

Bat Myths and Facts

Bat Myths	Bat Facts
<p>All bats carry rabies.</p>	<p>Less than <i>one percent</i> of bats carry rabies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You cannot get rabies from being in the same room as a bat • If you are bitten by a rabid bat or other animal (raccoons are the most common rabies vector in DE), you can be easily treated if medicine is administered soon after exposure. • Concerns about rabies should be directed immediately to the rabies hotline.
<p>Bat droppings (guano) are poisonous to me or my children.</p>	<p>Bat guano is a valued fertilizer. A specific fungus can grow on bat guano, which if disturbed and inhaled can cause “histoplasmosis.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Histoplasmosis exposure is preventable, use a face respirator in areas with large amounts of guano. • Histoplasmosis occurs naturally in the environment, bat droppings are one of many ways to be exposed to the spores. • More information in our Bats and Health Concerns fact sheet.
<p>Bats...</p> <p>...get tangled in people’s hair.</p> <p>...swoop and attack me when I’m in the pool.</p> <p>...are aggressive and try to bite people.</p>	<p>Bats have a sophisticated echolocation system they use to hunt tiny insects and avoid collision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bats can see you, they have good vision. • Using echolocation, bats can avoid a strand of fishing line with no trouble. • Bats eat insects like mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are attracted to people, so occasionally bats hunt around people. • Bats do not attack, but will use their teeth to defend themselves if cornered or grounded.
<p>Bats are dirty and covered in lice.</p>	<p>Bats groom themselves frequently and keep their fur very clean. There are a few specially adapted parasites sometimes found on bats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bat bugs are a cousin of bed bugs and are occasionally found on bats.
<p>Someone told me to kill a bat with a tennis racket because they can’t see it coming.</p>	<p>NO! There is no need to kill bats that accidentally get into buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never strike, spray or whack a bat. • Bats to be submitted for rabies testing should not be released. • Bats in buildings should be isolated to one room, windows or doors to the outside opened, and lights turned on until the bat finds its way back outside.