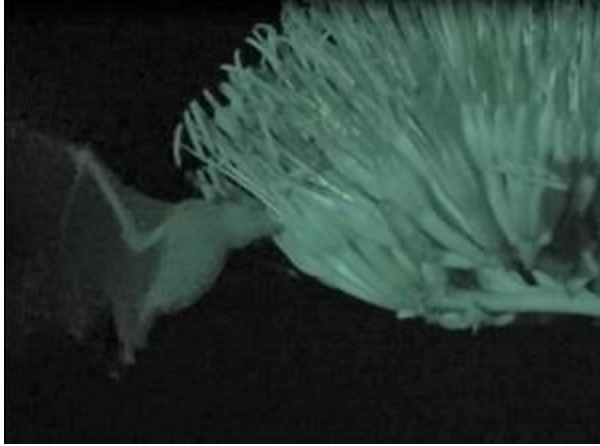


Project Update: September 2017

I spent 3 months in northeast Mexico (Nuevo Leon and Coahuila) this summer collecting data and interacting with local communities. My collaborators and I visited 14 communities, where we monitored bat foraging at flowering agaves on 27 nights (Objectives 1 and 2; see this link for a video clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gApHXoiQNe4>), conducted agave surveys around 40 focal agaves (Objectives 1 and 2), and interviewed 16 community leaders and agave harvesters about their management practices and land uses (Objectives 3 and 4).

Below are some highlights from the summer and the project to date:

- 1) From our foraging studies and interviews with community members, we identified two new potential roosts for the Mexican long-nosed bat. We plan to visit these caves next summer to determine if bats are roosting in them, which will help in planning protection efforts for these caves.
- 2) We discovered a Mexican long-nosed bat night roost (where small groups go periodically throughout the night to groom, socialize, and rest) and recorded night-vision video of their behaviors, which have rarely been recorded.
- 3) Our project team coordinated a 6-day PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) tagging workshop in Nuevo Leon for Mexican and US partners working with the Mexican long-nosed bat. The goal of the workshop was to train attendees on the use of PIT tagging, and to provide an opportunity for collaborative discussion about conservation of the species. <http://crosspollinationphd.blogspot.com/2017/07/collaborating-and-conserving-across.html>
- 4) This project was featured in several popular media outlets:
 - "Navigating Muddy Waters: The interface of research, practice, and culture", *Applied Biodiversity Science Perspectives Series*, Issue 7, p: 33 – 38, September 2017: <http://agrillife.org/abs/files/2015/01/ABSPS7-2.pdf>
 - "Not Just Tequila". *Bat News*, Bat Conservation Trust, Summer 2017
 - "A Story of Bats, Agaves, and People", *The Echo*, Bat Conservation International, February 2017: <http://www.batcon.org/resources/media-education/news-room/the-echo/1047-a-story-of-bats-agaves-and-people>
- 5) I created five blog posts about the summer's fieldwork experiences: <http://crosspollinationphd.blogspot.com/>



Left: A Mexican long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris nivalis*) feeding on the nectar of agave flowers in Nuevo Leon, Mexico. This is a still image from an infrared video taken at night. Right: A Mexican long-nosed bat displaying its long tongue while night-roosting.



Left: Watching an infrared camera for bats foraging on agave nectar. We monitored agaves for six hours every night. Right: The field team completing an agave survey.



Left: A Mexican long-tongued bat (*Choeronycteris mexicana*, left) and a Mexican long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris nivalis*, right) captured during our PIT tagging workshop. Both are important pollinators of agaves and are threatened or endangered. Right: The

participants of the PIT tagging workshop, who came from Mexican and U.S. universities, NGOs, and government agencies.



Left: Working with my translator to interview a community leader in Nuevo Leon about the community's harvest and use of agaves. (Photo credit: Jose Juan Flores Maldonado).
Right: An agave harvester on his parcel of land in Coahuila, Mexico.