



Lesson 2: Meet the Rhody Bats

Theme

Biologists collect annual data on bats in order to learn more about their populations and health. Data collection over time is an important part of wildlife conservation.

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, students will learn about the bat species of Rhode Island, and the current monitoring efforts being conducted by the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Corresponding Activities for this Lesson

- Working the Night Shift (*Note: This activity includes some of Rhode Island's bat species, as well as species from different states.*)

Materials

- Lesson 2 PowerPoint
- Mist net sample
- RI bat species cards

Lesson

1. Show students the pictures of Rhode Island's bat species. *Ask students if they can spot some similarities and differences between the bats. Ask students to guess which bats might be the most common, and which might be the rarest.*

- Explain that the big brown and Eastern red bats are the most common species, and that the little brown used to be more common than it is today. The Northern long-eared bat is listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Eastern small-footed bat has been documented in Rhode Island, but not in a long time. Hoary, silver-haired, and tri-colored bats are seen occasionally.
 - *Ask students why they think some bat species are more common than others, or why some bat populations are threatened/declining. After brainstorming, ask students to keep these predictions in mind. Threats to bats will be covered in the next lesson.*

2. Ask students what Rhode Island biologists may want to study about bats.

- Show students sequence of photos and videos of Rhode Island biologists capturing/banding bats, counting bats, and acoustic surveys. Pass around the mist net fragment for students to feel and see up close. *Information about each bat research project can be found in the notes section of the PowerPoint.*