

Bats Video Script

One of fall's highlights is of course Halloween, which summons forth pint sized goblins, witches and of course blood sucking bats. Hollywood has dropped quite a cloak of myth around the bat, and they are indeed mysterious little mammals.

Interestingly enough you won't find any real bats in Colorado at this time of year. They have long since headed south. For biologists though that's one of the mysteries, no one really knows exactly where these winged mammals spend the winter.

There are roughly seventeen different species of bats that use many of Colorado's abandoned mines in the summer. The Division of Wildlife along with the mined land safety board have been working for years to survey inactive mines to see if bats are using them. If they are, a bat gate is put up to allow bats to get in and keep people out of these dangerous sites.

The physiology of the bat is quite unique. They have an incredible sonar or echolocation system to find prey and obstacles in the dark. They can also fly at high speeds and make a right angle turn in a little over the length of their body. And then there's that hanging upside down thing...

Biologist Kirk Navo said;"Essentially bats have evolved to occupy a niche which is gaining and gripping access to weird places. Like cracks and crevices rocks and cliffs... up in the attic of your house. And so that orientation to be able to hang upside down is a really good benefit being able to back up and squeeze into a tight little spot and still be able to look out and see what is going around beneath you."

Overall bats are valuable members of the environment mostly because they keep insects at bay, create fertilizer, spread seed and pollinate plants.

However, bats are also used in a variety of medical research projects, including aging studies, speech pathology and space biology.