

Echolocation Made Easy

Bats are not blind

Micro-bats are the small, insect eating bats you may see flying at night.

These bats are not blind, they just don't use their eyes to find food at night. Instead they use a form of radar, called **echolocation**.

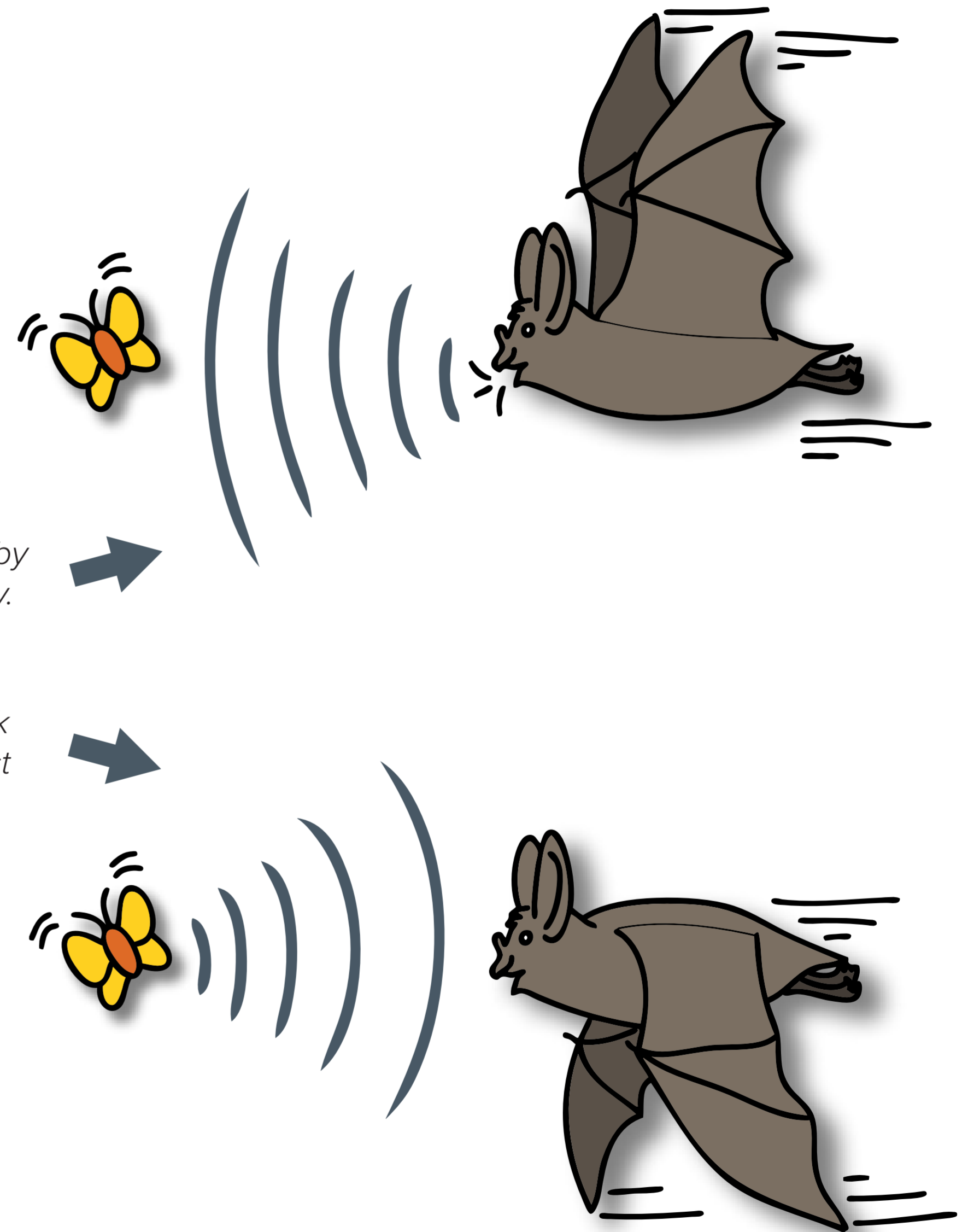
Echolocation works by the bat creating a sound that they use to bounce off objects in front of them. Bats listen to the echos that bounce back and can 'see' what is ahead of them.

The sound that micro-bats emit is normally too high for human hearing. Sometimes we can hear micro-bat sounds, but these are usually social chatter and alarm calls. What we might hear is a regular tick...tick...tick. Echolocation can usually only be heard using an 'ultrasonic bat detector'.

Finding their food

Micro-bats rely on echolocation to find insects while flying quickly through the air. They are very good at this.

There are about 80 species of micro-bat in Australia. They can eat up to 300 insects in an hour. Imagine what they could eat every night!



Sound waves are sent out by the micro-bat to detect prey.

Sound waves are sent back the micro-bat as they reflect off the prey.