

# Patch Program

## Bats

Check out the evening sky above Central Texas from May to October and you will see bats! Find out about your flying neighbors, why they live here, and more about their habitat while earning this patch.

### Grade level requirements:

- **Daisies (grades K-1).** Choose one activity from each category.
- **Brownies (grades 2-3).** Choose two activities from each category.
- **Juniors (grades 4-5).** Choose three activities from each category.
- **Cadettes (grades 6-8).** Choose three activities from each category.
- **Seniors (grades 9-10).** Choose three activities from each category.
- **Ambassadors (grades 11-12).** Choose three activities from each category.

## Discover

Find out more about bats by discovering all you can about them. Take the steps below to get to know your flying friends.

- Find out all you can about bats. Visit your local library or the Bat Conservation International website to find out the following information about bats:
  - What bats live in your area?
  - What are some of the different kinds of bats?
  - Are bats in the bird family?
  - How do bats navigate?
  - What do bats eat?

- How do bats care for their young?
- How are bats helpful?
- Describe bat anatomy
- Know the following terms and be able to explain them to your group:
  - Stalagmite
  - Stalactite
  - Grotto
  - Cave
  - Cavern
  - Spelunking
- Find out what kinds of animals live in a cave, cavern, or grotto. Select one type of animal and learn how it has adapted to life underground as opposed to animals of the same family that we see above ground.
- Find out what diseases bats can carry. How can we stay safe? Should we be afraid of bats?
- Learn the history, importance and location of one of United States' major caverns such as Carlsbad, Luray, Diamond, Mammoth, Meremac, Black Hills, or another cavern.
- Find out about equipment used in caving. Show that you know how to select, use, and care for the equipment. Be able to explain the purpose of each piece of equipment and when to use it. Show that you know how to dress for caving or visiting a cavern.

## Connect

Now that you know about bats and their habitats, take it one step further to connect with them.

- Read the book [\*Stellaluna\*](#) or another storybook about bats. Discuss why the author chose to write about bats and if the book accurately depicts bats.
- View videos produced by Bat Conservation International to learn more about conserving the world's bats and their ecosystems to ensure a healthy planet.
- Visit the Congress Avenue Bridge in Austin, TX, Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico, or other bat flight location to view bats in flight. Or, watch the sky at twilight where you live to look for bats. Remember – never go into any caves without a trained adult and always follow Safety Wise rules.
- Take a guided tour of Westcave Preserve, on Hamilton Pool Road, near Austin. Learn about why the preserve is there and how it helps the bat

population. Schedule a group visit or check the calendar for upcoming events.

- Find out about organizations that organize caving trips in your area. Have someone from the organization talk to your group about caving. Learn the safety measures and training that are needed to plan and carry out a caving trip. Participate in a caving trip.
- Get up and personal with bats on a bat walk led by an expert. Learn about bats in your area while seeing them in actions. Check the Bat Conservation International website for upcoming walks.

## Take Action

Take a look around and see how you can help bats! Use what you have learned and connections you have made to help bats in your area.

- As a troop or with a group of friends, make up a play about bats and put on the play for another troop or group to teach them about bats.
- Make a poster and display about bats and put it up in a school or other place where people can learn more about bats.
- Build a bat house. Talk with a local park or neighborhood to find a place to hang it.
- Find out about organizations and efforts for cave conservation. Look up ways you can help, then do it!
- Research the effects of pesticides and insecticides on bats. Learn about which chemicals are safe to use in areas of dense bat populations. Educate people in your community about the environmental effects of these chemicals.
- Research and create something to teach others how to be safe around bats and how to keep bats safe.