



**National Wildlife Health Center
Wildlife Health Bulletin 2018-06**

**Winter 2018/2019 Bat Submission Guidelines and
Updates from the 2017/2018 White-Nose Syndrome Surveillance Season**

To: Natural Resource/Conservation Managers

From: Dr. Jonathan Sleeman, Center Director, USGS National Wildlife Health Center

Date: November 29, 2018

Updated guidance from the USGS National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC) is now available for bat submissions for the [2018/2019 white-nose syndrome \(WNS\) surveillance season](#). These guidelines are posted on the updated [NWHC WNS web page](#) and replace all previous NWHC bat submission criteria. Included are reference charts and an updated WNS Management Area map to assist submitters in identifying priority species and collecting appropriate samples for submission to a diagnostic laboratory. These guidelines support surveillance objectives of the WNS National Plan designed to identify new geographic locations and bat species impacted by *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (*Pd*) and WNS.

The NWHC can answer questions about WNS surveillance and response plans relevant to your state, territory, or region. The NWHC can also test samples collected as part of opportunistic or targeted surveillance efforts in accordance with the national *Pd* surveillance strategy. Representatives from Tribal, State, and Federal agencies who wish to participate in ongoing surveillance efforts or who have questions should contact Anne Ballmann (608-270-2445, aballmann@usgs.gov).

Updates from national surveillance for white-nose syndrome and *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* during 2017/2018

Surveillance conducted last season documented an expansion in the distribution of *Pd*, the fungus that causes WNS, and an increase in the number of North American bat species on which the fungus has been detected. Specifically, WNS was confirmed in two new states (Kansas and South Dakota) and two additional Canadian provinces (Manitoba and Newfoundland). Thus, the disease is now known to occur in 33 U.S. states and seven Canadian provinces. Additionally, *Pd* in absence of clinical signs of WNS was detected on bats from Mississippi, Texas, and Wyoming.

Initial detections of WNS (*Pd* and disease) in South Dakota, and of *Pd* alone in Wyoming, resulted from bat sampling efforts conducted during spring emergence, and in all but one case were not associated with specific hibernacula. Environmental sampling earlier in the spring at hibernacula in the Black Hills region of South Dakota (Custer County) failed to detect the fungus, suggesting *Pd* was recently

introduced to the area. In Kansas, WNS (*Pd* and disease) was detected at hibernacula and bat mortality was observed indicating the fungus may have been present in previous seasons. New detections of *Pd* alone in Texas were reported from multiple species of bats sampled at hibernacula in four new counties (Blanco, Foard, Kendall, and Wheeler).

With respect to bat species impacted in 2017/2018, the cave bat (*Myotis velifer*) and long-legged bat (*Myotis volans*) were newly confirmed positive for WNS. Four additional species or subspecies, including the western small-footed bat (*Myotis ciliolabrum*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), the Ozark big-eared bat (*C. t. ingens*), and the Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*), were reported to harbor *Pd* in the absence of clinical disease. In all, 11 species of North American bats are now known to develop WNS, and presence of *Pd* has been confirmed on seven additional species in the absence of clinical signs diagnostic for WNS.

A current map of the distribution of confirmed and suspected cases of WNS is available [here](#).

Disease Investigation Services

To request diagnostic services or report wildlife mortality, please contact the NWHC at **608-270-2480** or by email at NWHC-epi@usgs.gov, and a field epidemiologist will be available to discuss the case. To report wildlife mortality events in Hawaii or Pacific Island territories, please contact the Honolulu Field Station at 808-792-9520 or email Thierry Work at thierry_work@usgs.gov.

Further information about our services can be found at www.usgs.gov/nwhc/services. To learn more about submitting samples and reporting events, go to www.usgs.gov/nwhc/submit and check out the [Wildlife Mortality Reporting and Diagnostic Services Request Worksheet](#).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the scientific and technical services we provide, please do not hesitate to contact NWHC Director Jonathan Sleeman at 608-270-2401, jsleeman@usgs.gov.

To see past Wildlife Health Bulletins, click [here](#).

WILDLIFE HEALTH BULLETINS are distributed to natural resource/conservation agencies to provide and promote information exchange about significant wildlife health threats. If you would like to be added to or removed from the mailing list for these Bulletins, please contact Natalie Nguyen at 608-270-2416 or e-mail: nwhcoutreachdb@usgs.gov.