

# AFRICAN ECHOES

*A quarterly e-newsletter for our supporters!*



Photo credit: Sally-Ann Hurry

## THIS ISSUE'S NEWS AND UPDATES:

**'Meet' Bat Ambassadors and a new Board member**

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**Updates from the BwB team**

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**'How to set up a bat group' training 2025**

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**Ways to support Bats without Borders**

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## GREETING FROM BATS WITHOUT BORDERS!

We're thrilled to bring you the latest updates from the **Bats** without Borders team! In this issue, we have exciting news to share. First, we're proud to announce the launch of our Early Career Pipeline training programme, designed to support early career professionals. You'll also have the chance to meet our incredible bat ambassadors. Plus, we're delighted to introduce a new member of our Board of Trustees, bringing fresh insights and expertise to our mission. And there's more! We're excited to announce that our popular 'How to set up a bat group' training will be making a return in 2025. Stay tuned for more details on how you can get involved.



We'd like to take the chance to thank all our **Bats** without Borders supporters, volunteers, advisors, and Board members for their continued support.

## New BwB Board Member

We'd like to warmly welcome Dr Simeon (Simmy) Bezeng to the Board of **Bat** without Borders.

Simmy is an Invasion Biologist, with a diverse interest in using modern technological innovations to understand drivers of biodiversity loss. He completed his PhD in Botany from the University of Johannesburg, South Africa in 2015. Simmy is a certified IUCN Red List and Key Biodiversity Areas Trainer and works primarily across several African countries to support capacity-building initiatives to develop a National Red List and identify Key Biodiversity Areas.



## Meet Our BwB Ambassadors

We'd like to give a huge shout out to our ambassadors, supporting and promoting our work. Meet our inspiring and passionate bat and conservation ambassadors!



**Dr Mark Anderson:** Chief Executive Officer of BirdLife South Africa



**Dr Tiwonge Mzumara-Gawa:** Lecturer in the Biological Sciences Department, at the Malawi University of Science and Technology



**Prof Kirsty Park:** Professor in Conservation Ecology within Biological & Environmental Sciences, University of Stirling



**Prof Paul Racey:** Regius Professor of Natural History (Emeritus), University of Aberdeen & Visiting Professor at the University of Exeter's Centre for Ecology and Conservation

## BWB Team Updates



We're delighted to share an update from Wongani on his fruit bat project. Wongani is our Junior Conservation Officer and is based at Monkey Bay, Malawi.



### Fruit Bat in Mangochi Update

'The project aims to collect baseline data on fruit bat species in Mangochi through roost monitoring and community engagement. So far, I have been interacting with school wildlife clubs and having informal interviews to gather information on the location of fruit bat roosts. Together with the project team, we have surveyed 11 villages in the Mangochi district and have found 8 roosts for Epomophorous species. As already known, these species require trees with dense foliage as roosting sites, however, they are also adapting to urbanisation by roosting in buildings and exotic trees. Their diet mainly consists of indigenous fruits and flowers, making them important for regenerating native forests. I am particularly amazed bats feed on fruits of the nyala tree (*Xanthocercis zambesiaca*) which are locally abundant just like figs. I am also amazed at how they feed on the flowers of the African sausage tree.



I have also visited bat roosts with Namazizi Wildlife Club members, showing and educating them about fruit bats.'

## Early Career Pipeline Training – launched!



As part of our commitment to capacity strengthening, we have developed an **early career pipeline** to support students, recent graduates and those just starting out working in ecology / conservation careers to strengthen essential skills and boost confidence to support their career progression.

Thank you to everyone who applied. The applicants have been selected to take part in the training programme which involves courses covering topics such as CV/application writing, interview skills and networking, grant writing, monitoring impact / Theory of Change, and assessing Key Biodiversity Areas.

The one-year early career training programme is aimed at providing early career professionals with an opportunity to join courses in employability, research, people engagement and leadership skills.

<https://www.batswithoutborders.org/earlycareertraining.html>

## #WINGEDWEDNESDAY WEBINARS

Our **#WingedWednesday** webinar series runs on the last Wednesday of the month until November. Each webinar is 1 hour long starting at 3pm southern African time (currently 2pm UK time).

Sign up here: [www.batswithoutborders.org/webinars](http://www.batswithoutborders.org/webinars)



Don't forget that all 48 of our previous **#WingedWednesday** webinars are available on our **YouTube channel**.



Subscribe to receive notifications when we add new videos.



Join us for the next **#WingedWednesday** webinar taking place on **Wednesday 25 September** with **Carme Tuneu-Corral** sharing 'Bats and rice: assessing the role of bats as insect pest suppressors in rice paddies'.

## AfriPopo Student Indaba 2024

Following on from the success of our first AfriPopo Student India back in 2022, we are delighted to be hosting our second Pan African student indaba - bringing together early career researchers working on African bats! **#AfriPopo2024**

The AfriPopo Student Indaba (symposium) provides a friendly, inclusive and supportive opportunity for students and early career professionals to network and share their research findings. This event is a great opportunity to connect people working on bats across Africa.



The Indaba is organised by students for students and will take place on:

**Wednesday 13 & Thursday 14 of November 2024**

Register here to attend the Indaba:

[https://www.batswithoutborders.org/afripopo\\_student\\_indaba.html](https://www.batswithoutborders.org/afripopo_student_indaba.html)

Thank you to our AfriPopo Student Indaba sponsors



# 'How to set up a bat group' training – making a return in 2025!

Bats without Borders is thrilled to announce the return of our 'How to set up a bat group' training course in early 2025 following its successful run in 2023!

**Applications are now open!**



Are you passionate about bat conservation in southern Africa? Join us for this comprehensive training designed for individuals keen to establish bat groups or lead bat walks and talks in their communities.

## What to expect:

a series of online training sessions over three months (1.5 hours per session)  
topics include leading bat walks, bat care, bat detectors, and group setup supported by online resources and practical assignments

Deadline for applications: **3 November 2024**

Learn more and apply: <https://www.batswithoutborders.org/bat-groups.html>

The training will provide interested and enthusiastic individuals across southern Africa with the knowledge, tools, and support required to set up local bat groups.

Special thanks to Bat Conservation International for their generous support.



## Bat Merchandise

### Looking for something unique and sustainable?

Dive into the Bats without Borders online store!

[bats-without-borders.teemill.com](https://www.batswithoutborders.org/teemill.com)



[www.batswithoutborders.org/shop](https://www.batswithoutborders.org/shop)

# Could you be a Bat Hero this Halloween?



Halloween is a great time to get batty, have fun and support African bat conservation. We've put together a **Halloween-themed fundraising pack** to provide you with information, ideas, and resources to help you host an event and raise funds to support bat conservation.

Bats are vital for maintaining healthy ecosystems as pollinators, seed dispersers, and insect controllers. Your efforts will help protect these amazing creatures.

Your fundraising efforts will help support applied research, conservation action, and education programmes, such as:

- Providing training to help new bat groups develop across southern Africa
- Setting up a fruit bat monitoring programme
- Supporting early career researchers and conservationists at the start of their careers to develop skills and confidence in conservation

Embrace the spooky season by hosting a Halloween-themed event to raise funds for Bats without Borders. Here are some event ideas to get you started:

**HALLOWEEN PARTY**

**BAT WALK OR NIGHT HIKE**

**MOVIE NIGHT**

**PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST**

**COCKTAIL MAKING**

**BAT-THEMED BAKE SALE**



[Download the fundraising pack](#) and have a **Spooktacular Bat-tastic Halloween** helping support bat conservation across southern Africa!

## Volunteer Opportunities

Join the **Bats** without Borders colony!



We have an exciting opportunity to join our colony as a volunteer **Community Fundraiser** to make a difference to bat conservation in southern Africa.

We're looking for a team of people keen to raise much-needed funds for bat conservation and awareness of the threats bats face.

# Species in the spotlight



## Egyptian fruit bat (*Rousettus aegyptiacus*)

- is found across **sub-Saharan Africa** across the Middle East and into N. India and Pakistan
- they have **large eyes** adapted for twilight and night vision
- they are found in groups of various sizes, ranging from small **colonies** of 20 to 40 members to large colonies of 9,000
- Egyptian fruit bats are one of 3 members of the *Rousettus* genus to use both visual orientation and **echolocation**. Echolocation is produced through a series of crude, short clicks of the tongue against the side of the mouth
- they **pollinate** many nocturnally flowering trees and assist in seed dispersal
- and can eat their own weight in **fruit** in just one night!



Photo credit: MerlinTuttle.org

## Ways to support Bats without Borders

### Raise funds while you shop with Give as You Live

#### 3 easy steps:

1

Sign up for FREE and select us as your chosen charity



2

When you shop, use Give as you Live Online to visit your chosen retailer



3

Your purchases will generate FREE donations for us!



### Join the colony as a Friends of BwB

and receive...

- a subscription to 'African Echoes'
- eco-friendly stickers & postcards
- a digital certificate
- a downloadable bat-themed ringtone

for just  
£25 | €29 | \$31 |  
ZAR576  
a year!

Friends of Bats without Borders  
save 30% on Pelagic Publishing books\*!

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[www.batswithoutborders.org/friends-of-bwb](http://www.batswithoutborders.org/friends-of-bwb)

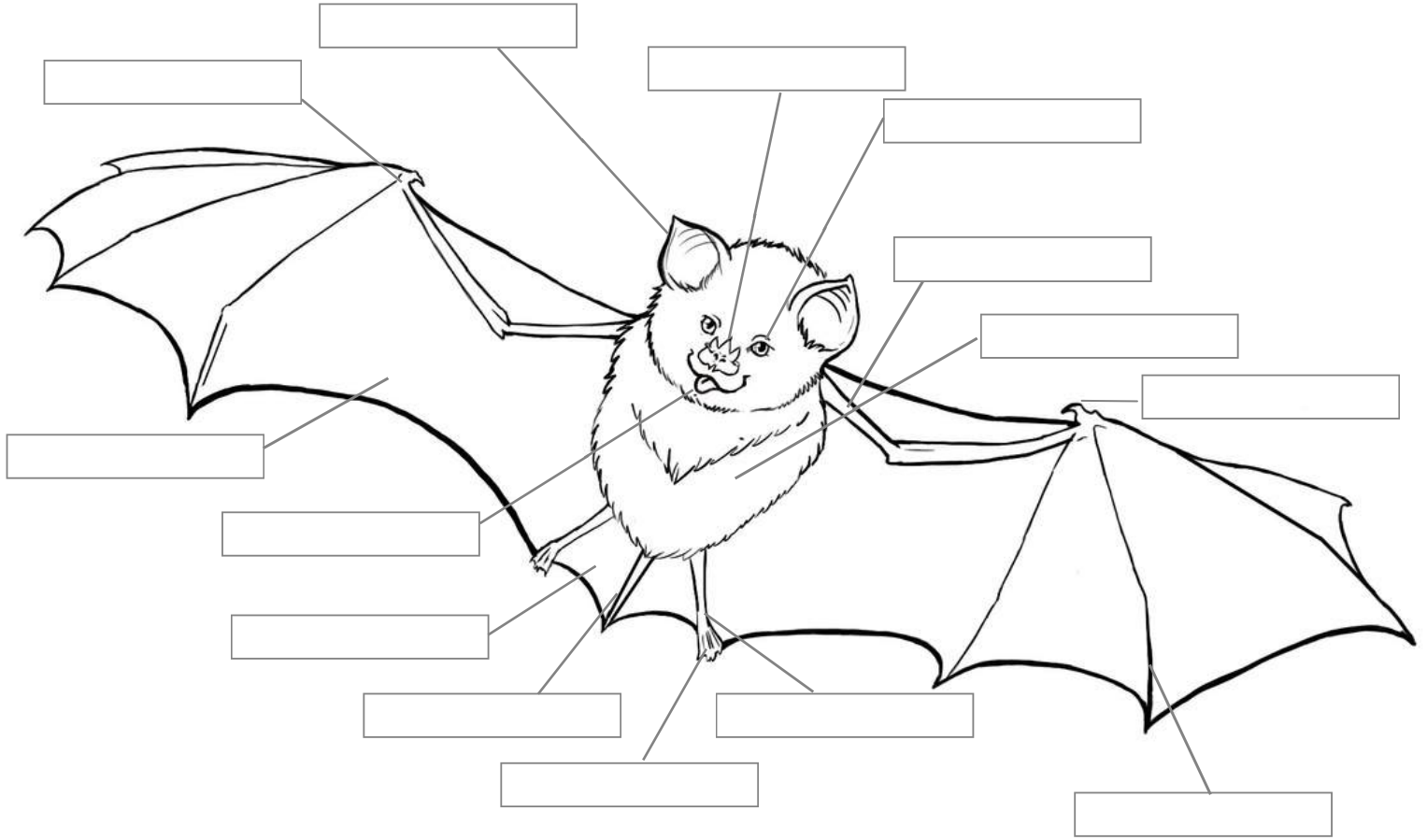
\*Discount can only be used via the Pelagic website and not in combination with other discounts, nor on books in the sale

We'd like to thank you all for your continued support.





Zeke here is a gorgeous trident leaf-nosed bat.  
Can you cut out the labels below and match the labels to the body parts (or write them in)?



ear

eye

tail membrane

wrist

knee

fur

foot

thumb

forearm

tail

nose-leaf

tongue

finger

wing membrane

Visit the BwB website to find free, fun resources (in 6 languages) all about bats

