



Southern bent-wing bat—Providing accurate population estimates and trends (VIC)

Funding

\$50,000

Project

This project will support efforts to conserve the southern bent-wing bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii bassanii*) by providing accurate population estimates and trends at one of its remaining two breeding sites.

The southern bent-wing bat was once estimated to number over 200,000 individuals but now is one of only five mammals listed federally as critically endangered. Today the species breeds in only two locations, Naracoorte Caves National Park in South Australia and Starlight Cave near Warrnambool in Victoria. Its numbers are estimated at less than 50,000. Understanding what is driving population declines at these two critical sites is vital for the survival of the species.

This funding will allow the use of state-of-the-art thermal imaging and other innovative technology to accurately assess the number of bats as they fly out from the cave at night. Health assessments will also be carried out to identify potential drivers of decline. Accurate population estimates are essential for evaluating the effectiveness of current onground, practical action.



Photo credit: Steve Bourne

Partners

Arthur Rylah Institute, Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Zoos Victoria and the University of Melbourne.

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