



The Bible appears to contradict science by classifying **'bats'** as **"birds"** in [Leviticus 11:13-19](#). From science, we know that bats are actually mammals. Therefore, we do well to ask, "Does the Bible call bats birds and contradict science?" Let's analyze the scriptures and science and see.

"These shall you detest among the birds, they shall not be eaten: they are detestable: the eagle, the bearded vulture, the black vulture . . . the stork, the heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat" ([Leviticus 11:13,19](#) ESV)

"Bats are the only mammal capable of true flight" (Bats 101).

Since almost all Bible translations of [Leviticus 11:13-19](#) call bats birds, yet science calls them mammals, there appears to be a contradiction between the Bible and science. But let's look deeper into this.

"Birds: the term is broader, including all animals that fly (including bats, v. 19, and flying insects, vv, 20-23)"—NAB note on [Leviticus 11:13-23,30](#)". This study Bible note indicates the Hebrew word that is rendered "bird" in almost all translations, **"eouph"**, is not limited to

birds, but ‘includes all animals that fly, including bats.’ Now, let’s look at the Hebrew word **“eouph”** itself, and see how it is defined:

“עוף (hā·’ō·wṗ); Article | Noun – masculine singular: [Strong’s 5775](#): Flying creatures”—Bible Hub

Let’s now look at how a much more accurate translation renders the Hebrew word **“eouph”** at [Leviticus 11:13](#):

“These are detestable things for you among winged creatures that you are not to eat, because they are detestable for you: the eagle, vulture, osprey” ([Leviticus 11:13 International Standard Version](#))

Notice that the Hebrew word **“eouph”** is not rendered “birds”, but “winged flying creatures”. This more accurate rendering of the Hebrew would **“eouph”**. certainly includes “bats”, since they are “winged flying creatures”.

This problem of this appearance of a contradiction between the Bible and science is thus cleared up when we understand that [Leviticus 11:13](#) was written in the ancient Hebrew language and not in English, and by using an accurate translation of the Hebrew word **“eouph”**.

Using an accurate Bible translation and study Bible notes helps us to solve yet another seeming contradiction regarding the Bible. Even though the man Moses wrote the Bible book of Leviticus, its real author, however, is the **“one who has perfect knowledge” ([Job 36:4 NIV](#))**, the **“God, who does not lie” ([Titus 1:2 NIV](#))**.