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Special Vampire Control Video Produced for Latin America

HELPING Latin American ranchers find solutions to cattle losses due to vampire bats and bovine rabies can have far-reaching conservation effects. Misdirected vampire control efforts are a primary threat to tens of millions of our free-tailed bats that overwinter in Mexico [see "Saving Our Free-tailed Bats," page 12]. Untargeted vampire control also seriously threatens countless millions of other bats essential to rain forest conservation efforts throughout Latin America.

This spring, BCI completed production of "Controlling Vampire Bats and Bovine Rabies," a 26-minute video. It features step-by-step instructions on control methods and how to distinguish vampires from bats that are beneficial. The video also explains why most Latin American bats are valuable and in need of conservation.

BCI members Tom and Marilyn Fifield generously funded the field work and filming in Costa Rica, with additional funding received from the W. Alton Jones Foundation. The program is the first of its kind and is available in Spanish and English. Both versions are available in the BCI catalogue.

The video is already receiving enthusiastic reviews from Latin America veterinarians. Dr. Rex Lord, an international vampire control expert who was a consultant on production of the film and appeared in it, has been invited to present the program at the Pan American Congress on Veterinary Sciences in Mexico this fall. It will be distributed to government agencies, cattlemens' associations, conservation groups, and others throughout Latin America. Distribution will also be extended to educators and others by the University of Texas Press, which is carrying the video in their fall catalogue. Wide viewership could make a substantial difference, since most ranchers currently destroy all bats in their attempts to control vampires.

All articles in this issue:

- ▶ [ON THE COVER](#)
- ▶ [Protected at Last: The Hibernia Mine](#)
- ▶ [The North American Bats and Mines Project Begins Work](#)
- ▶ [THE LIVES OF Mexican Free-tailed Bats](#)
- ▶ [Saving Our Free-tailed Bats](#)
- ▶ [The Pacific Flying Fox Trade: A New Dilemma](#)
- ▶ [Special Vampire Control Video Produced for Latin America](#)
- ▶ [Bat adoptions make great conservation gifts!](#)
- ▶ [Look for "Masters of the Night: The True Story of Bats"*](#)
- ▶ [WISH LIST](#)
- ▶ [MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES FOR 1995](#)