

BATS

Bats are the only mammals capable of sustained flight. Their wings do not have feathers, but are made of a thin sheet of skin stretched between the long *finger* bones. In most bats, the wings are also joined to the legs and tail.

Scientists have shown in experiments that bats do not need good eyesight for flying. They find their way in the dark by using a *sonar* system. As the bat flies, it utters a series of squeaks that are so high-pitched that a person cannot hear them. The sound waves from these cries bounce off objects and echo back to the bat's ears. From these echoes, the bat can tell where the objects are.

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The Latin name for this bat is *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*.

The Pipistrelle bat is a very small bat with a body length of only 3.5 - 4.5cm. Males and females are similar, with variable dark brownish fur, sometimes tinged orange with lighter underparts. The ears are short, rounded and brown.

This bat is nocturnal, usually emerging shortly after sunset. It frequently roosts, and sometimes breeds, in loft spaces and other sheltered situations around houses.

It forms large nursery colonies (up to 1000). It gives birth to single young, or occasionally twins, which are usually born around late June through to July.

This species is common and widespread virtually throughout Europe, and is the most frequently seen bat in most areas.

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The Latin name for this bat is *Plecotus auritus*.

This is a small bat, with a body length of 3.7-4.8cm, and conspicuous ears that are 3-4cm long. Its wings are thin and translucent with a wingspan of

