

All About Bats



MYTHS AND TRUTHS:

MYTH: Bats are blind.

TRUTH: All bats can see. In fact, some bats have eyesight that is three times better vision than humans!

MYTH: All bats have rabies.

TRUTH: Less than 1% of bats have rabies. However it is always best to avoid handling any wild animal, including bats.

MYTH: Bats are dirty.

TRUTH: Bats are extremely clean and groom themselves like cats.

MYTH: Bats are rodents or flying mice.

TRUTH: Bats are not rodents. Unlike mice, most bats have only one baby at a time and live long lives.

MYTH: Bats attack people.

TRUTH: Bats do not attack. They are afraid of humans and avoid people when they can.

MYTH: Bats suck blood.

TRUTH: Bats do not suck blood. However, Vampire bats do exist and they do drink blood from non-human animals.

10 FUN FACTS ABOUT BATS:

1) Bats are the only mammals that fly. Scientists classify them into an order called "Chiroptera" which means "hand-wing."

2) There are more than 1,300 species of bats in the world.

3) One insect-eating bat can consume 2,000-6,000 insects in a single night!

4) Bats are important in controlling many disease-carrying and crop-harming insects. They save US farmers over \$1 billion annually!

5) Fruit-eating bats spread seeds as they fly and digest food, which reseeds deforested land.

6) The smallest bat in the world is the Kitties Hog-nosed Bat, also known as the Bumblebee Bat. It weighs as much as a dime and has a six-inch wingspan. Small bats are called microbats and are found all over the world. They are the only bats found in North and South America. They have large ears, small eyes, small bodies, and use echolocation to find food. They eat a wide range of food, including: insects, nectar, fish, fruit, frogs, and blood.

7) Nectar-feeding bats pollinate many valuable plants including bananas, balsa wood, agave, mangoes, and cashews.

8) In addition to sight, many species of bats have ultrasonic sonar capabilities (echolocation), which they use to navigate and catch insects in total darkness.

9) There are three species of vampire bats that drink blood from non-human animals such as cows, pigs, goats, and chickens. These small bats live in southern Mexico, Central America, and South America.

10) The largest bat in the world is the Malayan Flying Fox. It weighs two pounds and has a six-foot wingspan! Large bats are called megabats, or flying foxes, because their faces look like the face of the dog. All megabats live in Africa, Asia, or Australia and consume only fruit nectar.



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

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