

## What are bats?

### Important ecosystem species

- Bats are the world's only flying mammals and are nocturnal (active at night).
- They are the second most species diverse among all mammals with more than 1,000 bat species globally.
- Fruit bats sustain and regenerate our precious rainforests by pollinating flowers and dispersing their seeds so that new plants can grow.
- Insectivorous bats feed on many kinds of insects, keeping their population in check.

### Bats in Singapore



Cave Nectar Bat pollinating petai flowers

- Singapore has around 25 species of bats.
- The Lesser Dog-faced Fruit Bat, the Cave Nectar Bat, and the Whiskered Myotis are most commonly seen.
- Our native bats help pollinate the flowers of some of our favourite food – durian, papaya and petai beans.

## Important things to note

### Injured or trapped bat?

If you come across bats that are injured, distressed or trapped, call the NParks Animal Response Centre at **1800-476-1600**. Please avoid handling the bat yourself as this may cause further stress or injury to the animal. The bat may also bite in self-defence.

### Do not feed wildlife, including bats

Refrain from putting food out to feed bats. Bats have sufficient naturally occurring food in our green spaces. Feeding bats will make them dependent on people for food and will also affect the regeneration of our forests. Feeding of all wildlife in Singapore is prohibited under the Wildlife Act.

### Coexisting peacefully with wildlife

Bats should be left alone if they are spotted outdoors and they will come and go on their own. By understanding the ecological role bats play, we can live harmoniously with the flora and fauna found in our City in Nature.



Scan the QR code to find out more about how to co-exist peacefully with our wildlife.



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# Advisory on Bats

Living in harmony  
with our wild neighbours



## Bats in the neighbourhood

Bats mostly stay within our green spaces, but are able to fly long distances to look for food at night. Insectivorous bats will hunt for insects attracted to light from lamps. Fruit bats will forage for fruit from a variety of shrubs and trees.

- ✓ **Do not be alarmed.** Like most wild animals, bats are shy. Bats should be left alone and will fly away after they are done feeding.
- ✓ **Harvest or cover fruit.** If you notice that there are fruits in your premises that bats are attracted to, you may wish to harvest the fruits from trees or cover fruits with cloth or mesh bags.



Wildlife will find it hard to reach fruits covered in cloth or mesh bags. Plastic bags can be torn by some animals.



Lesser Dog-faced Fruit Bat eating chiku fruit.

## Bat in my house

### Once-off accidental entry

- ✓ **Let the bat try to escape on its own.** Open the windows, turn off the lights and spinning fans, and close the doors leading deeper into the premises. Call the Animal Response Centre if the bat is unable to escape.

### Frequent entry or roosting

- ✓ **Cover the area where bats perch.** Use smooth surfaces (acrylic, plastic sheet) to cover the structure.
- ✓ **Restrict access to the house.** Install temporary mesh on windows or seal up gaps bats use as entry points.

## Bats and viruses

NParks has been studying Singapore's bat populations since 2011. To date, our biosurveillance programmes have not detected any transmittable zoonotic diseases, including COVID-19, in our bats. NParks will continue to monitor the local bat population closely.

### Fact checks

- ✓ Like all animals (and humans), bats are hosts to viruses, but the risk of transmission to humans is low.
- ✓ It has not been proven that COVID-19 was transmitted from bats to humans.
- ✓ No bats have ever been reported to have rabies in Singapore.
- ✓ Bat guano is not poisonous. However, fungus spores can grow on guano which causes histoplasmosis (a type of lung infection) if inhaled.

Photo credit: Kathleen Yap, Chan Kwok Wai, Nick Baker and Zestin Soh