

The Many Benefits of Bats



Bats are one of the most important animals in our environment. With more than 1300 different species in the world, bats are diverse in both how they look and how they keep ecosystems balanced.

INSECT CONTROL:

In North America, bats primarily eat insects—lots of insects. One bat eats thousands of insects each night. Since bats eat so many moths, beetles, flies and mosquitoes, we can use fewer pesticides to control insects. That makes our backyard, neighborhood and food healthier and saves farmers billions of dollars.

POLLINATION:

Bats in the Southwest U.S. and other warm ecosystems around the world help plants grow by pollinating flowers. When nectar-drinking bats stick their long-noses into flowers, they become covered in pollen that they then bring to other flowers, helping plants reproduce. Through pollination, bats help grow fruits such as bananas, avocados and agave.

SEED DISPERSAL:

Fruit bats are key in planting new tropical trees. Each night, fruit bats eat more than double their body weight in fruit. As they fly from tree to tree, their guano falls to the ground, helping to spread seeds across long distances. Thanks to bats in tropical parts of the world, we can enjoy fruits like pineapples, figs and mangoes.

MEDICINE

Scientists studying Vampire bats have created anti-clotting medication to help stroke victims.

TECHNOLOGY

Bat flight and echolocation have inspired advances in sonar, airplane maneuverability and navigation.

FERTILIZATION

Bat guano is used as a powerful fertilizer worldwide, offering economic and agricultural rewards.



For more information about bats, visit batweek.org and batlive.pwnet.org

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