

Now's the time to send them packing

By Jim Wood

special writer

They pass your face like a breath of air and never touch you. They're like shadows and if you listen hard, they squeak in the tiniest of voices. The Germans call them fledermaus, or flying mice.

We call them bats.

They are associated with caves, haunted mansions and belfries, but it's your attic they prefer.

Bats can be heard rustling in and out. They raise a stink with their droppings and when they die. There's also the danger of rabies if you're bitten. And they're hard to get rid of.

But not if you know what to do and when to do it.

That time is now, before the frosts become too frequent. Once cold weather closes in, the bat colony at your house is likely to grow.

There are six species of bats in Michigan: the red, the hoary, the pallid, little brown, big brown, and the endangered Indiana bat. Little browns are the most common in this area, followed by the big browns. Big browns only nest in single-digit numbers, but little browns average 20-40 in a colony, up to several hundred.

"It's not always easy to get rid of bats in your home," says Glenn Duddar, an extension specialist at Michigan State University, "but it's possible in winter. If you allow the bats to go into hibernation in your attic, that's where they'll be until spring. There's no way to rouse them once they've entered their dormant state."

The IMPATIENT homeowner would think of extermination, but the professionals would advise against that at the start of winter.

"If absolutely necessary, only in an emergency," Kevin Clark, president of Critter Control in Westland, said of extermination. Like Duddar, he is unwilling to kill the tiny flying mammals because they are so beneficial to man and the ecological balance.

BATS

Bats eat insects people would rather be rid of. And there are other reasons for not evicting them.

"If some of them crawl or fall into places where you can't reach them, you could be smelling them for quite a while. Killing the bats really doesn't solve the bat problem because it does nothing to prevent more bats from moving back in later," Clark said.

Neither does driving them out. Mothballs sort of work, but only if you can get them to stick to the floor for every 2,000 square feet. Bats are sensitive to high-frequency sounds and can be forced to leave by some commercial sound devices.

Duddar suggests making one by attaching two to three silent dog whistles to an air pump, such as those used in a large aquarium, and running it continually near the roosting area.

Brightly lighting the roosting area consistently with four or more 100-watt bulbs has also worked after several days.

These measures, says Duddar, "range in effectiveness from adequate, if used properly, to worthless." None of them keep the bats from returning promptly.

To do that you must get them all out and prevent them from getting back in.

"This may mean standing on a different side of the house around sun-

set on several consecutive nights until you spot the bats leaving," Duddar said.

He suggests going outside a bit earlier to give your eyes a chance to adjust to the waning light, as bats can be hard to see at that time.

IF YOU SEE them leaving, move quickly to stuff the openings while

they're gone. Openings are likely to be under eaves, around chimneys or near windows — with wood, window screening, hardware cloth, caulk, fiberglass insulation, or masonry.

The alternative is to wait for a bright day and observe the darkened roosting area from the inside; you should be able to find the openings from light leaking in. Block all but

one or two openings. When the bats leave by these at sunset, close them up too.

Clark said he uses "check valves" when blocking up exits. These are PVC pipes placed vertically, such as under the eaves, that allow the bat to leave but prevents its return because the pipe is too slippery for it to crawl up. He likes copper mesh with

openings of one-eighth to one-quarter inch. One-half inch is too big.

Clark also recommends bat houses to trap bats. A bat house is placed on a pole like a martin house and is a plain box made of cedar on the outside, with a rough surface on the inside and a hole in the floor. Bats enter through the hole and cling to the rough walls.

Windows galore

Continued from Page 1

"You don't need them with a wall of glass," Bennett said.

Difficult to install properly, many owners complained that skylights leaked. Heat rises, making skylights a source of heat loss.

"But they can help in some dark areas," Bennett said.

Aluminum-framed windows are the big losers in this new trend. First it was discovered the frames promoted heat loss. Then they lost fashion points.

"Twenty-five years ago wood was out. It was considered old-fashioned," said Myers, whose house de-

signed won the people's choice award at this year's Homescapes. "Now, there aren't that many aluminum windows. Wood holds heat better."

GLASS BLOCK, popular more than 30 years ago, is sneaking back into favor. Eight-by-eight walls of glass block are used to accent entrance ways and solve such problems as allowing light into baths while retaining privacy.

Although the emphasis on windows has begun to trickle down to average houses, chances are good buyers in that market won't see as many as the drama in their own houses. Large windows need higher ceilings.

Adios, heavy drapes

Continued from Page 1

tion, according to Shears. Pleated shades with metallic backs are an energy efficient solution suggested by Cockle. Bear in mind the shades can be almost too heavy to pull up by hand. Mechanisms are available to

pull up the shades automatically, but they're costly.

To soften a palladian or curved top window and emphasize the architecture, Shears knots a fabric around the window.

THE CHOICE OF THREE GENERATIONS



Royal Pointe
of West Bloomfield

\$320,900
Move-In Today
Call: 788-1070



Cross Creek
of Rochester Hills

\$257,900
Available Now
Call: 656-8825

Superior locations...outstanding designs...and exceptional quality. When you're buying your new home, consider the real satisfaction that comes with owning a home built by The Brody Group.

For more than 60 years, we have earned our award-winning reputation by building innovative homes with quality craftsmanship, value and attention to detail.

Choice building sites are available as well as immediate occupancy in several of Oakland County's most private and prestigious residential settings.

The Brody Communities

1. Royal Palace
Maple Rd. West of Farmington Rd
Troy 480-1070
From \$294,900

2. Strathmore
Haggerty Rd. South of 13 Mile Rd.
Farmington Hills 553-2820
From \$227,000

3. Cross Creek
Maple Rd. East of 13 Mile Rd.
Rochester Hills 556-9825
From \$219,900

4. Hartford Square
Lang Lake Rd. East of Rochester Rd.
Troy 480-0630
From \$166,900

5. Lockwood
Jolyn Rd. North of Waldon Rd.
Lake Orion 335-8900
From \$129,900

Hartford Square
of Troy
\$175,900
Immediate Occupancy
Call: 680-0630

BRODY
THE BRODY GROUP

2222 Franklin Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013
(313) 335-8900

SOUTH LYNN AREA
Greencrook Hills
"Luxury Living in the Country"

RANCH-COLONIAL-CAPE COD
Priced from... \$188,550

Decorated Models — Open 1-8 Daily (Closed Thurs.)

The Prudential

MODEL Harry S. Wolfe, REALTORS®
437-5970 Marketing Agent
421-5660

An independently owned and operated member of The Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

ENT. MILFORD RD. FROM 1/8 WEST OF 13 MILE 9 OF 10 MILE

Boulder's Close-Out!!!
"Luxury Homes"

FARMINGTON GLEN
One Model and Two Spec Homes Available

Priced from Low '200's

N. off 13 Mile • One block W. of Haggerty
For more information
Call...661-9210
Built by: Singh/Sharpe

save energy

Join a car pool. If just one more passenger climbs into each car for each trip, enough gasoline could be saved daily to power 67,000 cars traveling from San Francisco to New York and back again.

Enjoy The Lifestyles Dreams Are Made Of

The unbelievable natural beauty of Oak Pointe's 700 acres features the finest residential and recreational community in Michigan. Superior quality luxury condominiums and plush single family homes available. Oak Pointe offers: • 36 holes of exceptional golf • 9 hole Honor's Course designed by Arthur Hills • Marina and beach • Jogging walking paths • Cross country skiing • Furnished models • Luxury condominiums • Single family homes • The Roadhouse restaurant

Models and Information
Greene Cypress
Monday-Friday
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Closed Thursdays
313-227-2609
Oak Pointe Sales Office

USC EXIT 104

Developed and Built by The Irwin Group, Inc.
FINAL PHASE NOW IN PROGRESS!



Cross Creek
of Rochester Hills

\$257,900
Available Now
Call: 656-8825

The Brody Communities

1. Royal Palace
Maple Rd. West of Farmington Rd
Troy 480-1070
From \$294,900

2. Strathmore
Haggerty Rd. South of 13 Mile Rd.
Farmington Hills 553-2820
From \$227,000

3. Cross Creek
Maple Rd. East of 13 Mile Rd.
Rochester Hills 556-9825
From \$219,900

4. Hartford Square
Lang Lake Rd. East of Rochester Rd.
Troy 480-0630
From \$166,900

5. Lockwood
Jolyn Rd. North of Waldon Rd.
Lake Orion 335-8900
From \$129,900

BRODY
THE BRODY GROUP

2222 Franklin Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013
(313) 335-8900