

PET LISTENING – BATS

Instructions – Listen to the conversation about Bats and answer the questions True or False

QUESTION

- 1) The United States has declared twenty eleven to twenty twelve the Year of the Bat.
- 2) Bats live in cities, deserts, grasslands and forests.
- 3) There are over two hundred bat species.
- 4) The world's largest bat is the Giant Golden-Crowned Flying Fox
- 5) Bats are blind.
- 6) Bats are linked to death, darkness and vampires.
- 7) Bats are important because they eat huge numbers of insects, including kinds that damage crops.
- 8) A science magazine published a report saying that bats save European farmers billions of dollars every year.
- 9) A disease called white-nose syndrome has greatly damaged bat populations over the past ten years.
- 10) The name of the disease comes from a white fungus found on the faces and wings of infected bats
- 11) Leslie Sturges is the director of Bat World NOVA.
- 12) She says that bats are not dirty animal.
- 13) She and her assistant are caring for about thirteen injured bats this summer.
- 14) Shaggy does not want to leave just yet.

ANSWERS

- 15) The United States has declared twenty eleven to twenty twelve the Year of the Bat. T
- 16) Bats live in cities, deserts, grasslands and forests. F
- 17) There are over two hundred bat species. F
- 18) The world's largest bat is the Giant Golden-Crowned Flying Fox T
- 19) Bats are blind. F
- 20) Bats are linked to death, darkness and vampires. T
- 21) Bats are important because they eat huge numbers of insects, including kinds that damage crops. T
- 22) A science magazine published a report saying that bats save European farmers billions of dollars every year. F
- 23) A disease called white-nose syndrome has greatly damaged bat populations over the past ten years. F
- 24) The name of the disease comes from a white fungus found on the faces and wings of infected bats T
- 25) Leslie Sturges is the director of Bat World NOVA. T
- 26) She says that bats are not dirty animal. T
- 27) She and her assistant are caring for about thirteen injured bats this summer. F
- 28) Shaggy does not want to leave just yet. T

TRANSCRIPT

Bats

The United Nations has declared twenty eleven to twenty twelve the Year of the Bat. The campaign was launched last year as a way to strengthen efforts for protecting the world's only flying mammal.

These creatures can be found in many parts of the world. Bats live in cities, deserts, grasslands and forests. There are over one thousand two hundred bat species.

The smallest bat in the world is from Southeast Asia. The Bumblebee bat measures about thirty millimeters in length. The world's largest bat, the Giant Golden-Crowned Flying Fox, has a wingspan of one and a half meters. Most bats eat insects, but many feed on fruit or nectar from flowers.

Many people think bats are blind, but this is not true. Many species have very good sight. Most bats communicate and find their way by making "echolocation" noises. They produce high-frequency noises and can

estimate the distance of an object by using the sound echoes that bounce back to them. So, while bats may travel in total darkness, they “see” using sound.

Sadly, bats are widely feared and misunderstood. Most bats come out of their shelters only at nightfall. Three bat species feed on blood. Because of these qualities, bats have long been linked in many cultures to death, darkness and vampires.

Yet bats are important for agriculture and our environment. They help pollinate plants and spread seeds. They also help control insects. Bats eat huge numbers of insects, including kinds that damage crops.

For example, a brown bat can eat more than one thousand insects the size of a mosquito in one hour. One report says bats save American farmers billions of dollars every year by reducing crop damage and limiting the need for chemicals that kill insects. The report was published earlier this year in Science magazine.

Bats have also proved useful in the medical industry. Some bats carry a substance in their saliva that has been manufactured and used in medicine to help stroke victims.

Over one-fifth of all bat species are under threat. They face disease and the human destruction of their natural environments. In the eastern United States, a disease called white-nose syndrome has greatly damaged bat populations over the past five years. The organization Bat Conservation International says white-nose syndrome has killed more than a million bats since it was discovered in a New York cave in two thousand six. In some areas, the disease has killed nearly one hundred percent of bat populations.

White-nose syndrome has now spread to at least nineteen other states and parts of Canada. The name of the disease comes from a white fungus found on the faces and wings of infected bats. The disease causes the creatures to awaken more often during hibernation, the period when they normally rest. Infected bats leave their shelters during winter and can freeze to death. Or they may use up stored body fat and starve to death.

Leslie Sturges is doing what she can to save bats. She is the director of Bat World NOVA, a bat protection group in the Washington, D.C. area. She cares for injured bats in the basement of her home. Then she releases them back into the wild.

LESLIE STURGES: “You hear a lot of people refer to bats as filthy. But they aren’t. They groom like cats and dogs do. They use these toes back here to actually comb their fur coat out.”

Ms. Sturges also talks about the importance of bats during visits to schools and nature centers. Her goal is to support their protection by bringing attention to the good things that bats provide to people and the environment.

She and her assistant are caring for about thirty injured, sick or orphaned bats this summer.

When the bats are healthy, she moves them to a closed off area next to her home so they can learn once more how to fly.

One of her bats is named Shaggy. She plans to release him, but first wants to make sure he eats well. When the sun sets, she sets him free. But he does not want to leave just yet.

LESLIE STURGES: "So I think what I am going to do is put him back in and let him nap for an hour and I am going to try and release him later tonight. Because he has to go. He can't live here."

Ms. Sturges says Shaggy has a good chance of survival because red bats are common in the area.