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Member Nights at Bracken Cave



Experience the unforgettable sight of millions of Mexican free-tailed bats emerging at twilight from Bracken Cave. Listen for the soft flapping of countless wings as the world's largest bat colony spends hours swirling up out of the cave. Vast columns of bats, preyed upon by hawks and owls, disperse over the rugged Hill Country of Central Texas. By the time they return at dawn, these bats will have eaten some 200 tons of insects, many of them pests that attack farm crops of the region.

This is one of the most inspiring displays in the natural world, and members of Bat Conservation International enjoy an exclusive opportunity to witness it.

BCI protects this invaluable cave, located on the fringes of suburban San Antonio, and the immense maternity colony that uses it each summer to give birth and raise young. Until proper public-viewing facilities can be funded and built, visitation must be strictly limited. BCI members are invited to watch the emergence on specially designated nights.

Reservations for the 2008 Bracken Member Nights are now being accepted. Space is extremely limited, so please register early. We'll send directions and additional information with your confirmation. (Please limit your party to four people. Neither pets nor alcoholic beverages are allowed at Bracken Cave.)

The schedule for 2008: April 5 (Saturday), April 19 (Saturday); June 18 (Wednesday), June 28 (Saturday); July 9 (Wednesday), July 19 (Saturday), July 26 (Saturday); August 6 (Wednesday), August 16 (Saturday), August 29 (Friday); September 12 (Friday), September 27 (Saturday).

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The sight is breathtaking. Thousands of huge bats, their graceful wings spanning three feet or more, sail directly overhead. ...

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