

# AFRICAN ECHOES

*A quarterly e-newsletter for our supporters!*



Bibundi butterfly bat (*Glauconycteris egeria*)  
Photo credit: Miguel Angel Fuentes

## THIS ISSUE'S NEWS AND UPDATES:

**Women in Bat  
Science 2024**

**'Meet' our Education  
Volunteer Carys**

**2023 Bat Hero  
Awards!**

**Ways to support  
Bats without Borders**

## GREETING FROM BATS WITHOUT BORDERS!

We're delighted to share our first African Echoes issue of 2024 with you, full of news and updates.

It's been a busy start to the year, with our second Women in Bat Science Indaba taking place in February, releasing our Classroom without Walls in six languages (with more to come!), and working on our exciting plans for 2024!

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

We're looking forward to a successful and impactful year ahead.



# Women in Bat Science

Bats without Borders is committed to supporting and promoting women in (bat) science working on African bats.

After the success of our first Women in (bat) Science Indaba in February 2023, **Bats** without Borders was delighted to run our 2024 Women in (bat) Science event, as part of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, on Tuesday 13 February 2024.

We had a fantastic line-up, starting with our keynote address by **Dr Katendi Changula**, University of Zambia: 'My journey in bat research in Zambia: Navigating Pathogens and Ecology'. Followed by presentations by;

**Inieke Udokang**, Small Mammal Conservation Organization: Saving the Endangered Short-tailed Roundleaf Bat: Empowering Local Communities to Protect Forest from Wildfires.

**Geetika Bhandra**, University of Mauritius: Temporal expression of foraging patterns of Pteropus species in lychee orchards and backyard gardens.

**Ashmi Bunsy**, University of Mauritius: Conservation challenges of an endangered endemic insectivorous bat species on Mauritius island.



Thank you to the inspiring presenters who made the event such a success and to everyone who joined us on the day.

The keynote talk and presentations are available now via our [YouTube channel](#).

We highly recommend curling up with a cuppa and enjoying these fascinating presentations on African bat research and conservation.

[www.batswithoutborders.org/women-in-science-2024](http://www.batswithoutborders.org/women-in-science-2024)

#WiBS2024

In partnership with:



## Meet our Education Volunteer Carys

In this issue, we chat with Bats without Borders' volunteer **Carys Hoskins**, a dedicated member of the **Bats** without Borders Education subgroup.

### **What is your favourite thing about volunteering for Bats without Borders?**

Having initially enquired about volunteering positions at BwB in 2020 when I was doing my A levels, I have loved having the opportunity to take my understanding of conservation and biology beyond the classroom or lecture theatre and apply it to work in a conservation organisation such as BwB. I love using Canva to create resources as part of the education team, and although I have limited work experience with bats, I have found it awesome getting to know them and their personalities as I format posters and pages about them.



### **Where is the best place you have ever visited and why?**

While living in Zambia between 2014 and 2022 my family visited an island on the Zambezi called Bovu island. The trip felt very surreal, with genets that would come to the dinner table and eat off your fork, and rooms open to the elements. We collected chongololos (millipedes that appeared during the rainy season) and fished on the river in dugout canoes. I would definitely go back given the opportunity.

### **Which is the bat species you would most like to see and why?**

Creating resources on the 'PR bats' has enabled me to do some research on the diet, roosting behaviour, and distribution of some southern African bats. One bat to particularly catch my eye is the yellow-winged bat. I would love to see this in the wild with its beautiful yellow wings, ears, and nose-leaf. Now that I live in the UK and mostly only see pipistrelle bats, I think it would be really cool to see a bat this large and colourful.



## Why is conservation important to you?

I have been at my most joyful when spending time birdwatching, taking in a sunset, or just being in nature. I find it important to protect the biodiversity and natural beauty I have found so much joy in, not only as a way of giving back to the planet but also so that future generations can continue to find a similar joy that we currently take advantage of.

## What is your favourite hobby?

I would say birdwatching is a big hobby of mine, particularly in hearing birds and trying to identify them by their song or call.

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## Classroom without Walls – translated!

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### Exciting Announcement!

We are delighted to announce that our '**Classroom without Walls**' resources are available in Afrikaans, Chichewa, English, French, Swahili, and Portuguese, with Xhosa and Zulu coming very soon! [www.batswithoutborders.org/classroomwithoutwalls](http://www.batswithoutborders.org/classroomwithoutwalls)

Explore the resources packed with information and inspiration for engaging activities to learn about bats: their habitats, behaviour, the challenges they face, and what we can do to help.

Perfect for parents, teachers, rangers, wildlife club leaders...etc!



Thank you to everyone involved in the creation and translation of the resources!

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## Bat Heroes 2023

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Our **Bat Hero** awards are a celebration of people who've done incredible things to protect, conserve, and share appreciation of bats. Meet our winners below. We'd like to thank all our amazing volunteers and supporters, and our 2023 winners for all their work to help protect bats.



### Fundraiser of the Year

**Anne Youngman** ran an overnight 45-mile ultramarathon, to raise vital funds for bat conservation.

Anne's commitment to the cause is inspiring, she trained (in all weather conditions!) to prepare for the physical and mental demands of the run. She even had a bat detector attached to her backpack to record bat calls as she ran through the night.

Thank you so much Anne for the amazing amount you raised - almost £3,000 for Bats without Borders.



### Junior Fundraiser of the Year

**Brook** announced one day that he wanted to raise money to help bats. Bats are his favourite animal.

With Halloween approaching it seemed like a good time to get a bat project together. Brook helped to make and sell fudge from a batty roadside stand.

Brook was delighted to hand over around £98.50 to Bats without Borders. Congratulations and thanks so much for your support Brook



### Conservationist of the Year

**John Mchingama** is one of our 2023 'How to set up a bat group' trainees and since completing the course, has set up a bat group in Malawi. He enjoys talking about bat conservation with the group and they are eager to start working to conserve bats.

He is an inspiration and a worthy winner of the Conservationist of the Year award.



### Volunteer of the Year

**Carys Hoskins** joined the volunteer team as our youngest-ever volunteer and is a committed member of the education subgroup, bringing creativity, engagement and work for the education team.

It's fantastic how much she gives, and despite a busy student life, she gives her time to attend meetings and contributes so much.



## #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 1pm UK time).

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

Don't forget that all 42 of our previous **#WingedWednesday** webinars are available on our **YouTube channel**.



 **SUBSCRIBE**

Subscribe to receive notifications when we add new videos.



We're delighted to announce that the **#WingedWednesday** webinar series returns next month with the first webinar taking place on **Wednesday 27 March**.

## Bat Group Trainees – update

The **'How to set up a bat group'** training that took place in 2023 created a community of trainees keen to engage about the importance of bats. After the training, each trainee committed to lead 5 engagement events to build the foundations of a bat group, with the support from Dr Christopher Imakando (Bats without Borders' Capacity Development Officer).

Christopher has run individual meetings, in-country meetings, and main bat group meetings to share ideas and support the trainees.

We're delighted that three bat groups have been established so far – the Lusaka, Cape, and Sapiitwa Bat Groups. In addition, the participants have talked to over 300 people on various topics related to bat conservation. Christopher has also helped with grant writing, applications, and organising further training. Keep a look out on our Facebook page for updates on the newly formed bat groups.

 **CLASS OF**  
**2023**



### BWB TEAM UPDATE:

We're delighted to announce that our Conservation Intern Wongani, who joined the Bats without Borders colony in May 2022, has been promoted to Junior Conservation Officer!

**Well done Wongani!**



# Thank you!

A huge thank you to our first annual sponsor of the year, BatLogger. Thank you so much for the generous support that enables us to continue to work to protect bats across southern Africa.



## Sponsorship Opportunities

We are delighted to be rolling out a new Bats without Borders Business Partnership opportunity that would contribute to the vision that bats and their habitats in southern Africa are valued, protected and conserved for the well-being of bats, biodiversity and people.

We have a range of partnership packages such as becoming an annual sponsor to support Bats without Borders where we need it the most; sponsoring an individual to access bat conservation training; sponsoring a training workshop or another exciting 2024 event; or why not consider sponsoring one of the newly formed bat groups in southern Africa.

For further information or to express an interest in partnering with us, please contact:

Ruth Fraser our Admin and Comms Officer - [info@batswithoutborders.org](mailto:info@batswithoutborders.org)

## Our Latest Batty Clothing and Gifts!

### Exciting News from Bongi the Botswanan long-eared bat!

Hey fabulous friends!

Bongi here, and I'm buzzing with excitement to unveil my brand-new look! Brace yourselves for a fashion feast, as I introduce my incredible new clothing range!

From dusk till dawn, I've been working tirelessly to bring you a collection that reflects my unique style and personality. Get ready to soar in style with these chic and comfortable pieces that are perfect for any nocturnal adventure!

Spread the word, share the love, and let's make a statement together!



<https://bats-without-borders.teemill.com/collection/flowers/>

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

# Species in the spotlight

Bibundi butterfly bat (*Glauconycteris egeria*)

- is a species of **vesper** bat in the family Vespertilionidae.
- Based on molecular evidence, it is closely related to the **silvered bat** (*G. argentata*)
- It has conspicuous **whitish stripes** on the sides of its back and very **large ears**
- Not a southern African species but can be found in the following countries: **Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, and Uganda.**
- As of 2019, it is evaluated as a **data deficient** species by the IUCN. This beautiful bat is infrequently encountered and thus little is known about its population size and trend, range size, natural history, or threats it faces.



Photo credit: Miguel Angel Fuentes

## Ways to support Bats without Borders

Raise funds while you shop with Give as You Live

Join the colony as a Friends of BwB

Make a difference in 2024

We'll get a free donation when you sign up...



...and keep receiving donations when you shop!



Give as you Live Online

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feefo Rating from 2,281 reviews

and receive...

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

for just  
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ZAR576  
a year!

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\*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.







Can you find all the bat families in the word search?

## Bat families

L	O	N	G	F	I	N	G	E	R	E	D	E	C
D	E	C	A	F	T	I	L	S	M	O	V	A	I
I	E	O	D	R	H	E	I	N	T	L	S	H	S
I	A	R	E	E	R	C	P	L	P	I	O	T	T
E	C	G	S	E	A	S	H	S	I	G	T	O	U
F	E	I	O	T	E	D	D	I	H	A	H	G	G
R	D	L	N	A	I	T	N	M	E	H	F	N	O
U	E	D	F	I	H	O	R	S	E	S	H	O	E
I	S	F	A	L	S	E	V	A	M	P	I	R	E
T	E	E	E	E	H	A	E	T	N	A	R	D	P
T	E	P	L	D	F	N	G	E	T	N	E	T	S
P	L	A	I	N	F	A	C	E	D	O	E	E	N
E	I	S	I	I	E	T	T	R	I	D	E	N	T
D	E	L	I	A	T	H	T	A	E	H	S	E	A

- |              |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| HORSESHOE    | PLAINFACED   | TRIDENT      |
| FREETAILED   | FALSEVAMPIRE | LONGFINGERED |
| FRUIT        | LEAFNOSED    | SLITFACED    |
| SHEATHTAILED | CISTUGO      |              |

Visit the Kids Zone on the BwB website to find free, fun resources all about bats!



# Classrooms without Walls

EXPLORE - DISCOVER - LEARN - LOVE