

little bugs club



Reptiles and Amphibians

Herpetology

Herpetology is the study of reptiles and amphibians. This includes many different creatures like snakes, turtles, frogs, and salamanders. These animals can be found all over the globe living in deserts, rainforests, and even your backyard! While there are many characteristics that are shared between reptiles and amphibians, there are also some key differences. Take a look below to learn more about the similarities and differences between these two groups.



Vertebrates

Most major animal groups, including mammals, fish, and birds, are Vertebrates, meaning that they have a backbone. Also known as a spine, our backbone is a collection of small segments of bone, called vertebrae, that gives our body structural support. Both reptiles and amphibians have a backbone, meaning that they can also be classified as vertebrates.



Metamorphosis

Metamorphosis means "a change of form". For animals, this usually means that juveniles go through a major change to become an adult. A common example of metamorphosis is caterpillars changing into butterflies. Another great example is tadpoles becoming frogs. Frogs are an example of how amphibians go through a metamorphosis beginning their lives in water and eventually living on land. Reptiles however, don't go through a metamorphosis, and juvenile reptiles look like a smaller version of adults.



Ectotherms

When it comes to controlling our body temperature, animals can be sorted into 2 distinct groups: Endotherms, who can maintain a constant body temperature, and Ectotherms, who rely on their external environment. While humans are Endotherms, maintaining a body temperature of around 98 degrees Fahrenheit, both reptiles and amphibians are Ectotherms. This means that if they want to warm themselves up, they must sit in the sunlight, and if their body temperature becomes too hot then they have to seek the shade.



Habitats

Another difference between reptiles and amphibians is their habitat requirements. While both groups of species can be found all over the world and in many similar habitats, what they require from each can be very different. Because amphibians go through a metamorphosis, they often require both aquatic and terrestrial habitats that can be found near each other. Laying their eggs in water generally requires a consistent body of water. As reptiles can lay their eggs on land, they are less tied to this requirement. This also allows some reptile species to live in or near saltwater, which amphibians are unable to do.

Take a look below for a cute frog craft!

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Lily Pad Frogs

Now that we have learned more about what makes reptiles and amphibians unique, we can use that information to help us make a fun craft! One of them most well-known types of amphibians is the frog. As discussed above, frogs begin their lives in the water and eventually transition to living on land. Even after they're adults, many frogs still live very close to water sources. They can be found living in ponds and swamps. This is why they are often associated with lily pads - plants that float on the top of the water. Take a look below to learn how to make your own lily pad frog craft!

Frog Crafts

Materials:

- Paper Plate
- Paint
- Colorful construction paper
- Yellow tissue paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Sharpie

Instructions:

- Cut out a triangle from your paper plate to form the base of your lily pad
- Paint your plate green and allow to dry
- To make a flower: cut out 3 sets of flowers and glue them on top of each other making sure that the petals don't overlap
 - Cut out small squares of tissue paper and glue them to the center of your flower
- For your Frog: trace the shape of your hand onto green construction paper and cut it out
 - Draw its eyes and mouth
 - Add a small strip of red construction paper for a tongue
- Glue your frog and lily flower onto your lily pad base

