



Sharing is caring: three bat species eating from the same tree in a village of Purulia district, West Bengal, India.

Fruit plants act as a major food source for frugivorous bats in semi-urban or cultivated ecosystems (Chakravarthy & Girish 2003). In return, fruit bats disperse the seeds and pollens of those plant species (Hodgkison et al. 2003). A Guava *Psidium guajava* tree (23.192°N, 86.051°E) at Baghmundi village, Purulia district, West Bengal, India was observed at night in August 2021 to identify the bat species dependent on it as literature showed August is the peak time when bats eat most of the Guava fruits (Chakravarthy & Girish 2003).

Three frugivorous bat species were sighted and photographed using Canon EOS 750D with 18–55 mm lens during the observation. The bat species were Greater Short-nosed Fruit Bat *Cynopterus sphinx* Vahl, 1797, Lesser Short-nosed Fruit Bat *Cynopterus brachyotis* Müller, 1838 & Indian Flying Fox *Pteropus*



Cynopterus sphinx resting on guava tree. © Supriya Samanta.



Cynopterus brachyotis feeding upon guava fruit. © Supriya Samanta.



Different moth species sucking the fruit sap.
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medius Temminck, 1825. *P. medius* always visited the high canopy fruits whereas *C. brachyotis* and *C. sphinx* targeted the under canopy fruits. They regurgitate the solid substance after sucking the juice from the fruit. Many other species are also dependent on the visit of bats to the tree. Various moths like *Anomis* sp., *Ercheia* sp. and one unidentified species of subfamily Herminiinae were observed to feed on the fruit saps opened by the bats. In daytime the Common Evening Brown *Melanitis leda* (Linnaeus, 1758) butterfly was observed to feed on fruit saps felled by the bats.

References:

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