



## LITTLE WYOMING

# BABY BATS



Bats are ecological superheroes that provide vital insect control, seed dispersal and pollination services that benefit the world. Although bats may not look a lot like us, humans and other primates are actually thought to be their closest living relatives! Just like humans, these small flying mammals provide nurturing care to their young to ensure their baby superheroes survive and thrive into adulthood.

## STRONG MOM

When bats are first born, they need to be with Mom at all times so she can nurse them and keep them safe. But Mom still has to eat! When mother bats leave the roost at night to feed, they bring baby with them for the first few days. The baby bat clings to their mother as they zip through the sky. This is no easy feat, since baby bats are born well-developed and quite large—when they're born, they can weigh up to a third of their mother's weight!

## MOTHERS ALWAYS KNOW

Female bats typically roost together in maternity colonies, which in Wyoming can range in size from dozens to thousands of bats in a single colony, depending on the species. Once the baby bat is a little bit older and too heavy for Mom to carry around the night skies, it will stay behind in the roost while Mom forages. She'll return to the roost several times throughout the night to nurse her baby. Even though there may be lots of other bats in the roost, Mom is able to find her baby by its smell and sound.

## BATTY ABCs

Bats are social animals and communicate with each other through vocalizations. Just like humans, baby bats have to learn this language—they aren't just born knowing how to talk. Recent research shows that baby bats babble to learn language, just like baby humans! Bats will repeat syllables and rhythms in their babbling and are the only non-primate mammal known to do so.

