

*November 2012, Volume 10, Number 11*  
**The Return of Bracken Member Nights**

Bat Conservation International is proud to announce the return of BCI Member Nights for viewing the world's largest bat colony at Bracken Bat Cave near San Antonio, Texas. We have decided not to continue the admission-fee experiment that opened Bracken to the general public this past summer. Visiting Bracken is a benefit of joining BCI.

Nearby Natural Bridge Caverns, BCI's partner in the test, conducted supervised public tours five evenings a week through the summer to watch millions of Mexican free-tailed bats emerge from the cave. The bats were carefully monitored through the season, and there was no evidence that increased visitation had any discernible impact.

"Natural Bridge Caverns was an excellent partner and performed admirably throughout this experiment. We greatly appreciate their partnership on this test and their commitment to the conservation of the Bracken bats. Our decision in no way questions their first-rate efforts, and we are jointly considering a limited number of public-viewing nights," said Dave Waldien, BCI's Interim Executive Director.

"But after reviewing the results, we believe that our education and conservation goals for Bracken as an iconic symbol for international bat conservation is best served by providing special nights for BCI's valued members and their guests and for targeted groups, such as science teachers, conservation organizations, legislators and Scouts."

BCI has reserved 18 nights exclusively for BCI Members from May through September, including an unprecedented all-night opportunity on August 10, when visitors will be able to experience the bats' emergence, the Perseid meteor shower and the bats' return at dawn the next day.

Each BCI membership will admit two adults on Member Nights. You may also bring up to two children (18 years old or younger) at no cost. Arrangements for accommodating additional guests are being developed. Reservations are required and new memberships may be obtained during the reservation process.

The Member Night schedule is available [online now](#), where additional details and reservations for 2013 BCI Member Nights at Bracken Bat Cave will be accepted beginning January 1, 2013. The number of spaces is limited for each designated night, so please reserve your place early.

Join us at Bracken Bat Cave in 2013 as we share one of the world's most memorable and treasured wildlife wonders!

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*Watching the bats emerge from  
Bracken Bat Cave. Â© Fran  
Hutchins, BCI.*

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