



Bat Inventory of Pinnacles National Monument

The Question: What bat species are present at Pinnacles National Monument? Are any sensitive species present?

Bats are economically and ecologically important animals providing ecosystem services such as pollination and insect predation. Most bat species are difficult to study in the wild because of their nocturnal foraging and cryptic, inaccessible roost sites. On average, bat populations are believed to be declining. Most species have very low reproductive rates (e.g. one offspring per year) making recovery a very slow process. Many are also constrained by a limited number of specific roosting sites for a large number of individuals in a population. The causes of the declines are likely due to direct and indirect human impacts, primarily through destruction of foraging and roosting sites. Forty-five species of bats are found in the United States and the central coast of California is known to support 17 species from two families (*Vespertilionidae* and *Molossidae*). Nine of the 17 species have special status and all are insectivorous.

Since Pinnacles National Monument (PINN) provides important and unique habitat for bats, baseline information on populations is critical to management needs. The talus caves of Pinnacles were formed when steep, narrow canyons filled with rocks and boulders from the cliffs above and were supported in place by rocks and sand. These features are seen within the park at the Bear Gulch caves and the Balconies Caves.

The Project: To use multiple surveys for bat inventory at PINN.

To characterize the diversity of bat species at Pinnacles National Monument, researchers used multiple survey techniques, including acoustic sampling, mist-nets, and roost sampling from August 2004 through July 2005. Each method had inherent biases and different detection likelihood for each bat species.

Acoustic sampling involved the use of an AnaBat II Detector System to detect the ultrasonic echolocation calls and convert the signals into graphs on a computer. The graph of each call is unique and can often be used to determine the species based on the frequency, call shape, call duration and time intervals. Acoustic sampling was conducted at eight sites within PINN and operated between 7:30 pm and 6:30 am. This method detected 11 of the 17 bats expected to be area.

Mist-nets similar to those used to capture birds were set over water, trails and other known flyways. After capture in the mist-net, the bats were handled to collect data on the reproductive condition, sex, age and body measurements. Bats were immediately released on-site once the data were collected.

Roost sampling was also used to inventory bats. An abandoned mine in Frog Canyon was surveyed to determine if it was being used as a roost site by the local bat species. The Bear Gulch caves have also been well documented for bat use in previous studies.



The AnaBat II Detector System was used to record ultrasonic echolocation calls of bats at Pinnacles National Monument.

Titley Electronics, Australia.
<http://www.titley.com.au/tanabat.htm>

The Results: A total of 13 of species have been documented at PINN. Seven species have special status. An additional three species are likely to occur but were not positively identified during the inventory. Species were detected throughout the year, with reproductive populations present during the summer months. Species were observed foraging in riparian habitats and roosting in cave features.

Scientific name	Common name	Special Status	Method of detection
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	Little brown myotis	-----	***
<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>	Yuma myotis	-----	Ac, Mn, V
<i>Myotis evotis</i>	Western long-eared myotis	FS, BLM	AC
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	Fringed myotis	FS, BLM, WBWG	AC, Mn
<i>Myotis volans</i>	Long-legged myotis	-----	***
<i>Myotis californicus</i>	California myotis	-----	Ac, Mn, V
<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>	Western small-footed myotis	FS, BLM	Mn
<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	Silver-haired bat	-----	***
<i>Pipistrellus hesperus</i>	Western pipistrelle	-----	Ac, Mn, V
<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	Big brown bat	-----	Ac, Mn, V
<i>Lasiurus blossevillii</i>	Western red bat	FS, WBWG	Ac, Mn
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	Hoary bat	-----	Ac, Mn
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	FSC, CDFG, FS, BLM, WBWG	Ac, Mn, V
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Pallid bat	CDFG, FS, CLM, WBWG	Ac, Mn, V
<i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>	Mexican free-tailed bat	-----	Mn, V
<i>Eumops perotus</i>	Western mastiff bat	FSC, CDFG, BLM, WBWG	Ac, V

Table of bat species occurring or presumed to occur at Pinnacles National Monument.

Special Status Codes: FSC = Federal Special Concern species; CDFG = California Department of Fish and Game's California Special Concern species; FS = Forest Service Sensitive species; BLM = Bureau of Land Management Sensitive species; and WBWG = Western Bat Working Group High Priority species.

Method of detection codes: Ac = Acoustic detection; Mn = Mist net capture; V = Visual detection; and *** = not detected but presence possible.

Additional Resources

San Francisco Bay Area Inventory and Monitoring Program: <http://www1.nature.nps.gov/im/units/sfan/index.htm>

USGS Western Ecological Research Center: <http://www.werc.ugsg.gov/bats>

For More Information

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