

Shipping Mammal (bat) Samples for Identification

Due to improved DNA technology and more complete databases, we are now able to process mammal (mainly bat) identifications based on DNA alone. It is no longer necessary to send complete or partial carcass of bats or other mammals. If our lab analysis fails in cases of bat strikes, we will attempt to identify the bat to major 'group' using hair or other morphological characters that are received with the shipment. We will attempt other mammal identifications if appropriate material is received.

The following guidelines are suggested for shipping Bat/Mammal remains to the Smithsonian for Identification:

Do not send the entire carcass or large parts of partial carcasses. These specimens decompose rapidly and cause problems with shipping and handling and may be discarded by postal workers.

- Collecting Options (please do **as many** of the points below as possible):
 - If the body cavity is open or blood or tissue is present, sample that material using a cotton swab or alcohol (70% ethanol) wipe.
 - Pull hair samples from the carcass if possible and include with other samples.
 - Clip a small part of the skin from the wing (patagium) of the bat if it is available. We will use this as a tissue sample for DNA analysis.
 - Photograph the carcass (or bat) if the specimens are whole and attach the photo to the on-line report.
- Provide a tentative identification if possible.
- Enclose all samples with proper documents and ship remains according to your agency instructions.
- ALWAYS wear gloves/PPE
- If you have a fresh bat that is in excellent condition, freeze it immediately and contact the Smithsonian to see if we need the specimen for the research collections. If so, we will send separate shipping instructions.

Properly wash hands with soap and water and follow all sanitary procedures for collecting wildlife remains.