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Correspondence From Our Members

"Just a quick note to acknowledge with thanks the safe arrival today of the bundle of bat literature. I am quickly going through it extracting facts (especially on commercially valuable trees that are bat-pollinated/ dispersed and grown here) to include in my recommendations on wildlife matters to the Forestry Division. The Conservation of Wild Life Act Chapter 67:01 has a "Third Schedule"-list of animals declared as vermin, and #1 on the list is Bats (#2 and #3 are the Fer de Lance and Bushmaster!). Needless to say I will recommend that as this is a most unscientific, ignorant, and economically as well as ecologically short-sighted attitude, they rethink lumping all 64 or so species of bats as if they were *Desmodus* or rabies carriers.

My report is due to FAD people before I leave on Thursday 29 September for Canada (and then Australia), so the material came in the nick of time! Thanks, and keep up the good work."

Donald A. Smith
United Nations Development
Program
Trinidad

"I was greatly interested to read the October 27 article in the *Wall Street Journal* concerning bats. Like most people I had a naive abhorrence of bats, and believed that they were disease carrying pests that had no place in the small town ecology of Princeton. Just prior to receiving the timely WSJ article, I had learned from a gutter repair crew that bats were living behind the shutters of our old frame house, located just a few blocks from the Princeton University campus."

"Then the WSJ arrived with its hopeful appraisal of bats. I've now decided to live and let live, taking care to avoid opening both screens and storm windows at hours when bats may be on the prowl, seeking to satisfy their curiosity about the inside of our house '

My family is somewhat horrified by my attitude, and at a dinner party this past weekend, when I confessed my new found tolerance towards bats, several of our guests seemed quite disapproving. They also seemed to scurry to their cars with shoulders hunched as they left the party later that evening.

Hence, my request. Do you have a newsletter or some sort of information booklet on bats that I can wave in the face of unbelievers here. In the liberal academic community of Princeton the WSJ is hardly regarded as an authority on anything, to say nothing of bats. But the written word, preferably couched in scholarly lingo has great power among the local literati. Even, perhaps, to encourage peaceful relations with bats.

I hope you can assist me in promoting a bit more tolerance for these interesting creatures."

Winton H. Manning, Senior Scholar
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey

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