



AUSTRALASIAN BAT SOCIETY INC.

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MEDIA RELEASE

Australasian Bat Night 2017: Come and discover your local bats!

Australasian Bat Night is back again this autumn (March to May) with several community events held over the next few weeks in Sydney, Melbourne, South Australia, Brisbane, Alice Springs, and in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Find out about the homes of bats at 'bat box' talks workshops on 7 and 15 March in Blanchetown and Kingston, South Australia. Join a Bat Watch picnic viewing a spectacular flying-fox flyout in inner western Sydney or attend a bat fest at the annual Blue Mountains Bat Night on Friday 10 March. 10th March is also the first of a series of Friday Bat Tours during March and April at Waikato Museum, Hamilton, New Zealand. Take a 'Batty Boat Cruise' on the Brisbane River on Sunday 12 March in Brisbane. Join the volunteers at the Melbourne Mega-Bat Count on 15 March in one of the longest running bat monitoring programs in the world. Or come to Alice Springs on 17 March for its first Australasian Bat Night at Simpsons Gap.

These and other events during March, April and May are up on our website <http://ausbats.org.au/find-a-bat-night-event/> and more are in planning and being finalised in all states and New Zealand.

"Australasian Bat Night is all about fun and building partnerships; and with so many local councils, land care and other community groups involved, there is sure to be a Bat Night near you" said Australasian Bat Society President, Dr Justin Welbergen.

"Now in its sixth year, the Australasian Bat Night programme is modelled on the long-running European series that celebrates the positive aspects of bats, and that educates people about the vital ecological roles these creatures play and the threats they face.

"Bats make up around a quarter of Australia's native mammals, with over 80 species, including four mainland species of flying-fox. They are also the only native mammals in New Zealand".

"Unfortunately, there are many unfounded fears and misconceptions associated with bats, and the Bat Night events give people an opportunity to ask questions and discover the facts from experienced and knowledgeable people" said Dr Welbergen.

ABS Media Release:

Australasian Bat Night community education events in Australia and New Zealand this autumn

"Participants in many of the events will have the opportunity to join in citizen science projects and encounter bats for themselves. Very popular are our 'watch parties' to see the dusk fly-out of both flying-foxes and microbats, as are the 'discovery night walks' where participants can use electronic bat detectors to hear bat echolocation calls before they see the bats."

"There is so much to do at a Bat Night event. We have many of our experienced people giving talks on bats, providing advice on how to look after bats that come into care, and demonstrating the building of bat roost boxes. There is also interactive play and craft for kids, bat exhibitions, and a chance for people to meet a microbat or flying-fox up close." said Dr Welbergen.

We are still accepting new events and encourage anyone interested in hosting one to contact our Bat Night Coordinator, Maree Treadwell-Kerr on batnight@ausbats.org.au

Examples of 2017 Australasian Bat Night events include:

- **Blue Mountains Bat Night—Friday 10 March—Blackheath, NSW**
It's a bat fest. There will be bat talks, bat walks, bat videos, and a bat cave with activities for kids. You can also listen to bats with bat detectors, meet a flying-fox up close, and enjoy a sausage sizzle! So popular in the past, that this year you have to book. Free event.
- **Bat Watch Picnic—Friday 10 March—Wolli Creek, Sydney, NSW**
Come to one of the great urban 'David Attenborough moments' and watch thousands of grey-headed flying-foxes stream out from their Turrella camp at sunset. Share this 'wow' experience with friends and family. Learn more about these important night workers and enjoy batty craft for young and old. BYO picnic.
- **Batty Boat Cruise—Sunday 12 March, Brisbane River—Brisbane, NSW**
Celebrating over 30 years of the Batty Boat Cruises, this is the last cruise for the season. Visit the flying-foxes near New Farm Park and watch them fly over at sunset on their nightly feeding expeditions. Meet orphaned baby bats on-board and hear educational commentaries about bats and the river along the way. Bookings essential.
- **Mega bat count—Wednesday 15 March—Yarra Bend, Melbourne, NSW**
Join one of the longest running monitoring programs of any bat colony in the world and help collect data to help manage the threatened grey-headed flying-fox, while viewing one of the great wildlife spectacles in the world- an evening flyout of flying-foxes. Repeated monthly.
- **Bat Night in Alice—Friday 17 March—Simpson's Gap, Alice Springs, NT**
Enjoy kids' batty activities during the day, followed by bat detecting and harp trapping at the iconic Simpson's Gap in the evening. Discover the latest in bat research about the bats of the area.
- **Bats of the Lofty Ranges—Tuesday 21 March—Adelaide Hills, SA**
"Bat Man" Terry Reardon, from University of South Australia, will share some of his incredible insights into the world of microbats. Terry has been researching bats for many years and will discuss their biology, habitat, benefits and the threats they face today. Bookings essential. Gold coin donation.

For more information on events, or to register new events, please contact our Bat Night Coordinator Maree Kerr on 0412 311 403 and email batnight@ausbats.org.au or visit: <http://ausbats.org.au/australasian-bat-night/>

Photos from events are available via the email above.

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About the Australasian Bat Society, Inc.

We are a not-for-profit organisation, registered under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984 through the NSW Department of Fair Trading. Our aim is to promote the conservation and scientific study of bats in Australasia. ABS membership is wide-ranging and includes research scientists and students, natural resource managers, ecological consultants, wildlife rehabilitators and members of the general public.



For further information please visit <http://ausbats.org.au/>, and if you would like to join us please go to: <http://ausbats.org.au/joinrenew>