

Northern Myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

Pennsylvania Mammal Species of Concern

State Rank: S3B (vulnerable, breeding), **S3N** (vulnerable, non-breeding), **Global Rank: G4** (apparently secure)

Identification

The Northern Myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*), also known as the Northern Long-eared Myotis, is characterized by its long-rounded ears that when folded forward, extend beyond the tip of the nose. Also, the shape of the tragus, the flap of skin inside the ear area, is long and dagger shaped compared to the little brown bats curved and blunted tragus. This species has a longer tail and larger wing area than other similar sized bats in this genus. The fur is dull yellow/brown above and a pale gray on the belly. Another characteristic of this species is that the calcar, a spur extending from the foot, lacks a keel. These bats weigh only 6 to 8 grams and have a wingspan of 9 to 10 inches.



photo source: Aura Stauffer

Habitat/Behavior

In the more northern parts of their range the northern long-eared bat is associated with boreal forests. In Pennsylvania, this bat is found in forests around the state. Northern Myotis hunt at night over small ponds, in forest clearings, at tree top level and along forest edges. They eat a variety of night-flying insects including caddisflies, moths, beetles, flies, and leafhoppers. This species uses caves and underground mines for hibernation and individuals may travel up to 35 miles from their summer habitat for hibernation. Maternity roosts are located in tree cavities, under exfoliating tree bark and in buildings.

Status

The status of the Northern Myotis in Pennsylvania is uncertain. The state status of this species currently is candidate rare (CR). More information is needed before adequate management decisions can be made. It occurs throughout Pennsylvania, but has been found in relatively low numbers.

Traditionally, bats have been unpopular with the public because of a misunderstanding of their ecology and due to their presence as pests in homes and barns. However, bats play a very important role in the

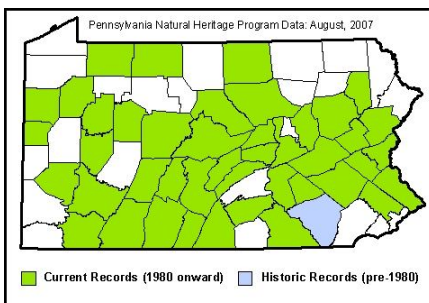
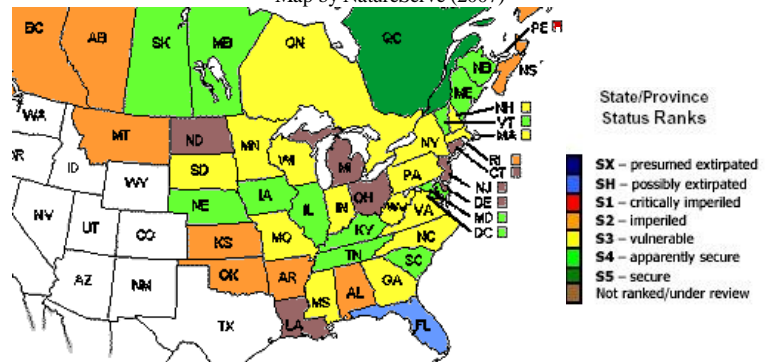
environment by eating large amounts

of insects. For example, a single little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) can eat up to 1,200 mosquito-sized insects in just one hour!

More than 50% of American bat species are rapidly declining or already listed as endangered. The loss of bat species in Pennsylvania could greatly affect our ability to protect our plants from pests and enjoy the outdoors. For more information on bats and bat houses visit the Bat Conservation International website at <http://www.batcon.org/>.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe (2007)



References

- Bat Conservation International, Inc. 2002. "Bat Species: U.S. Bats: *Myotis septentrionalis*" Website: www.batcon.org/discover/species/mystep.html.
- NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: September 4, 2007).
- Ollendorff, J. 2002. "*Myotis septentrionalis*" (On-line). Animal Diversity Web. Accessed February 25, 2004 at http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Myotis_septentrionalis.htm.



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program