



**Australasian Bat Society Inc.**  
**PO Box 185**  
**Milsons Point NSW 1565**

## **Media Release**

### **18<sup>th</sup> Australasian Bat Society Conference and Public Forum on Sydney's Bats**

All members of the general community, government officers, educators, land managers, researchers, consultants and carer organisations with an interest in bats are encouraged to register for an upcoming Public Forum "Sydney Bats: Hidden Treasures and Flying Icons" to be held at the Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, Western Sydney University, Richmond from 1-5pm on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 2018.

The forum precedes the Australasian Bat Society's (ABS) 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference to be held at the same location from Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> to Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of April, 2018

"Bats are a fascinating yet often under-appreciated part of Australia's natural ecosystems" says ABS President, Dr Justin Welbergen. "With at least 81 species of bats in Australia, these highly diverse mammals play important roles in pest insect regulation and provide crucial pollination and seed dispersal services to our native forests." "Unfortunately, bats are sometimes also at the centre of controversial public debates". "This Public Forum will focus on the overlooked diversity of bats in the Sydney area; however, many of the 'take home messages' are more broadly applicable and will appeal to a wide public audience" states Dr Welbergen.

Latest research and management approaches will be discussed, with highlights from the forum program to include Dr Peggy Eby (University of NSW) discussing the history of flying-fox camps in Sydney, Mike Roache (NSW Office of Environment & Heritage) tackling the challenging topic of government's role in flying-fox management, and Dr Caragh Threlfall (University of Melbourne) highlighting some hotspots, threats and management needs of Sydney's microbats.

Registration for the Public Forum "Sydney Bats: Hidden Treasures and Flying Icons" is still open. Information and registration details can be found at: <http://ausbats.org.au/2018-sydney-bat-forum> or by contacting [leroy.gonsalves@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:leroy.gonsalves@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Immediately following the forum, the ABS 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference will have leading bat experts showcasing their findings from innovative research, management, and conservation projects throughout the Australasian region. Held over three days, the extensive program will be interspersed with field trips to Yarramundi Reserve to see flying-foxes and microbats, including Australia's only true fishing bat. At the conclusion of the conference, a field trip will be held at the beautiful Jenolan Caves where participants will partake in a survey for a wide range of bat species.

The ABS is the peak body promoting bat conservation in the Australasian region. ABS membership is wide-ranging and includes research scientists, natural resource managers, ecological consultants, educators, students, wildlife carers and members of the general public. The ABS recognises the intrinsic value of all bat species as well as their place in this country's natural heritage and the key ecological roles they play in our natural environment. The primary aim of the society is to promote evidence-based conservation of bats and the habitats in which they live.

### **Media contacts**

- **Sydney Public Bat Forum: Dr Leroy Gonsalves – 02 9842 8599; Dr Bradley Law – 02 9842 8601**
- **18<sup>th</sup> ABS Biennial Conference: Dr Justin Welbergen – 0457 338 189**