

Western Bat Species – W

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Molossidæ, or free-tailed bats, belong to the order Chiroptera. The family's common name is derived from a length of "free" tail, projecting beyond the end of the uropatagium – the membrane that connects the base of the tail to the hind legs. The tail is usually best seen when resting. A special ring of cartilage slides up or down the tail vertebrae by muscular action to stretch or retract the tail membrane. This gives many species a degree of fine tuning in their flight maneuvers to rival their day-flying ecological equivalents, such as swifts, swallows, and martins. As a result, these animals include the fastest-flying of all bat species among their number.

+ Eumops perotis | greater mastiff bat

+ Eumops underwoodii | Underwood's mastiff bat

+ Nyctinomops femorosaccus | pocketed free-tailed bat

+ Nyctinomops macrotis | big free-tailed bat

+ Tadarida brasiliensis | Mexican free-tailed bat

Mormoopidae, contains bats known generally as mustached bats, ghost-faced bats, and naked-backed bats. They are found in the Americas from the southwestern United States to southeastern Brazil. They are distinguished by the presence of a leaf-like projection from their lips, instead of the nose-leaf found in many other bat species. In some species, the wing membranes join over the animal's back, making it appear hairless. The tail projects only a short distance beyond the membrane that stretches between the hind legs.

+ Mormoops megalophylla | ghost-faced bat

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