Bats Hear Water

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Bats can hear still water, according to a report in *Nature Communications*, 2 November 2010, doi:10.1038/ncomms1110. A lot of research has gone into how echolocating bats catch insects, but little on the role of echolocation in recognising their surroundings. A group of scientists at Max Planck Institute for Ornithology, Germany, have tested bats to see how they recognise bodies of water, such as lakes and ponds. To do this they let bats fly through an experimental chamber with two types of flat surface on the floor. One was smooth and reflected sound waves in the same way water does; the other was a textured surface that gave an echo pattern like sand.

They found that all the adult bats of 15 different species, as well as juvenile bats that had never encountered a body of water, tried to drink from the surface with the water-like echo pattern. The fact that so many species showed the same behaviour, and naive juveniles responded to the water-like echoes indicates recognising water by echolocation is an innate, or inbuilt, ability. The researchers concluded: "This provides the first evidence for innate recognition of a habitat cue in a mammal."

Editorial Comment: It's the question that makes evolutionists go into denial – what did half evolved bats drink before they got their echolocating system altogether. Did they drown because they didn't recognise what water sounded like so they flew into it, or just go thirsty because they couldn't identify the same? It is no surprise to us that bats can recognise important features in their environment using an inherited enviro- recognition program built into the DNA which God gave them. The same God who created the environment to provide water for the bats to drink, also designed the echolocating system, including this now proven to be innate ability to recognise water. (Ref. design, mammals, ecology)

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