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On the Cover

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The Jamaican fruit-eating bat (*Artibeus jamaicensis*) eats figs and many other tropical forest fruits, including the pulpy layer surrounding nuts, such as the wild almond pictured. After carrying fruits away to eat them, the bat then drops the nuts, dispersing seeds for future trees. In addition to fruit, this species also eats pollen, nectar, and a few insects.

Jamaican fruit-eating bats range from central Mexico to Paraguay and Brazil, and also live in the Bahamas, the Antilles, Trinidad, Tobago, and probably Key West, Florida. They can be found in a variety of habitats, from dry deciduous forest to tropical evergreen forest and even cloud forest. Caves and hollow trees are their most common roosts, but sometimes they also create roosts by biting the midribs of large leaves until they hang down to form tents.

Photo by Merlin D. Tuttle

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