

The Essential Guide to a Batty Halloween



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Welcome!



01 **Happy Halloween**

This Halloween, we're taking the chance to celebrate bats as the amazing creatures they are! We hope that you will join us at BCT in, spreading positive awareness and fundraising to help protect bats and their habitats. Together, we can protect bats and keep them flying in the night sky for us and future generations to enjoy.

Despite bat activity being low at this time of year, we suddenly begin seeing bats everywhere – in our shops, pubs and even our homes. Find out why bats are more than a Halloween decoration in this Special Edition BCT Halloween pack. In this pack, you'll find exciting fundraising ideas for your Halloween celebrations, in addition to fascinating batty facts, myth busters and even more ways to get involved and help.



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02 *Bats & Halloween*

Bats have long been associated with Halloween, but why is this? There are many different reasons why bats have become a Halloween symbol. Part of this is because bats are nocturnal, which means they are most active during night. This has led to some myths associating bats with death. However, bats have actually adapted to be nocturnal, partly as this helps them avoid predators.



Sometimes bats are also associated with vampires on Halloween. This has meant that over Halloween in particular, bats are portrayed as terrifying blood-sucking fiends. However, as you'll find out later in this pack, all bat species in the UK feed only on insects, not blood. There are only three species of vampire bat in the world and these are found in South and Central America.

Despite this misconception of bats, they're actually very gentle, intelligent and captivating creatures!

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03 *Why fundraise for bats?*

Bats are misunderstood

Bats are unique and fascinating animals. However, they often suffer from bad press because of the many myths and false media surrounding them.

On pages 5 and 6, you can learn about some of the myths often spread about bats and find out the real truth!

We need bats

Bats are an indicator species, meaning they tell us a lot about the health of our environment. Decreasing bat populations is a warning sign of wider problems within nature.

These amazing creatures are also important pollinators and pest controllers (because UK bats feed on insects).



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04 *Why fundraise for bats?*

Bats are facing many threats

Bat populations have experienced severe declines historically due to loss of roosting sites, and lack of feeding grounds and flight paths caused by the destruction of their natural habitat. This is a direct result of human development; as we've increased the area we take up for our homes, shops, offices and roads, we have reduced the area available for bats to live.

Six species of bat in the UK remain endangered but it is encouraging that the populations of other bat species are showing the initial signs of recovery following significant historic declines.

However, our work is far from over and bats need more help now than ever. Bats are often portrayed as scary animals, particularly around Halloween, and recently they have been wrongly blamed for the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are doing everything we can to secure the funds we need to make sure that we continue to be here to provide a national voice for bat conservation. We hope you can join us in our efforts.





05 MYTH BUSTERS

MYTH

"Bats drink blood"

All 17 species of bat that we have in the UK feed solely on insects, not blood.

There are over 1400 bat species in the world and only three of these are Vampire bats.

The three vampire bat species live in Central and South America (not Transylvania!). They feed on livestock, horses and birds by making a small nick on the skin and lapping up a few drops of blood, the animal barely notices and no sucking is involved.



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MYTH

"Bats are blind"

No, bats aren't blind (and so, they won't fly into your hair), but at night they use their ears rather than their eyes to make their way around. As they fly they make shouting sounds. The returning echoes give the bats information about anything that is ahead of them, including the size and shape of an insect and which way it is going. This system of finding prey is called echolocation - locating things by their echoes. This is just one of the things that makes bats amazing and unique animals!



06 MYTH BUSTERS

MYTH

"Bats have lots of babies"

The majority of bat species only have 1 baby (called a pup) each year. In the UK, pregnant female bats gather in maternity roosts to have their young. They will keep their pup very close and nurture them.

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MYTH

"Bats come out on Halloween"

Despite being associated with Halloween, bats are more likely to be hibernating at this time. Bats in the UK seek suitable hibernation sites and begin periods of torpor (deep sleep) in October.



07 *Batty Celebration Ideas*

This Halloween we're excited to be able to celebrate with our friends and families again.

However, some of us are still a little cautious and we all still need to be careful with social distancing.

Don't worry as we've put together some exciting ideas so you can safely celebrate bats and Halloween from the comfort of your own home, or you can invite friends and family to if you feel comfortable.

Pumpkin carving challenge

Get your family and friends involved and challenge them to a batty pumpkin carving competition. Check out our [pumpkin carving guide here](#).

You could even have a Zoom ceremony to present your finished bat-themed pumpkins and crown a winner! Have a look at our [Facebook pumpkin album](#) for ideas and inspiration.



To help raise funds for bats at the same time, you could suggest a [donation](#) for entry or award the winner with a prize from one of our generous [collaborators](#) or one of our [bat pin badges](#).

Pumpkin carving should only be done with great care and children should never do it unsupervised.

08 *Batty Celebration Ideas*

Batty Zoom party

Host a batty Zoom fancy dress party to safely celebrate with your friends and family.

Your party could consist of a **batty pub quiz**, or even a **Halloween-themed cocktail (or mocktail) making session**. [Visit our page here](#) to see some fun bat facts you could use in your quiz or [click here for a ready-made quiz](#)! We also have [cocktail and mocktail recipe ideas here](#).

Try something different and host a **batty Halloween-themed scavenger hunt** on Zoom! Challenge your friends and family to find bat-related items (like food items that bats help to produce) in their homes within a set time and the quickest wins.

These are all great ways to also raise funds for bat conservation whilst celebrating - you could suggest a [donation](#) to BCT for party entry, perhaps even create a Facebook fundraising page, and award a scavenger hunt prize that you've purchased from one of our [collaborators](#) or one of [BCT's bat pin badges](#).



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09 *#BatBake*

A great way to celebrate this Halloween is by joining in with BCT's great British *#BatBake*. Get involved and be creative whilst learning about all the amazing things bats do for us.



How do I get involved?

Taking part in *#BatBake* is easy! You can find loads of fun and tasty recipes in our [#BatBakes guide](#). Each of these recipes has ingredients for which bats play an important role in their production. So, just choose your favourite recipe and get baking!

Make sure you share your bakes with us by uploading photos of your creations to social media and tagging us (@batconservationtrust on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), or @_BCT_ on [Twitter](#)) and using the hashtag *#BatBakes*.

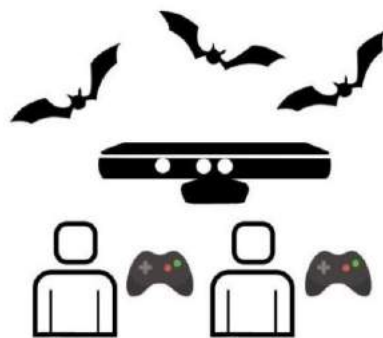
[You can find out more about the role bats play in our food production here.](#)

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10 *Gaming for Bats*



A great way to help bats this Halloween and have fun at the same time is a charity gaming event.

You could have a streaming marathon, batty fancy dress gaming event or a gaming challenge.

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Use Twitch and Livestream Fundraising on [JustGiving](#) or [Give as you Live](#) to raise money for bats this Halloween.

In previous years, we have had lovely gamers doing streamathons and live streaming over Halloween to help raise funds for Bat Conservation Trust!

Let us know if you do a livestream or have any questions about gaming for bats by emailing fundraise@bats.org.uk.

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Activities & crafts for celebrations

We've put together a few little activities that you may like to incorporate in your Halloween celebrations. Enjoy!

Can you survive A Bat's Life? Will you make it through Hedgerows and Hazards? [Play our batty board games here!](#)



Wondering how to entertain your guests? Play [Pin the Nose on the Bat](#), make [bat jewellery](#), have a [pumpkin carving session](#), or host a [batty quiz](#).

Not sure what to wear this Halloween? [Click here for how to make your own bat costume](#) and [here for how to make a bat mask](#).



Maybe you want to make your guests some [Halloween-themed cocktails](#) or [snacks](#). Don't forget to check out [#BatBakes](#) for more recipe ideas.



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12 Resources

Find out more about bats and fundraising for bat conservation with these links below!

Learn more about bats:

- [Types of bats](#)
- [Why bats matter](#)
- [Fun facts about bats](#)



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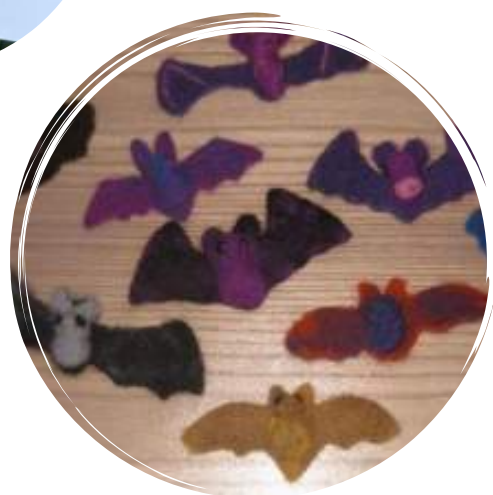
More ways to fundraise for bats:

- [Fundraising for bats](#)
- [How to donate](#)
- [Become a BCT member](#)
- [Adopt a Bat](#)



Other useful links:

- [Batty activities, crafts & other educational resources](#)
- [#BatBake](#)
- [Useful leaflets & resources](#)



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And most importantly.....

Have a fun, safe and batty Halloween!

Whatever way you decide to celebrate Halloween this year, we would love to know! Make sure you share your Halloween celebrations with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#)!

If you have any questions, please do contact us on fundraise@bats.org.uk.



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