


## VOLUME 28, NO. 2 Summer 2010

### WNS Timeline

February 2006: A caver photographs hibernating bats with a white powder on their muzzles at Howes Cave west of Albany, N.Y. The photograph “the first evidence of what would become known as White-nose Syndrome” was not distributed until 2008, when its significance became clear.



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January 2007: A caver reports that bats, which normally hibernate deep in the cave, were clustered near the entrance of Schoharie Cavern, near Howes. This was followed by scattered reports of bats flying around urban neighborhoods in the area with deep snow on the ground “something bats don't do.

March 2007: A New York Department of Environmental Conservation team visits Hailes Cave, 20 miles from Howes, for a scheduled survey of endangered Indiana myotis. They left soon after entering and reported thousands of dead bats in the cave. The team also photographed bats in the cave with white noses. Dead bats are confirmed in a total of four caves in the area.

Summer through Winter 2007: Al Hicks of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation raises the alarm, seeking information about bats with "this white nose condition" from colleagues and cavers. White-nose Syndrome is named.

Spring 2008: WNS is reported in Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Aeolus Cave in Dorset, Vermont, shocks biologists with thousands of bat carcasses strewn across the cave floor.

June 2008: An emergency Science Strategy Meeting on White-nose Syndrome is held June 9-11, in Albany, New York, to set research priorities. The meeting was organized by BCI, Boston University, Cornell University, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

October 2008: The fungus found on WNS-affected bats is identified as a member of the genus *Geomyces*. A similar white fungus has been informally reported on some European bats, but without significant mortality.

Spring 2009: WNS is confirmed in New Hampshire, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, but also moves beyond the northeastern states into Virginia and West Virginia.

April 2009: The White-nose fungus is confirmed as a new species: *Geomyces destructans*.

May 2009: The Second Science Strategy Meeting on WNS is hosted by BCI, in partnership with Boston University, in Austin, Texas.

June 2009: Officials of BCI, Boston University, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Forest Service, the National Speleological Society and the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife testify about WNS to a congressional subcommittee, requesting \$15 million in federal funds for WNS research and monitoring for the coming fiscal year. They received \$1.9 million.

August 2009: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with sponsorship from BCI and the NSS, hosts an annual meeting to advance collaboration on WNS research and management.

September 2009: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, working with the U.S. Geological Survey and National Park Service, presents the framework for its national plan for confronting White-nose Syndrome. The process began with an initial meeting in May.

December 2009: The WNS fungus is confirmed on a bat in France that shows no WNS symptoms.

February/March 2010: WNS is confirmed on bats in Tennessee and Maryland, and in Ontario, Canada.

April/May 2010: The WNS fungus is confirmed on bats in Delaware, Missouri and Oklahoma, and Quebec, Canada. In Missouri, the fungus was identified for the first time in endangered gray myotis (*Myotis grisescens*). It's also confirmed on a southeastern myotis (*Myotis austroriparius*) in Virginia. A cave myotis (*Myotis velifer*), a western species, is found with the WNS fungus in Oklahoma, potentially opening the American West and possibly Mexico to the disease.

May 2010: BCI Executive Director Nina Fascione submits testimony, endorsed by 60 other conservation organizations, to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees requesting urgent funding for WNS research and mitigation. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pennsylvania Game Commission and BCI sponsor the 2010 WNS symposium in Pittsburgh.

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