

Bat Wing Basics

Bats are not birds

Bats fly but they are not birds, they are mammals.

A bat's wings are structured similar to the arm and hand of other mammals, like humans, and not birds. Their wings are also thinner than birds.

Because of their differences, bats are more agile and can move quicker and more precisely than birds.

Hand-wing mammals

Bats are classified under the scientific Order - *Chiroptera*, which means "hand-wing".

If you look at the skeletal structure of a bat's wing, it is almost identical to that of a human hand and arm, only elongated and much, much smaller.

Bats also have a thin membrane of elastic-like skin that stretches across the fingers to form the wing. This membrane is so thin they appear semi-transparent when flying.

The finger bones of bats are more flexible than other mammals. These bones are flattened instead of circular making them even more flexible for bats to manoeuvre themselves while flying.

All the better to grab things

All bats have a big thumb with a claw. This helps them to climb on trees, hold on to flowers, fruit and insects when eating as well as assists in mating.

