



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Secretary  
Press Service



Release - Immediate

March 25, 1926.

BATS OF LITTLE VALUE  
AS MOSQUITO DESTROYERS

Not all species of bats are important as mosquito destroyers or as producers of guano, says the United States Department of Agriculture. Reports as to the commercial possibilities of bats in the United States relate to the Mexican free-tailed bat. This is a sooty-brown mammal, with a spread of about 12 inches across extended wings, a projecting tail, short, wide ears pointing forward over the eyes like a hat rim, and short velvety fur. Attempts to colonize these bats through building bat roosts have with one exception failed, according to Department Bulletin 1395, "Bats in Relation to the Production of Guano and the Destruction of Insects."

The Mexican free-tailed bat is most abundant in southern Texas, New Mexico, and the warmer portions of Mexico, but occurs also in Arizona and California. Bats of this species are gregarious, and colonies are to be found in numerous caves, from which are gathered from time to time quantities of guano.

Assertions that bats will eradicate mosquitoes or materially reduce their numbers are shown by the department to be without foundation. Even in proximity to bat colonies mosquitoes have been observed to be very numerous.

A copy of the bulletin giving additional information concerning the general habits and economic importance of the bat may be obtained free, as long as the supply lasts, upon application to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.