

FAQ's

What time is the emergence?

From October through early spring, the bat emergences can be hard to see because it gets dark earlier and there are fewer bats at the bridge. (Most of the bats migrate to Mexico in the winter.) A few bats do stick around all winter, but their emergences are more erratic and less concentrated than in the summer. When the bats are in town, they usually emerge a little after sunset, but keep in mind that they react to many variables, including weather, temperature, and various disturbances. Their emergence times vary from day to day. Please call Bat Conservation International at 512-327-9721 for the latest flight times.

When are the best viewing months?

July and August.

When are the bats in residence?

Austin's Mexican free-tailed bat colony usually arrives in March and returns to Mexico in November.

Where is the best viewing site?

The Bat Observation area at the Austin American-Statesman, which is located at the southeast corner of the Congress Avenue bridge.

Do the bats still fly if it's raining?

Bats have a high metabolism and must forage nightly, but rain can delay the emergence time and make the emergence itself more sporadic.

Where can we park?

Free parking is available at the Texas Dept. of Transportation parking lot, located at 200 E. Riverside Drive, after 6 pm and on weekends. However, there is no designated parking for buses. Buses may drop off visitors and then will need to find parking off-site as the parking lot composition will not allow for the weight of buses. If you are bringing in a bus with a large group you should plan to come in a little early, especially during the summer months.

How do I get to the Congress Avenue bridge?

The Congress Avenue Bridge is in Downtown Austin, just 10 blocks south of the State Capitol building. The bridge spans Town Lake at the cross streets of Cesar Chavez to the north and Barton Springs Road on the south. The Austin American-Statesman's Bat Observation Center is on the southeast side. See the section above entitled "Location", which has a map showing the location of the bridge. If you need additional information click on the "more directions" link in the Location section.

Are there bathrooms?

There are no public restrooms at the bridge.

Are there refreshment stands?

No refreshment stands are available at the bridge, however there are several restaurants in the immediate area.

Are there picnic tables, chairs, bleachers?

There are no picnic tables, chairs, or bleachers at the viewing area, but you are invited to bring lawnchairs or blankets and enjoy a picnic on the lawn.

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