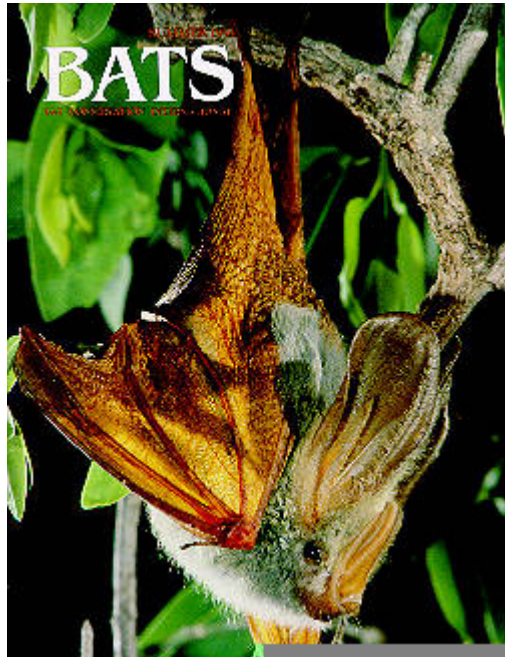


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ON THE COVER

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With their bright yellow wings and bluish-grey fur, yellow-winged bats (*Lavia frons*) are among the most colorful of all insectivorous bats. They are found only in tropical Africa where they favor savannas and open woodlands near water.

Yellow-winged bats feed on a wide variety of insects. To hunt, they hang from a branch, swivelling from side to side, constantly moving their long ears, scouting for sounds of potential prey. After spotting an insect, they take off, snatching their meal from the ground or foliage, and occasionally in midair. Unlike most insectivorous bats, they appear to make minimal use of their echolocation ability for hunting, probably relying mostly on sounds produced by walking or flying prey.

Yellow-winged bats roost in monogamous pairs, resting by covering their faces with their wings, well camouflaged by resembling dead leaves in the trees. The male defends its territory, allowing only its mate to feed there. Females give birth to one young, who remains with its parents for about three months. --Photo by Merlin D. Tuttle

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