

Backyard Books: *Bat Count, A Citizen Science Story*

How to Use This Packet: This *Backyard Books* activity packet corresponds to the *Bat Count, A Citizen Science Story* read-aloud. [Click here](#) for the read-aloud.

This packet has been designed with elementary age children in mind, but its contents can be enjoyed by the whole family.

Questions? Contact Allison Jones at: allisoo@clemson.edu

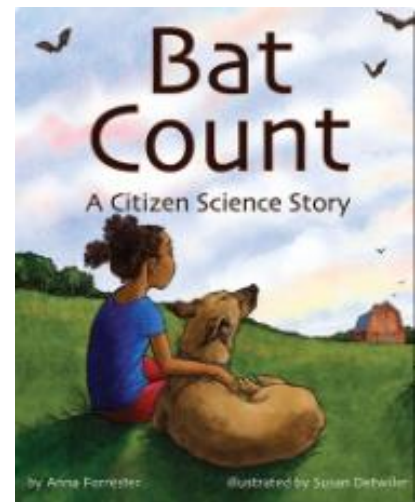
Why Should We Care About Bats?

Some people are scared of bats and don't want them around, but bats don't have any interest in flying into our hair or drinking our blood! Mosquitos, of course, do like to suck our blood, and, without bats, we'd have a lot more of those pesky little guys around!

All the bats in our state and most in the United States, are insectivores. They play an important role in controlling populations of insects. Because bats eat so many insects, they help farmers keep crops safe from pests, reducing the need for pesticide sprays, which can be harmful to the environment. Each year, they provide over 1 million dollars' worth of eco-friendly pest control in South Carolina alone! And just think how many mosquito bites they save us from!

[There are more ways that bats are beneficial to us!](#)

A mother Hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinerius*) holding her twins: This species can be found in South Carolina. Unlike most bats that birth one pup at a time, the Hoary Bat usually gives birth to two pups at a time.



You Can Help Bats!

Raise Awareness

Learn more about bats and share what you learn. Help others understand that bats are helpful, not scary! Because of [White-Nose Syndrome](#), bat populations need our support more than ever before.

Support natural bat habitat

When safe to do so, leave dead and dying trees in your yard, as bats will use these for roosting sites. For the sake of bats, and everyone else, do your part to keep streams and other water sources free of pollution.

Reduce pesticides

Using less pesticides allows for more insects, which means more food for bats! You can even consider planting night-blooming plants to help make more nocturnal insects available to bats on the hunt.

Remove Bats Safely

If you need to remove bats from your home, contact a wildlife agent who can remove them from your home without hurting them. It is best to avoid this scenario by taking [measures to exclude bats from your home](#).

Put up a bat house.

You can purchase a bat house or make your own. Instructions can be found [here](#).

Be a citizen scientist.

You can do your part by providing information to researchers who are committed to helping bat populations. Learn about how to get involved with **SC Bat Watch** [here](#).

REMEMBER! Bats, like other wildlife, can carry disease. If you see a bat, please respect it and don't touch it!



Did You Know?

- Bats are the only mammals that can fly.
- Bats may look like rodents, but they are more closely related to humans.
- The smallest bat in the world is the size of a bumblebee and weighs less than a penny. The Bumblebee Bat holds the record for world's smallest mammal.
- The world's largest bats are called Flying Foxes and have wingspans of up to 6 feet.
- Some bats can eat 1200 mosquito-sized bugs in a single hour.
- All bats have a thumb and four fingers, and they use them to comb their fur.
- Bat poop is called guano and is an excellent plant fertilizer.
- The Big Brown Bat is our state bat.



Learn More:

- If you were a bat, which one would you be? [Take the quiz!](#)
- [Which bat species live in South Carolina?](#)
- [Learn about echolocation and hear some cool bat sounds.](#) The last one sounds like R2D2! 😊
- Adults and older children may enjoy learning about [the effects of White Nose Syndrome in Walhalla, South Carolina.](#)

See the following pages for more information on the body parts of a bat, as well as instructions for making a fun bat craft!

Bat Bodies

Match the body part to its location on this little brown bat. Do you have any body parts similar to a bat's? Does a bat have any body parts that you do not?

The **forearm** is the part of the arm between the elbow and where the fingers begin.

The **elbow** is a joint. It connects the forearm with the upper arm.

Bats use their **ears** to listen.

The bony **tail** helps support the wing membrane.

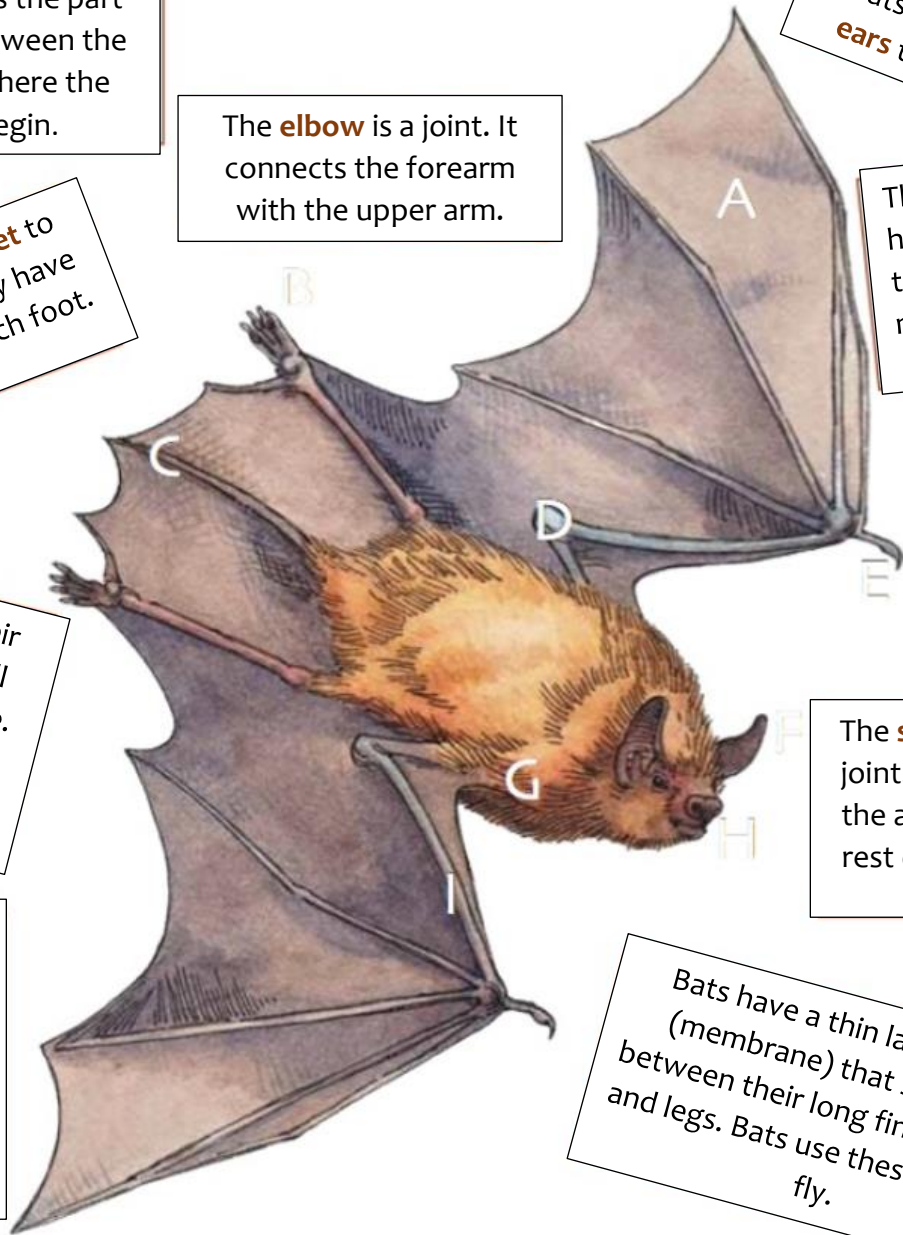
Bats use their **feet** to grip things. They have five toes on each foot.

Bats use their **nose** to smell and to breathe. Some bats use their nose to echolocate!

Bats have a claw on each **thumb**. They use their thumbs to climb, crawl, or fight.

The **shoulder** is a joint. It connects the arm with the rest of the body.

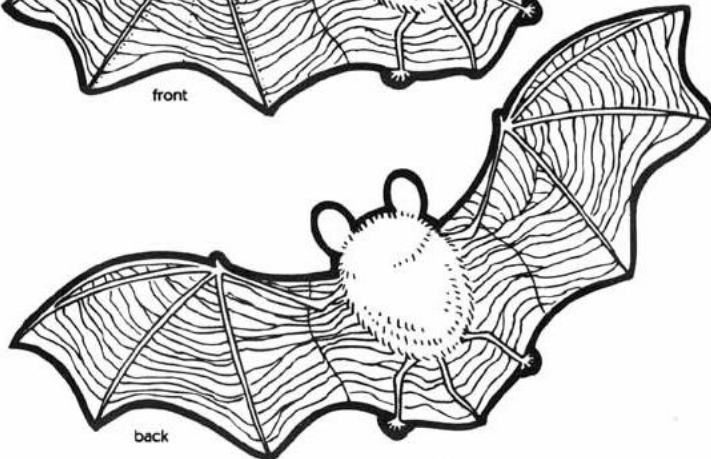
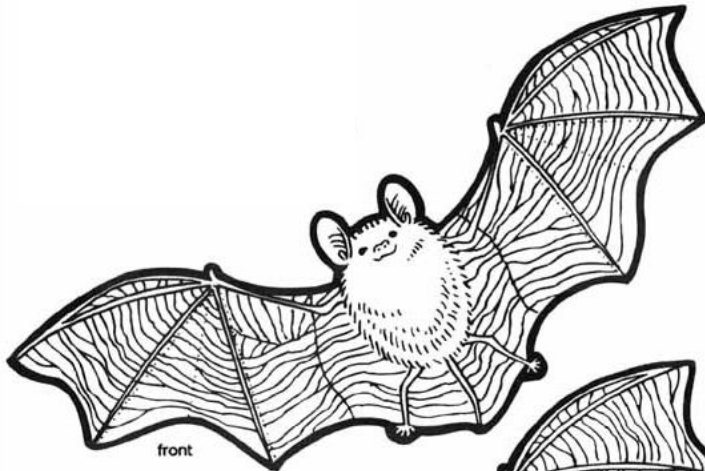
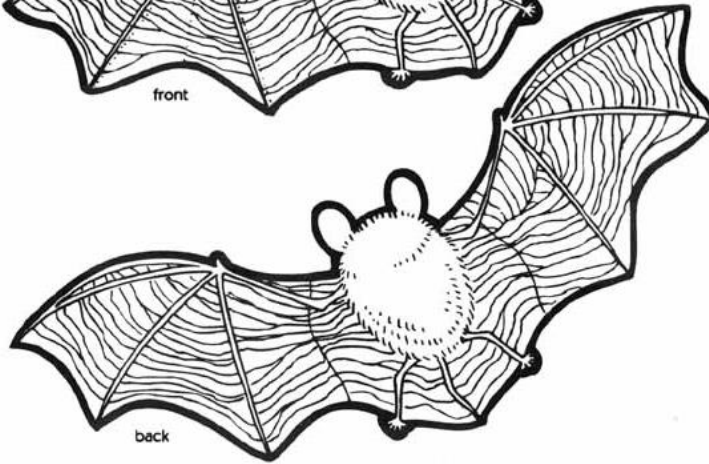
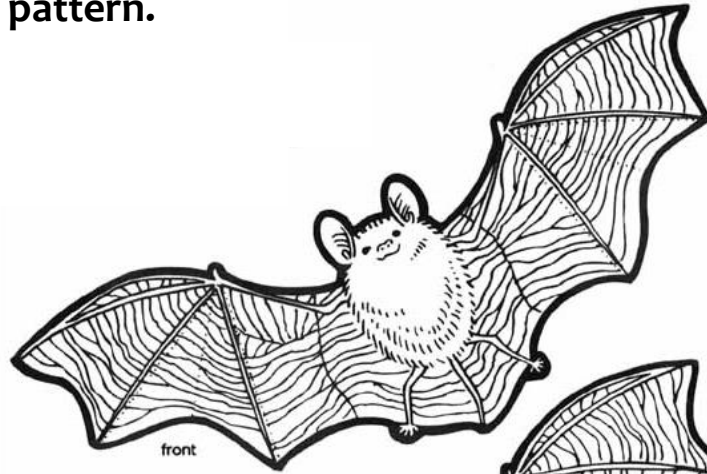
Bats have a thin layer of skin (membrane) that stretches between their long fingers, arms, and legs. Bats use these **wings** to fly.



Answers: A-wings, B-feet, C-tail, D-elbow, E-thumb, F-ear, G-shoulder, H-nose, I-forearm

Little Brown Bat Pups Pattern:

*See directions, below,
with Bat Mom pattern.



Little Brown Bat Mom Pattern:

Directions:

1. Print bat patterns on white paper
2. Color the bats
3. Cut out each pattern on the heavy line
4. Glue front and back patterns together and let dry
5. Accordion-fold the wings on the dotted lines
6. Hang the bats from strings or mount on pencils, skewers, or craft stick to make a stick puppet.

