TEXAS' TOP Bat Viewing Sites

Observing bats emerging from their roosts is one of the most exciting encounters that nature has to offer. Texas happens to be the perfect place to capture the seemingly choreographed exodus. Viewing times are best by early August through about mid-November when they migrate to Mexico for the winter.

Waugh Drive Bridge, Houston

This bridge has an estimated 250,000 Mexican free-tailed bats. The highest bat population is August through September. There are also "Bat Chats" that occur at the bridge on Friday nights from March through October.

Watonga Boulevard Bridge – White Oak Bayou Greenway Trail, Houston

This bridge is known to have approximately 100,000 Mexican free-tailed bats. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the view from park benches or on grassy greenspace along the Bayou.

Congress Avenue Bridge, Austin

Austin's Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge hosts the largest urban bat colony in the world–about 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats. More than 100,000 people flock to the bridge each year to witness this maternity colony emerge nightly to consume up to 20,000 pounds of insects. That feeding schedule helps raise the estimated 750,000 pups born here each year.

McNeil Overpass and IH-35 Bridge, Round Rock

From March through November of each year, there is a smaller bat colony about 15 miles north of Austin fascinating locals and tourists in Round Rock, Texas. Just as their South Congress Bridge counterparts, they take to the air at dusk for their nightly feeding and aerial show. Eating roughly 20-30 thousand pounds of insects on each night flight, nearly a half-million bats in Round Rock, Texas call the McNeil Overpass and IH-35 Bridge Bats home during this period.

Bracken Cave Preserve, San Antonio

With more than 15 million Mexican free-tail bats calling this home, Bracken Cave holds the record for having the largest bat colony and greatest concentration of mammals in the world. The public can take tours on select nights during the summer.

Camden Street Bridge, San Antonio

From April through October, the more than 50,000 male Mexican free-tailed bats can be seen under the Interstate 35 Bridge, where it crosses the San Antonio River near Camden Street.

Old Tunnel State Park, Fredericksburg

The Old Tunnel State Park holds up to 3 million Mexican free-tailed bats and 1,000 to 3,000 cave myotis bats from May to October.

Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve, Mason

This preserve is one of the largest bat habitats in the country. It holds 4 to 6 million female Mexican free-tailed bats that inhabit the site from May through September. The bats form a "bat-tornado" formation as they emerge.

Frio Bat Cave, Concan

For a once in a lifetime experience you will want to go to the Frio Bat Flight Tour and witness this awesome site as 10 to 12 million Mexican Free-tailed Bats ascend into the evening sky before sunset at Frio Cave near Concan, Texas. This is the second-largest bat population in the world open to the public!

Devil's Sinkhole Natural Area, Rocksprings

On its own merits, the Devil's Sinkhole is the largest single-chambered cavern and third deepest in the state. This makes it a perfect home for more than 3 million Mexican free-tailed bats that can be viewed from May through October as they make their nightly runs. While the bats are away, 3,000-4,000 cave swallows occupy the space.

Stuart Bat Cave, Bracketville

This cave is home to about 1 million Mexican free-tailed bats. This location also provides picnic sites, camping, mountain biking, wildlife and more. The bat viewing time is usually mid-March through the end of October.

Clarity Tunnel, Quitaque

This abandoned 1920s Fort Worth and Denver Railway tunnel is not only in the National Register of Historic Places, but it's also home for up to 500,000 Mexican free-tailed bats. Take the 1.5-hour tour on Friday evenings through September.

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