Mythical Mammal

Today, I will introduce you to an illustrious, almost mythical animal… But before I introduce them, I must tell you this majestic animal is an endangered species and not just in Wisconsin, though it lives in 37 of our states,8 Canadian provinces, and the District of Columbia. The beautiful mammal I'm introducing to you today is… Myotis Septentrionalis, well known as the Northern Long-Eared Bat.

Let's learn about the northern long-eared bat…Their scientific name is myotis septentrionalis, myotis comes from part of its name of its bat family, and septentrional means north (sea) or of the north explaining their name. Their appearance suggests they are known for their long ears compared to other bats, their size being about 3 to 3.7 inches and 5 to 8 grams, they live approximately 18 to 19 years. The bat is a bronze to dark brown on its back, with dark brown ears and wings, with russet fur on its ventral side. The northern long-eared bat resides in forested areas all across the northern US and Canada, its diet is mostly moths but it is an insectivore the way it hunts is different from most bats instead of foraging they use a method called aerial hawking according to the University of Bristol aerial hawking is when prey is caught while in flight. Though it is a beautiful animal, it's still endangered because of many factors.

Now, what is endangering the northern long-eared bat? The biggest thing threatening the northern long-eared bat is white-nose syndrome it is a disease that affects Hibernacula (Bats that hibernate) according to the United States Geological Survey the disease is caused by an invasive fungus, the fungus grows on the bats disturbing their hibernation usually by causing dehydration, starvation and usually death. Furthermore, white-nose syndrome was estimated to have killed millions of bats in eastern North America since 2006. If found, a bat colony can kill up to 100% of bats during hibernation. I collected the information from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Another thing threatening bats is wind turbines, if a bat flies too close to the blades the major wind pressure change or direct impact kills the bat. Almost 50% of bats found under wind turbines are found without wounds and according to Engineering.com, some studies have pinned 888,000 deaths per year to wind turbines. Lastly two other major threats to not just bats but animals/humans are habitat loss and climate change. Nevertheless, we can still save them.

So how can we help the northern long-eared bat? Most of the ways are quite difficaled for an average person so, I will begin this section with a couple easy ways you can help them and even yourself. One easy way is watching your carbon footprint but what is a carbon footprint? A carbon footprint is how much carbon an individual

person makes. Though you may be compared to Earth you make an impact and controlling your carbon footprint can be pretty simple, an easy way is using public transport, biking, and carpooling. Some ways that are less simple are planting trees or native plants. Another way is purchasing an electric vehicle or a hybrid vehicle. Now onto some things that you probably can’t do to help these bats. Disease management, if an infected bat is found it will be put down, helping lower the spread of white-nose syndrome. Addressing wind turbine mortality, spreading the word could help let people who can help know. Hibernacula protection, where state, federal and local conservation groups protect caves or mines that house or are important to cave-dwelling bats. We can help. Lastly, let's review something I share throughout this article.

To conclude, this article about the northern long-eared bat lets review. Although it lives in over half of the US it is still endangered, from many things though some are difficult to solve for an average person, it is still possible by doing even the smallest things. Because climate change isn’t just an animal problem, it's our problem too. So let us think about this mythical mammal to change the world.