

Bat Week 2018 Report

When: October 24th – 31st, 2018

What: Bat Week is an annual celebration of the role of bats in nature. Bat Week is organized by a team of representatives from across the US and Canada from conservation organizations and government departments. MSL and FWP decided to provide resources and materials to libraries across Montana to help them celebrate Bat Week in October 2018.

Participating Organizations (Requested a package of Bat Week materials): 33 organizations total, mixture of public libraries, school librarians, and schools

Requested Package, but ran out of materials: 3 organizations further wished to participate, but we ran out of materials by that point.

Initial Impressions:

1. Bat Week was a very popular event among the librarians, and there was a lot of interest and enthusiasm after Amelea sent out the initial email in September. The pencils and erasers were claimed within the first two days, or so, and about 250 posters were requested.
2. A surprising number of school teachers and school librarians (highlighted in yellow above) requested materials. The original email did not say this event was only for public librarians, but it was great to see such interest from the schools, and all requests for materials were honored, if possible.
3. The materials were sent out through the Courier system, a service organized through the Montana State Library. However, difficulties arose because not all public libraries subscribe to the courier service, and none of the schools/school libraries are on the courier. As such, organizing delivery logistics took much longer than expected.

Survey Feedback:

A survey was sent out on WIRED in early November asking Bat Week participants to send in their feedback and suggestions. Here are the main results from that survey:

1. Number of respondents: 21 (13 public library, 8 school library)
2. Most popular Bat Week Resources Used:
 - a. 17 out of 21 people used the Bat Erasers and Bat Posters
 - b. 16 out of 21 people used the Bat Pencils
 - c. 12 out of 21 people used the Bat Week website
3. Most popular programs that libraries hosted:
 - a. 14 out of 21 read a bat book
 - b. 13 out of 21 made a bat display
 - c. 12 out of 21 did bat crafts
 - d. "Other" responses of note: Someone created a Bat Trivia game, which might be a good idea to use for future Bat Week resources
4. Attendance/Age Group of Programs:
 - a. Most programs were for elementary school, K – 4th grade mostly
 - b. Reported Attendance: 406 children, 24 adults

- i. The adults accompanied the children
 - ii. Only about 60% of responses included numbers, so actual numbers are much higher
- 5. Most helpful resources:
 - a. Of the 19 responses, 10 people mentioned how useful the posters were, and how much they appreciated the free pencils, erasers, etc.
 - b. 5 people mentioned how useful the website was for finding accurate bat information to readily share
- 6. Unhelpful resources:
 - a. Overall, people thought all the resources provided were helpful. However, some issues arose regarding:
 - i. Timing: Due to a delay in the courier, some people did not receive their bat materials in time to use them for bat week
 - ii. Quantity: People liked the free bat materials, but wished they had more to give to all of the participants who came to their program
- 7. Things they wished were included in the Bat Week Resources:
 - a. Bookmarks
 - b. Bibliography
 - c. More scaling up and down of the PPTs (for really young kids, and for high schoolers/adults)
 - d. Movie suggestions
 - e. Bingo cards
 - f. Information pamphlets
- 8. Other suggestions:
 - a. Sending the items earlier to make sure they arrive on time
 - b. Having a permanent search URL to shared library catalog resources around a specific topic

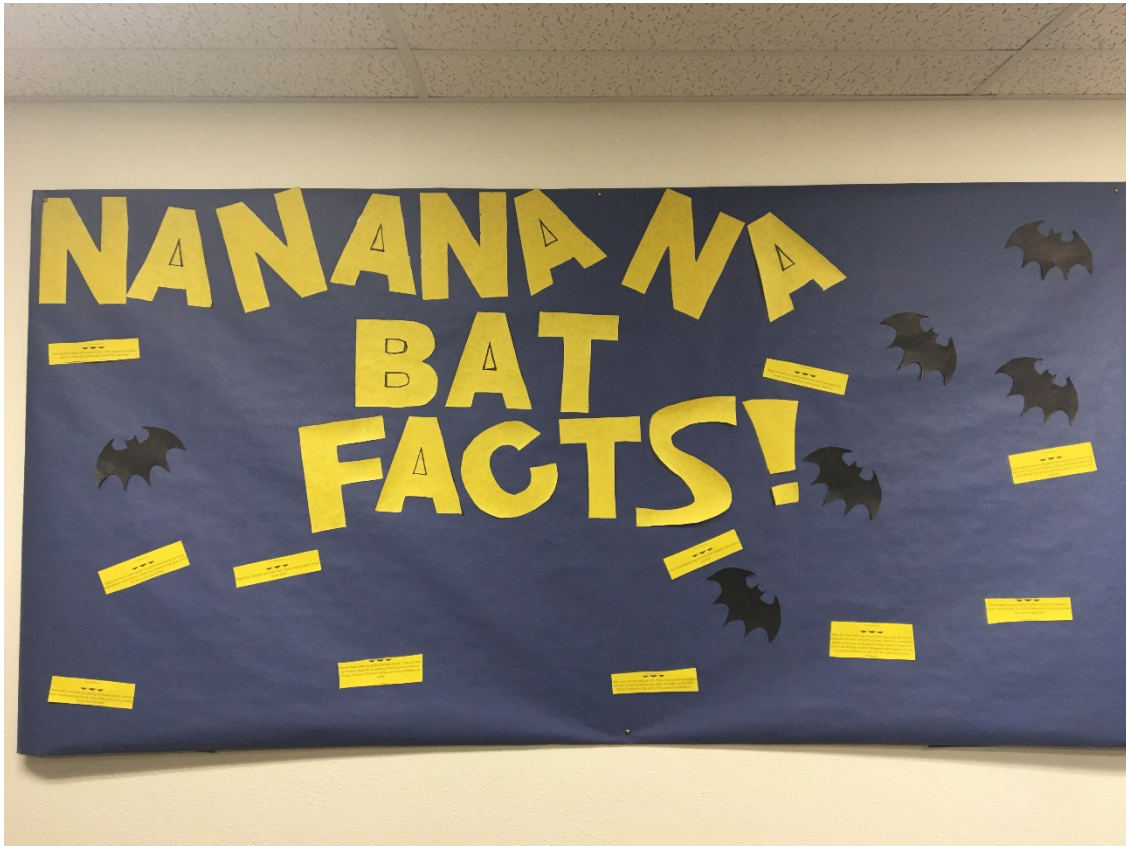
Main Recommendations:

1. This event was highly popular, and librarians really liked how fun the topic was, and how educational it was. Many librarians mentioned how they would love to do this event again next year.
2. Timing and package delivery was an issue. It would be good to push up the timeline – sending the initial email in early August, then sending out materials in late August/early September to ensure that they arrive in time for librarians to use them.
3. Posters/free materials were VERY appreciated. If possible, it would be great to order more so that more libraries can request a package, and can receive more items in each package as well.
4. Librarians greatly appreciated having a variety of vetted Bat Facts ready for them to use. Make sure to provide that in the future, either through the Bat Week website or through self-generated materials.
5. The social media materials were not used, so that can be dropped from next year’s resources.
6. More publicity/a separate email for the bat biologists might be necessary – some libraries saw that information and were able to ask someone to come, but some libraries missed that part.

7. To prepare for next year, it would be great to have all of us sit down together to brainstorm more thoroughly about what we want to accomplish with this program, what outcomes we are looking for, and ways to provide assessment tools to librarians so that we get feedback from patrons as well.

Pictures from Librarians:

Havre Bat Display



Miles City Bat Biologist Program

