

# BAT ROOSTING BOXES

Bats are perhaps one of the most misunderstood mammals in the world, although they make up roughly one quarter of all known mammal species, they are one of the least studied. As the only mammal that is capable of true flight, and the fact that they are nocturnal, many superstitions and unwarranted beliefs have sprung up around them, largely through ignorance.

Bats can be divided between the larger Fruit Bats and the smaller insect-eating bats, both are vitally important to natural ecology. It has been estimated that 80% of tropical forest trees are either pollinated or have their seed dispersed by fruit bats, without which the forests



would not exist.



A female Whalberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat, the bulge under her wing is a suckling pup.

Insect eating bats eat about 25% of their body weight in small flying insects every night. These insects include a large number that are harmful to, or at least a nuisance to humans. If you don't like mosquitos, bats are your friends!

A Cape Horseshoe Bat, one of the local insect control agents.

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Worldwide, the numbers of bats are dropping, largely due to a fungal disease, habitat loss and pollution. As most bats are cavity roosters, the roosting boxes erected on Pearl Valley Golf Course ensure that bats have places to hide up during the day and to breed, ensuring that future

generations of these fascinating animals will survive and continue to control the insect population of the estate.