

It's Time to Set the Record Straight....About Bats!

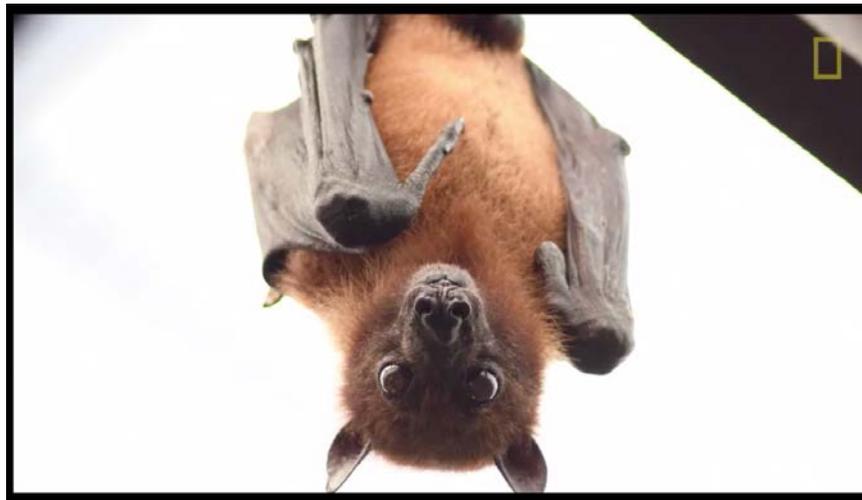
By: ECB members with Facts compiled from the Nature Conservancy and National Geographic websites



It's Fall again! And, what better time than now to revisit the importance of **BATS**. The ECB hopes you enjoy the **VIDEO** and **FACTS** below giving homage to the scary reputation these indispensable creatures have garnered through time. It's time to set the record straight.....

“Why Bats Aren’t As Scary As You Think”

Click below to launch this fun and short video about bats!



AMAZING FACTS ABOUT BATS

There are 1,100 species of bats worldwide, with 40 species in the United States alone. Though small in physical size, bats have a large footprint, making up one-quarter of the world's mammals. Follow along below to learn more about one of the natural world's unsung heroes.

Bats can live more than 30 years and can fly at speeds of up to 60 mph.

In fact, [a 2016 paper published by University of Tennessee researchers](#) found that the Mexican free-tailed bat could reach speeds up to 100 mph, making it by far the fastest mammal on earth.

Bats can find their food in total darkness.

They locate insects by emitting inaudible high-pitched sounds—10-20 beeps per second—and listening for the echo produced.

Bats can eat up to 1,200 mosquitoes an hour.

Often, bats consume their body weight in insects every night, helping keep bug populations in check.

More than half of the bat species in the United States are in severe decline or listed as endangered.

In addition to loss of habitat, one of the most dire threats comes from white nose syndrome, a disease that has decimated bats in the U.S. and Canada. [The Nature Conservancy collaborated on a breakthrough](#) in 2015. Bats were treated with a common bacterium that seems to stop the growth of the white nose fungus, and were then successfully released back into the wild.

Some bats hibernate in caves through the cold winter months.

Some of them can survive freezing temperatures, even after being encased in ice!

Most bats have only one pup a year, making them extremely vulnerable to extinction.

Bat mothers can find their babies among thousands or millions of other bats by their unique voices and scents.

Bat droppings, called guano, are one of the richest fertilizers.

Bat guano was once a big business. Guano was Texas's largest mineral export before oil! Austin is a seasonal home to North America's largest urban population of Mexican free-tailed bats, which live beneath the Congress Avenue Bridge. Approximately 1.5 million bats reside there!

The world's largest bat is the "flying fox" that lives on islands in the South Pacific.

It has a wingspan of up to 6 feet (see image at right). The world's smallest bat is the bumble bee bat of Thailand, which is smaller than a thumbnail and weighs less than a penny.

Pallid bats eat scorpions!

In fact, the bats appear to be immune to scorpion stings from even the most venomous scorpion in North America, the Arizona bark scorpion. Up to 70% of a [pallid bat's diet can be scorpions](#) at certain times of the year.

The Bracken Bat Cave in Texas is home to the world's largest bat colony.

30 million Mexican free-tailed bats roost there each year between March and October. They can eat **250 tons** of insects every summer night. They sometimes fly up to two miles high to feed or to catch tailwinds that carry them over long distances, and can fly at speeds of more than 60 miles per hour.



Mexican free-tailed bat mothers can find and nurse their own young among hundreds of pups.

Even in huge colonies where many millions of pups cluster at up to 500 per square foot. The youngsters can be as curious and playful as many other animal babies.

Providing bat houses can help build the population of many valuable bat species.

They eat many crop-damaging insects, such as cucumber and June beetles, stink bugs, leafhoppers and corn worm moths. Bat houses furnish places for bats to roost, hibernate and raise young, in addition to supplementing the dwindling

number of natural sites available to them.

Thanks to The Nature Conservancy and National Geographic websites for information used in this article. For more information visit: www.nature.org and www.nationalgeographic.com

From the Town Clerk's Office

From the office of Jean Chrisman, Town Clerk / Receiver of Taxes
