



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

You May Want to see Batman in Movie Theatres but Not in your Own Home

***The Humane Society of the United States warns:
young bats take flight in September and can take a wrong turn into your home***

(Sept. 10, 2008) -- While bats are widely recognized for the positive environmental benefits that they provide with their insatiable appetite for insects – and a starring role in a blockbuster movie -- they still can cause fear in people, especially when they make their way into your home. And no one wants to be surprised by a chance meeting in the house, including the bat.

According to John Griffin, director of The Humane Society of the United States' Humane Wildlife Services, "These incidents often occur this time of year when young and newly weaned bats get lost trying to make their way out of an attic for the first time to join the rest of their colony in nocturnal foraging for insects."

Attics are the ultimate hang-out for bats because they provide the high temperatures and undisturbed environments that bats need for resting, giving birth and rearing young. Baby bats are born in late spring and become mobile and interested in braving the great outdoors around the end of summer. The young bats can sometimes take a wrong turn and end up flying into the living areas of your home.

Griffin explains, "There are two issues that homeowners are faced with when it comes to an accidental intrusion. First, the humane removal of the wayward bat and second, making sure that the home interior is sealed up properly so that unexpected visitors from the attic don't intrude again."

Bat tips from The HSUS:

Removal of a wayward bat in your living space:

When a bat or any wild animal is inside, local animal care and control agencies usually respond with immediate help. Some homeowners may take matters into their own hands and capture the bat themselves. To do this as safely as possible, make sure that you do not come in contact with the bat by using a container (e.g. a plastic food container or

shoebox) and placing it over the bat when he or she is at rest on drapery or the wall. The lid is then carefully slid underneath to contain the bat. Heavy gloves **MUST** be used to do this. **NEVER** try to handle a bat with bare hands or cotton gloves. Once contained, the bat can be safely released outside, but be sure to put the bat on a tree limb or wall since they cannot fly from the ground up.

If there is any chance that the bat was in the room of a sleeping or intoxicated person or young child, health authorities mandate that the bat be captured and tested for rabies—even if there's only a slim chance that the bat could have bitten someone without their knowing it.

Humane exclusion of the colony:

This is almost always a job for professionals, who can determine where and how the bats are getting inside the structure and properly install the appropriate exclusion material and one-way doors (or “check valves”) that let them out but not back in. Bats can enter attics through openings as small as a nickel and an experienced eye is best in determining where they are coming and going from.

Some bats will leave buildings to fly to sites where they hibernate over winter, and others will overwinter. An experienced and professional installer can determine which species of bat is present and how they are using a structure and plan a humane exclusion strategy accordingly.

Bats help to control insects and pollinate numerous plants we depend upon. If you have a colony excluded from your house, or simply want the incredible benefits they provide, The HSUS recommends putting up a bat house outside to give the bats alternative roosting quarters.

The HSUS Wild Neighbors Program promotes non-lethal means for resolving conflicts between people and wildlife and cultivates understanding and appreciation for wild animals commonly found in cities and towns. **Humane Wildlife Services** was developed around proven strategies addressing the needs of homeowners, businesses and communities experiencing wildlife conflicts. HWS solves people's problems while respecting and protecting the lives of the animals involved. For more information visit humanesociety.org/humaneservices

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 10.5 million Americans, or one of every 30. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the web at humanesociety.org.