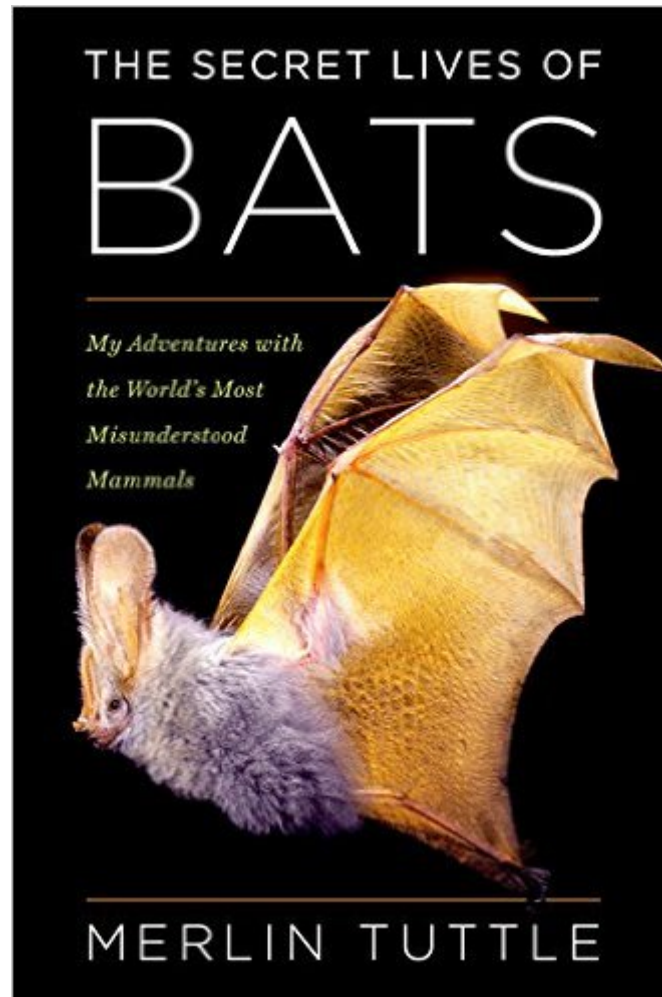


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# The Secret Lives Of Bats: My Adventures With The World's Most Misunderstood Mammals



## Synopsis

A lifetime of adventures with bats around the world reveals why these special and imperiled creatures should be protected rather than feared. From menacing moonshiners and armed bandits to charging elephants and man-eating tigers, Merlin Tuttle has stopped at nothing to find and protect bats on every continent they inhabit. Enamored of bats ever since discovering a colony in a cave as a boy, Tuttle saw how effective photography could be in persuading people not to fear bats, and he has spent his career traveling the world to document them.   
   
 Few people realize how sophisticated and intelligent bats are. Tuttle shares research showing that frog-eating bats can identify frogs by their calls, that vampire bats have a social order similar to that of primates, and that bats have remarkable memories. Bats also provide enormous benefits by eating crop pests, pollinating plants, and carrying seeds needed for reforestation. They save farmers billions of dollars annually and are essential to a healthy planet.   
   
 Sharing highlights from a lifetime of adventure and discovery, Tuttle takes us to the frontiers of bat research and conservation and forever changes the way we see these poorly understood yet fascinating creatures.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have always been fond of and fascinated by bats, even long before I became a wildlife rehabilitator. These terribly misunderstood flying mammals are essential to our OWN well being, yet they are being persecuted and exterminated every chance humans get. I love bats. Repeat: I LOVE BATS!!! Merlin Tuttle has written a rousing tribute to these flying wonders. A lot of what he says I discovered on my own from working up close and personal with these amazing little animals. Bats

are highly intelligent and fast learners, and they do indeed possess an incredible memory. They are able to vocalize both audibly and invisibly to our ears via echolocation, they are amazing flyers, and without them we would drown in mosquitoes and pesticides. 'A fungus, inadvertently introduced from Europe by a bat cave visitor in upstate New York, brought a deadly disease to American bats in the late 90s called White Nose Syndrome. The fungus causes irritation on the hibernating bats and wakes them up frequently, it also destroys wing membranes and fur. Every cave affected by the fungus has a mortality rate of up to 99%. Scientists from all over the world are feverishly working on finding a cure before our bats go extinct. There has been some recent success which is currently being repeated in hopes to rescue and render immune of what is left of our once vast bat population. Tuttle has traveled the globe extensively in his research of bats. His passion shines through in every word, and he conveys this love of these creatures beautifully. This is not a dry science book, it is a highly entertaining read that often had me laugh out loud because I perfectly understood where he was coming from. Education is key to the survival of this species as a whole, and Tuttle does this like nobody else can. Read this book, and then tell your family and neighbors what you have learned. Please never handle a bat with bare hands. While less than 1% carry rabies, all that come in direct contact with humans must by law be euthanized and tested for rabies. Education will go a long way in preserving what is left of these marvelous animals before they indeed go extinct.

I've always liked bats, and even did some research on them many years back for a press release for the North Dakota Extension Service, so was delighted to find this book in the queue. Dr. Merlin Tuttle, the author and long-time bat conservationist, writes in an appealing and very readable style, and casually knocks aside exaggerated horror stories with facts and anecdotes. He fought against ignorance in the 70s and 80s, and states that the world is seeing a resurgence of the horror stories fed by ignorance, to which he states, "[Hundreds] of bat researchers world-wide remain healthy despite lifetimes of close association with bats. In fact, even among the millions of people who eat bats or harvest guano from caves, reports of possible harm are exceedingly rare." Bats provide a service, and a strong economic reason to protect them. A single bat can eat 1000 insects in an hour, so imagine what a colony of hundreds could do! They eat pest insects, some even searching out pests before they have a chance to lay eggs, thereby saving agriculturalists large amounts on pesticides. Nectar and fruit-eating bats provide pollination that is much better than birds or bees. Bats are also shown to be highly intelligent and sophisticated, even altruistic, like the vampire bat, which will share food with other bats and adopt orphaned pups. They have proven long-term

memory, with bats who have been tamed returning occasionally to the person with whom they have bonded, and remembering how to do various things that had been taught years before. Obviously I could go on for some time, but will end it here. I strongly recommend this book to anyone to learn more about this fascinating and often beautiful animals. My only gripe is that the ARC doesn't have the pictures that will be in the final release copy, which will be available Oct. 20, 2015. Highly recommended!

I have always been fascinated by bats. I have bat houses on my property and a framed mummified bat hanging on my living room wall. So reading this book was a natural for me. Merlin Tuttle devoted his life and career to studying bats and their behavior. With over 1200 species of bats in the world, he was a busy man and has many interesting stories to tell, many of which are in this book. His goal has always been to enlighten the misguided masses about bats. The sad parts in this book describe how many millions of beneficial bats have been destroyed by ignorant humans, because they believe the only good bat is a dead bat and that all bats are vampire bats. This book has statistics on just how rare vampire bats are, which should surprise most people. I know it surprised me. I was also fascinated and surprised by how easily Mr. Tuttle catches bats of all varieties and how tame they are, and how well and fast he trains them to work with him in his photography set-ups. It's truly mind blowing to find out that bats are as trainable as dogs. In fact, Merlin Tuttle is probably better named The Bat Whisperer, for all the good he has done for bats in his life. I wish this book would be required reading for students in elementary school or junior high, so that we might better inform them on how beneficial bats are to our very being. At least teachers should read it and pass on information to their students, if we want future generations to protect bat habitat, which in reality, protects ours. It's an excellent book for anyone interested in the fascinating world of bats, with introduction to to many species most people, including myself, have never heard of. I truly enjoyed it. Thanks Mr. Tuttle for devoting your life to bats & promoting bat conservation!

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