

Notes

Observation of Foliage-roosting in the Little Brown Bat, *Myotis lucifugus*

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First report of foliage-roosting behaviour in a Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). The observation is discussed in relation to similar behaviour in other bat species.

Key Words: Little Brown Bat, *Myotis lucifugus*, foliage roosting, Ontario.

We report the occurrence of foliage-roosting behaviour by a Little Brown Bat, *Myotis lucifugus*, which is generally considered a cavity-roosting species (e.g., Barbour and Davis 1969; Fenton and Barclay 1980; Barclay 1980). At 11:00 hrs on 18 July, 2004, in Algonquin Provincial Park (Ontario, Canada) we observed a single *M. lucifugus* hanging by one foot from a relatively exposed maple leaf (*Acer saccharum*) at a height of about 5 m. The bat was torpid, and would have been well camouflaged had it not been roosting directly opposite a small deck. When captured and handled, it woke from its torpid state within 45 s. and behaved normally. The bat had a number of ectoparasites (bat bugs) on it. However, its ectoparasite load was not higher than the loads observed on several other bats captured in the area, so we have no reason to assume the bat was in poor health.

To our knowledge this is the first time that day-roosting in foliage has been reported for *M. lucifugus*, or any North American *Myotis*, although it is known from other species in the genus (e.g., the Taiwanese endemic *M. formosus*; Y. Ho, personal communication). Other foliage-roosting species in Ontario, such as the larger and more brightly coloured *Lasiurus* species are notoriously difficult to spot in mature forests (Fenton 1998; B. Hickey personal communication), so such behaviour could be easily missed. The Eastern Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus subflavus*) was previously believed to be an obligate cavity rooster until it was recently found frequently roosting in foliage (Veilleux et al. 2003).

The individual that we observed was less than 100 m from an old building that contained a maternity colony of *M. lucifugus* (>50 individuals). While we cannot discount the possibility that it was a sick or excluded member of the colony, we observed no indications of acute illness. We suggest that our observation represents further evidence that many bat species are capable of substantial behavioural flexibility.

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