



Dear Colleague,

We wish to extend a cordial invitation to you to participate in the **5th International Berlin Bat Meeting: Are bats special?** to be held in Berlin, Germany. We have some important new information for you.

→ We had to **shift the days of the conference** from 10-12 March to **24-26 February 2017** (two weeks earlier), because we learned recently that all hotels in Berlin are fully booked in mid-March owing to a convention (the few hotel rooms available are exceedingly expensive). We hope that this does not cause any problems and apologize for any inconvenience. Please note the new date.

→ Our conference web page is now **open for registration!** Please go to <http://www.leibniz-izw.de/registration-336.html> or register directly at <http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/bat2017/>. Please register as soon as possible since you may then benefit from the early-bird registration fees.

→ The **revised program** is now available.

AIM

With this conference, we would like to foster an exchange of ideas related to the question 'Are bats special?' We are especially keen on crossing disciplinary boundaries and hope that the discussion among ecologists, geneticists, morphologists, physiologists, immunologists, virologists and conservationists will advance the field substantially. We suggest several exciting topics as sessions or workshops. In addition, we have invited plenary speakers to review novel applications and exciting developments in their respective research areas.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM (TENTATIVE TITLES)

Friday 24.02.2017	
09:30	Opening of reception
13:30 - 14:15	Plenary talk by Anders Hedenström (Lund University, Sweden): Are bats birds with respect to flight?
14:15 - 15:15	Session 'Bat flight': Chairperson Christian Voigt (IZW, Germany), Anders Hedenström (Lund University, Sweden)
15:15 - 15:45	Coffee break
15:45 - 16:30	Plenary talk by Cynthia Moss (Johns Hopkins University, U.S.A.): Is bat echolocation unique?
16:30 - 17:30	Session 'Bat vocalizations': Chairpersons Lutz Wiegrebe (University of Munich, Germany), Mirjam Knörnschild (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany)
17:30 - 19:00	Poster session
19:00 - 23:00	<i>Poster-Pasta party at the BfR</i>
Saturday 25.02.2017	
8:30 - 9:15	Plenary talk by Jerry Wilkinson (University of Maryland, U.S.A.): Bat longevity
9:15 - 10:30	Session 'Bat longevity': Chairperson David Costantini (University of Antwerp, Belgium), Joanna Kacprzyk (University of Dublin, Ireland)
10:30 - 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00 - 11:15	Plenary talk by Craig Willis (University of Winnipeg, Canada): Bat heterothermy
11:15 - 12:15	Session 'Bat heterothermy': Chairperson Melanie Dammhahn (University of Potsdam, Germany)
12:15 - 13:30	Lunch break

13:30 - 15:30	Plenary talk by Michelle Baker (CSIRO, Australia): Bat immunology and diseases
15:30 - 16:15	Session 'Bat immunology': Chairperson Marcel Müller (University of Bonn, Germany), Gábor Czirják (IZW, Germany),
16:15 - 16:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:45 - 17:45	Session 'Bat-associated pathogens': Chairperson Marcel Müller (University of Bonn, Germany), Gábor Czirják (IZW, Germany),
17:45 - 18:15	Poster session
18:15	Departure to conference banquet (Natural History Museum) OR conference party (Grüner Salon, Volkstheater)
19:30 - 23:30	Conference Banquet OR conference party

Sunday 26.02.2017

8:30 - 9:15	Plenary talk by Emma Teeling (University College Dublin, Ireland): Bat evolution and radiation
9:15 - 10:15	Session 'Bat diversity and evolution': Chairperson Stephen Rossiter (University of London, United Kingdom)
10:15 - 10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 - 11:45	Session 'Bat diversity and evolution': Chairperson Emma Teeling (University College Dublin, Ireland)
11:45 - 13:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
13:00 - 14:00	Session 'Bat conservation': Chairpersons Tigga Kingston (Texas Tech University, U.S.A.), Dina Dechmann (Max-Planck Institute for Ornithology, Germany)
14:00 - 14:45	Plenary talk by Paul Racey (University of Exeter, United Kingdom): Are bats special as conservation targets?
14:45 - 15:00	Closing ceremony/awards
15:00	End of Conference

DEADLINES AND COSTS

The deadline for registration and abstract submission is **15. November 2016**. Registration fees are **100€** for regular participants and **70€** for student participants (**early bird registration before 15th of September 2016**: 80€ for regular participants and 60€ for student participants).

We also invite you to our conference dinner which will take place in the dinosaur hall of the Berlin Natural History Museum. Dine with dinos in a wonderful exhibition. Alternatively, you may attend the conference party at the Grüner Salon at the Volkstheater in Berlin.



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Please feel free to distribute this call to anyone you think might be interested in participating. We apologize in case you received this letter more than once. If you have any questions, please contact us at 5thIBBM2017@izw-berlin.de or check the web pages www.leibniz-izw.de (-> 'conference', -> 'International Berlin Bat Meeting') or www.batlab.de.

We have reserved a contingent of rooms for you in the Best Western Hotel Steglitz (<http://www.si-hotel.com/?lang=en>). In case you would like to make your hotel

booking there, please mention the code "**Bats 2017**". We will organize a cost-free bus shuttle that will bring participants each morning from the hotel to the conference venue.

We are looking forward to seeing you in Berlin next February,

Christian C. Voigt, Gábor Á. Czirják and the batlab team (www.batlab.de)
 Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research, Berlin (www.leibniz-izw.de)

5TH INTERNATIONAL BERLIN BAT MEETING

BERLIN, 24-26 FEBRUARY 2017

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

We invite speakers to present data, projects or comprehensive reviews about the topic “**Are bats special?**” We propose the following sessions:

BAT FLIGHT

Bats are the only mammals capable of powered flight. Wing morphology, aerodynamics and flight performance seem to differ from birds, yet flight metabolic rates are similar. In this session, we will review our current understanding of bat flight, and whether the ability to do flapping flight presented a pre-adaptation for other seemingly unique traits of bats, such as high thermal tolerance, longevity or immunocompetence.

BAT VOCALIZATIONS

Bats provide textbook examples for echolocation. The sophisticated sonar enables bats to listen to their environment in complete darkness and to explore a multitude of ecological niches. What is unique about bat echolocation? And how does it differ from that of other sonar-using animals? Social calls are diverse in mammals and vocal learning has been attributed only to a few species, yet Chiroptera are outstanding for both social vocalizations and singing. Why do bats have such an extraordinary vocal repertoire and what is its purpose?

BAT LONGEVITY

Bat longevity is remarkable, yet our understanding of why bats are more long-lived than other taxa is poor. Is it related to some unique repair mechanism for damaged DNA, low levels of oxidative stress, high immunocompetence or heterothermy? During this session, we will discuss factors that may be responsible for the longevity of Chiroptera.

BAT HETEROOTHERMY

Bats seem to be particularly tolerant towards low and high body temperatures. Almost all bats are capable of torpor, i.e. the ability to reduce core body temperatures during adverse conditions. However, bats also seem to reach high core body temperatures when flying. Is heterothermy related to longevity and how does the immune system change at high and low body temperatures?

BAT IMMUNITY AND ASSOCIATED PATHOGENS

Recent studies have revealed that bats host a large diversity of viruses, yet there are only a few documented cases of die-offs in bat colonies caused by pathogens. White-nose syndrome is the tragic exception to this rule. Why do we observe this pattern? Why are bats less susceptible towards viral antigens, yet seemingly highly susceptible towards fungal infections?

BAT DIVERSITY AND RADIATION

The bat genome seems to be typical for a mammal, yet recent advances in the field of next-generation sequencing may teach us more about what extraordinary traits are correlated. Also, genomic approaches may inform us about the evolutionary scenario under which Chiroptera radiated, making it the second largest order within the Mammalia.

BATS AS SPECIAL CONSERVATION TARGETS

Can a thorough understanding of the exceptional biology of bats help us in refining our conservation efforts for this taxon? Do bats require other conservation approaches as other mammals in particular or vertebrates in general? Are bats particularly susceptible or resilient to anthropogenic changes?