

LITTLE WYOMING

Meet the

BAT

02

Seeing with sound

All bats can see, but insectivorous bats rely on a process called echolocation to help them navigate and find food. As they fly, bats make sounds out of their nose or mouth. The sound wave bounces off any objects surrounding the bat, which tells the bat where something is, how big it is and even the texture of the object. Echolocation calls can be very loud, but they occur at frequencies higher than humans can hear. That is probably a good thing: a big brown bat's echolocation calls are as loud as a smoke alarm!

01

Ecological superhero

What's that flying in the night sky? It's not Superman or Batman—it's a bat, a true superhero of the world! There are more than 1,400 bat species in the world, 18 of which can be found in Wyoming. All Wyoming bats are insectivores, and they help farmers by eating insects that destroy corn, potato, cotton and wheat crops. A colony of 150 big brown bats, a common Wyoming species, can eat approximately 1.3 million insects in one season! In other parts of the world, insectivorous bats eat the pests that threaten rice, chocolate and sugar crops, to name just a few. Nectar-eating bats pollinate many of the foods that we love to eat such as banana, mango and agave. Next time you're eating a snack, thank a bat!

03

Appreciate from a distance

Although bats are amazing to have around, they are wild animals and should be admired from a distance.

If you find a bat, do not touch it! It could be sick or injured, and might bite you to protect itself. Bats can best be observed as they fly around at night looking for food, or as they emerge from caves, mines, bridges or bat boxes at dusk.

04

Bat walk!

Next summer, join the UW Biodiversity Institute on a Summer Bat Walk in a community near you! Bat walks are fun, free and family-friendly. Learn more at wyomingbiodiversity.org/index.php/outreach/bat-walks or submit a request for a Bat Walk in a community near you at biodiversity@uwyo.edu.



October
**IS BAT
APPRECIATION
MONTH**

Fun bat activities are available at www.batweek.org/educate.



UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING

Biodiversity
Institute