



**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

# COMMUNITY BAT WALKS

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## GOALS:

- ◆ Teach basics of bat biology and observe bats in nature.
- ◆ Help participants develop or enhance their appreciation of bats for their uniqueness and ecosystem services.
- ◆ Dispel some of the mystery around bats by allowing people to see and hear them.
- ◆ Encourage people to make observations in nature.

## EVENT DESCRIPTION:

- ◆ Audience assembles for a “sidewalk talk” for the first 30 minutes.
- ◆ As the bat walk leader, use interactive tactics to assess knowledge of bats and prepare the audience for the observations they’ll make during the bat walk.
- ◆ Hand out some acoustic detectors that make the sounds of echolocating bats audible and explain how these devices work.
- ◆ Lead a 30-45 minute “bat walk” with the group, listening for bats with the detectors and spotlighting bats in flight when they are observed.





## INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

### THINK-PAIR-SHARE

- ◆ Try the Think-Pair-Share tactic to prompt the audience to share their initial impressions of bats.
- ◆ Ask the audience to think of an adjective that describes bats, pair up to discuss their thoughts, and share their adjectives with the group.
- ◆ Use the audience's responses to expand upon their understanding of bats, gently correcting any myths and affirming any truths.
- ◆ This tactic helps build trust between you and your audience and enhances their understanding of the uniqueness of bats.

### DRAWINGS

- ◆ Provide sidewalk chalk and encourage audience members to draw bats in motion.
- ◆ Adjust the level of detail discussed based on the audience's drawing abilities and knowledge.
- ◆ Build trust and connection with audience members by reviewing and discussing their drawings. Note any unique features and correct any misconceptions.
- ◆ Develop the audience's appreciation for bat flight and variations in flight capabilities and prepare them for bat observations after dark.

