



## Fun Facts

### Pest Control

Bats are great at pest control. They come out in the evening to eat insects such as moths, flies, leafhoppers, mosquitoes, crickets, and beetles. Their diet helps save farmers' crops especially corn.

The USDA Forest Service says bats can eat as many as 1,000 small insects in an hour. A mother bat nursing her young can eat 4,500 insects each night.

### Pollination

More than then 300 species depend on bats to spread their seeds for pollination. Without bats we wouldn't have foods like mangoes, bananas, avocados, figs, nuts, or even cacao – the main ingredient of chocolate.

### Medical Advances

Bats make sounds to sense the distance between objects. Studying echolocation, which is tracking objects and the distance between them by sensing echoes from the objects, is helping researchers develop tools for the blind.

Bats are the only flying mammal. They can travel at speeds up to 100 miles an hour.

Why do bats hang upside down? A bat's wings are not as powerful as a bird's wings, and they have trouble taking off from the ground. To fly, they launch themselves from a high position and get a head start already in the air. Bats rest or hibernate upside down in a high spot with their wings draped around their bodies to avoid predators.

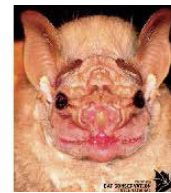
How do bats hang upside down? A bat's knees face backwards. Its tendons lock its toes and back claws. Once its toes and legs are locked in place, a bat's body weight and gravity keep them hanging and allows them to rest, sleep, or hibernate without using much energy. A bat can hibernate upside down for as long as six months.

### Bats Beware

Hawks, owls, snakes, and racoons eat bats. Millions of bats have also died from a disease called White-nosed Syndrome. This disease, which affects hibernating bats, grows a white fungus on the bat's muzzle and wings.

Which bat species is your favorite? Make a mask using one of these bats.

## Fun Bat Facts and DIY Masks



Above: Mask designs by Izel Alberto Sosa.

Below, left to right: Rafinesque bat by John MacGregor, Wrinkle-faced bat by Martinez Fonseca, Northern long eared bat by wetlands.com.

### Rafinesque's big-eared bats

Have you ever seen a Rafinesque's big-eared bat? It's a medium-sized bat with long, rabbit-like ears, the biggest ears of all bats. Its fur is grayish brown on its back and white on its underside. The bat also has long toe hairs.

*Is it in your state?*

Also known as the Southeastern big-eared bat, it is found in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Mississippi. It's also in Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, Texas, Oklahoma, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri.

*Lifespan:* Rafinesque's big-eared bats live up to 10 years.

*Diet:* They prefer moths, but they will eat other small insects.

*Lifestyle:* In the south, they are found in large, hollow trees, bridges, or old buildings. Further north or west, they are often found in caves or mines.

### Wrinkle-faced bats

Look like: A creepy-looking bat, its face is wrinkly and folded. Its scientific name means 100-year-old man. Males also have skin folds around the neck, which are thought to contain scent glands.

*Not from the U.S.:*

Lives in Central America.

*Diet:* It usually eats a lot soft, squishy fruit. The folds and wrinkles on their lips and jaws help get the fruit juice when they are feeding, and they can store fruit pulp in their mouth. Most bats help spread seeds for pollination of plants and fruits like bananas or mangoes. However, Wrinkle-faced bats have powerful jaws which can bite into even hard fruits and destroy their seeds.

*Lifestyle:* These bats are found in dense forests.

## Northern long-eared bats

Have you ever seen a Northern long-eared bat? It's cute and fuzzy with long ears. Its fur is brown on its back and tan to pale brown on its underside.

*Lifespan:* Northern long-eared bats live up to 18 and a half years.

*Is it in your state?*

Found in most of the country: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

*Diet:* They fly through forests snatching their insect prey from vegetation on the ground of the forest.

*Lifestyle:* Northern long-eared bats come out in the evening and rest or sleep during the day in caves or mines.

# Kids Bat Masks DIY Templates

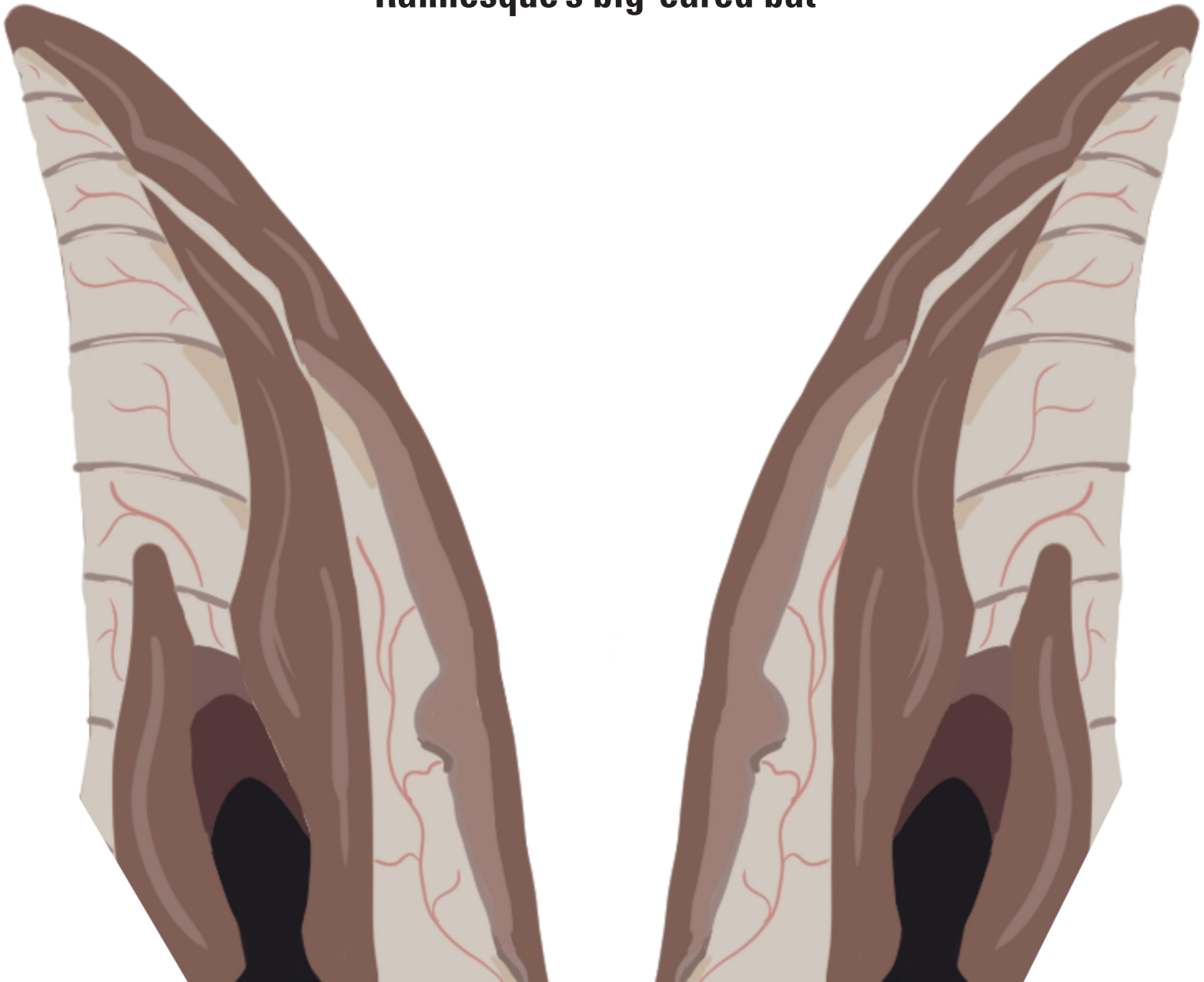
## Craft project

Encourage young outdoor enthusiasts with bat themed (DIY) masks! Just print and cut out any of these three templates and let the little creatures in your life work their magic to fit and assemble.

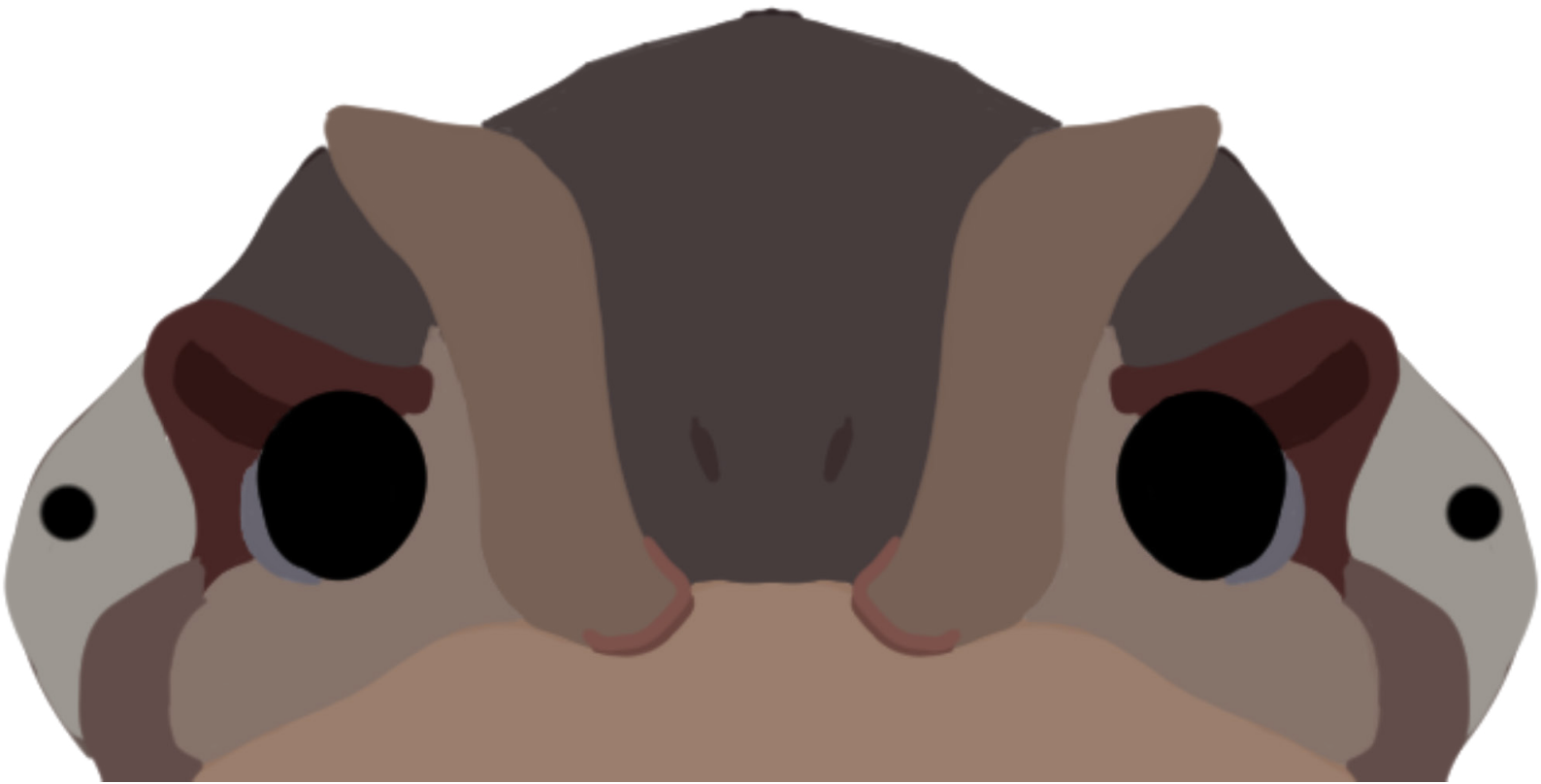
## Materials and Instructions

1. Print desired templates attached in pages three to seven on cardstock paper.
2. Cut out masks and ears.
3. Cut out eye openings.
4. Assemble ears and masks using glue or tape.
5. Break a rubber band or use elastic.
6. Optional: use paper-mache technique to shape and harden mask. This will make the mask more durable.
7. Staple the rubber band on the left and right side of the mask.
8. Wear and enjoy.

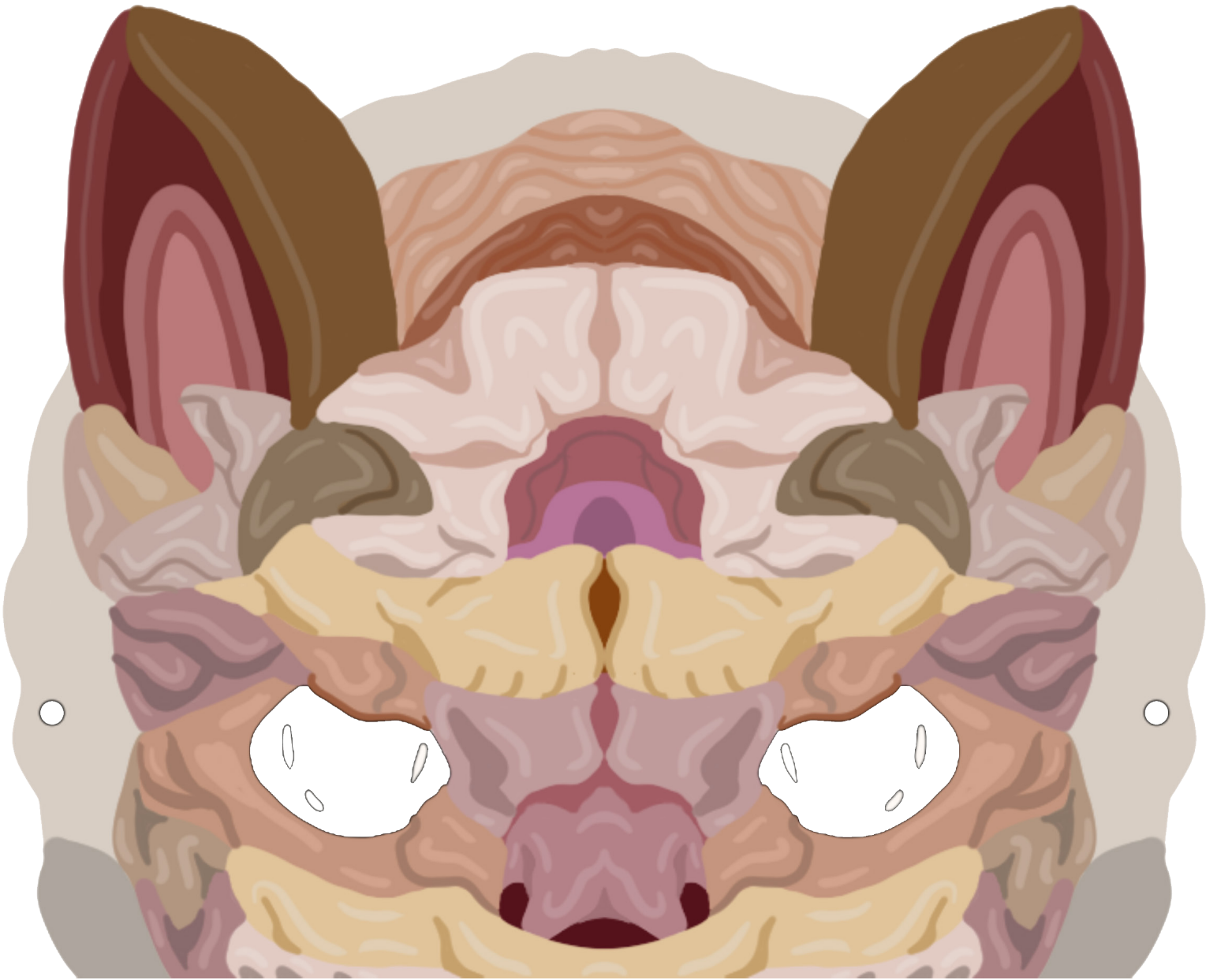
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## Wrinkle-faced bat



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