



Busy Bats!



Bats can be found in lots of places around the world and enjoy eating insects. They particularly like moths, gnats, crickets and beetles. The only things they have to worry about eating them are owls and sometimes snakes.

Bats sleep during the day so they are nicely rested for their night time hunting. Some rest in caves, barns, attics and even the rafters of people's house, whereas others prefer to roost in trees. Male and female bats roost separately except when they are mating. They give birth in May or June and most of the species only have one baby bat per litter. They are quick developers, able to fly in just three weeks and can live about 30 years.

We often hear the phrase 'Blind as a Bat' but this isn't true, they can see (but only in black and white). Some species, however, rely more on echolocation, which means they are able to send supersonic calls through their mouth or nose. These are reflected back by any insects in their path, helping them to locate their dinner. Other species of bat prefer pollen and nectar. These are mainly found in tropical regions and are perfectly adapted to eat this way, with the ability to hover and a long tongue able to reach deep inside a flower. These bats also use their sense of smell to locate their food.

Bats make other noises as well, such as purrs, clicks and buzzing sounds which help them communicate with each other.

Bat Facts

- Bats are fascinating as they are the only mammals that can fly. They can move quickly and skilfully and have a separate thumb which they use to cling to things. Their wings are different to birds as all their muscles for flying are attached to their shoulder blades instead of their ribcages.
- They can SWIM! They don't particularly choose to but if forced they can swim using their feet and wings.
- There is a bat called a VAMPIRE bat. This feeds on the blood of mammals like horses or cattle. Bites from these bats can be dangerous as they can pass on diseases like rabies. Don't worry though. It is very rare for a bat to attack a human as they have lots of animals to choose from which are far less trouble.
- In the Second World War a lot of thought was put into the idea of releasing bats from aircraft with bombs attached to them. This idea was never tested successfully and on one occasion the bats escaped and set fire to an aircraft hangar instead.



Turn over to complete our Bat Word Search. Can you find them all!?