



Take A Peek!

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White Nose-Syndrome

A Million Bats and Counting

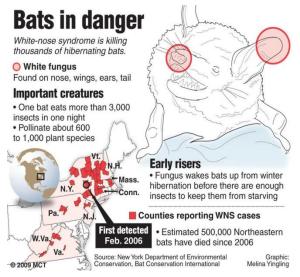
In the past five years the night skies have become a more empty place. Although many nocturnal animals can still be heard rustling in the midnight, there is one animal that has declined in the forest.

This mammal belongs to the Chiroptera family, but we know it as the modern day bat. Since 2006, over

1 million bats have disappeared from caves, mines, and other wildlife habitats. So, the question to be asked is why are nature's little sonar units vanishing at such alarming rates?

In February 2006, the New York State

Department of Environmental Conservation
studied the dropping numbers of the area's bat
population. After further analysis researchers
noticed an odd white fungus that proved to be
the culprit. The white fungus, white-nose
syndrome, is a disease that attacks a bat's
exposed tissues of the mouth, wings, and ears.
Once a bat is exposed to the white-nose
syndrome it is possible that it can spread the
disease to many other bordering colonies.



Statistics of White-Nose Syndrome

There are currently several bat species such as the little brown bat, big brown bat, northern long-eared bat and the gray bat that have been severely impacted by the white-nose syndrome. Biologists believe that if the disease spreads into the Western United States, there will be twenty-five additional species that will be threatened. If these species are lost we will see a devastating impact on the world's natural resources.

Bats tiny enough to fit inside a teacup use their gigantic appetites to help the plants and trees you see at Russell Cave. After dusk bats emerge from their homes and swoop into the dense forest and surrounding fields looking for juicy insects. While bats are gobbling up a mouth full of appetizers, they incidentally brush against several plants; pollinating many plants in which they come into contact.

Although many people do not look at bats as being pollinators on the level as birds and butterflies, bats pollinate plants that we use in today's world. If we lose the bat population many fruits, such as mangos, agaves, and bananas, will not exist for our enjoyment. As you can see bats contribute a lot to the health

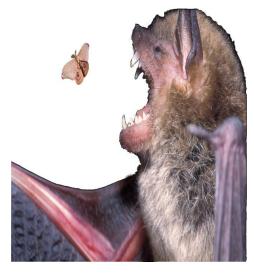
and well-being of humans and our surroundings.

This is why they can be considered a superhero.

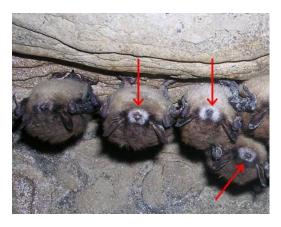
Many superheroes battle crime with lightning speeds or supernatural strength but bats use not only their ability to pollinate but their hefty appetites as their super power in order to help the environment. They do this by eating harmful crop pests such as aphids and beetles. A single little brown bat can swallow a bat-sized lunchbox full of scrumptious creepy-crawlies, or 8,000 insects in one night. That would be like sitting at the dinner table watching your parents eat a hundred pounds of food in one night! Bats may seem like greedy little gluttons but their positive impact helps humans. This is why it is important to save the remaining bat populations.

Due to the white-nose syndrome many bats have disappeared at alarming rates. Some scientists believe that people may cause the spread of white-nose syndrome, while others believe it may be a natural process. Until we figure out what is devastating these dark sky creatures we have to do our part to inform people that bats are our friends, educate the youth on how they help

the environment, and take the right initiative to save our furry companions.



Big Brown Bat With Prey



Colony of Bats With White-Nosed Syndrome

Information and Services



Hiking Trails

Russell Cave has two distinct trails that visitors can access during park hours. The scenic hiking trail us perfect for bird watching or just staying in touch with nature. The nature trail is a rustic short walk that connects visitors with the tranquility of nature.



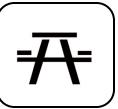
Pets

Pets must be leashed and under control; you are required to clean up after your pet. Pets are not permitted inside the museum.



Gilbert H, Grosvenor Museum

Open daily except Thanksgiving (November 24), Christmas (December 25), and New Year's Day (January 1) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST. Information, interpretive programs, museum, publications, restrooms films, and lost-and-found services are available here. Admission into the park is free.



Picnic Area

There are three designated picnic areas for visitors to enjoy year around.



Phone: 1-(256)-495-2672 **Fax:** 1-(256)495-9220

Mailing Address:

Russell Cave National Monument County Road 98 Bridgeport, AL 35740

Web:

Website: www.nps.gov/ruca

Facebook: Facebook.com/Russell

CaveNationalMonument

Park Facts

Established

On May 11th 1961, John F. Kennedy declared Russell Cave the only National Monument in the state of Alabama.

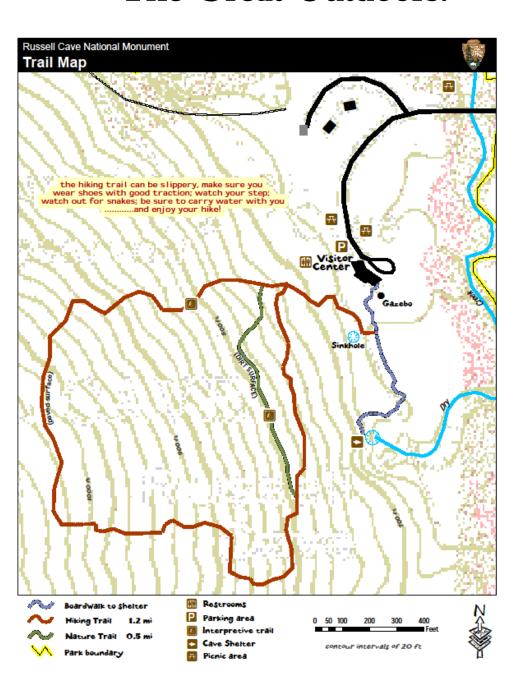
Cultural Significance

Russell Cave has one of the most complete archeological records of prehistoric history, which dates back to 10,000 B.C.

Natural Significance

Russell Cave National Monument has over 115 species of birds including: great horned owls, redtailed hawks, and cardinals.

The Great Outdoors!





SCAN THIS QR CODE AND TAKE THIS TRAIL MAP WITH YOU! Russell Cave National Monument has two unforgettable trails that help visitors get a little closer to peace and serenity. Each step into the deciduous forest can take visitors into a world of colorful ruby throated hummingbirds, trees that tower into the canopy and a vibrant assortment of wildflowers that scatter the mountain side.









Upcoming Events:

FEBRUARY

- 2/10/2012 Starry Nights at 5:00 PM
- 2/17/2012 Starry Nights at 5:00 PM

MARCH

- 3/10/2012 Smokey Bear at 10:00 AM
- 3/17/2012 Indians in the Civil War at 11:00 AM (Presented by Stones River)
- 3/31/2012 Prehistoric Climate Change at 1:00 PM (Presented by Dr. Richard Clemons)

APRIL

- 4/13/2012 Walk on the Wild Side Wildflower Walk at 10:00 AM
- 4/21/2012 Scale Back Alabama Walk
- 4/28/2012 Jr. Ranger Day Wildlife Program at 11:00 AM(Presented by Chattanooga Zoo)

MAY

- 5/5/2012 Primitive Olympics 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- 5/6/2012 Native Plants day 10:00
 AM 4:00 PM (Birds of Prey at 2:00
 PM Presented by SOAR)
- 5/19/2012 Prehistoric Plants at 10:00 AM (Presented by Candice Hollenbach)



• 5/19/2012 Primitive Cooking at 11:00 AM

JULY

• 7/7/2012 Three Sisters Plants at 11:00 (Presented by botanical Gardens)

AUGUST

• 8/18/2012 Indians in the Civil War at 1:00 PM (Presented by Stones River)

SEPTEMBER

 9/15/2012 Reptile Program at 2:00 Pm (Presented by Becky Tucker)

NOVEMBER

• 11/24/2012 Primitive Cooking Demonstration at 10:00 AM