CREATURES OF THE NIGHT: ELF OWLS, BATS, Nighthawks

YOUR YARD IS A GOOD PLACE FOR NIGHT-TIME INSECT EATERS!

• **BUG SNACKS:** Birds, bats, and other insect eaters will keep the insect numbers down in your yard.
• **URBAN ADVANTAGE:** Nearby streetlights attract a wide variety of insects that then attract bats and nighthawks.
• **SMALLEST OWL:** A large saguaro with a nesting cavity may become a home for an Elf Owl.
• **FUN AFTER DARK:** You can experience the fascinating animals that live in the night.

LET’S GO BATTY!

• Bat boxes specially designed for desert climate provide shelter for sleeping bats during the day.
  • Both the Rocket Box and 4-Chamber Nursery designs work well in the Sonoran Desert and can be purchased at the Tucson Audubon Nature Shop.
• Avoid insecticide use. Bats will eat insects for you!
• Check out bridges at dusk during spring and summer for bats leaving to hunt insects.
INGREDIENTS

• SHELTER: Protected saguaro cavities, dense low overhanging cover
• HABITAT: Pockets of dense and diverse vegetation with gaps for flying
• FOOD: Humidity and night-blooming nectar plants attract insects for food
• SAFETY: Red-hued outdoor lighting or motion-activated, downward-pointed white lighting protect light-sensitive species of bats

PLANTS

Desert hackberry  
Velvet mesquite  
Sacred datura  
Tufted evening primrose  
Mimosa  
Saguaro

DIRECTIONS

• Keep cats indoors. It’s safer for cats and protects wildlife.
• Leave leaf litter on the ground.
• Avoid insecticide use.
• Support moths with both nectar and caterpillar food plants.
• Provide moving water with a fountain or drip into a dish. “Mosquito dunks” in the water target mosquito larvae and don’t harm other insects.
• Swimming pools and livestock watering tanks provide needed water for bats. Sometimes bats and other animals fall into the water and escape ladders prevent them from drowning.
• Leave low-growing branches above open ground for daytime roosting for nighthawks. Lesser Nighthawks will nest on bare ground under shrubs.

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