



## 'Look, but don't touch' urges Queensland rabies expert

A leading travel health pioneer will issue Queenslanders with a public health warning this Saturday, September 28 (World Rabies Day) about the risks associated with a disease that kills an estimated 55,000 people each year.<sup>1</sup>

This life-threatening virus, first discovered in Australian flying foxes (commonly known as 'fruit bats') in 1996,<sup>2</sup> is responsible for three Australian deaths, all in Queensland, the most recent occurring in February, 2013.<sup>3</sup>



Australian Bat Lyssavirus – which is closely related to the classical rabies virus – is present among all four types of flying foxes, with a subtype also found in insectivorous bats that are prevalent across mainland Australia.<sup>4</sup>

To learn why it's important to **look, but not touch** a flying fox, speak to Queensland rabies expert, Dr Deb Mills.

### AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

Dr Deb Mills, Travel Doctor & Medical Director, Dr Deb – The Travel Doctor, BRISBANE

#### MEDIA INTERVIEWS & INFORMATION:

[Media alert available for immediate download at vivacommunications.com.au/blog](http://vivacommunications.com.au/blog)  
Download media release FRI, SEPTEMBER 27

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#### References

1. World Health Organization (WHO). Rabies fact sheet; September 2011. WHO Available at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs099/en/> [last accessed 25 September 2013].
2. National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), Division of High-Consequence Pathogens and Pathology (DHCPP), <http://www.cdc.gov/features/rabies/>.
3. Gherardin, T. Australia is not rabies-free, Asian Biomedicine Vol. 1 No. 1 June 2007.
4. P. Leggat and J. Goldsmid, Tropical Medicine for Health Professionals. The Australasian College of Tropical Medicine, Inc., 2001. Publisher: ACTM Publications.