

NON-CHARISMATIC MINI-VERTEBRATES - WORTHY OF OUR ATTENTION !

Zoo Outreach Organisation -- in keeping with its peculiar fondness for unloved small creatures -- has brought out a poster on bats and rats. The poster highlights the importance of the orders Chiroptera and Rodentia in particular although the Orders Insectivora, Scandentia, and Lagomorph are equally significant.

The poster was produced to mark the completion of the two Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) workshops on Chiroptera (2002) and Non-volant Small Mammals (2004).

ZOO has been running an education programme for Chiroptera (bats) for some time now and will soon begin bringing out material on rodents. We felt it was unlikely we could be so lucky as to interest people in rodents alone, however, so have decided to combine the two groups in some of the educational material. This poster was a first effort.

We have included a copy of this poster stapled into ZOOS' PRINT so that all our readers can have one, but also to encourage some of our readers to consider taking up public education at their own level, even in their own institution or home. We would like you to display this poster in a prominent place. You can pin it up at the top so people can lift it and read the message on the back, deliberately printed up-side-down for the purpose.

You can also order more posters for distribution to your friends and colleagues, schools, etc. and we will send them to you free of cost as long as our budget lasts. We would like you to indicate how you plan to distribute them and also if you would agree to conduct a very simple evaluation exercise on the poster. We want to assess public reaction to this poster and attitudes to bats and rats before seeing the poster and again afterwards. The questions are in the next column.

Send your request to
Bats 'n' Rats c/o ZOO
POB 1683 Peelamedu
Coimbatore 641 004 T.N.

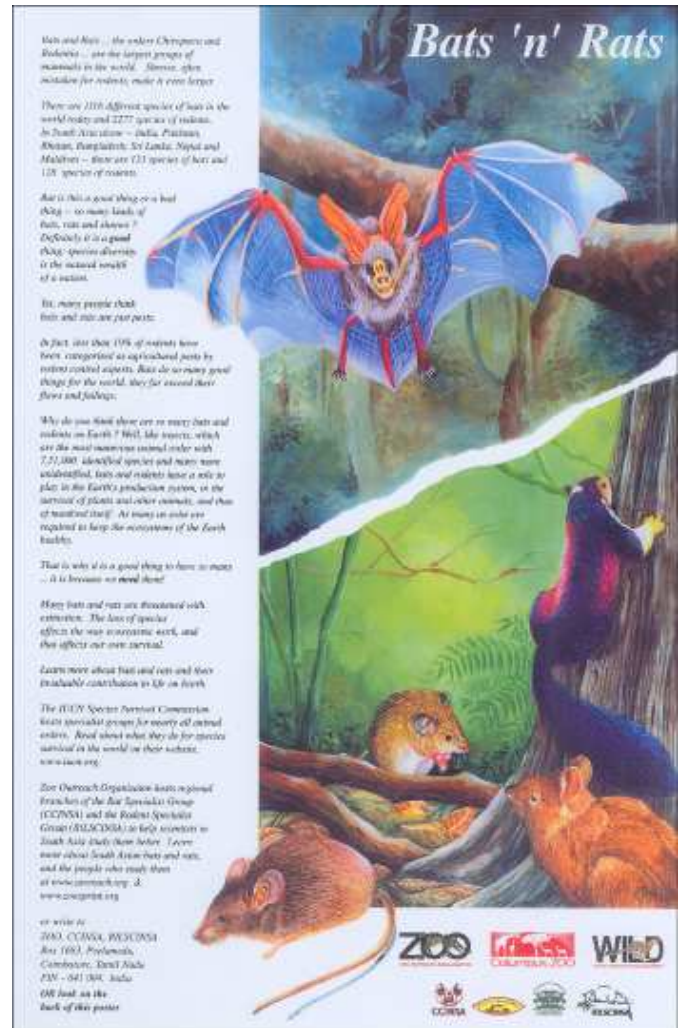
So your request for posters should include something like this :

I would like (select from 5-10) posters to distribute among my colleagues, friends, students, etc. _____

I would be happy to help you conduct an evaluation of the poster by asking a few simple questions before giving the poster and afterwards. _____

Include your name and address, pin, etc. clearly written.

If you distribute 10 posters and send us the evaluation results for at least 5 individuals, we will send you more posters. For an educational event involving a number of individuals, a school class or a special gathering you can request a larger number of posters but we would like a description of the event, the group to be targeted, your agreement to reimburse us for postage, and a short report. By the time Wildlife Week rolls around we will probably have developed some other material which we can share as well.



Educating people about Bats 'n' Rats using the information on this poster is will go some way towards teaching them to appreciate the biodiversity of the earth.

Don't forget to mention that fruit bats, mice and rats (all of them, even the threatened ones) are still listed as Vermin on the Indian Wildlife Protection Act -- more on that later !

Questions for evaluation :

BEFORE you give the poster :

- Are bats "good" animals ? (yes, no, don't know)
- Are rodents "good" animals ? (yes, no, don't know)
- Can you name any one good thing bats do ? _____
- Can you name any one good thing rodents do ? _____
- Of all mammals, what % are bats and rats ? _____

AFTER they study the poster :

- Are bats "good" animals ? (yes, no, don't know)
- Are rodents "good" animals ? (yes, no, don't know)
- Can you name any one good thing bats do ? _____
- Can you name any one good thing rodents do ? _____
- Of all mammals, what % are bats and rats ? _____