

Bats as producers of fertilizer

Bat excrement also known as guano, is among nature's best fertilizer. It is high in nitrogen and phosphorus and usually used around fruiting and flowering plants.

THREATS TO BATS

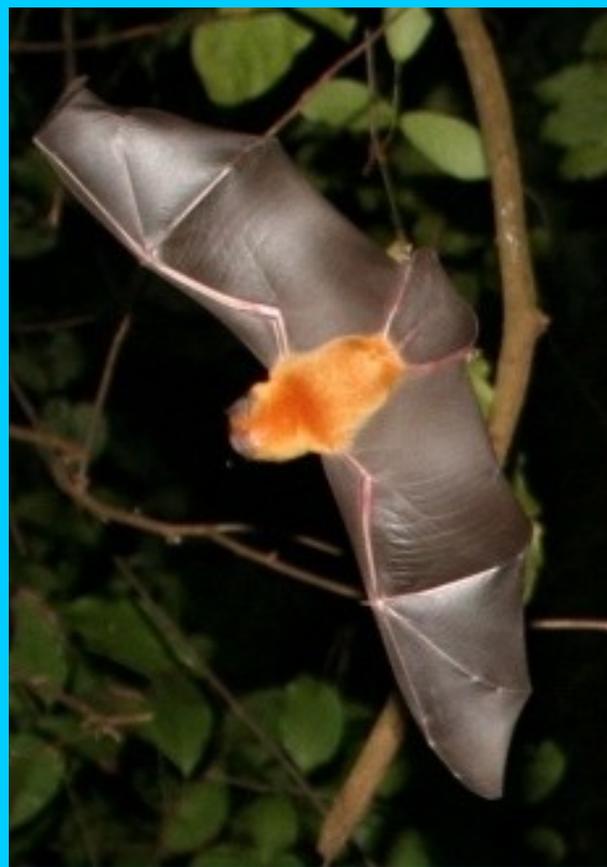
Bats are threatened by loss of habitat which can happen due to:

Habitat destruction

- Deforestation to make space for development
- Excessive roost disturbance due to harvesting of guano and tourism
- Loss of foraging area

Climate Change

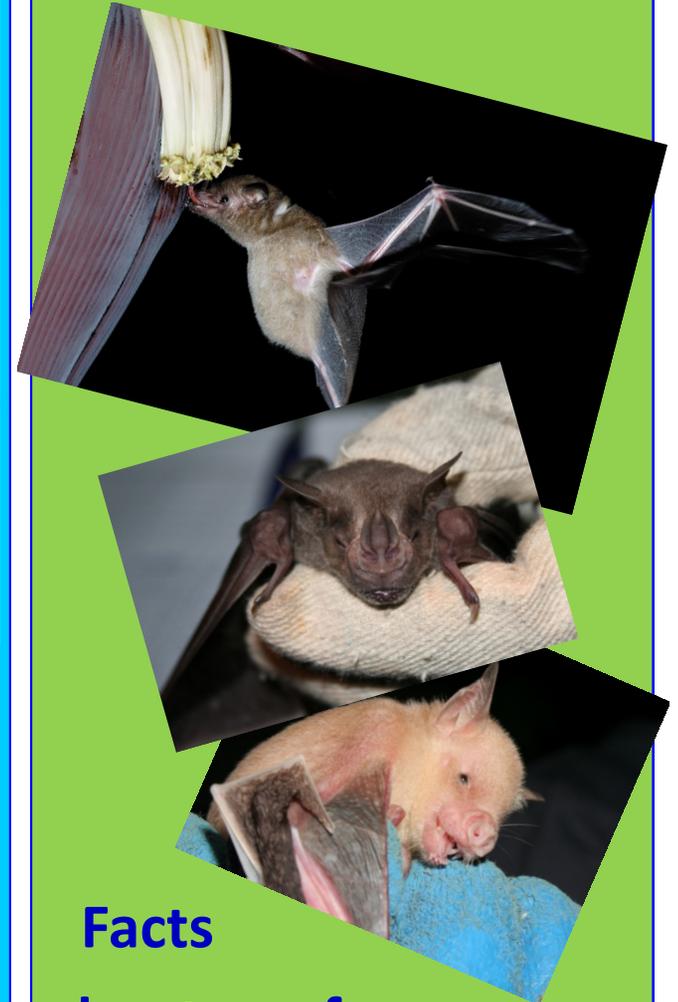
For bats that depend on nectar or fruits, changes in plant flowering cycle could put them out of sync with their food sources.



For additional information on Bats contact:
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Bats of Jamaica

not just an ugly nuisance



Facts

about our furry,
winged friends

WHAT ARE BATS

Bats are mammals and are known to roost in various environments. The most popular are caves, crevices and tree cavities. They also roost in the roofs and ceilings of abandoned structures such as factories and infrequently used structures such as churches. They may, at times, roost in the eaves of inhabited structures and also in trees.



Bats are the only mammals that echolocate and are capable of true flight. Their bodies are specially modified for their lifestyle as the wing is a modified hand with elongated fingers and a forearm with thin elastic skin stretched over it.

TYPES OF BATS

Of the over 1,200 species of bats that are found world-wide, Jamaica is home to 21 species; of this number 5 species are endemic. The diet of bats is varied and those found in Jamaica feed on insects, nectar, fruits and fish. Locally, only one species is known to feed on fish.



DISTRIBUTION

In Jamaica, bats can be found in all parishes; there are 149 known cave roosts island-wide but limited information on non-cave roosts. The bat species are not uniformly distributed, as this is determined by food availability, forest cover and the availability of suitable roosts.

BATS AND YOU

Bats play an important role in healthy ecosystems by providing both ecological and economic services, which are important to humans.

[Bats as pollinators](#)

Fruit and nectar-eating bats pollinate and disperse seeds. Many plants of economic importance including bananas, avocados and peaches are pollinated by bats.

[Bats as pest control agents](#)

Insect eating bats consume up to 100% of their body weight per night. The insects consumed include species which have an economic impact on agriculture crops such as the cucumber beetles, June bugs, corn borer and Jerusalem crickets. These insect species are pest of crops such as corn, cotton and potatoes.