

# Save The Batty Environmentalists



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## **Birds are Great: But Bats Have More In Common With Pagans**

Besides witches in pointy hats, bats are the only warm-blooded mammals who can brag of their ability to fly long distances. Not only that, but bats make superb environmentalists.

Fruit bats, for instance, fly around in their little organic uniforms, visiting tree-after-tree with their highly advanced environmental equipment.

Then, when they leave their night-time jobs each morning - meagerly paid with only the fruit in their mouths - they drop seeds, planting new trees in soil far away from the parent foliage. This, my friend, is called reforestation!

Other bats do the unthinkable and, without gagging, consume ridiculous amounts of insects on a given night. Better than highly paid body-guards, they protect vegetation from predatory bugs while voluntarily fertilizing the soil with nitrogen in the form of "guano" (bat waste).

### **Who Farted In The Bat-room?**

Ever since Hollywood linked **bats** with **Satanists** and the **undead**,

narrow-minded individuals have nurtured nasty-smelling reactions against all three sets of mammals; erroneously assuming any and all of them could somehow be objectionable. Similar to the burning times (when healers were tortured for fabricated relationships with fictitious deity) entire bat roosting colonies have since been invaded and destroyed. According to the National Park Service: "More than 50% of American bat species are (now) in severe decline or already listed as endangered" ([nps.gov/noca/naturescience/bats.htm](https://www.nps.gov/noca/naturescience/bats.htm)). While this information is definitely tragic, it poses a real problem.

### **When Bats Lives Are Being Threatened, Where Can We Paste The Warning Label?**

Just as the most intelligent among humans don athletic cups before playing sports, so people can erect defensive barriers in a strategic manner to protect Earth's pollinating, bug-eating, fertilizing mammals: the inestimable bat.

### **Bats Have Ears Like Faeries & Elves**

Just as Faeries and elves have fascinating ears that vary in size and shape, some bats have tiny rounded ears while still others have exceptionally long and pointy ones. Some

bats with the biggest ears are able to climb into very small spaces by folding their ears down into something that looks like a fruit-roll or sleeping bag!

## **Teeth And Child Rearing**

Unlike birds that lay eggs, female bats bear live offspring and nurse them with their own mammary milk. Youngsters are born naked and helpless, just like humans. I wouldn't even be surprised if bat mothers read stories about the tooth faerie to their babies because bats lose their nursing teeth only to grow a full set of incisors, canines, premolars and molars later on! (Maybe the next time you meditate on the bat as a totem animal, it would be a good idea to leave a quarter under the proverbial bat pillow!)

## **Breach Baby Bats!**

All bats are born feet-first and weigh up to 40 percent of their mother's body weight. Because of this, the bay bat uses its legs to help pull its own torso out of the birth canal. Nature knows best because being born head-first might have hurt the baby bat's wings!

Most bats deliver only one baby per breeding season and many bats breed only once per year. Depending on the species, baby bats

become full-grown at either three or four weeks of age.

### **Agnostics And Rubber Bat Skin**

Malleable as an agnostic, who remains open to believe anything given the right evidence, bat skin (including the membrane which stretches over the arm and finger bones to form the wing) feels rubbery to the touch; just like a latex glove!

OH! And another thing about bats? Like some Pagans, all bats are warm-blooded and some are covered, more or less, in hair.

### **Finger Bones Like The Grim Reaper's**

If anything about a bat could possibly look a little scary, it's definitely how long and bony their fingers appear when looking at a bat's skeleton.

Such reminds me of the Grim Reaper as he wraps his long phalanges around that deadly scythe. Fortunately a bat's fingers provide part of the framework for flying, and they're covered up with wing membrane. To see how similar the bat skeleton looks to human beings, with the same arm, leg and torso bones defined, see: [visual.merriam-webster.com/images/animal-kingdom/flying-](http://visual.merriam-webster.com/images/animal-kingdom/flying-)

<mammal/bat/skeleton-bat.jpg> (or Google-search "bat skeleton").

## **Blind As A Bat? No Problem!**

The common saying "blind as a bat" is an utterly ridiculous (very false) notion. While bats never heard that stupid church-school lesson about masturbation causing blindness (an equally ridiculous saying) ALL BATS have the ability to see.

In addition to having day vision, bats never look silly as people who attempt to walk around in the dark, popping their hair barrettes every time they bang into furniture. That's because bats are sort of like children who snort milk out their noses when they laugh and then drink it again but instead of milk, bats make sonar-sounds through their noses or mouth and those ultrasonic waves bounce off solid objects only to return to the bat again.

(It's sort of like getting wet when you try to splash a friend by stomping in a mud puddle). This helps bats navigate safely through utter darkness by the way sound-waves splash back.

## **The Kind of Itch Only a Hot Bat Can Cure**

Like Fonzi, honking the horn on his black motorcycle to lure a potential mate out of the house, some bats, such as the hammer-headed fruit bats in Africa, honk loudly to attract mates. Other male species squirt body odor from their underarms all over the female. (I'm glad no human male ever does that -- but imagine, if you're a female bat with a certain kind of itch . . . just **MAYBE** it wouldn't seem so vile.)

Oddly enough, every study conducted on bats has shown that the males live in separate roosts all summer while the females raise the offspring in a nursery - with no cell phones or grown males allowed!

### **Bat Nipples: Are They Where They Should Be?**

Unlike the way George Clooney wore his Batman costume in 1997 with perky nipples sported on the front, biology placed real-live bat nipples inside the flying mammal's armpit. I would guess Mother Nature had many reasons for doing that. Perhaps the warmth generated by the axillary region protects bat nipples from the cold.

The upper arm of the female would also be close enough to offer breast support (since bats don't have bras) but that would only be true if bats actually **HAD** breasts. Also, hiding

nipples there would increase modesty - keeping all the local bachelor male-bats from gawking so much. What's more, with so many bachelor-roosts being full of male bats, which live separately from the females all summer maybe the armpit location prevents them from starting nipple-twisting contests with one another!

### **Holy Scrotum Batman!**

"I'm sorry. Did you borrow that from a donkey? If bats could talk, that's probably what females would exclaim come mating season. That's because male bats reportedly (like some Pagans) have genitalia that's extra super-duper-sized, covering as much as 1/5th of their body mass. (Note, according to Don E. Wilson, in his book: "Bats in Question," with some bat species, the females also look unusual with an external clitoris that makes them almost indistinguishable from the males.)

Certainly pleasing the Love Goddess of the Fall: Bats mate in the cooling season, just before hibernation. Bats could certainly teach humans a lesson with their delayed insemination programs. Some species of female bats (who mate in fall) store that sperm through the hibernation months until they re-emerge for self impregnation in the spring!

## **Cohabitation And Habitat**

Extremely well-developed socially, bats have so much to teach humans in regards to how they interact with one another. While it's suspected that many bat species roost together in large numbers to conserve body heat, we do not know all the reasons for such amicable behavior.

Speculation suggests they might roost together each winter to avoid the holiday shoppers fighting over parking spaces. Other ideas purport that community roosts allow bats to alert one another about predators (and about avoiding a stampede at one of K-mart's blue light specials).

So far, it seems that birds and bats seem very gifted at cohabiting. For instance, I heard of one condo-style bat house that successfully kept birds in the top compartment while bats filled the bottom dwelling. Reason suggests the two species would not collide in flight (since neither drinks alcohol). What's more, they generally sleep and become active at opposite times of the day - never having to compete for food or fight for an empty stall in the bathroom.

With exception to bats that live in warm climates year-round, many bats either migrate south for winter (like birds) or else they hibernate. This is due, largely, to the availability of edible insects and/or fruit but it is also due, in part (I am almost sure of it) to horrible stories told about the abominable motor vehicles that come sliding out of driveways, scaring away all domestic and wildlife each winter.

### **Habitat Under Attack**

Many bats have died due to cave invasions creating a disruption to their natural hibernation cycle. Waking from a winter's nap requires a lot of bug or fruit calories for the bat to get comfortable again. If the bats are disturbed too often in winter, when they have no real food sources available, they starve to death and/or freeze.

Since bats often look like birds in flight, having flight patterns that resemble and eagle's, and while they only fly after sunset, bats could easily be mistaken for the physical incarnation of birds after death with their shadowy presence.

While many bat species are now adapting to live with humans, such as those who now live under heavily traveled bridges or set up home inside a bat house, other species go

looking for half-way houses from nature. With heavy bulldozing, some animals don't find a suitable alternative home and they don't survive.

## **Bats Hang Upside Down Because They're Smart!**

Bats seem highly intelligent in the way they hang upside down to roost. Perhaps such posture improves blood-flow to their brains, enhancing brain activity. It certainly allows them to conserve energy and utilize gravity when taking off in flight. All a bat must do to launch off is simply 'let go!'

While human-moms often brag about having eyes in the back of their heads, bats can do something even better. They can arch their heads back all the way until the back of their skull touches their spine and, if they happen to be hanging upside down at the time, they'd be seeing things "up-right" behind them.

## **Are Vegetarians Smarter Than Meat Eaters?**

I doubt a study like this have ever been done on human beings, but according to Don E. Wilson, author of *Bats in Question*: vegetarian/Fruit bats have larger brains than meat-eating insectivore bats.

## **More Guano Please**

According to my "Bat Ambassador" training, there are so many rich ingredients in bat guano, a scientist could spend a lifetime discovering its many productive uses and still have work left after s/he died. Some sources say bat guano gives staying power to modern-day lipstick but I cannot officially validate such sources. Others insist that good farmers, interested in organic farming, have been willing to throw punches over what guano's available (it's a most superb fertilizer).

Years ago, when I attended a Civil War Reenactment (on assignment as a news reporter) a Yankee soldier/actor told me that when troupes ran out of rifle powder they'd mix dried guano with toasted straw. They'd then stuff the mix down their musket muzzles in place of gun powder and go off to shoot.

## **Bats: "Deity To Mice And Rats?"**

Compared to other rodents, bats live amazingly long lifetimes. While most nibbling-mammals seldom live a full year, many bats live 30 years or longer (they're practically immortal by comparison!) I

wonder if rats look up to their flying relatives as highly evolved spiritual advocates!

### **Each Sabbat: Meditating On The Anatomy of Flight**

Any Pagan wanting to visualize flying by power of bat should realize there are dramatic differences in the anatomy and muscle physiology of birds verses bats. For one thing, birds have hollow bones while bat bones are much more solid, just like a human's, filled with marrow.

Because birds carry most of their muscle mass over their breast-bones, anyone wanting to astral project themselves for a ride upon a bird would likely cling to its feather back in the same manner that Harry Potter rode Buckbeak, the hippogriff (legendary offspring of a griffin and a mare). In contrast, a bat's bulkiest flying muscles remain on the mammal's posterior shoulders, muscles which stretch over the top of its shoulder-blades.

To fly with a bat, one would do best to hang from its anterior (front) as though embracing the bat tightly for an intimate slow dance. The lesser of the two dancers (meaning the passenger) should warp his/her limbs around the flying partner. When female bats carry their young, the infant clings to her belly in that same sort of fashion; often attaching its

hungry mouth to either its mother's nipples during flight.

### **Safety For Bats And All**

Considering how the beloved family dog can catch rabies, it's probably wise to immunize your pets. Also, never touch a wild animal that hasn't yet learned how to communicate that it's just about to vomit, explode with diarrhea, or otherwise spew virus all over you. Even if the fallen bat you've discovered looks adorable ... take extreme caution when handling (e.g., use rubber gloves inside welding gloves) or don't touch it at all.

Just as we humans would protect ourselves against a stranger whose spurting blood, you should always consider the risk of catching disease when helping an injured animal. Never tug on the ears of a man-eating shark or thumb-wrestle a wild bat, no matter how tempting that bat's thumbs truly look to touch.

Out of thousands of injured, lost or sick bats captured by humans world-wide, fewer than 8 percent have ever tested positive for rabies. All the same, it's always better to be safe than addressing "sorry" letters to your survivors after you're gone.

## **Bat Inside Your House**

A bat caught inside the house is most likely a juvenile who got drunk at some hazing party the night before and got lost on its way home. Statistically, it is truly the younger bats that take silly risks and venture indoors with people. To release it, open all doors and windows while remaining quiet. This will enable the bat's sobering escape (and it's the best strategy for ending such a fascinating visit happily).

Bats are protected in many countries and in the United States. It's actually illegal for ordinary citizens to keep bats locked up as pets. In fact, many areas require a license just to handle a bat! For relocating a lost and exhausted animal back outdoors, instead of standing on the curb to hail a cab, gather a clear Tupperware (large enough plastic) container and carefully place it over the bat. Then slide a thin piece of cardboard or very sturdy paper underneath to seal the animal inside. That way it can be immediately transferred outside safely.

### **What Can You Do To Help Protect Bats**

Provide bat houses as an alternative roost site so they have a place to go when their former habitat is destroyed. A bat house should stand in full sun, 12-15 feet above

ground. Plans for building bat house plans are available at the Bats Northwest website: [batsnorthwest.org/bat\\_houses.html](http://batsnorthwest.org/bat_houses.html)

Once settled into a new roost, or artificially supplied home, bats will return year after year. (This includes those who migrate south for the winter as well as those who hibernate inside caves). Even if you pack up your human family and move away, the bats will continue to return to that same old bat house each summer if the new human residents allow it to remain.

### **Keep Your Cats Indoors For Their Own Sake And For The Bats**

**Keep your cats indoors.** In Washington, the domestic cat is not native to the wilderness but they certainly kill a frightening number of small native animals. If your neighbor's pet kills only one wild creature per week, and ten of your neighbors have such outdoor cats, that's 40 wild animals destroyed unnaturally per month and 480 wild animals killed per year (just in your neighborhood!).

**Never disturb roosting bats** (as previously mentioned). Simply disturbing bats during hibernation often results in their death.

**Get more information.** See the website for Bat Conservation International: [batcon.org/](http://batcon.org/) and visit the National Park Service website [nps.gov/noca/naturescience/bats.htm](http://nps.gov/noca/naturescience/bats.htm) See also Wind Cave National Park's bat pages: [nps.gov/archive/wica/Bats.htm](http://nps.gov/archive/wica/Bats.htm)

**Educate others.** Do your best to dispel the harmful myths about bats. Share your enthusiasm for nature with everyone you meet. The more people who learn about bats, the more they'll realize the importance of such flying mammals and how they help our financial economy as well as our Mother Earth.

### **Other Possibly Senseless & Perhaps Unrelated Information (Author's Bio)**

Author Tami Jackson is a "bat ambassador" for [Bats Northwest](#): Helping Bats In Washington State (USA).

Tami knew very little about bats beyond ducking from those that flew into the family wooded home when she was a child. Such silly experiences -- with the entire family in hysterics -- helped her decide to overcome senseless personal ignorance. She became a bat ambassador in 2007 and this article is part of her subsequent agreement to educate others about the importance of bats (she

signed a contract to do that during her training in Seattle WA).

"Discomfort with bats is merely ONE frightfully ignorant thing I can now cross off my list. It's a tragic behavior response I have definitely overcome," Jackson said. "Fear of bats is now a distant memory, if even that. The more you know about them, the more you realize they're just adorable."

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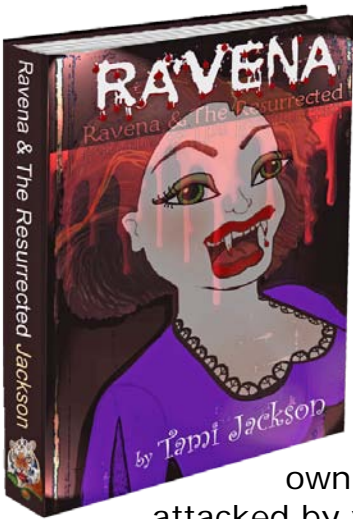
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## **Ravena & The Resurrected (R&R)** by Tami Jackson

Ravena Doomlah has difficulty making close friends and fantasizes about vampires. When her coworkers insist they are not real, Ravena figures she knows better. After all, she's seen one with her

own eyes and, after she's attacked by yet another vampire, she begins to go through a change that will transform the way people treat her forever.

\*Rated R for adult-scene/vampire violence.

Here's the **book trailer**:

[youtube.com/watch?v=v0wsDzDxIko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0wsDzDxIko)

**Sample chapters** and more available at  
[SunTigerMOJO.com](http://SunTigerMOJO.com)

Read more about this book  
[SunTigerMOJO.com/book.html](http://SunTigerMOJO.com/book.html)

Main character, Ravena Doomlah, has a blog:  
[Vamchoir.blogspot.com](http://Vamchoir.blogspot.com)

## **5 REASONS WHY R&R IS THE BEST VAMPIRE NOVEL**

- \* There's a LOT of Seattle in this book!
- \* Part of Ravena Doomlah's vampire experience is spent underground in the city's historic ruins.
- \* Fresh view on what it's like to suddenly become turned vampire.
- \* Experience the raw forces of wild vampire and werewolf nature safely, by living vicariously through the main character.
- \* Beautifully written, well-researched and imaginative. (Even hilarious in some places.)
- \* Modern (present day) vampires with historic accuracy.
- \* Encourages obsession with vampires! (Guilty pleasures realized.)
- \* There's a very good reason why vampires of old pursued only one true love - learn why!

OKAY! So That's MORE than five reasons! (This book really delivers!)