



Neighboring San Antonio-Area Caves Team-Up to Celebrate International Bat Night

Bracken Bat Cave and Natural Bridge Caverns Host Special Event on August 27th

August 23, 2011 (San Antonio, TX) – On August 27th, Bat Conservation International (BCI) and Natural Bridge Caverns are hosting the first public viewing of Bracken Bat Cave, which will serve as San Antonio’s official International Bat Night, an event being celebrated around the world to highlight these fascinating animals. Guests will tour Natural Bridge Caverns, enjoy a pizza dinner, and then head to Bracken Bat Cave to witness the incredible emergence of millions of Mexican free-tailed bats. Bracken, the home of the world’s largest bat colony, is owned and protected by Bat Conservation International. Until now, only members of Bat Conservation International and their guests were permitted to view the spectacular site.

“We’re proud to partner with Bat Conservation International for this global celebration to honor all that bats do for the environment,” said Brad Wuest, Natural Bridge Caverns owner. “I consider myself lucky to have grown up watching the bats at Bracken Bat Cave. I’m very excited to share this amazing experience with others.”

In autumn of 2010, the United Nations declared 2011-2012 as International Year of the Bat. The aim of Year of the Bat is to raise global awareness about bats, bat conservation and the unique role bats’ play in our environment. Bat Conservation International (BCI) of Austin, EuroBats and UNEP Convention of Migratory Species (CMS) of Germany, and dozens of others organizations across the world are planning events in celebration of these flying mammals.

“As a founding partner for Year of the Bat, BCI is looking forward to the exciting events that will be occurring throughout next year,” said Nina Fascione, BCI’s Executive Director. “Negative myths and misinformation have generated needless fears that have threatened bats and their habitats for centuries. Year of the Bat will help educate people around the world about the benefits of bats and knowledge is the key.”

Bats need more help than ever. Since 2006, millions of hibernating bats have died from a disease known as White-nose Syndrome (WNS), named for a cold-loving white fungus typically found on the faces and wings of infected bats. WNS causes bats to awaken more often during hibernation and use up the stored fat reserves that are needed to get them through the winter. Infected bats often emerge too soon from hibernation and are seen flying around in midwinter. These bats usually freeze or starve to death.

“The bats at Bracken are the lucky bats,” said Fascione.

To make reservations, please contact Natural Bridge Caverns at (210) 651-6101.