

only a matter of time before another zoonotic coronavirus results in an epidemic by jumping the so-called species barrier (287).

The host spectrum of coronavirus increased when a novel coronavirus, namely, SW1, was recognized in the liver tissue of a captive beluga whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*) (138). In recent decades, several novel coronaviruses were identified from different animal species. Bats can harbor these viruses without manifesting any clinical disease but are persistently infected (30). They are the only mammals with the capacity for self-powered flight, which enables them to migrate long distances, unlike land mammals. Bats are distributed worldwide and also account for about a fifth of all mammalian species (6). This makes them the ideal reservoir host for many viral agents and also the source of novel coronaviruses that have yet to be identified. It has become a necessity to study the diversity of coronaviruses in the bat population to prevent future outbreaks that could jeopardize livestock and public health. The repeated outbreaks caused by bat-origin coronaviruses calls for the development of efficient molecular surveillance strategies for studying Betacoronavirus among animals (12), especially in the *Rhinolophus* bat family (86). Chinese bats have high commercial value, since they are used in