

Rodrigues Flying Fox Bat

Scientific Name: *Pteropus rodricensis*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Chiroptera

Family: Pteropodidae



The Rodrigues Flying Fox Bat is a medium-sized bat that is about 12 inches long. Its coloration is silvery and blackish-brown. There is no tail. The area between the shoulders is often yellow or grayish-yellow. They maintain a body temperature of 33- 37 degrees C. They have a very noticeable characteristic odor. They normally roost in trees by day, and colonies may utilize the same roosting site year after year. During daylight there is much noise and motion in the roosts, and individuals sometimes fly from one place to another. This range is maintained by constant activity.

At dusk they fly to fruit trees to feed. Some drink sea water, apparently to obtain mineral salts lacking in the plant food. This species is endangered, and its future remains in doubt. They have been seriously affected by the clearing of forests, resulting in easier access by hunters, and loss of buffering protection against cyclonic winds. Captive breeding groups have been established to help preserve the species.

Range

Rodrigues Island in the western Indian Ocean

Habitat

Forests and Swamps

Gestation

140-150 days

Litter

Unknown

Behavior

The Rodrigues Flying Fox Bat inhabit forests and swamps, often on small islands near coasts. They normally roost in trees by day, and colonies may utilize the same roosting site year after year. During daylight there is much noise and motion in the roosts, and individuals sometimes fly from one place to another. This range is maintained by constant activity. At dusk they fly to fruit trees to feed. They eat, rest, and digest their food for several hours while at their feeding trees. The principal food is fruit juices, which they obtain by squeezing pieces of fruit pulp in their mouths. They swallow the juice and spit out the pulp and seeds. If the pulp is very soft, like banana, they swallow some of it. They also chew eucalyptus and other flowers to obtain the juices and pollen. They drink while flying to and from the feeding and sleeping locations. Some drink sea water, apparently to obtain mineral salts lacking in the plant food. They maintain a body temperature of 33-37 degrees C. They have a very noticeable characteristic odor.

Reproduction

No definite breeding season is recorded

Wild Diet

Fruit, eucalyptus and other flowers