

# Bats and Bridges

Mark J. Bloschock P.E.

Texas Department of  
Transportation

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## Things to Accomplish Today:

- ✓ Intro to Bridges
- ✓ Bats 101
- ✓ Wildlife/Bridge Interaction Issues
- ✓ Questions and Answers



## Bat Facts

- ✓ Bats occur worldwide
- ✓ Bats play key roles in the balance of nature
- ✓ Bats are primary predators of insects that fly at night

## Bat Facts

- ✓ Nearly 4,000 Species mammals on earth
- ✓ Almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  are bats
- ✓ Many are in decline or endangered

## Bat Facts

- ✓ U.S.: 47 Species of bats
- ✓ Texas: 33 Species
  - 30 Insectivorous
  - 2 Nectarivorous
- ✓  $\frac{1}{2}$  U.S. Species are reported to roost in bridges

## Bat Facts

- ✓ Bats are **NOT** blind
- ✓ Bats do **NOT** get tangled in your hair
- ✓ Seldom transmit diseases to other animals or humans

## Bats are also beneficial as:

- ✓ Sources of guano
- ✓ Pollinators of flowers
- ✓ Transplanters of seeds
- ✓ Biomedical research

## Where do bats live?

- ✓ Caves and sinkholes
- ✓ Trees
- ✓ Snags
- ✓ Cliffs

## Where do bats live?

- ✓ Mines
- ✓ Parking Garages
- ✓ Stadiums
- ✓ Bridges and Culverts

**Texas Department of Transportation**



# Bats and Bridges Study



**Bat Conservation International**

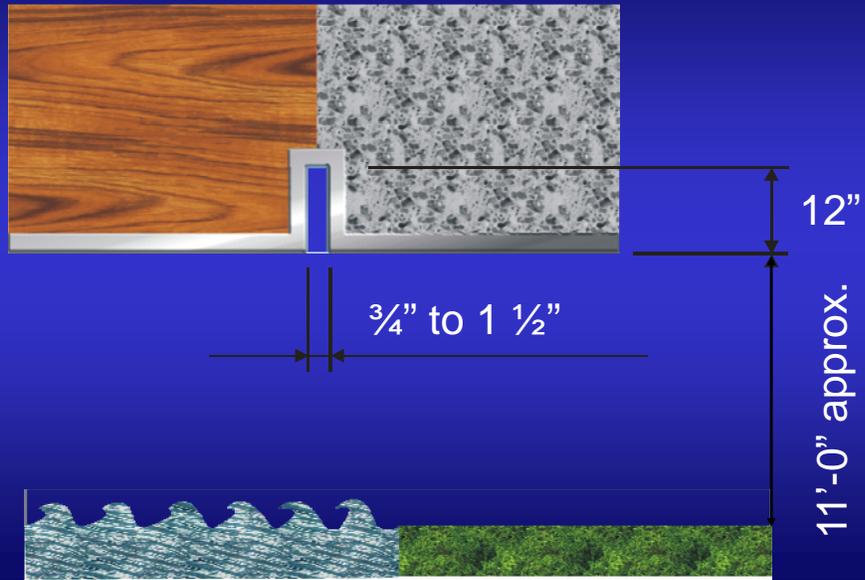


Why do some bridges house bats, often in very large numbers, and is this a problem?

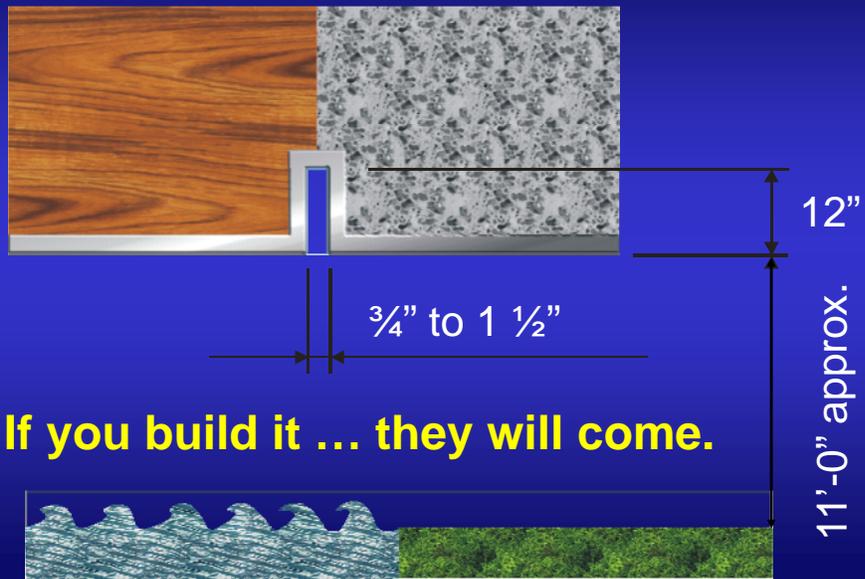
## **Study Objectives:**

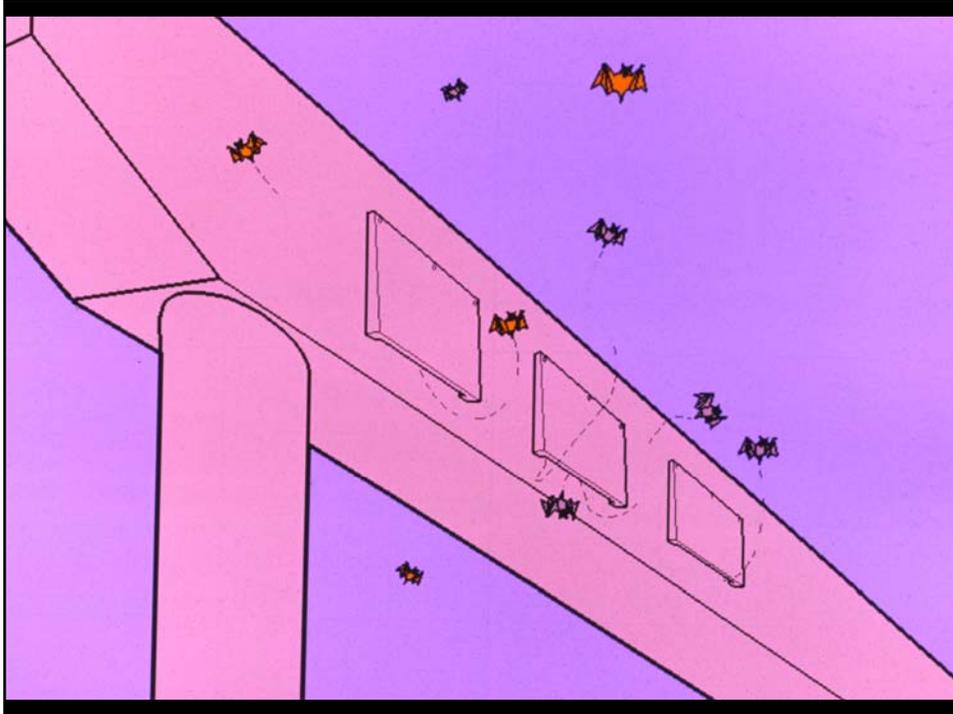
- ✓ Public Health and Safety
- ✓ Workman Health and Safety
- ✓ Structural Integrity
- ✓ Water Quality
- ✓ Significance of Bridges as Roosting Habitat for Bats

## Man-Made Bat Habitat



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- ✓ New bridges can be constructed to accommodate bats for very little extra
- ✓ There are no problems that can't be solved

## Photo Credits

Dr. Merlin Tuttle – Bat Conservation International

Dr. Tom Kunz – Boston University

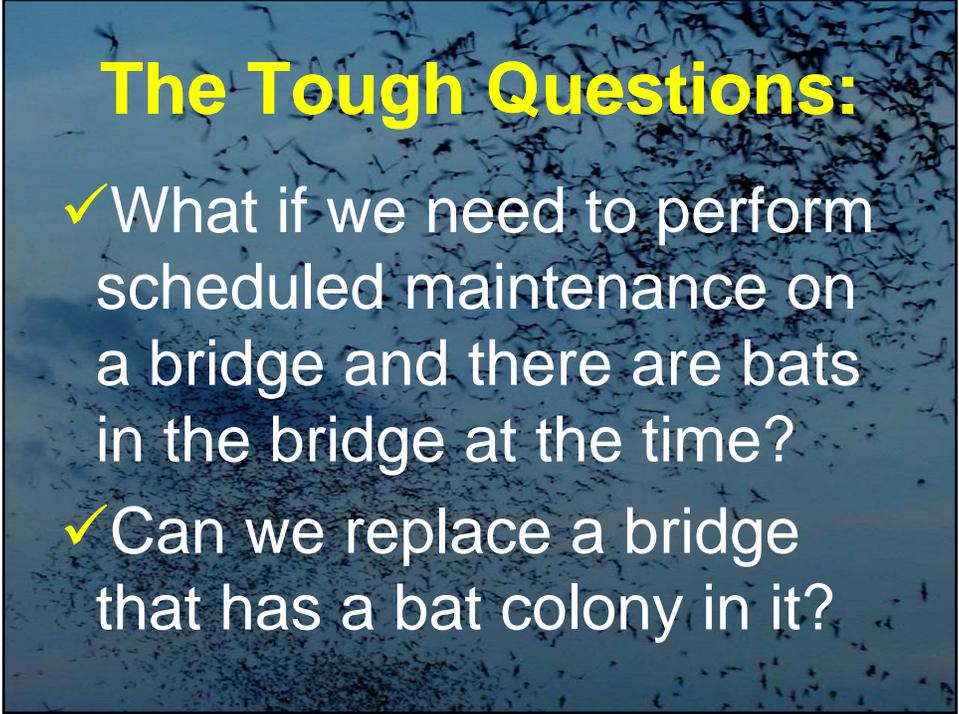
Meg Goodman – Texas Parks and Wildlife



**For more information contact:**

**Mark J. Bloschock P.E.**

**214.224.2410**



## **The Tough Questions:**

- ✓ What if we need to perform scheduled maintenance on a bridge and there are bats in the bridge at the time?
- ✓ Can we replace a bridge that has a bat colony in it?

## The Tough Questions:

- ✓ What if a bridge attracts an endangered bat species?
- ✓ How do we get rid of unwanted bats in a bridge?
- ✓ How do they guess how many bats are in a bridge?

## The Tough Questions:

- ✓ Can any artificial roost, such as a bridge, increase bat populations to the point that the bats become an invasive species?

## Bat friendly exclusions



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- ✓ How do we get rid of unwanted bats in a bridge?
- ✓ Can any artificial roost, such as a bridge, increase bat populations to the point that the bats become an invasive species?