



GREEN-SCHOOLS STAY HOME - WATER



Idea - Make a Flying Water Bat

The Daubenton's bat (Scientific name: *Myotis daubentonii*/ Irish: Ialtóg uisce) is a small/medium size bat (4.5-5.5cm) that can fit in the palm of your hand, weighs less than a Robin and lives for about 5 years in the wild. It is often called the 'water bat' as it flies just above water (e.g. lakes and slow moving rivers and canals) hunting for small flies like midges, caddisflies and mayflies. It can even scoop prey from the water surface using its big feet and tail! Amazingly, if the bat makes a mistake and ends up in the water, it can swim to safety.

Echolocation
The bat uses echolocation to find its food. This is when the bat makes a sound (high frequency), the sound wave hits an object and returns (echo) to their ears, telling them where it is, how big it is and what direction it is moving in.

JumpStart Bat Echolocation Song:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hr-Y2Tf8gFE>

Where they live and hibernation
The place a bat lives is called a roost and Daubenton's bats roost near water, under stone bridges, in canal tunnels, inside mines and damp caves or holes in trees. In summer, females come together to form maternity colonies to have their pups and in winter the bats hibernate, usually alone, in their preferred warm sheltered spots underground e.g. mines or caves and will not emerge until the start of spring.

Threats and conservation
Possible threats include water pollution, less insect prey, removal of waterside trees and vegetation and things that reduce their roosts e.g. flooding, human destruction etc. So, we can help by keeping our fresh water clean and protecting where they live.



Photo: Frank Greenaway

Make a Flying Water Bat



Have fun making your very own Daubenton's bat ('Water Bat'), fly it around your home and use it as a decoration on spooky occasions!

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Empty toilet paper roll
- Plain paper or coloured paper/card
- Marker/colouring pencils/crayons and/or paint with paint brushes and a jar with water
- Child friendly scissors or adults help
- Sellotape and glue
- Thread/string/wool
- Paper clip/hair clip/bobby pin

WHAT TO DO...

1) Get your empty toilet paper roll which will be the bats body and paint it black/brown or any colour you want. While waiting for the paint to dry cut out 2 circles of paper and a smile or fangs which will be its eyes and mouth. Colour these whatever way you want and stick them on (away from the top of the roll which will be pushed in later) using glue or tape.



2) Draw out a pair of wings on some paper with tabs on the end **Tip**. You can use the template below as guidance. Then colour them as you want, leave to dry (if needed) and cut them out. Make a cut (adult help needed) in the middle of the roll, along the side of what will be the bats body, make the cut the right size for the tabs to slide in to. Slot the tab into the roll and tape the tab to the inside. Make a small hole approx. 1/3 the way down the back of the roll and thread the string/wool, tying a clip to the end in the inside and loop on the other end.

3) Push down on the top of the roll, folding it in to create a point on either end (see picture below) to make the ears and repeat on the bottom to make the feet. Then pull the looped end of the string and fly your bat!



CONCLUSION...

Did you enjoy making a Daubenton's bat? Do you see bats differently now? Can you remember one fact about the Daubenton's bat? Maybe you could turn your bat into a piñata, inserting a circle of card into the bottom with a string and filling with treats? :) Would you like to learn more about bats? If so, you could go to one of the following websites:

<https://www.batconservationireland.org/irish-bats/species/daubentons-bat>

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/mammals/daubentons-bat>

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/mammals/daubentons-bat/>
SciShow Kids Bats Video

Bat Wing Template



Thanks for taking part,
keep checking back for
more tips, experiments &
activities with
#GreenSchoolsStayHome