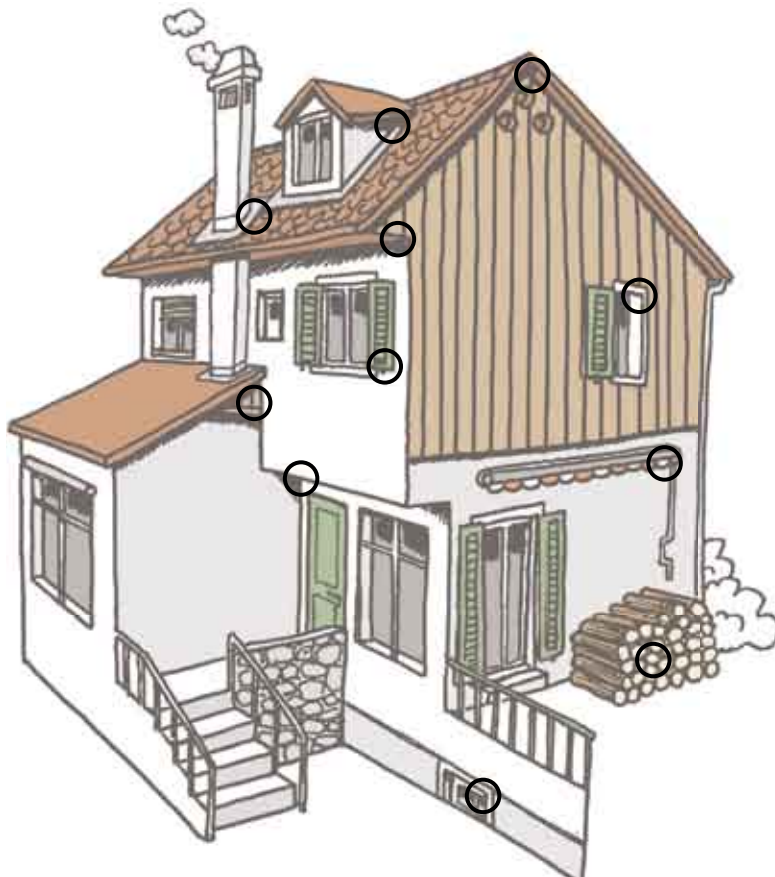


Enemies

About 50 years ago, colonies of more than 2,000 greater mouse-eared bats lived in many churches on the Central Plateau in Switzerland. Today, there are far fewer colonies and they are much smaller, numbering only around 50 to 100 animals. In some areas in Europe, greater mouse-eared bats are even extinct. There are several reasons for this. The most important one is farming and forestry. Wild grassland as well as wild woodland have become rare and these were the ideal hunting grounds for bats. They contained lots of wild flowers and bushes where many insects could be found. Now, there are fewer flowers and bushes, and a lot of insects are killed with chemicals. So there is less food for the bats, and the chemicals are harmful to them, too.

But there isn't just less food, there are also fewer places where bats can *roost*. This is because a lot of old buildings have been renovated in recent years and the bats have been *driven out*.

What can be done? Today, renovations are often planned carefully to make sure that no bats are disturbed. If possible, buildings are renovated in autumn and winter because that's when bats hibernate in caves. It's also important to leave holes for the bats so that they can get in and out of the building. Depending on their size and the size of their colony, the different types of bats need smaller or bigger places to hide and sleep.



<i>roost</i>	die Schlafzeit verbringen
<i>drive out</i>	vertreiben