted us on the safest way to release the bats.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

Someone found a bat, looked online and determined it was a baby fruit bat. Took care of it for two days, gave it a bath and let the children handle it before letting it go. They contacted us wanting to know what kind of bat it was, it was a free-tail. We recommended they get rabies vaccinations.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

From a member of the public— “There is no way that I could let her die. One of the contacts in Kansas who supposedly are a rescue said to let nature take its course. The other said to call animal control!! At one point I was concerned that she was too humanized to be released but a cage is no life for her and I most certainly can’t keep a bat. She’s starting to fly from my hand to my arm. I bought her a bat box but I am concerned that I don’t have the space or set up to get her flying and I have no idea how to get her hunting. She is eating ground dried mealworms with goats milk (50/50 mix). We don’t have mealworms in my area. The closest pet store is 45 min away but I intend to go get her some on Sunday.”



Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A MOP contacted a rehabilitator after her neighbor found an orphaned eastern red bat in her yard. The neighbor did not recognize it as a bat and didn't know what else to do, so called the MOP for help. When the MOP arrived the neighbor was dousing the pup with beer. The MOP then took the bat home and fed it kitten milk replacer every two hours for the remainder of the day "to flush the beer out" before contacting a rehabilitator for assistance.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

MOP: “A friend in CT found a mother bat who had been killed by a cat. The baby was attached to her mother. We have been caring for her while trying to find someplace to take her but had no luck. When I called the “rescue” and told them about her they said they could not take her and to Animal Control to have her put to sleep!! That is NOT an option!! We searched for someone to help get her ready and she is now ready to release!! She’s really precious and deserves to live free.”

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

MOP: “Hi. I’m attempting to reunite baby bat in attic with her colony but bat is still in attic by herself. Any additional tips? It’s been at least 12 hours without food/water! I tried to reach a local bat rehab and no one in KS will help me and this poor baby. I am getting ready to feed her goatsmilk and raise her myself but and I could really use some tips.”

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

MOP: “A woman found a bat in the playground but no rehabbers are able to help. She took it home and tried to put it into a bird house so that it could fly away that night. The next morning the bat was on the ground. She took it back inside and gave it Gatorade and said she would keep trying to release it.” The rehabilitator advised the woman to contact her local health department and her personal physician to see if post-exposure rabies vaccinations were needed.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

MOP: "I live in NH. I've reached out to 5+ rehabbers or wildlife professionals so to speak in NH and VT. I hear the word illegal repeatedly. "Because of Covid it's illegal for me to take them" "it's illegal for me to give you any advice because you're not licensed" "it's illegal for me to take them because you live in NH, I live in VT". Every one of these people I find to be somewhat dismissive, bothered, arrogant or irritated by my questions and desire to do something for these baby bats. They can't/won't help me. Nobody has said the actual words "toss them out the back door and call it a day" but that's the message I'm getting. I've somewhat founded my own underground bat society. I and they are illegally caring for these orphans. Of the seventeen I've found only four lives are unaccounted for. I was told by a so called 'bat expert' to leave the pups outdoors at night and the mothers would come get them. Four have 'disappeared' overnight because I followed this suggestion. I later was told by another 'bat expert' that the mothers are too small to carry the pups and that they would not come get them. I've been told by several people to spray-foam any opening so they stop falling through and the mother will come get them. I refuse to do this. I do not trust this is true. I want to drop a rope down from above (someone else needs to do this, not ME, the several chimney/masonry people I've left messages for haven't called me back) in the hopes the pups crawl back up or perhaps mother comes down for them. I have no idea if this will work, just sharing my theory. I want to wait until September to seal off anything, cover the chimney opening with wire mesh and install a one-way door.

It's been a disappointing experience seeking help/education regarding my dire situation. It doesn't seem like the people who are licensed truly care or are truly willing to help find a solution. It's exhausting and disappointing. I have friends helping me care for the 17 babies I have rescued so far."

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

I received this from the someone who had found a bat in April. "hi, I found a very small bat on my front porch floor. it was around 6pm and it's kind of cool outside. I dont know anything about bats, but I nudged it with my shoe, thinking it was a small brown mouse, but it moved its wings. I scooped it up using a box lid, and it is now in a box, as I didn't want my cat to get it. I wonder if its sick? I looked at its face and there is no foaming or white fungus, as i had read about online... I've been feeding it watermelon which it really seems to like. No one can help me. I want to let it go but I dont want it to die.



My friend I met today, we think he was bothered by a cat, we named him Bateo. he was very content sitting in my hands.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

Received this email. "My coworker found a bat in his basement. They were going to kill it. I begged them to let me come catch it. I can't release it right now because I think it's a baby. No one here is taking bats. What can I do to keep it alive. I offered it some mealworms (none eaten yet) and I syringed it some water. I know I can keep it alive is someone will help me."

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

This big free-tailed bat was found in a department store. The worker took the bat home and tried to take care of it for a week. She contacted me for help on the same day that the bat died.



Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

MOP: "I'm trying to find any help I can. Ive found a bat on a sidewalk. It wasn't moving so I assumed it was dead and was going to try to move it off the sidewalk into the trees or something. Well it was alive. I picked it up and held it as to warm it up and it started moving more and is moving quite a bit now that its warm and has had water and food..mealworms. The thing is, its wing is broken. You can clearly see the bone sticking out. I've had it for a week thinking it would get well. That's not possible anymore. I'm at a loss of what to do, I know it won't be able to fly so putting it outside will surely mean death but I also can't keep it as a pet. There's also no place around here that will take it in because of covid. Any advice would be very helpful. Thank you."

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A homeowner found a bat on a sticky trap. After being unable to find a rescuer to help in CT, the homeowner used gloves and vegetable oil to remove the bat, and then bathed the bat until most of the oil was gone. She reported that after two days in care the bat was rested the bat had flown safely away. The rehabilitator advised the woman to contact her local health department and her personal physician to see if post-exposure rabies vaccinations were advisable.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

MOP: "I have bats roosting and nesting in my barn. A baby bat fell from the nesting loft yesterday. Using protective gloves, I returned it to the nest. The next day I found it on the ground again. I am trying to find a wildlife rescue to assist me but no one will help me in Virginia. Using protective gloves, I am feeding the alert baby and keeping it warm until I can find a professional wildlife caretaker. I think it is a Brown bat baby. Please let me know if you have advise on how to proceed from this point."

Wildlife rehabilitator statement

A Covid-19 positive individual in quarantine found a bat in his yard. After calling local rehabilitators and finding no help due to the recent restrictions on bat rehabilitation in PA, this individual then put the bat into a tree. If, in fact, bats are able to contract the virus, restrictions on bat rehabilitation actually creates the very problem that we want to avoid, namely, exposing large numbers of bats to yet another potentially lethal disease.

Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

An individual found a bat on his boat and reached out to a bat rehabilitator in Washington state. The rehabilitator instructed the finder to place the bat into a tree. This individual instead took the bat to a veterinarian. So, rather than the bat being exposed to only the finder and the rehabilitator, the bat was instead exposed to the veterinarian, the clinic staff and clients who were at the clinic with their pets.

She said they aren't allowed to rehab bats because of covid so her advice was to take it to a vet and see if they would put it down.

So anyway, can little brown bats eat mealworms?

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Wildlife rehabilitator statement:

A man in an urban area who had a downed adult bat that could not fly. Despite everything I told this man to do and to not do, he repeatedly handled the bat, tried it to get it to fly by tossing it in the air, had an employee climb a ladder and place the bat in a bat box from which the bat immediately fell. So besides repeatedly handling a clearly sick or injured bat, he was also feeding a feral cat colony in the area. Unvaccinated cats potentially coming into contact with a possibly rabid bat.

It took me three days, and countless phone calls and texts to finally convince the man to contact his local ACO. Unfortunately this incident happened at the height of the pandemic in our area so going to his address, even if I had had it, was not advisable given vulnerable family members in my home. I called a number of veterinarians in the area and not one would take the bat in for examination or euthanasia. It was a horrendous situation that could have exposed both people feral cats in an urban environment to rabies.

Additional individuals attempting to care for bats on their own. Photos posted online June 2020.



