



SAVING NATURE
Environmental Leaders Who Live
Noah's Notes Mission of Saving Nature

Image courtesy of Bat Conservation International

Bat Conservation International



"Bats lead us to the best opportunities to protect nature anywhere in the world." — Mike Daulton, Executive Director of Bat Conservation International

The Importance of Bats

Bats are nocturnal animals, and use echolocation to fly through the night air on the hunt for insects. Out of all the species of bats, around 70% feed exclusively on insects. The other bats feed on fruit and nectar, and a small minority are vampire bats that feed on animal blood. These feeding habits make bats valuable assets for humans, as they help to protect against pests and reduce mosquito populations.

Every night, bats can eat up to half their body weight in insects, with some bats capable of eating up to 1,000 mosquitoes in a single hour. With numbers like these, it's a wonder why bats are not more loved by people. Bats get a bad reputation from myths spread about rabies and depictions of them as pests, but the reality is that bats are hugely beneficial for their ability to control insect populations and reduce virus transmission to humans by mosquitoes.

Around the world, bats are facing threats to their existence from disease, pesticide use, habitat loss, and climate change. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 24 species of bats around the world are in critical danger of extinction. The organization lists 53 other bat species as endangered, and more than 200 as threatened.

While the risks to bat populations may seem insurmountable, Bat Conservation International believes we have a moral duty to prevent the extinction of the most vulnerable wildlife including the world's only flight-capable mammal—bats.



Mouse-eared Bat catching grasshopper



Leaf-nosed Bat feeding on flower nectar

Bat Conservation International

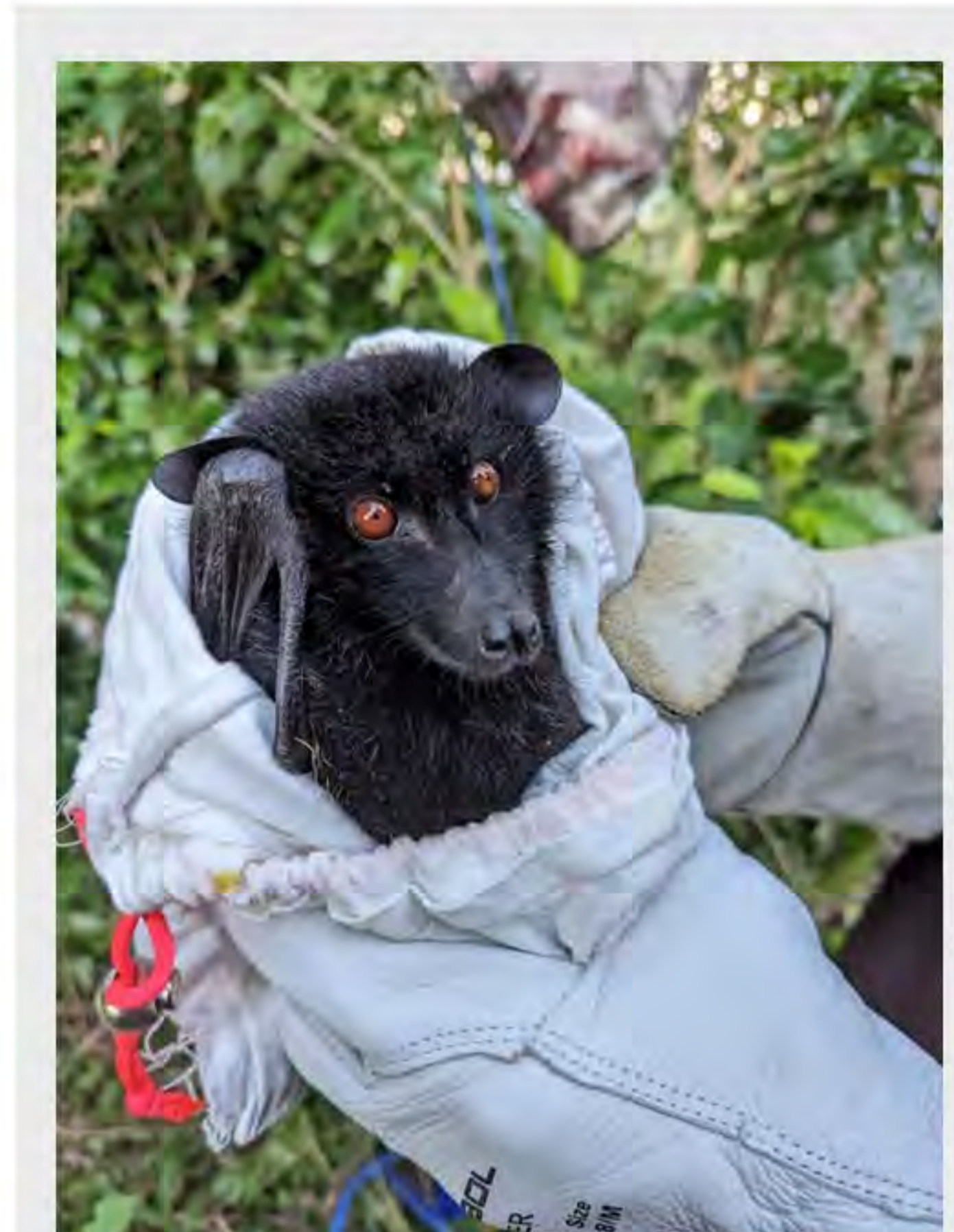
Founded in 1982 by Merlin Tuttle, with a mission to conserve the world's bats and their ecosystems to ensure a healthy planet, Bat Conservation International has helped save over 20 million bats annually and is dedicated to ending bat extinctions worldwide.

To accomplish lasting conservation victories, Bat Conservation International focuses on operations that have significant positive impacts for several highly-endangered bat species including the **Livingstone's Fruit Bat**, **Hill's Horseshoe Bat**, **Florida Bonneted Bat**, **Jamaican Flower Bat** and **Jamaican Greater Funnel-eared Bat**, and **Fijian Free-Tailed Bat**.

In their five-year strategic plan, Bat Conservation International has identified four core mission areas to ensure the survival of these extraordinary mammals.

- Endangered species interventions
- Protecting and restoring landscapes
- Conducting high-priority research and developing scalable solutions
- Inspiring through experience

Bat Conservation International leads with action, experimenting with innovative conservation strategies to prove their effectiveness, and deploy them at scale. From roosting conservation efforts for the Fijian Free-Tailed Bat to habitat restoration for the Florida Bonneted Bat, Bat Conservation International has been involved in efforts to aid and preserve the most vulnerable of bat species. Their current research operations and goals include reducing bat fatalities at wind energy sites, providing scholarships and resources to graduate students researching bats, and collaborating with partners across North America to ensure lasting conservation successes.



Researcher holds Livingstone's fruit bat

Image courtesy of Dr. Isabella Mandl, Bat Conservation International



"Working with partners across the globe we are able to identify and lead critically important conservation projects with clear, achievable actions that prevent the extinction of the world's most threatened bats." — Jon Flanders, Ph.D., Director, Endangered Species Interventions

The organization believes effective conservation requires science at every stage: establishing criteria for prioritizing targets, selecting conservation strategies, executing field work, interpreting results, and assessing impact. They also utilize cutting-edge tools, technology, and training to redefine what is possible in global conservation.

Bat Conservation International partners with state and federal agencies to identify significant bat habitat by surveying abandoned mines. There are around 500,000 abandoned mines in the U.S. that provide critical habitat for bats. By working together with the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and state abandoned mine land programs, they are able to survey and map out the mines and draft solutions that will benefit both the bats and the public.

Landscape restoration is another area where Bat Conservation International is having a significant impact. In the Southern US and Mexico, native agave restoration has proved to be an important step towards bat conservation. The agave blooms during the night and natively grows in the migratory path of many pollinator bat species such as the Mexican Long-nosed bat, which has suffered a 50% decrease in its population in just the last ten years. During their migration, the bats feed on the agave bloom, and in turn pollinate the plant. It's a win-win for the bat and tequila drinkers!

Florida Bonneted Bat

One of the endangered bat species interventions in which Bat Conservation International is engaged is for the Florida Bonneted Bat. This bat species is endemic to south Florida and is the rarest of American bats. Florida Bonneted Bats live in small groups and are comparatively noiseless. They are at risk of extinction due to urban development, which has destroyed their native habitat of old-growth tree hollows.

The bats have commonly sought refuge in the space between Spanish roof tiles. Because the bats are small, live in small clusters, and are relatively quiet, they can go mostly unnoticed—at least until they are seen, or roof repairs are needed.

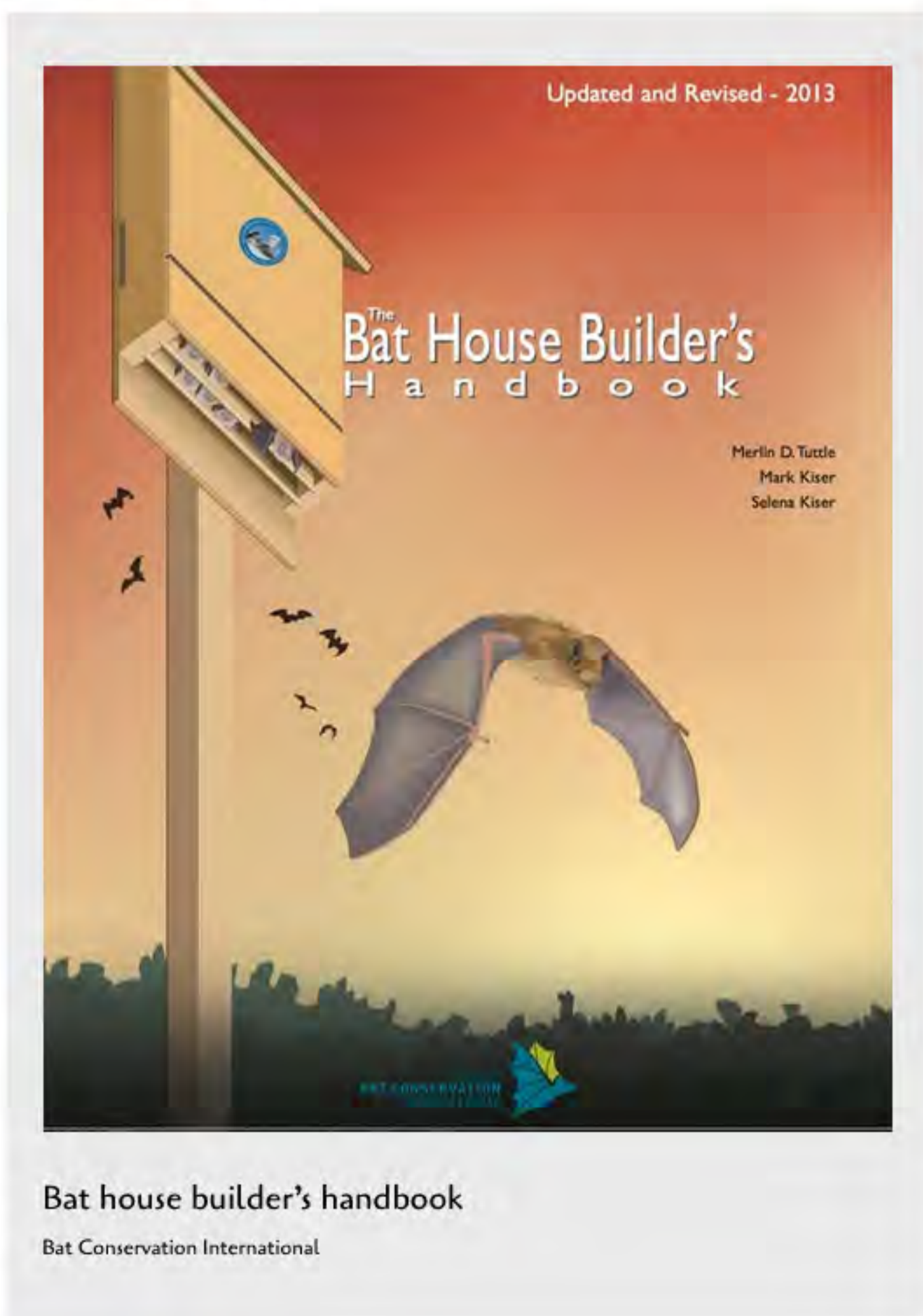
Dr. Melquisedec Gamba-Rios and his team have developed a bat house that can withstand Florida's extreme weather. The bat house allows maximum movement for the bats to be able to move freely and away from the sun. Bat Conservation International has been able to provide roosts for over 170 Florida Bonneted Bats, which is the largest known population of the species.



Terranaut Tip

5 Ways to Help Bats in Your Yard

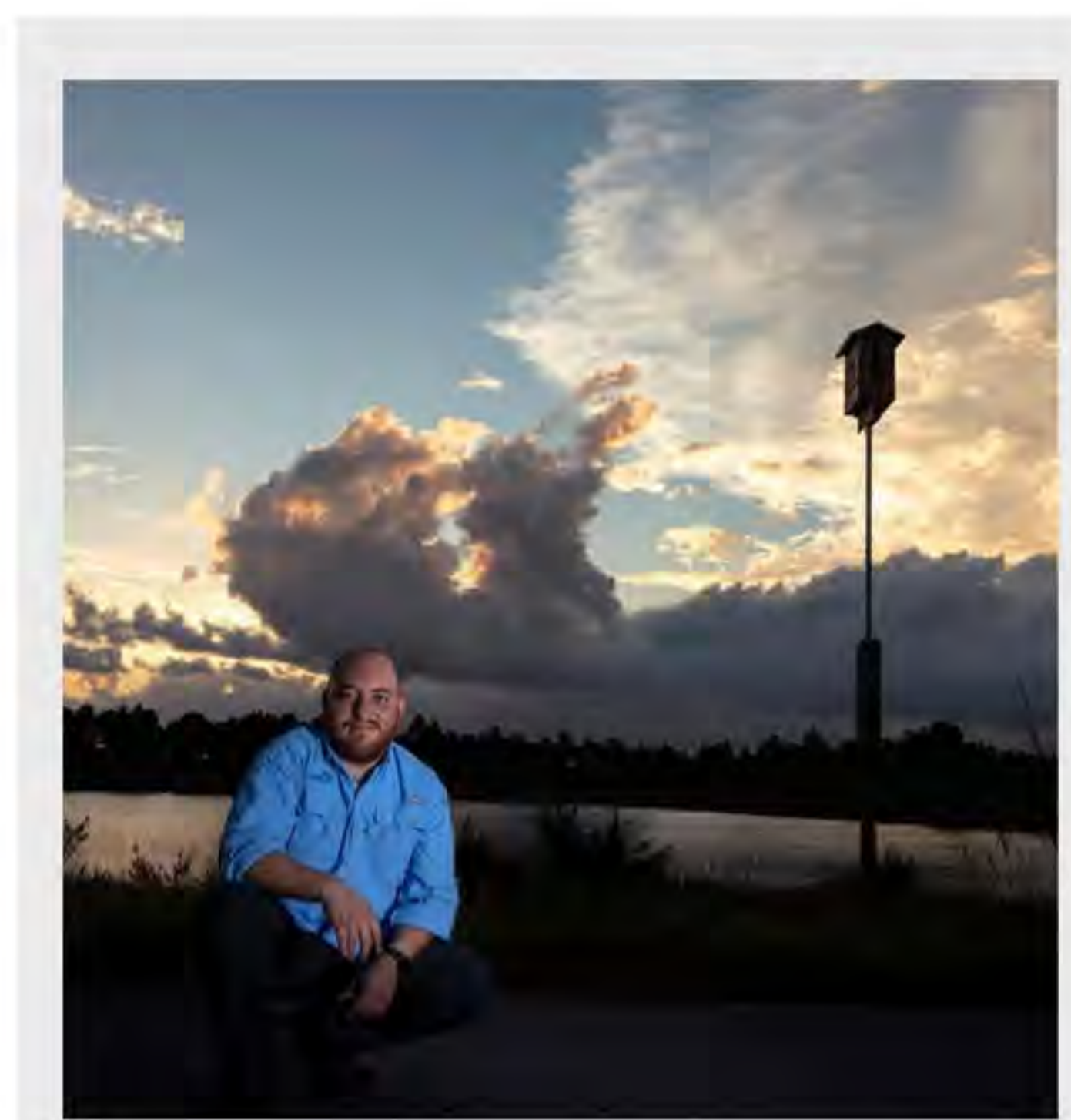
1. Plant native plants and trees
2. Don't cut down dead trees
3. Keep it organic – don't use pesticides
4. Keep cats indoors
5. Install a bat house



Bat house builder's handbook
Bat Conservation International

Learn More

- [What to do if you find an injured bat](#)
- [Bat Gardens and Houses](#)
- [Bats in Homes and Buildings](#)



Dr. Melqui Gamba-Rios with Florida Bonneted Bat House, Miami, Florida

Image courtesy of Bat Conservation International



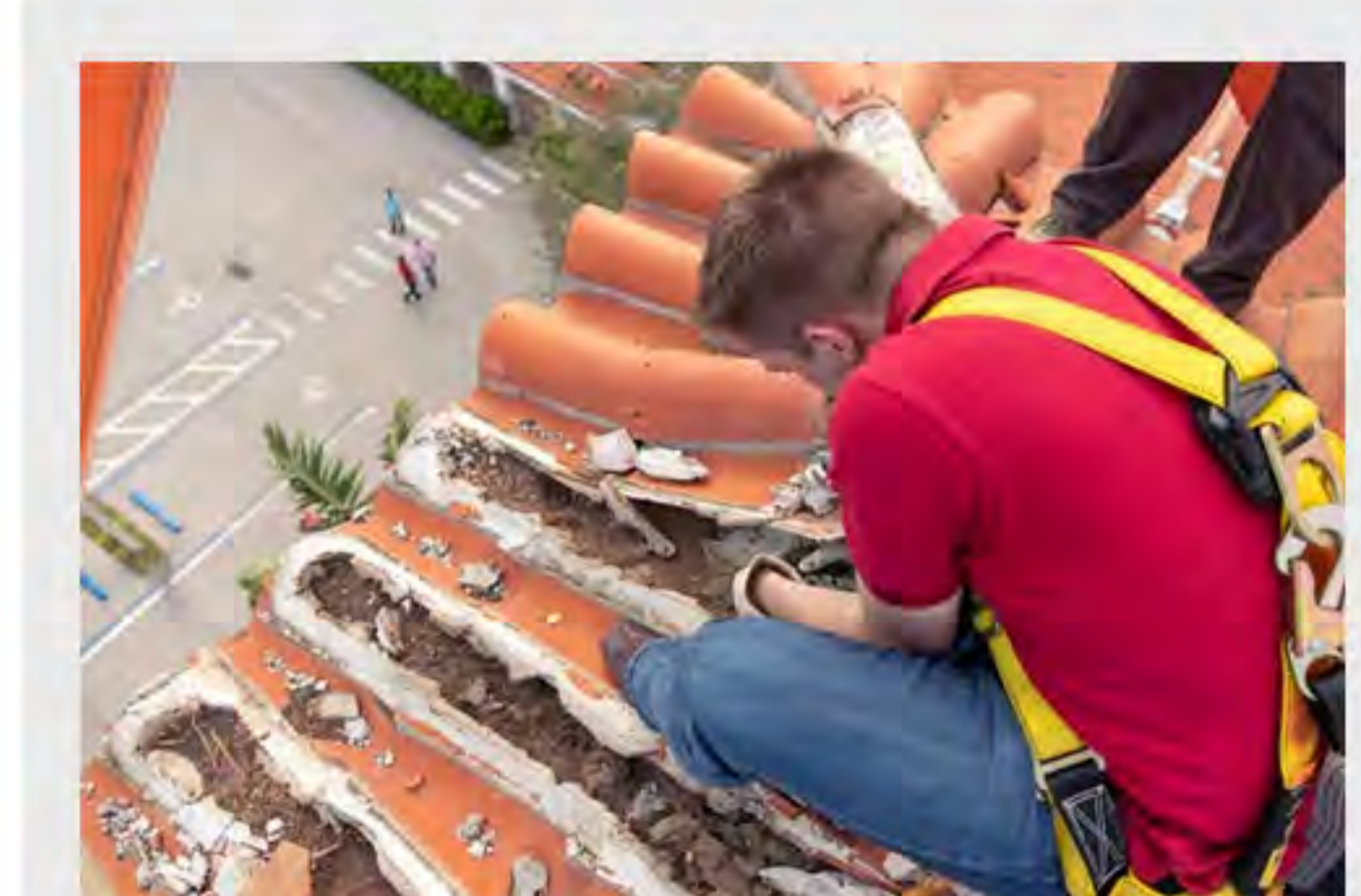
Jennifer Barros surveys cave

Image courtesy of Josh Hydeman, Bat Conservation International



Florida Bonneted Bat

Image courtesy of Dr. Melqui Gamba-Rios, Bat Conservation International



Dr. Jon Flanders removes bat from roof tiles in Miami

Image courtesy of Dr. Melqui Gamba-Rios, Bat Conservation International



Dr. Melqui Gamba-Rios and Dr. Frank Ridgley check a bat house at Zoo Miami

Image courtesy of Dr. Melqui Gamba-Rios, Bat Conservation International



24-hour live stream camera at Bracken Cave in Austin, Texas—the largest known bat colony in the world.

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