

Animal Families - Fact Sheet

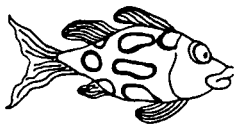
Vocabulary Extension

There are well over a million different types of animals living on the earth.

To make the study of animals easier, scientists have developed a system of grouping them according to their similar characteristics. This is called **Classification**.



Any animals with backbones are called **vertebrates**. Belonging to this group are birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish and mammals.



Fish live in water. They breathe oxygen from the water using gills. To move they use fins. They have a hard skin and a covering of scales to protect their bodies from the water. The fishes' bodies are the same temperature as their surroundings. We say such animals are **cold-blooded**.



Amphibians, like fish, are cold-blooded animals. They both reproduce by means of eggs laid in water.



A seahorse is an unusual fish.



Amphibians are animals like frogs, toads and salamanders.

At different stages in their lives, they live in water and on land.

When they are young they live in water and breathe with gills. As adults they live on land, and they breathe with lungs and through their skin. Their skin is smooth and wet.



Birds' bodies are designed for flight. They have wings, feathers and light hollow bones.



Some birds, like the kiwi, emu, ostrich and penguin, cannot fly.



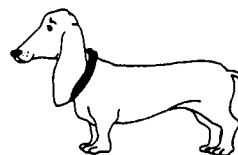
Birds help us by controlling insect numbers. In China in the 1950s there was a campaign to eradicate sparrows. When many of the birds were killed, insect numbers grew to plague proportions, so the campaign was stopped.

The dinosaurs were reptiles.



They are warm-blooded and breathe with lungs. Their young hatch from eggs.

Mammals are animals like goats, cats, dogs, elephants, and humans. They are warm-blooded. Their bodies have fur on them. Baby mammals are born from their mother and feed on the milk from her body.



The bat is a mammal that flies.

The echidna and platypus are unusual mammals as they lay eggs. They belong to a special mammal group called **monotremes**.



The pouched **marsupials**, like the kangaroo, are members of a special group of mammals.



Animals without backbones are called **invertebrates**.

The largest family of this group is the **insect** family. Their bodies have three sections called the head, thorax and abdomen.

They have six legs and at some stage of their lives most have wings. Their skeletons are on the outside of their bodies. Such skeletons are called **exoskeletons**.

Most undergo several changes in their lives going from egg to larva to pupa to adult.



Some mammals, like whales and dolphins, live in water.



You are a mammal.



There are many other animal families. Find out what you can about them.

Do a project on some animals that you find interesting.

Animal Families - Worksheet

Vocabulary Extension

A. Answer the questions below in one or two words.

1. What is grouping similar animals into families called? _____
2. What are animals with backbones called? _____
3. What do fish breathe with? _____
4. What do we call animals whose body temperature is the same as their surroundings?

5. Where do amphibians live when they are young? _____
6. What is the skin of a reptile like? _____
7. To which animal family did the dinosaurs belong? _____
8. What are birds' bones like? _____
9. To which mammal family do echidnas belong? _____
10. What is the largest family of the invertebrates? _____



B. List things that belong to the groups below. (You may need to research some answers.)

1. Three fish _____
2. Three amphibians _____
3. Three reptiles _____
4. Three flightless birds _____
5. Three mammals _____
6. Three body sections of an insect _____
7. Two stages in the life cycle of an insect _____

C. Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. What is the skin of an amphibian like? _____

2. What is unusual about the skeleton of an insect? _____

3. If some nasty person called you an 'insect', give some reasons you could give them to let them know you are not. _____

