

A bat is born

The mother catches the baby in her tail, the mum separates the umbilical cord by biting it off. If the baby falls to the ground it is usually abandoned. The placenta is usually eaten.

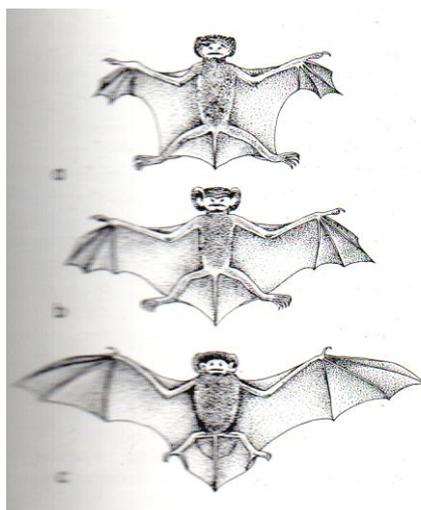


Jarrell's description(see column 3 is very accurate as the photo above shows. What you can't see is that a bat is born with milk teeth and quickly learns to grip and suckle it also has relatively big feet all the better to grip and climb. And grip it needs must, as the mother moves roost every 5 days or so. (perhaps to avoid parasites.

The mother may abandon her baby as she moves between roosts, possibly because she is one year old and first pregnancies have a high mortality rate.

The young eyes open at 6 days at which time it stops always roosting attached to its mother later and is fully furred by 7 to 8 days. The mother leaves the young bat alone as she hunts for food. The young tend to huddle together in the roost. It grows rapidly and by 15-20 days old it has reached 70% of its adult weight and 90% of its skeletal development.

The diagram above shows the change in body and wing proportions between one day and 28day days old, the bottom drawing shows 69day old adult Noctule



By now it has its adult teeth which it can use to hang onto its mum.



[Atul Jain](#)'s amazing photo of a flying fox mothers flying with her calf hanging on their chest, simultaneously breast feeding and enjoying ride. See how junior is enjoying feed and ride(flying foxes can feed their young on a wing. How much joy mum gets is debateable Bats ' nipples are under their armpits and the baby needs sharp teeth to hang on. (see above)

When we examine bats we can tell if she has bred because her nipples are chewed and whether the area around her nipples

A lot of time is spent blowing on bats nipples to get the fur out of the way, though a bat which has bred often has bald patches.)The hair regrows once the young is completely weaned.



From the archive
From July 2011



*A bat is born
Naked and blind and pale
His mother makes a pocket of her tail
and catches him. He clings
to her long fur
by his thumb and bones and teeth
And then when mother dances through
the night
Doubling and looping
Soaring, somersaulting
Her baby hangs on underneath
All night in happiness
Randell Jarrell*

