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Ispy mammals

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Twilight Friends

If one day you're out and it's nearly twilight, just when the stars are beginning to get bright.

You look up and *whoa, what's that?* Dark and silent, it's a bat!

Sweeping through the night sky, catching insects on the fly.

This unique mammal is no foe; in fact, it's an animal you should get to know!

Starting with some facts, for fun; bats spend no time in the sun.

Although they use echolocation to hunt their food, their vision is far from crude.

As the only mammals capable of true flight, bats can eat millions of bugs per night!

Some bats also eat fruit and nectar, they're not all just fly collectors.

When they hibernate, bats can go into torpor; for hours, or even weeks-up to four!

If food is dropped in water on a trip, there is evidence that they may even take an afternoon dip.

Like a triathlete, they can swim, fly and crawl; bats are amazing, they can do it all!

Bats are helpful and should be protected, so let's get rid of any misconception.

Chiroptera is the bat order; with 17 families and 900 species, they don't have many borders.

They are found virtually everywhere, except for some deserts, and by the polar bears.

Although the young have a high mortality rate, once flying develops, they can live 20 years if determined by fate.

Eating insects is a natural pesticide for farmers, which protects our food from many harmers.

Bats also pollinate over 500 plants; without them, mangoes would be scant!

The species that feed on fruit are vital for spreading seeds, they combat deforestation and meet the rainforest's needs.

Now that their important role has been determined, there should be no lack of discernment.

This unique mammal is facing a predator, one which unfortunately has no competitor.

White-nose syndrome is a disease, caused by a fungus that threatens this species.

By 2010, millions of bats had succumbed to White-nose; as it spreads through North America, it can kill them in droves.

So what can be done for our little bat friends, as many of them meet their untimely ends?

Probiotic treatments? Or more suitable hibernation habitats? We need to help them in some way-be their diplomats.

Everyone can pitch in, it's not so hard; for example, if you enter a cave, step in a footbath- it acts as a guard.

Bats are important, they're very unique; they're vital to our ecosystem, so let's keep them from going extinct.

Without them, the number of bugs is rising, while many plants and rainforests are no longer thriving.

This nocturnal mammal may seem a bit odd, but when people see them, they are awed!

So next time you're out right around dusk, keep an eye out for these friends- just take a look up!

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