



Bat World Sanctuary Position Statement On the Reproduction of Captive Bats

It is the position of Bat World Sanctuary (BWS) that non-releasable male captive bats should be neutered to prevent reproduction. The only exception should be an accredited facility engaged in a regulated, bona-fide breeding program involving endangered species intended for release.

Breeding is discouraged for the following reasons:

- Breeding can result in undue aggression and increased mortality affecting both adults and infants
- Depending on the species, overpopulation can take place resulting in the culling of unwanted bats by unscrupulous zoos and other facilities
- Overpopulation also results in unwanted bats being disposed of via research, exotic pet trade dealers and ill-equipped private individuals
- Captive mother bats may abandon pups due to the stress of a captive environment, requiring the hand-rearing of the pup which often does not survive

BWS Policy

Male bats: All male bats that cannot be released back to the wild are neutered to prevent reproduction. If a male bat is born in captivity and indigenous and releasable, after he is weaned he is set free in a safe location where known bat colonies exist. If the pup is male and is *not* releasable or non-indigenous, he is neutered after he is weaned and before he becomes sexually active. He is then placed in with the other non-releasable sanctuary bats.

Females: Occasionally we rescue pregnant females who give birth in captivity. If a non-indigenous or non-releasable female bat is rescued while she is pregnant she is allowed to give birth and raise her pup naturally. If the pup is male, he is neutered or released as described above for both indigenous and non-indigenous. Non-pregnant female bats are not spayed due to the likelihood of not surviving the procedure.

BWS Intake

The fruit bats in our care usually come from places where they were over-crowded, under-nourished, abused or neglected.

Males: If the intake is a single male, a male orphan, or a bat recovering from injuries, he will be kept in our clinic or quarantine flight enclosure until he is healthy enough to be neutered (neutering a bat before the stress of the transfer has diminished can cost the bat its life). Once he is neutered he is placed in the flight enclosure with the general fruit bat population.

Females: Because bats are extremely social animals it is always in their best interest to place them with their own kind as soon as possible. Non injured or compromised females are placed in general population immediately. Any bat that requires intervention, special needs, or a quieter environment is placed in the clinic until such time as he/she can be released into general population.

BWS Procedure:

As soon as nonreleasable male bats have acclimated and are no longer stressed, they are transported to our local veterinarian for neutering by our Lead Bat Caregiver, who assists the doctor during the procedure. When the anesthetic wears off, the bats are transported back to Bat World Sanctuary and placed with the general population, which quickly eases any stress the bat may be feeling.