

Scouting for Bats with the Mississippi Bat Working Group

Article by Terri Jacobson, Mississippi Field Office, 2011

Earlier this fall, in celebration of “Year of the Bat”, biologists and bat enthusiasts of the Mississippi Bat Working Group (MBWG) conducted a bat survey with a mist netting demonstration and educational seminar for a group of Webelos II boy scouts and their families in north Mississippi. A total of 12 red bats (*Lasiurus borealis*) were caught in 18-meter mist nets giving the scouts a chance to view a live bat close up. The seminar part of the event included five learning stations, oral report presentations by the scouts and a large group activity. Topics and activities covered aided the scouts towards their wildlife belt or pin and the World Conservation Award.



This patch was custom designed especially for the bat and scout event in Mississippi. Graphic design by Mike Womack, MBWG

What is the Mississippi Bat Working Group? The MBWG was formed at the Sixth Annual Southeastern Bat Diversity Network meeting in 2001. The goal of MBWG is bat conservation through research and education. Currently, the non-profit organization consists of 125 individuals interested in the biology, conservation, ecology, and management of bats, and their habitats on state, federal, and private lands within the state of Mississippi. Members of the bat working group that participated in the scouting event included three rangers from the Corps of Engineers, two enthusiastic “batty” volunteers, one educator from the Mississippi Museum of Natural Resources, two biologists from Mississippi Ecological Services Field Office (Sandie Kilpatrick and Terri Jacobson) and two biologists from North Mississippi Wildlife Refuge Complex (Eva Kristofik and Becky Rosamond).



Three scouts practicing to be bat biologists.
Photo credit Terri Jacobson, FWS



North Mississippi Refuge biologist, Becky Rosamond handles a red bat. *Photo credit Terri Jacobson, FWS*