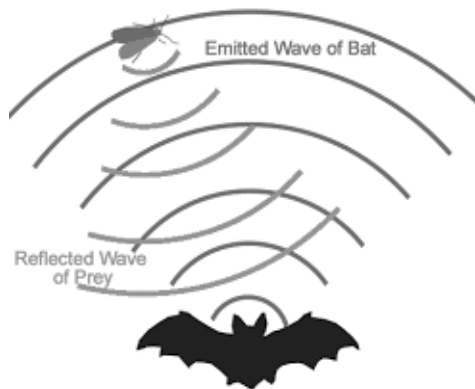


Bat Finds Her Dinner – a Classroom Game



Insect-eating bats use echolocation to find their food, sending out a very high-pitched sound (we can't hear it) and then listening for the echo that comes off the body of a moth or mosquito. It can remind us of playing Marco Polo (though the insects do not call back), so here is a game:

Children stand in a circle, with one, the “bat” in a blindfold, selected to be in the middle. The leader will circle outside the group and quietly tap one student to be the mosquito or moth.

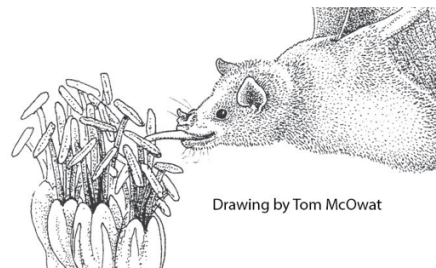
The “bat” will call out “Marco,” and most of the circle, not being prey, will call back, “Nope-o.” Only the selected mosquito will say “Polo.” See how long it takes for the bat to discern where the “Polo” is coming from and point to the prey. Pick a new bat, and new mosquito or moth, and repeat until it feels like enough.

As another option, the bat (again in a blindfold) in the center doesn't say anything. Most of the circle repeatedly whispers the word “quiet.” The selected mosquito (again by the leader tapping someone as she/he circles outside) will be the only one to be whispering, “mosquito.” [Game-playing “mosquitos” often try to lower their whisper to an inaudible level. Warn that if that happens, you will select a different mosquito.] Bat listens until she/he can point to the prey. Repeat.

FYI, fruit- and nectar- eating bats do not use echolocation. They rely on eyesight (and they have bigger eyes) and sense of smell; noses are also longer.



Big ears for hearing



Drawing by Tom McOwat

Long nose for smelling