

Ghost Bat

Fast Facts



Scientific Name: *Macroderma gigas*

Conservation Status: Vulnerable

Extinct Threatened Least Concern



Body Length: 10–13 cm

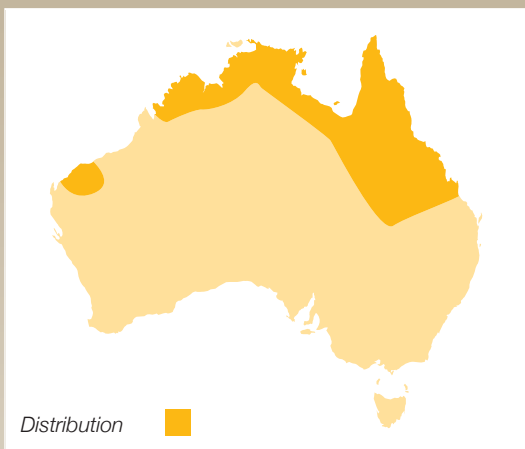
Weight: 75–145 g

Gestation: 2.5-3 months

Number of young: 1

Habitat: Cave systems and mineshafts in arid and rainforest areas

Distribution: Northern Australia



Description

The Ghost Bat has a light grey, almost white, colouring and large long ears. The Ghost Bat's wing span is up to 60 cm wide.

Diet

It is Australia's only carnivorous bat and eats large insects, reptiles, frogs, birds, small mammals and, sometimes, other bat species. Much of this prey is captured on the ground.

In the wild

Mothers form nursery colonies separate from males until the young are able to hunt. Juveniles then hunt with their mothers until they become completely independent.

Threats

Populations are under threat due to destruction of roosting sites and changes in their surrounding habitat. Cave tourism can disturb roosting bats, while barbed-wire fences can pose a hazard to low-flying bats. Ghost Bats require multiple roosting sites, making them especially sensitive to environmental changes.

At Perth Zoo

Perth Zoo received its first Ghost Bat colony in 1977. Their descendants are located in the Nocturnal House in several exhibits including one which is a replica of an Australian mine shaft.

Perth Zoo's Ghost Bat exhibit is proudly supported by:

BHP

DID YOU KNOW?

Ghost Bats use echolocation to find their food.

Echolocation is a sensory system where the bats emit a high-pitched sound and listen to the echo to determine how far and in what direction objects are.