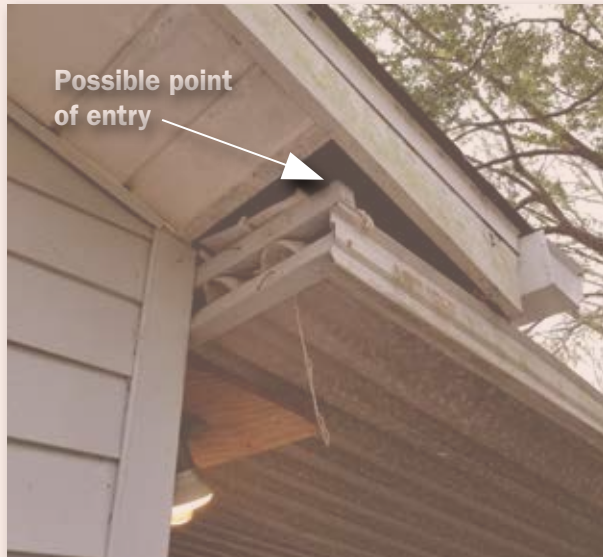


## Is your structure being used by wildlife?

Wildlife such as bats, owls, songbirds, squirrels, opossums and raccoons may find their way into buildings occupied by humans.



Eastern screech owl in soffit – Credit: Blayne Thom



## What to do if wildlife is using your structure

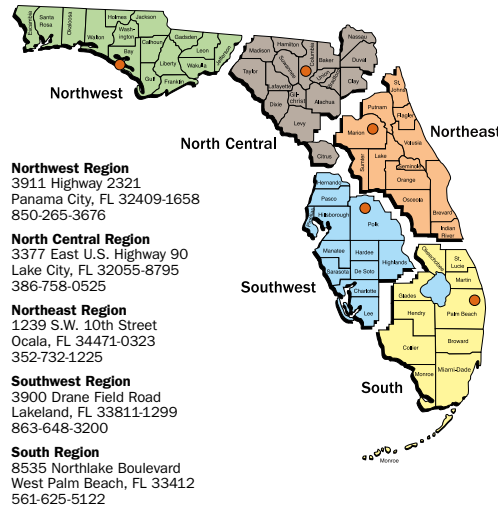
If there is wildlife currently in the structure, call your FWC Regional Office and ask to speak to the Wildlife Assistance Biologist. They will be able to provide additional information on legal options and methods to prevent wildlife from entering your home.

## If you are certain no wildlife or young are currently in your structure:

- Identify the location(s) where wildlife is entering the structure and make the necessary repairs to exclude them.
- Once repairs are made, continue to monitor to ensure all wildlife has been successfully excluded.

### Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

#### Regional Offices



# Wildlife in Structures



## Know the signs

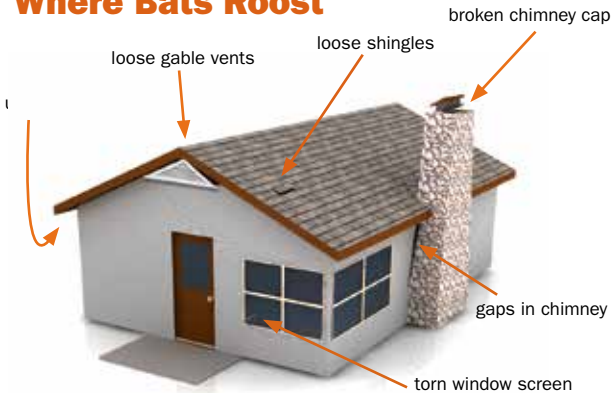


Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission  
MyFWC.com

## Where and when to look

- Common places for wildlife to reside are attics, barns, garages, soffits, underneath shutters or roof shingles or tiles, in wall voids or behind siding or chimneys.
- Dawn and dusk is when you are most likely to spot wildlife entering or leaving your structure, as this is when they are leaving to forage or coming in to rest.
- Some wildlife, such as squirrels and woodpeckers will be more active during daytime hours, while others, such as raccoons, bats and flying squirrels are more active at night.

### Where Bats Roost



## There are ways to tell if wildlife might be using your structure

- Bent or missing soffits or roof tiles.
- Damaged, patted down, or missing insulation. Tunnels may also be present in insulation.
- Chew marks on wood or electrical wiring.
- Tracks on AC ductwork or other dusty surfaces.
- Sounds of scurrying, scampering, or squeaking in your walls or attic.
- Scat found near the entry and exit points, or on insulation.

- Rub marks/stains of light brown discoloration near the entry and exit points due to body oils and dirt.
- Nesting material (like grass, feathers, leaves, Spanish moss, etc.) or food found in one location inside or along the exterior of the structure.
- Feathers, pellets, or bones found inside the structure (this is evidence of birds, including owls).
- Holes in siding (may be sign of a woodpecker).
- More comprehensive ways include trying a motion-activated trail camera or bat detector to determine if wildlife is present.



Shed snake skin in attic

## Look before you treat

Eliminating termites and other household pests is important for the maintenance of your home and the health of your family. Before fumigating, it is important to ensure no wildlife is present. This prevents unintentional wildlife casualties and the need for further wildlife removal efforts.



Structure being fumigated for pest treatment



Bats roosting in attic - Credit: Dan Bozone

## Be proactive: know what actions to take

- Inspect your home regularly for openings, tears, rotting wood or weak spots that could allow entry. Bats can enter an opening that is as small as your thumb.
- Look around the foundation of your home where pipes, cables and vents, exit the houses.
- If an opening is found, mark the hole by doing something such as sticking a plastic bag in it or taping a piece of plastic over it. Watch it for 3-5 days, and if it does not get disturbed then the opening is not being used. You can also place diatomaceous earth at the potential entry point and check later for track marks in the dust.
- Trim overhanging tree branches close to your roof, as some wildlife can use them for help with entry into your home.
- If you have a chimney, you can have a professional install an animal-proof chimney cap once ensuring no animals are present.