

DICHOTOMOUS KEY FOR BATS

A dichotomous key is an important scientific tool, used to identify different organisms, based on the organism's observable traits. A dichotomous key consists of a series of statements with two choices in each step. Choices are based on the two characteristics that best fit the organism in question and will take you on different paths to ultimately find the name of each organism. Choices typically begin with broad characteristics and become narrower as more choices are required.

Begin with number 1(a). Read the information on each card and determine which bat is described. Write the name of the bat in the space provided. Based on your answer, the key will direct you to a new statement. You will continue in this way until reaching an endpoint where you have identified all 10 bats. If an identification doesn't make sense, it may mean that one of the previous questions was answered incorrectly.

1(a)	If the bat has large, forward-facing ears that makes them look like they are wearing a bonnet, it is a	Florida Bonneted Bat
1(b)	If the bat does not have large, forward-facing ears that makes them look like they are wearing a bonnet,	Go to 2
2(a)	If the tail extends past the tail membrane and has a mass less than 15 g, it is a	Mexican Free-tailed Bat
2(b)	If the tail does not extend past the tail membrane and does not have a mass less than 15 g,	Go to 3
3(a)	If the bat has a nose-leaf (fleshy "triangle shape" above nose) that is horseshoe shaped, it is a	Hill's Horseshoe Bat
3(b)	If the bat does not have a nose-leaf (fleshy "triangle shape" above nose) that is horseshoe shaped,	Go to 4
4(a)	If the bat has a long tongue that can extend from their body nearly 3 inches and is covered in hair-like papillae, it is a	Mexican Long-nosed Bat
4(b)	If the bat does not have a long tongue that can extend from their body nearly 3 inches and is covered in hair-like papillae, go to	Go to 5
5(a)	If it is a small bat that has banded yellow and brown colors found on the hairs on their back, it is a	Tricolored Bat
5(b)	If it is not a small bat that has banded yellow and brown colors found on the hairs on their back,	Go to 6
6(a)	If the bat can camouflage itself to blend in and appear to be dead leaves, it is a	Eastern Red Bat

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6(b)	If the bat cannot camouflage itself to blend in and appear to be dead leaves,	Go to 7
7(a)	If the bat has disc-shaped nose-leaf with a long snout, it is	Jamaican flower bat
7(b)	If the bat does not have disc-shaped nose-leaf with a long snout,	Go to 8
8(a)	If the ears on the bat can extend past end of nose, it is a	Northern Long-eared Bat
8(b)	If the ears on the bat cannot extend past end of nose,	Go to 9
9(a)	If the bat is black or dark brown with large round ears and copper-colored eyes, it is	Livingstone Flying Fox
9(b)	If the bat is not black or dark brown with large round ears and copper-colored eyes, it is	Big Brown Bat