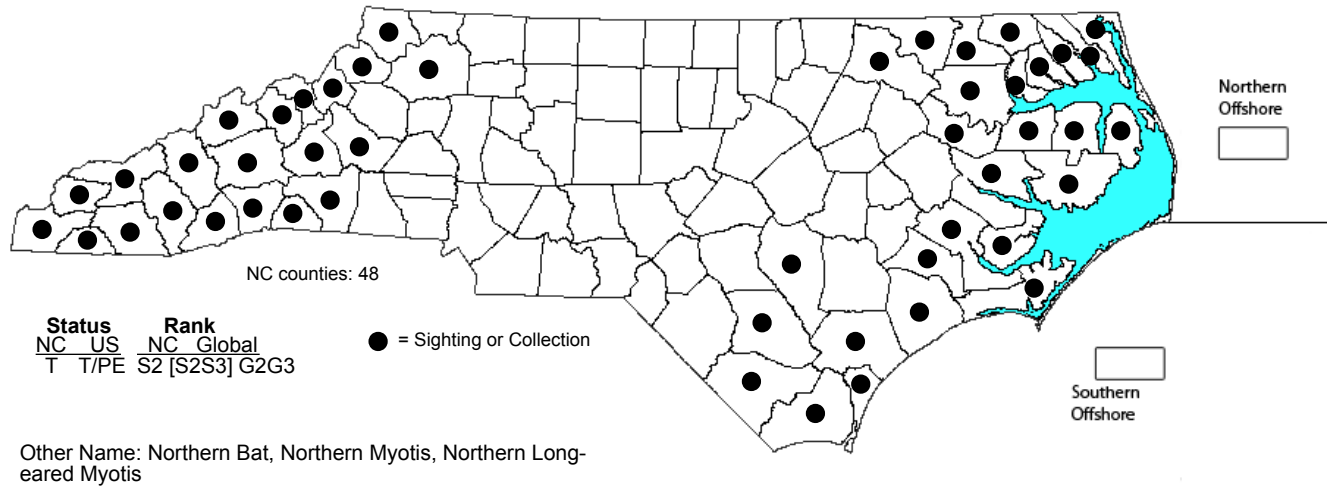


Myotis septentrionalis Northern Long-eared Bat



DISTRIBUTION: In NC, it has a distinctly bimodal distribution -- essentially only the mountains and Coastal Plain. The only Piedmont records are for the foothills; former specimen records for Davidson and Lee counties have recently been determined to be of Evening Bat. In the Coastal Plain it is primarily found in the eastern portions, and it has also been found at scattered counties in the southern Coastal Plain (but not in the Sandhills). Thus, lacking records as yet from most of the western third of the Coastal Plain/Sandhills region.

As the name implies, this species ranges farther north than most other bats, occurring from Alberta and Newfoundland south sparingly to the Gulf Coast states, though generally scarce in the Southeast.

ABUNDANCE: Declining somewhat strongly, owing to White Nose Syndrome. In NC, generally uncommon now in the mountains, rare to uncommon in the foothills, and rare to locally uncommon in the northern and eastern Coastal Plain (being quite rare or local in the southeastern counties). Likely absent from most of the inner Coastal Plain and Piedmont (east of the foothills). However, despite records from 44 counties (as of 2022), most counties have are just one or two records, and most mist-netting efforts have produced just one individual in a night.

SEASONAL OCCURRENCE: Year-round, and apparently not migratory. Hibernates in winter, at least in the mountains and foothills. However, there are some winter records in the Coastal Plain, and thus can be active at times in winter in that region.

HABITAT: Generally in moderate to heavy forests, probably with creeks or other water nearby. Roosts in trees or buildings in the warmer months, rarely in caves. However, in winter, it uses caves and other heavily sheltered spots almost exclusively. In the Coastal Plain, it roosts inside hollow trees or other openings inside tree trunks.

BEHAVIOR: Roosts singly or in small numbers, but never in sizable colonies. Forages well after dark.

COMMENTS: Until the 1980's, the species was thought to be limited in NC almost exclusively to the mountains, with an outlier record from Wake County (which has since been determined to be a specimen of Little Brown Bat). However, since then, many records have come from the central and eastern Coastal Plain. Extensive mist-netting in the Coastal Plain has provided most of these new records, and others have been captured roosting inside trees in swamps. In 2016 an individual was mist-netted in Bladen County, providing just the second known record for the southern half of that province. Similar mist-netting records came from Craven and Pender counties in 2017, and Carteret and Jones in 2018, further filling in "holes" in the southern Coastal Plain part of the range. Since then, there are now records south to the SC state line (in Columbus and Brunswick counties). Until around 2010, it was not considered to be rare or in trouble in the state. But, as it roosts in caves in winter, though in small numbers at any given site, White Nose Syndrome (in the mountain region) has been a serious factor in the decline in the species. In fact, on October 2, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed the species for Federal Endangered status. It has since been Federally listed as a Threatened species; in 2022, the species was listed as "Threatened/Proposed Endangered". The State status was listed as Threatened when the Federal listing was given that status. NatureServe had moved the Global Rank in recent years from G2G3 to a very rare G1G2, but has since (2022) returned the rank to a more reasonable G2G3. With 44 county records now in NC, and many new ones in the Coastal Plain in the last 5-6 years, the State Rank is suggested to be moved to S2S3.

STATUS: Native

LIST TYPE: Official