

# Amazing Animals

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# Ready for Cold Weather

## Slowing Down

### Hedgehogs sleep in winter.

A hedgehog gathers leaves. It carries them in its mouth and makes a pile. Why? The animal is making a winter nest. It will soon **hibernate** (HIGH-behr-nayt). That means it goes into a long, deep sleep.



E A Jones/Photo Library

Some hedgehogs live in places where winter is cold. Food is hard to find. The hedgehogs eat a lot of food in the fall. They store fat in their bodies. When the animals hibernate, they live off the extra fat.

During their long winter sleep, the animals use very little energy. They do not move. Their body temperatures drop. Their hearts beat slowly. They breathe slowly too.



Terry Button/Getty Images

*A hedgehog eats an earthworm.*

When the weather gets warmer in March or April, the hedgehogs are hungry. They leave their

nests to eat again. What do hedgehogs like best? Insects, worms, snails, and slugs!

# Ants in Action

## An Ant's Life

### Welcome to the world of ants.

Ants are busy insects. They live and work together in groups called **colonies**. Millions of ants can live in one colony! Each colony has at least one queen. The queen lays eggs. The other ants have work to do. Here are just a few of their jobs.

### Worker Ants

Most ants live in underground nests. Worker ants dig the nests using their jaws. They take the extra dirt outside. That dirt forms an anthill above the nest.



Graphic Science/Alamy

Each nest has many rooms. They are connected by tunnels. Some rooms are places to rest. Other rooms are used to take care of the young ants. Food is stored in some rooms.

### Scout Ants

Some ants are scout ants. They hunt for food. When a scout ant finds food, it goes back to the nest. The ant leaves a scent trail along the way. Other ants follow the trail to find the food. They carry the food back to the nest and share it with the colony.

Ants eat different foods. Many ants eat seeds and fruits. Other ants eat insects. Some ants even

eat small animals.

## Soldier Ants

Some ants are soldiers. Their job is to protect the nest. They stand near the nest's entrance and guard it. They fight off enemy insects that try to enter the nest.



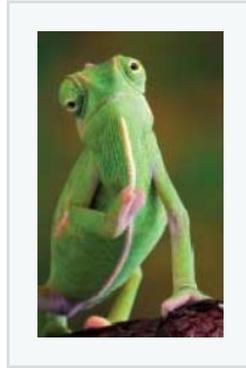
Graphic Science/Alamy

Some soldier ants have large heads. They use their heads to block the entrances to the nest.

# Amazing Animals

## Wild About Animals

These animals can do amazing things.



Cathy Keifer/Shutterstock

## Chameleons Are Reptiles

A **reptile** is an animal that has hard, dry skin. Reptiles are **cold-blooded**. Their body temperature changes as the temperature of the air or water they live in changes.

**Amazing facts:** Chameleons can move their eyes separately and look in two different directions at the same time! Chameleons can also change colors. They might be green one moment and brown 20 seconds later.



Frank Lane/Parfitt/Getty Images

## Cheetahs Are Mammals

A **mammal** is an animal that has hair on its body. Mammals are **warm-blooded**. Their bodies stay about the same warm temperature in both hot and cold weather.

**Amazing facts:** Cheetahs are the world's fastest land animals. They can run as fast as 70 miles per hour. That is faster than most cars driving on a highway! Cheetahs can reach highway speeds in just a few seconds. However, they can run fast for only a short time.

## Frogs Are Amphibians (am-FIH-bee-uhnz)

An **amphibian** is an animal that lives part of its life in water and part on land. Amphibians are cold-blooded. Most have smooth, wet skin.

**Amazing facts:** The American bullfrog is the largest frog in North America. It can grow up to eight inches long. How did this frog get its name? The frog's call sounds like a cow. A **bull** is a male cow.

# Scaly or Slimy?

## Reptile or Amphibian?

### What is the difference between the two groups?

## What Is a Reptile?

A reptile is an animal that has hard, dry skin. Turtles are the only reptiles that have shells.

Most reptiles have clawed feet and walk on four legs. Can you name a reptile that has no legs? A snake! Other reptiles include alligators, crocodiles, and lizards.

Most reptiles lay eggs on land. Baby reptiles hatch from the eggs. A leaf-tailed gecko lays two eggs at a time. The corn snake lays up to 30 eggs at once! The boa constrictor is a snake that does not lay eggs. It gives birth to baby snakes.

## What Is an Amphibian?

An amphibian is an animal that spends part of its life in water and part on land. Most have smooth, wet skin. Frogs, toads, newts, and salamanders are amphibians.

Most amphibians hatch from eggs. The eggs are usually in or near water. Young amphibians breathe through gills. When they get older, they breathe with lungs. Most adult amphibians live on land.

For example, you young frogs that hatch from eggs are called tadpoles. Tadpoles live in water and move like fish. After they grow legs, they can hop on land.

# The Silk Mystery

## Web Wonders

### Scientists work to create spider silk.

If you think spider webs are weak, think again! Spider webs are made of **silk**. That is one of the strongest materials. In fact, silk is stronger than the same amount of steel!

A spider squeezes a sticky liquid from its body. That liquid hardens into a strong silk thread. Scientists are working to make silk that is as strong as a spider's. They are getting closer to learning how.

## What Did Scientists Learn?

"We use lots of different machines to see how spiders make their silk," says scientist Chris Holland. "The machines can show us how strong the silk is and what it is made of."

Holland says, "We recently discovered that to make silk like a spider's, we have to start with the right material. We have been using a material that was too runny. In spiders, it is thick like mayonnaise [MAY-uh-nayz]."

Scientists hope their work will help **produce**, or make, a stronger silk. It may be used to make clothes that are strong but light in weight. The clothes may one day protect soldiers and astronauts.

## How Do Spiders Use Silk?

### Spiders use silk in several important ways.

A grass spider uses silk to make a shelter. A shelter is a place where an animal lives.

An orb weaver spider makes a sticky web to trap prey. A spider's prey is any animal that it eats.

A female candy-stripe spider wraps silk around her eggs to protect them.

# Web Weavers

## Building a Web

### See how spiders use silk.

A spider squeezes liquid from its body. The liquid hardens into a strong silk thread. It can be thin or thick. It can also be smooth or sticky.

All spiders spin silk. Some spiders hang from their silk. Some use their silk to protect their eggs. Many spiders use their silk to build webs. Learn about three kinds of **web builders**. They each build a different kind of web.

## Sticky Silk

An orb weaver builds a round web. It is made of thin silk. Some of the silk is sticky. Insects fly into the web and get caught. The spider feels the web move. It knows that food is there.



Gary W. Carter/Corbis

## Hide and Grab

A funnel weaver builds a web near the ground. It is shaped like a cone. The spider hides in the narrow end. The web moves if an insect walks over the wide end. The spider feels the web move. It rushes out and grabs its meal.

## Net Drop

A web thrower builds a small web. It is shaped like a rectangle. The spider hangs upside down. It holds the web and uses it like a net. The spider waits for an insect to crawl by. It drops the web over the insect to trap it.



Kevin Schafer/Corbis