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Bats: status, threats and conservation successes

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Sulawesi dawn bat *Eonycteris spelaea rosenbergii* captured in a mist net.

Photo: S. Rossiter

THEME SECTIONS of Endangered Species Research (ESR) present integrated multi-author syntheses initiated and coordinated by acknowledged experts. They highlight cutting-edge research areas or problems and/or bring together cogent bodies of literature on key taxa. Typically, they are led by one or more members of the ESR Editorial Staff, sometimes including Guest Editors.

This ESR THEME SECTION focuses on bats (order: Chiroptera), which number over 1100 species and represent the second most species-rich mammalian order worldwide. Bats exhibit tremendous ecological diversity and also display a unique suite of evolutionary adaptations. In addition to their intrinsic conservation value, they play key roles in numerous ecosystem services, as seed dispersers, pollinators and predators

of insects. Yet at the same time, bats are among the most endangered of mammals, facing unprecedented threats from the loss of foraging habitats and roosting sites, from hunting, changes in land use, climate change and pathogens. The research and reviews contained within this ESR Theme Section encompass the wide range of threats and conservation issues that concern bats, as well as highlighting the challenges for conservationists, and the potential successes that can result from prompt and sound management decisions. We hope this will inspire more researchers to submit their work on bats to ESR.

As for all current ESR articles, we are pleased to make the online version of this ESR THEME SECTION available with Open Access.

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