

HearthSong
HABITATS



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Bat Field Guide

Installation and care requires adult supervision.



Like most bats in the world, North American bats are *microbats*, which means they eat insects—thank you, microbats!

The second largest group are known as *megabats*, who may or may not be larger than microbats, and who feed mostly on fruit.

DID YOU KNOW?

Bats are nocturnal, meaning they feed at night and sleep by day. Upon waking, the first thing a bat will do is look for water, so make sure to have a source of fresh water close to any wildlife habitat!

Why Do Bat Houses Matter?

Bats feed on insects, helping us to significantly cut down on *pesticides*, which are chemicals used by farmers to wipe out harmful insects. Bats are also important pollinators, so providing female bats with a safe, warm place to raise their young is a win-win proposition for everyone!

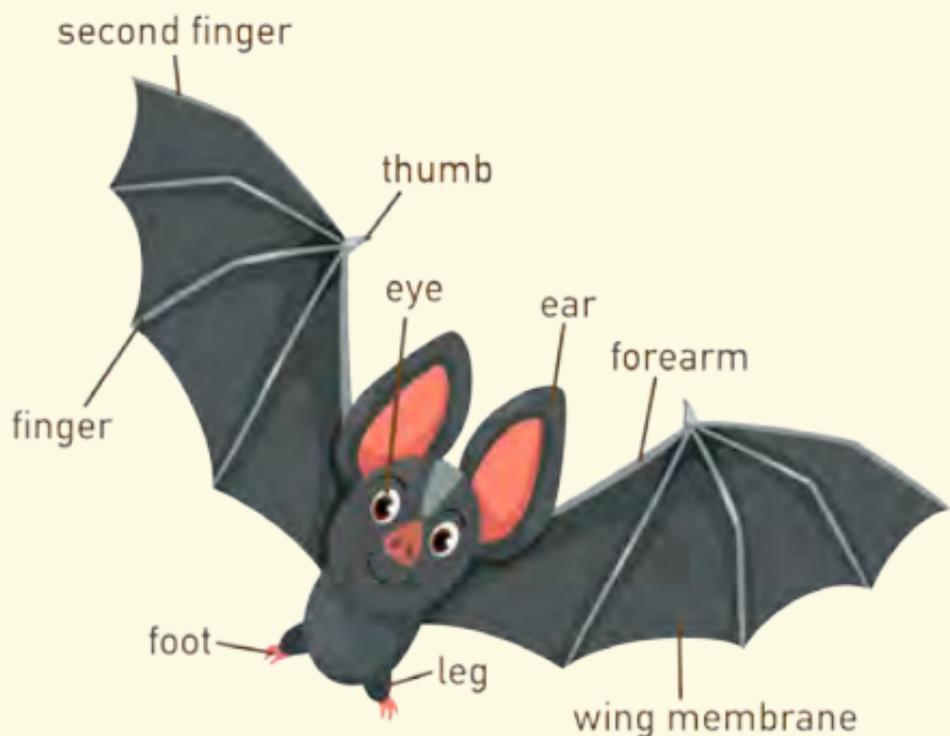




DID YOU KNOW?

One bat will eat 60 moths
and 1000 mosquito-sized
insects in a single night!

Anatomy of a Bat



DID YOU KNOW?

Bat poop, called guano, is a super fertilizer for plants and flowers—just one more reason to love the 1,100 species of bats around the world!

What Makes a Great Bat House?

Wildlife habitats are shrinking at an alarming rate, so humans can help by mimicking a bat's ideal nursery: the snug space between a tree trunk and its bark. Install your bat house at least 15' off the ground, near a water source, and in an area with lots of sun for warmth.



Bats of North America are *insectivores*.
That means that they love to snack on bugs!



Big Brown Bats

Like many nocturnal creatures, the big brown bat eats night-flying insects, like moths and mosquitoes.



Little Brown Bats

The little brown bat is a big-eared, small bat that eat wasps, beetles, and gnats.

DID YOU KNOW?

5 common North American bats:

- Big brown bat
- Little brown bat
- Brazilian free-tailed bat
- Pallid bat
- Northern long-eared bat

The **Brazilian Free-Tailed Bat** is known to have the fastest horizontal ground speed of any animal—that's almost 100 miles per hour. WOW!



DID YOU KNOW?

In order to navigate in the dark, most bats use echolocation, or the use of high-pitched sound as it bounces off objects.



Pallid Bats consume half their weight
in crickets every night!



The **Northern Long-Eared Bat** is a bat with large wing membranes—the skin and muscle stretched across a bat's wing bones that help control the curve of flight.

Have you ever wondered why bats hang upside down? Unlike most birds, bats can't easily lift up and off to fly. Hanging upside down puts them in the perfect position for an easy takeoff. Smart!

The **Lesser Mouse-Eared Bat**
is a large bat native to Eastern Europe.



DID YOU KNOW?

Female bats give birth to one baby per year, called a pup. Like all mammals, mothers provide milk to their young.



Pipistrellus is a bat named after the Italian word for bat, *Pipistrello*. This genus (family) is known for its gentle, fluttery, butterfly-like flight.



Tent-Making Bats are found in Central America, Southeast Asia, and India, and construct roosts from big, big leaves—like banana leaves!



Native to Northern Europe and Asia, the **Brandt's Bat** joins maternity colonies in the summer and gives birth to one pup, who sets out on its own at only six weeks!



Blood-sucking **Vampire Bats**, the most notorious of bats, live in Central and South America. But don't worry, they're not interested in humans!

DID YOU KNOW?

Contrary to folklore, vampire bats don't suck human blood. They feed on blood from cattle, horse, pigs, and birds.



The **Tricolored Bat** is found in Central America and as far north as Eastern Canada. This busy bat is important to farmers for keeping destructive moth populations in check, and will return to hibernate in the same spot year after year.



The **Malayan Flying Fox**, or fruit bat, is native to Southeast Asia and has a wingspan that extends to almost 5'. This gentle giant loves nothing more than feeding on fruit, flowers and nectar.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Malayan flying fox will eat half its body weight in fruit every day!



Bat Lore

Is it because bats are nocturnal, awake by night and asleep by day? Is it because a bat looks a bit like both an animal and a bird? Whatever the reason, bats have always been a little mysterious to us, and have found their way into myths and stories all over the world. Many bat stories are on the dark side, but quite a few will make you smile, like this one:

To prevent baldness or greying hair, folklore suggests washing your hair with a mixture of powdered bats wings and coconut oil!



Ancient Greek and Roman beliefs surrounding bats suggested that placing a figurine of a bat under a pillow would prevent sleep. Zzzzzzz...

In China, bats in groups of five symbolize what the Chinese consider to be the five elements of happiness: health, wealth, long life, virtue, and a natural death.