

Lampronnycteris branchyotis (Yellow-throated Big-eared Bat)

Family: Phyllostomidae (Leaf-nosed Bats)

Order: Chiroptera (Bats)

Class: Mammalia (Mammals)



Fig. 1. Yellow-throated big-eared bat, *Lampronnycteris branchyotis*.

[<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1870345313728604>, downloaded 3 March 2016]

TRAITS. *Lampronnycteris branchyotis*, commonly known as the yellow-throated big-eared bat or orange-throated bat, is in a monotypic genus (with a single species) (Wikipedia, 2014). It can be positively identified by its large distinctive pointed ears and yellow-orange colour (Fig. 1). Both the male and female have a body mass of 9-15g and a total length of 57-75mm. They have long and slim hindfeet 8-10.5mm long, the tail ranges from 7-14mm and the forelimb 40.4-40.7mm (Medellin et al., 1985; Marciente and Calouro, 2009). These bats have relatively small heads and large ears. Their first upper pair of incisor teeth are sharp and chisel-shaped and are aligned with the upper canines, used for tearing foods (Scultori et al., 2009). The bat has a tiny leaf-shaped nose with bottom lips that form a V shape (William, 2007; Tirira et al., 2010). Its colour is a deep yellowish-orange to red, that extends around the stiff hairs of its throat and upper chest, which is more prominent than the rest of its body which has bright pale coloration in adults and a brownish-olive colour in infants (Fig. 2). Fur is short and thick, especially at the top of the head.

DISTRIBUTION. Native in Brazil, Columbia, Peru, Venezuela, French Guiana, Guatemala, Suriname, Costa Rica, Panama and Ecuador (Fig. 3), commonly found in lowlands of humid tropical forest to an altitude of 700m; also ranges across South and Central America from southern Mexico to the Amazon Basin, and Blanchisseuse and Guanapo in Trinidad (Ochoa et al., 2008; William, 2007; Tirira et al., 2010).

HABBITAT AND ACTIVITY. Found in moist and transient lowland forest habitats; roost in old mines, hollow trees, dark caves and abandoned buildings. Though most bats are nocturnal these species are crepuscular mammals which forage actively at dusk and dawn (twilight). These bats fly for an average of 3.5 hours per night, of total distance about 60km (Weinbeer and Kalko, 2004). They collect fruits and insects from vegetation, and feed on whatever resources are available (William, 2007). They are also found in secondary forests and clearings; *Lampronycotis* are presumed to be sensitive to habitat disruption, this was observable when a vast group bats from the Veracruz Caves disappeared due to the cutting and burning of trees (Medellin et al., 1985; Ochoa et al., 2008). Predators of this species are unknown, but may consist of small carnivores that raid their roosts occasionally.

FOOD AND FEEDING. *Lampronycotis* will use perch hunting as a mechanism to hawk insects (William, 2007). Unlike birds which rely mostly on their sight, these bats seems to rely mainly on its sense of smell and hearing. They are largely frugivores and insectivores that feed mainly on fruits, insects, nectar and pollen (Weinbeer and Kalko, 2004). Other foods that have been included in their diet were arachnids such as spiders and mites. The faecal pellets obtained from these bats show that more than half of their intake comprises fruits, and insects such as beetles and flies being a small portion of their diet (Medellin et al., 1985).

POPULATION ECOLOGY. They are locally common in Costa Rica's tropical forest but rare in Trinidad. A small group usually comprises ten bats, with nine being female to one male (Medellin et al., 1985). They maintain a harem social structure (a group of animals consisting of mostly females and their offspring with one or at most two adult males). A colony comprising nine females, one male and five young were recorded in Guatemala (Medellin et al., 1985).

REPRODUCTION. The rearing of young usually occurs in the wet season. Lactating (nursing) females attached their offspring to themselves (Weinbeer and Kalko, 2004). They tend to have a polygynous reproductive pattern (multiple females mating with one male) in the harem. Juveniles have a much darker colour of fur than the brightly coloured adults (Medellin et al., 1985).

APPLIED ECOLOGY. *Lampronycotis* known to not have any major threats as it was listed in the "Least Concern" category in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

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Fig. 2. Male yellow-throated big-eared bat.

[<http://www.anda.jor.br/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/morcego1.jpg> downloaded 10 March 2016]



Fig. 3. Yellow-throated big-eared bat geographic distribution.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Distribution_of_Lamproncycteris_brachyotis.png,
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