

# **Bat facts**



- One mammalian species in five (20%) is a bat
- Second to rodents in number of living genera and species
- The only non-terrestrial mammal
- More widely distributed than other mammals, except man
- Variable thermoregulation
- Ecolocation
- Long life span ( a 7-gram bat can live up to 41 years!)
- Low rate of tumourigenesis
- Reservoir of a large number of viruses

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## 25 years of research - 3 questions

- 1) Are bats important viral reservoir?
- 2) Are bats special as viral reservoir?
- 3) What makes bats special?

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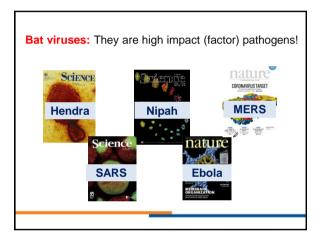
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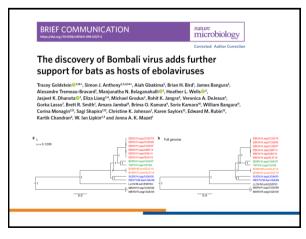
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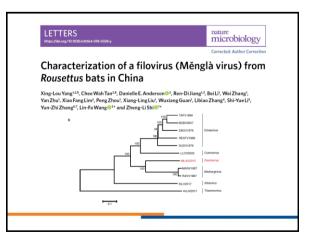
## Hendra virus outbreak in Australia

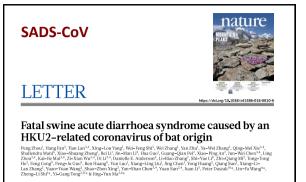
Time:	September 1994
Place:	Hendra, Brisbane
Death:	13 horses, 1 human
Infected:	7 horses, 1 human



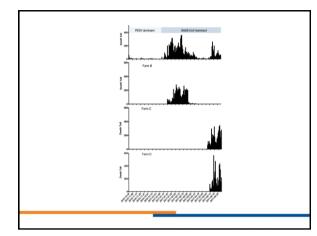


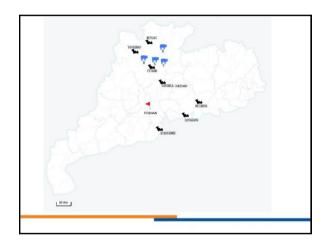






Zhou et al., Nature 2018



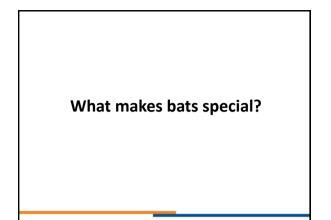


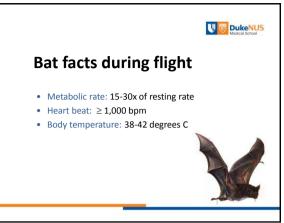
# Are bats special/different?

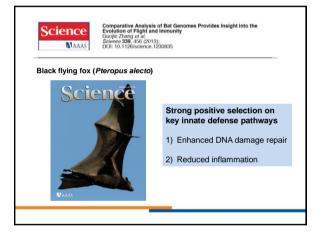
- Unable/difficult to produce clinical signs in experimental infection of bats with different viruses
- Isolation of viruses from <u>healthy</u> bat primary cells (persistent infection)
- Higher viral prevalence
- Greater genetic diversity
- Ancestor or ancient lineages of "modern" mammalian viruses
- Carries more viruses per species of bat

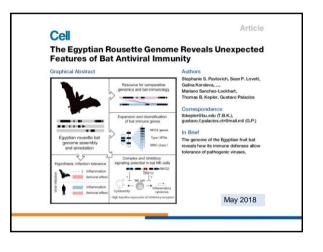


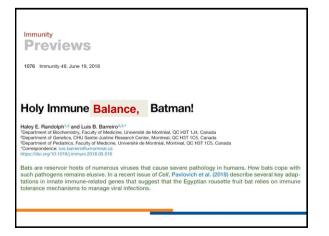


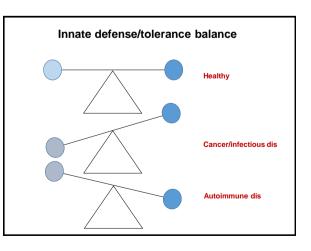


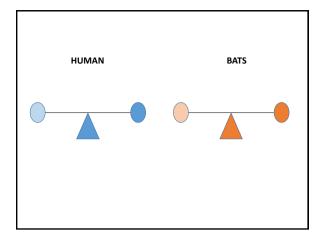


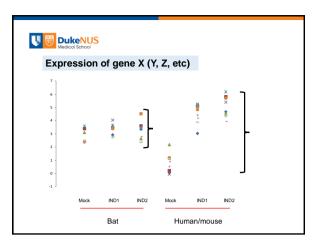












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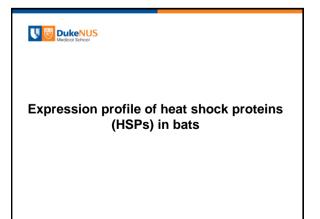
#### Published/unpublished findings

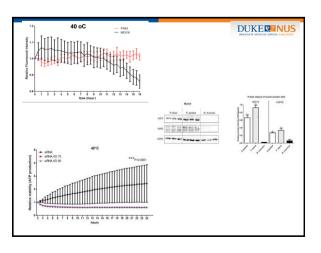
- More efficient DNA damage repair system
- Higher base level  $\mathsf{IFN}\alpha$  gene expression in some bat
- Higher base level expression of HSPs
- Higher base level expression of surface efflux pump proteins (ABC transporters)
- Missing AIM2-mediated inflammasome signaling
- Dampened NLRP3-mediated inflammasome activation
- Dampened STING activation
- Apparent lack of GvHD in bat mice

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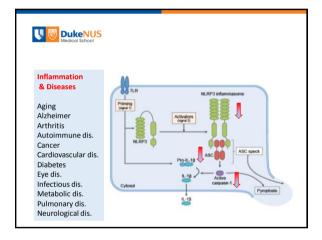
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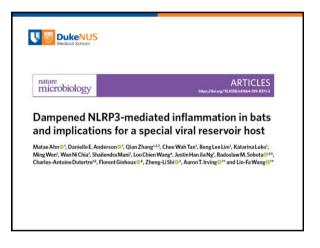
#### From Matthew Shoulders, MIT

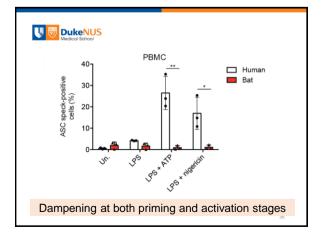
- Successful viral evolution hinges on the efficient sampling of mutated protein sequences.
- Often, these mutations are destabilizing to the proteins in which they occur.
- It is unknown how viral evolutionary capacity is influenced by the composition and activities of the host cell's protein homeostasis network.
- Hypothesis: viruses hijack the host cell's protein-folding machinery to help fold their own proteins and will therefore be better able to accumulate destabilizing mutations when more host chaperones are present.
- Early results suggest that influenza evolution is influenced by the host's protein-folding environment (modulated by HSP expression).

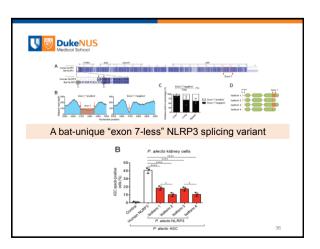
Hyper-folding ← Normal → Hypo-folding

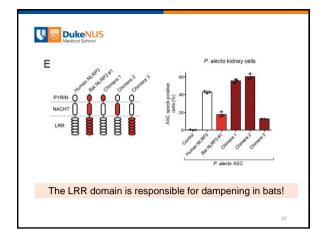


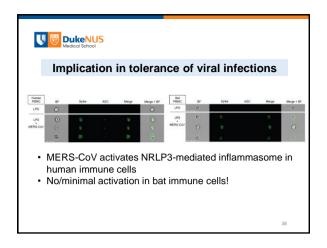


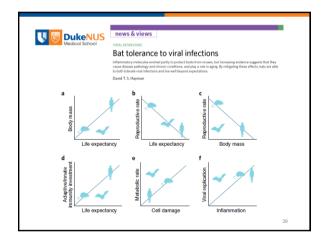












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### Future directions/challenges

- · Immune cells and antibodies for cell markers
- In vivo experimental systems
  - Bat breeding colony (and SPF bats?)
  - Bat mouse
  - Transgenic mice with knock-in bat genes
- Learning from bats: translation into biomedical applications



