

A close-up photograph of a brown bat hanging upside down from a tree branch. The bat's wings are spread out, showing the dark brown membrane. Its fur is a mix of brown and orange-brown. The bat's eyes are large and reddish-brown. The background consists of large green leaves and a tree trunk.

Bats

By Heather Aiken

Table of Contents

Bats are mammals.....	3
Bats big and small.....	4
Living with bats.....	5
Bats in the dark.....	7
Bats are helpers.....	10
Glossary.....	13

Bats are mammals



Baby bats are called pups. Like all mammals, they are live-born. This means they do not hatch from eggs. As mammals, they have hair, or fur, on their body. Bats are the only mammal that can fly.

Bats Big and Small

Bats can be many different sizes. The largest bat, called the Flying Fox, lives on islands in the South Pacific. It can have a wingspan up to six feet wide.

The smallest bat, called the bumblebee bat, lives in Thailand. It weighs less than a penny.



A flying fox takes to the skies.

Living with Bats

Some bats live in caves. They **hibernate**, or sleep, in winter. They often live in large groups called **colonies**.



This bat colony lives in a cave.

Other bats **migrate** to warmer places when the weather gets cold.

Most bats sleep upside down. This makes it easier for them to take-off and fly. When they want to fly, they can just let go and swoop into the air. Sleeping upside down also helps them avoid predators.



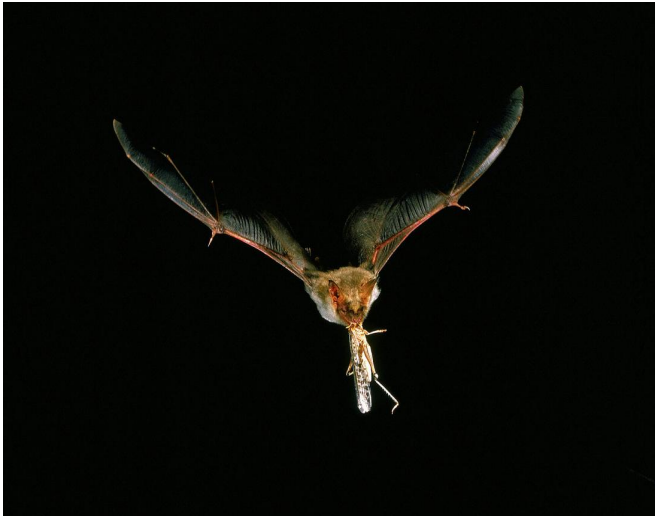
These bats sleep upside down.

Bats are nocturnal. They sleep during the day and stay awake at night. Bats can't see very well. Many bats use **echolocation**, or sound waves, to help them move around in the dark. The bat makes sound waves that bounce off objects and help the bat find its way.

Bats are Helpers

Some bats eat mosquitoes and other insects. These bats can eat up to 1,200 mosquitoes an hour!

Other bats eat fruit. They help **pollinate** plants. These bats help mangoes, avocados, and cacao (used to make chocolate) grow.



This bat has caught a grasshopper.



These bats are enjoying some cut fruit.



This bat house helps protect bats from predators.

Many bats are **endangered**. You can help protect bats by building a bat house to keep them safe.

Glossary

colonies: A large group of animals that live together

echolocation: A bat emits sound waves which bounce off of hard objects and return to the bat, allowing the bat to find its way around in the dark.

endangered: Animals that are at risk of no longer surviving because of human actions destroying their food or habitat.

hibernate: To sleep through the winter.

migrate: To travel from one place to another based on the weather.

pollinate: To move pollen (the yellow powder from flowers) from one plant to another. For example, bees help pollinate flowers.

pups: Baby bats.

species: A group of animals that have similar characteristics.

Purple level
Multisyllabic Words
Three syllable words