



Amphibian, Reptile, and Bat Habitat Stewardship on Southern Vancouver Island, BC

With support from the Government of Canada's [Habitat Stewardship Program](#) (Prevention Stream), the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) undertook a one-year project in 2014–2015 to help conserve seven bat, nine amphibian, and one reptile species on Southern Vancouver Island from future population declines.

WHY THIS PROJECT IS IMPORTANT

Amphibian, reptile, and bat species on southern Vancouver Island, British Columbia, are vulnerable to habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation caused by human development. For example, amphibians such as the Northern Pacific Treefrog (*Pseudacris regilla*) are subject to road mortality during their seasonal migrations, while bats such as the Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) frequently roost in buildings, creating conflict with owners/managers. As a result, bat and amphibian populations continue to decrease.

WHAT WAS DONE

Through mainstream and social media, HAT raised public awareness to improve habitat for bats and reduce incidences of building owners and managers removing bats from buildings without care for the bats' safety. To do so, HAT assisted building owners and managers with the installation of bat houses as replacement roosts. HAT also addressed rates of amphibian roadkill by reaching out to the public to assist in the collection of information about problem areas for road crossings. HAT later surveyed these locations to provide roadkill and road crossing data to the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recommendations for consideration in the planning and placement of safe road crossings for amphibians. HAT also educated five plant nurseries about how to avoid the unintentional introduction of non-native reptiles (hiding in imported plants), which can compete with the native Northern Alligator Lizard (*Elgaria coerulea*).

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THIS PROJECT

- Conducted assessments on 10 known bat colonies in southern Vancouver Island to assess threats and guide management actions.
- Safely removed bats from buildings on 6 properties and installed bat houses to serve as replacement roosts.



Credit: Christian Engelstoft

▲ Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)

- Assisted landowners with the construction of 100 bat houses and helped to install 35 of them on 26 properties.
- Surveyed 24 road crossing sites and identified high amphibian roadkill locations.
- Received coverage on two radio and three TV stations about high problem areas for bat, amphibian, and reptile road crossings.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROJECT

HAT improved habitat for bats and increased understanding and awareness of reptile, bat, and amphibian species among landowners and the public.

INVESTMENT: 2014–2015

Habitat Stewardship Program Funds:	\$33,175
Partner Support Leveraged:	\$52,860
TOTAL:	\$86,035