



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Hoary Bat
*Lasiurus cinereus***

State Status: **None**
Federal Status: **None**

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: The Hoary Bat is the largest bat found in Massachusetts, up to 134 mm in total length and 18 to 38 grams in weight. Females are heavier than males. The fur of Hoary Bats is yellowish-brown to dark mahogany brown, each hair tipped with silver. While all of the cave bats have only one pup per year, the tree bats, including the Hoary Bat, produce three or four pups a year.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE: Data on specific locations of Hoary Bat are not recorded by NHESP. Hoary Bats do not hibernate in Massachusetts; they are only known from the state during the summer and migration. In large part, Hoary Bats only migrate through Massachusetts; apparently, few individuals spend the summer. There are two recent breeding records (Cardoza et al. in prep.). As for Silver-haired Bat, it is mostly female Hoary Bats that migrate. Thus, it is likely that most Hoary Bats found in Massachusetts are females or young of the year of both sexes. Cardoza et al. (in prep.) found records of Hoary Bats in 25 of 351 municipalities, from 12 of the 14 counties.

HABITAT DESCRIPTION: Hoary Bats are forest-dwellers, but can be seen hunting over water or at lights. They roost solitarily among thick leaves of trees or in cavities or buildings.

THREATS: As for most other tree bats, Hoary Bats are threatened by the precipitous decline in larger moths due to parasitism by the non-native wasp, *Compsilura concinnata*. Other threats include declines in other prey species, due to insecticide spraying or prey species habitat destruction, and outright destruction of bat habitat, due to conversion to development, intensive logging, or agriculture.

REFERENCES:

- Cardoza, J. E., G. S. Jones, and T. W. French. In prep. Distribution and status of bats in Massachusetts, USA.
- Whitaker, J. O., Jr., and W. J. Hamilton, Jr. 1998. *Mammals of the Eastern United States*. Third edition. Comstock Publishing Associates, Ithaca, New York.

Updated 2015

A Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan

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