



BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND

An Introduction to Bats

Lizards, Birds and Frogs are not Mammals



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Bats are Mammals



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Bats are **not** rodents (rats/mice)

- Bat belong to a group called Chiroptera. This means 'hand-wing'.
- There are more than 1000 species of bat.
- Chiroptera are more related to apes (and humans) than to rodents.



Photo derived from work by Oren Peles

Bats have been around for a long time. Fossil bats +50million yrs.



Photo by Niamh Roche



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Bats are the only mammals that can really fly



Bats are nocturnal and they like to hang upside down



Mountain moonset copyright Jessie Eastland



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Bats use sound to find their way around at night and to find insects to eat.



Bat Detectors & Bat Detectives



Images copyright Tina Aughney

A place where a bat lives is called a ROOST



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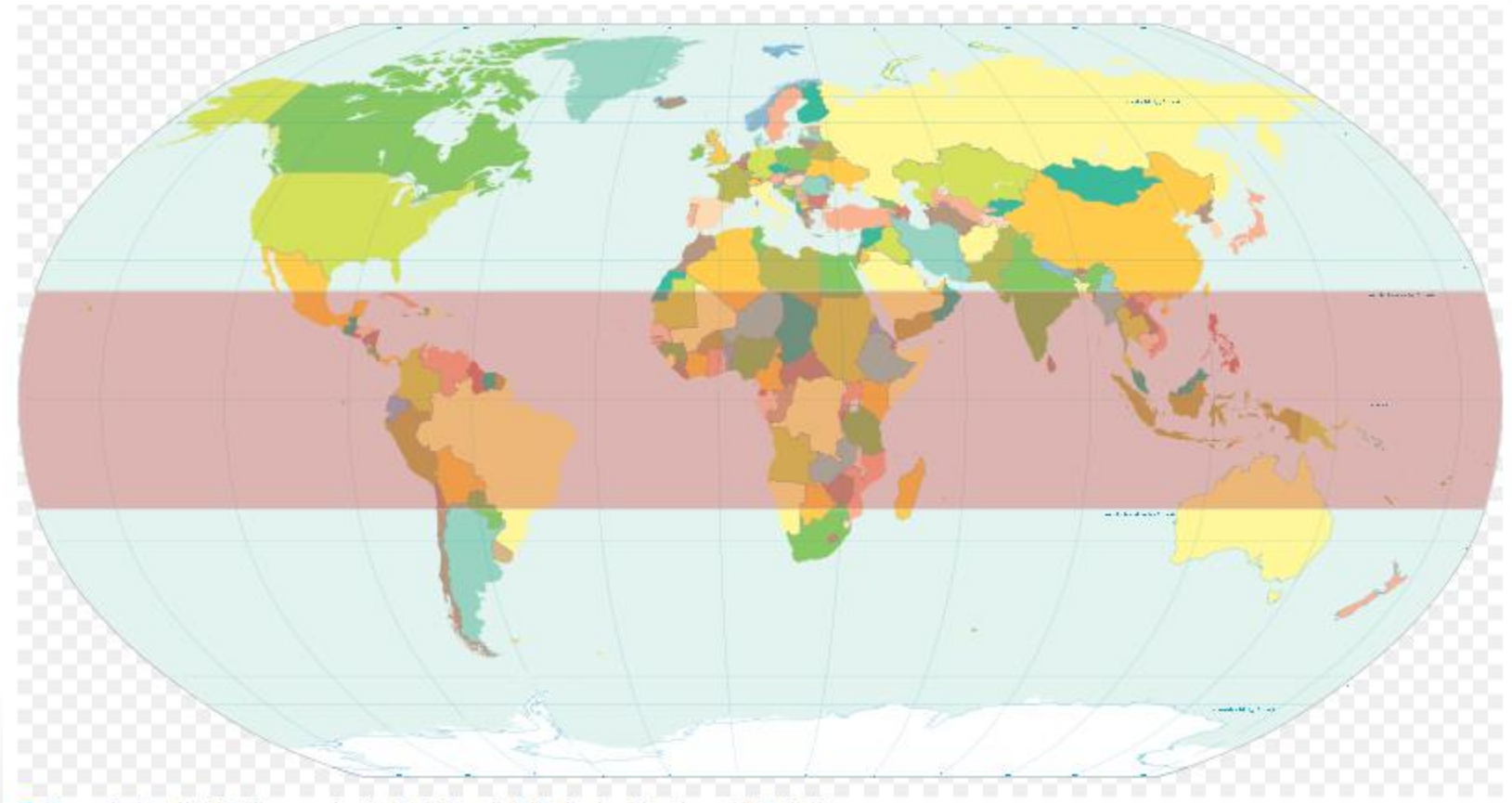
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Bat Diversity

There are more types of bats in the tropics than anywhere else



In Ireland we have 9 species of bat

- They all eat insects



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Lifecycle

In summer the mothers live together in a nursery roost



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Babies are born in June or July, blind and without fur

- Babies are born (bats do not lay eggs)
- Mothers feed their babies milk
- The babies are able to fly and eat insects after about 6 weeks



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In late summer the bats leave the nursery roost. They hibernate in winter.



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- There are no insects to eat in winter.
- This bat is hibernating in a cave and is covered in little drops of water.

Some Irish Bat Species

The pipistrelles are Ireland's smallest mammals

**Soprano
Pipistrelle**



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**Common
Pipistrelle**

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Brown long-eared bat – its ears are the same length as its body!



Ireland's largest bat, Leisler's bat, has very small ears

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Daubenton's bat flies over rivers scooping up insects with its tail

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The lesser horseshoe bat is found in the west of Ireland



Myths and truths about bats

There is no such thing as a blind bat



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Bats do
not get
caught
in
people's
hair



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Bats just have one baby in a year



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Bats do **not** build nests

- This is a bird's nest!
- Bats just hang upside down in a roost, sometimes in clusters sometimes on their own.



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Vampire bats live in South America



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All around the world bats do lots of good things for people

- They eat lots of insects that bite us or eat our food crops
- They pollinate fruit that humans eat
- They spread seeds so that new trees can grow
- In some countries people collect bat guano (poo!) as fertiliser



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