

## Bats on My Mind

Here is a little story that happened to me many, many years ago.

When I was a girl in Guides (about 30 years ago) my troop (as we were called back then) went on a camping trip to the Sierra Mountains in California. Now this was not your average pitch a tent kind of camp, rather a "let's get back to nature" camp. The area was well known for having many small caves, which housed bat colonies. After we arrived we explored a small cave nearby and saw hundreds of sleeping bats.

After supper our leaders told us to pick our spots where we would like to sleep that night. Now I put careful thought into where I should sleep, by the fire to stay warm, or under one of the many pine trees in the area. I looked up at the sky and saw not a star in place, so being the "thinker" that I was, under the trees seemed ideal. In case it should rain, I would remain dry!

About 10:00 p.m. we held campfire and then prepared for bed, all were tucked in like bugs in a rug by 11:00 p.m. Of course we talked until after mid-night, but then one by one, the girls started to drift off to slumber land. Not me, I laid there until 1:00 a.m., and I know that because I ducked my head under the covers and snapped on my flashlight to see the time. I found it even cozier under the covers so I stayed there.

Around 2:00 a.m. I felt something sit on me. Now I was sure this was a bat coming to check me out. Soon after another one sat on me and then another. By this time I was shaking like a leaf under the covers! Much later, sheer exhaustion finally hit and I fell into a dreamless sleep.

Morning finally arrived with the first chatter of the girls. I awoke and took a peek outside of my sleeping bag, only to discover the "bats" that kept me fearful and awake most of the night were really pinecones that had fallen onto my well-placed bed under the canopy of trees.

It goes to show that fear of the unknown could be quite different with a little light shed on the matter!

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