



## Marriott Supports the Ecosystem Again!

The *Marriott Beach Resort* has joined forces with the National Trust Bat Conservation Program and Caribbean Utilities Co Ltd (CUC) in a collaborative effort to aid the community in alleviating of the ever-present nuisance of mosquitoes and garden pest insects. Marriott is lending their associates' time and resources in building 20 + bat houses which will then enable the placement of these bat houses on poles donated and installed by CUC at carefully chosen sites throughout the Island, including one being maintained on the Marriott property.

Bats are losing habitat at an ever increasing rate. In their search for shelter, they sometimes move into roofs, lofts and attics. While they are not a health hazard or dangerous to humans in any way, bats in the roof produce an unpleasant odor and should be removed humanely and safely using environmentally sound methods. Volunteers working with the National Trust advise and assist homeowners in the removal and relocation of bat colonies from roof spaces. When bats are removed from a roof, they will seek another home. Bat Houses ensure that these displaced bat colonies do not find shelter in another person's roof space.

"The contribution of the Marriott is an enormous boom to the program" enthused Lois Blumenthal, Bat Conservation Program Manager for the National Trust. "Their engineering team is top notch and Chief Engineer Bryan Badrick has been absolutely brilliant in assisting with design modifications. Cayman's bat house project is receiving world-wide acclaim since Hurricane Ivan and this Marriott partnership and the continuing support of CUC are key in making the Cayman Islands a model for not only the Caribbean, but tropical regions globally."

"Marriott supports the National Trust in this effort and has learned to appreciate the ecological importance of bats to the ecosystems of our country." commented Walter Regidor, the Managing Director for the Grand Cayman Marriott Beach Resort. "We've learned that contrary to popular belief; the benefits of bats to humans, and to the ecosystem as a whole, are many. Bats not only control mosquitoes, but also crop and garden pests. Other bat species are important pollinator agents and seed dispersers of native plants. Furthermore, bats are the only native mammal in Cayman and they are subject to high vulnerability due to their low birth rate."

"With the collaboration of efforts there lies existence of responsible, humane and effective methods of bat exclusion in buildings. Marriott supports combating the bat roosting issues we face in roofs, especially in the tropics, with a true long-term solution that is eco-friendly and benefits humans directly – especially in regard to insect pest control - bat houses."

For more information about the Bat House Project contact the National Trust at 949-0121 or email [info@caymanwildlife.org](mailto:info@caymanwildlife.org)

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