

AMPHIBIANS FROM A-Z



**TAKE A JOURNEY OF FACT-FILLED
FUN TO DISCOVER SOME
AMAZING AMPHIBIANS
FROM  -Z**

AMPHIBIANS FROM A-Z

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Extras: Glossary of New Words, Metamorphosis Cycle, Wordsearch, Quiz

GLOSSARY OF NEW WORDS

What is an Amphibian?

It's a cold-blooded vertebrate animal of a class that comprises frogs, toads, newts, salamanders, and caecilians. They are distinguished by having an aquatic gill-breathing larval stage followed (typically) by a terrestrial lung-breathing adult stage.

Clutch: a group of eggs fertilized at the same time, laid in a single session.

Ghat: a mountain pass

Heathland: an area of uncultivated land largely made up of coarse grasses and heather

Megophryidae: is a large family of frogs native to the warm southeast of Asia,

Metamorphosis: the process of transformation from an immature form to an adult form in two or more distinct stages.

Nocturnal: Active mostly at night

Papillae: a small rounded protuberance on a part or organ of the body

Regenerate: grow new tissue after a loss or damage.

Translucent: See through

Vomerine: vomerine teeth are pairs of teeth-like plates on the roof of the mouth that slant inward

Watersheds: an area or ridge of land that separates waters flowing to different rivers, basins, or seas.

A is for Axolotl



Fast Facts

Region: Lake Xochimilco Mexico

Habitat: Only Lake Xochimilco

Diet: Worms, insects, tadpoles, and small fish

Size: 6 to 18 inches long

Lifespan: 10 to 15 years

The Axolotl does not go through metamorphosis, so as an adult it still has the features of a tadpole. This includes feathery gills and a quill-like dorsal fin. They can be pink, white, or dark brown. The Axolotl is considered critically endangered.



Think About This...

This amphibian can regenerate limbs!

B is for Black Rain Frog



Fast Facts

Region: South Africa

Habitat: Scrubby vegetation, sandy regions on the slopes and mountains

Diet: Insects and larvae

Size: 2 inches long

Lifespan: Up to 15 years

This unique frog can inflate its body to several times its normal size. The black rain frog can also fold its short legs up under its body. It is mostly nocturnal, likes to dig shallow tunnels in the ground, and does not require open water.



Think About This...

Males will stand guard over the nest until the eggs hatch!

C is for Canyon Tree Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Southern USA

Habitat: Semiarid rocky habitats, near a permanent water source

Diet: Insects

Size: 2 to 2.2 inches long

Lifespan: Up to 9 years

This frog has brown, grey-brown, or grey-green coloration with darker blotches or bands to camouflage itself. The female can lay over 100 eggs in the rainy season. These egg masses float on the water's surface.



Think About This...

Males have a loud call and are most vocal after sunset!

D is for Desert Rain Frog



Fast Facts

Region: South Africa and Namibia

Habitat: Sandy regions and sand dunes close to the sea.

Diet: Insects, beetles, and larvae

Size: 1.6 to 2.4 inches long

Lifespan: 15 years

The Desert Rain frog is a small, plump critter that is nocturnal. It spends most of the daytime hours in burrows. These can be 8 inches under the ground. The legs of this amphibian are too short to hop, so it walks!



Think About This...

This frog's call sounds like a dog's squeaky toy!

E is for Emperor Newt



Fast Facts

Region: Southeast Asia

Habitat: Pools and slow-moving streams

Diet: Small insects, crickets, and worms

Size: Up to 8 inches long

Lifespan: 15 years

This nocturnal newt is highly toxic. When it is squeezed the tips of its ribs will push poison out of its skin. It has enough venom inside its body to kill 7,500 mice. The Emperor newt has orange ridges, bumps, and colorations on its body.



Think About This...

Females lay clumps of eggs (or one at a time) on aquatic plants!

F is for Fire Salamander



Fast Facts

Region: Europe

Habitat: Forests with access to water

Diet: Insects, worms, slugs, and spiders

Size: 6 to 12 inches long

Lifespan: Over 14 years

This black and orange (yellow or red) salamander is poisonous to predators. It prefers to live alone under logs, at the base of trees or under leaf litter. This salamander needs to soak itself in water (pond or stream), so its skin doesn't dry out.



Think About This...

Females give birth to live babies. She can have up to 75 over a few days!

G is for Goliath Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon in West Africa

Habitat: Rainforests with waterfalls and swift-moving water

Diet: Insects, crustaceans, fish, and other amphibians

Size: 12 inches long

Lifespan: 15 to 21 years

The Goliath Frog has earned its name. It is the largest frog in the world weighing in at around 7 to 8 pounds! This behemoth is so big it actually moves rocks to build its nest. The Goliath Frog is thought to have existed more than 250 million years ago.



Think About This...

Goliath Frogs can leap forward up to 10 feet!

H is for Hairy Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, and possibly Angola.

Habitat: Tropical and subtropical moist lowland forests

Diet: Slugs, spiders, beetles, and grasshoppers

Size: Up to 5 inches long

Lifespan: Unknown

The Hairy frog got its name from the hair-like "dermal papillae" found on its legs and lower body. This amphibian is also known for its retractable claws. These claws are actually the frog's bones that it forces through its skin and used in defense from a predator.



Think About This...

The "hairs" on this frog help it absorb oxygen from the water.

I is for Idaho Giant Salamander



Fast Facts

Region: Western Montana along the Idaho border

Habitat: Forested watersheds

Diet: Tadpoles, fish, other salamanders, mice, small snakes

Size: Up to 13 inches long

Lifespan: Unknown

The Idaho Giant Salamander has blotches on its body, which can vary between brown, purple, tan, grey, and a copperish color. This salamander has a thick head and body and its fourth toe (on the hind foot) has three segments.



Think About This...

This salamander defends itself by emitting a "bark," having toxic skin, and by biting!

J is for Japanese Fire-Bellied Newt



Fast Facts

Region: Japan

Habitat: Slow-moving aquatic and semi-aquatic areas

Diet: Insects and plant matter

Size: 3.5 to 5.5 inches long

Lifespan: 10 to 15 years

The Japanese Fire-Bellied Newt is a bottom-half-colorful critter (brown to black on top with crimson or orange underbelly). The color of this newt isn't just for show. It is actually very toxic to both humans and animals. Death can occur in as little as 6 hours after the newt has been ingested.



Think About This...

Just touching this newt can cause skin irritations and numbness.

K is for Kihansi Spray Toad



Fast Facts

Region: Tanzania

Habitat: Dense grassy vegetation

Diet: Flies, larvae, and small insects

Size: Up to 1.1 inches long

Lifespan: Unknown

This toad will protect itself by pretending to die. It does this by ejecting water from its bladder when disturbed. Unfortunately, this tiny toad was declared extinct in the wild (2009). Its decline is due to the drying up of a waterfall in Kihansi Gorge, Tanzania



Think About This...

Environmentalists are working hard to re-establish a natural habitat for these toads.

L is for Little Grass Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Southeastern USA/Florida

Habitat: Wet grassy areas

Diet: Ants, beetles, mites, other tiny invertebrates

Size: Up to $\frac{5}{8}$ of an inch long

Lifespan: Unknown

This teeny frog has a two-part call. A long tone, followed by a string of pulses. Being so small this frog can jump 20 times its body length to help avoid capture. The Little Grass Frog also blends in with its environment. It's the smallest frog in North America.



Think About This...

Males like to crawl 3 feet up a tree trunk or tree foliage and use it as a "calling perch." to find a mate!

M is for Mudpuppy



Fast Facts

Region: Southern Central Canada through the Midwestern United States

Habitat: Bottom of lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams

Diet: Snails, fish, and crayfish

Size: Over 16 inches long

Lifespan: 7 to 30 years

Mudpuppy's have sense organs in their skin. These help them detect water movement and pressure changes. The sense organs also help them avoid predators. Mudpuppy's have small eyes and a good sense of smell, which they use to locate their prey.



Think About This...

This salamander never leaves the water. It walks on the bottom of its habitat and can swim with fish-like movements.

N is for Natterjack Toad



Fast Facts

Region: Europe

Habitat: Sandy and heathland areas

Diet: Insects, worms, and small reptiles

Size: 3.1 inches long

Lifespan: 15 years

Natterjack means, 'chattering toad.' They got this name because of their very loud and distinctive mating call. Natterjacks differ from other toads because of the yellow line down their backs and their odd short-legged gait - they run more than walk or hop! This toad can cover large distances at night.



Think About This...

Natterjacks are most active at night. You can often see their tracks in the sand

O is for Olm



Fast Facts

Region: Central and Southeastern Europe

Habitat: Underground caves

Diet: Shrimp, insects, snails

Size: 9 to 12 inches long

Lifespan: 60 to 100 years

The Olm is an entirely aquatic salamander - it eats, sleeps, and breeds all underwater. It is adapted to living in a dark environment. It has underdeveloped eyes and is blind. However, it has excellent hearing and a sense of smell. The Olm is also translucent.



Think About This...

Olms can go up to 10 years without food!

P is for Purple Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Southwestern Ghats of India

Habitat: Underground

Diet: Termites

Size: 2.8 inches long

Lifespan: 10 years

The purple Frog spends most of its life underground. It only emerges for a couple of weeks (in the monsoon season) to breed, This frog's body is somewhat rounded. It has a small head and an odd, pointed snout. Adults are typically dark purple.



*Think About This...
Its call sounds like a chicken!*

Q is for Quacking Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Australia

Habitat: Coastal plains and forests with abundant water sources

Diet: Insects, snails, and mites

Size: 1.4 inches long

Lifespan: Unknown

The Quacking Frog uses 1 to 4 quacks in a sequence but there can be up to 12. Males will respond to the calls of other males with the same amount of notes. The calls are used to attract females. The call is distinct and loud. These frogs will also respond to imitations of their call.



Think About This...

The Quacking Frog has vomerine teeth.

R is for Reticulated Glass Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Columbia, Costa Rica, Panama, and Ecuador

Habitat: Rainforests

Diet: Small insects, crickets, moths, flies, and even other tiny frogs

Size: 1 inch long

Lifespan: 14 years

The Reticulated Glass Frog got its name from its see-through underside (you can actually see its heart beating)! These nocturnal critters like to hang out in the leaves of the rainforest. Males are very territorial and will squeak to warn other frogs to "stay away."



Think About This...

Males guard the eggs. They will kick away intruders like wasps that get too close to the clutch!

S is for Spring Peeper



Fast Facts

Region: Southeastern Canada to Eastern United states

Habitat: Moist wooded areas, fields, and grasslands near a water source

Diet: Beetle, ants, flies, and spiders

Size: 1 inch long

Lifespan: 3 to 4 years

These frogs are known for their call - a high-pitched whistle or peeping. The sound is repeated about 20 times a minute. The faster and louder the frog sings, the better chance he has of attracting a mate. Males will often gather near water and sing together. The frog with the deepest voice starts the call.



Think About This...

Females can lay from 750 to 1,200 eggs. She attaches them to aquatic vegetation!

T is for Turtle Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Southwestern Australia

Habitat: Desert

Diet: Termites

Size: 2 inches long

Lifespan: 5 to 7 years

This odd frog resembles a turtle without its shell. It has pinkish colored skin, flecked with gold and black to help camouflage it. It has powerful front legs it uses to dig head first into the sand, along with stumpy back legs and a blunt nose.



Think About This...

Turtle Frogs can eat about 400 termites in one meal!

U is for Upland Chorus Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Southern and Eastern United States

Habitat: Vegetated and highly moist areas, close to water

Diet: Small insects and invertebrates

Size: Up to 1.4 inches long

Lifespan: 3 years

These frogs are rarely seen or heard, except after a rain. The call of this frog is short, raspy, and rises in pitch. It has been described as sounding like someone dragging their thumbnail over the teeth of a comb.



Think About This...

Females can lay over 1,000 eggs at a time. She places them in water and under vegetation!

V is for Vampire Frog



Fast Facts

Region: Southern Vietnam

Habitat: Dense evergreen forests in higher altitudes

Diet: Insects, small lizards, (most anything)

Size: 2 inches long

Lifespan: Unknown

The strange new species of frog isn't wearing a cape but its tadpoles do possess small black fangs (hence its name). It uses webbed fingers and toes for moving from great heights and to glide about.



Think About This...

Females lay their eggs in holes in trees that contain water. This protects them from predators!

W is for Western Slimy Salamander



Fast Facts

Region: Missouri to Oklahoma, Arkansas,. Another population in south-central Texas.

Habitat: Moist, wooded areas under rocks and ground debris

Diet: Worms, snails, slugs, spiders

Size: 8 inches long

Lifespan: 20 years

This shy salamander has a long tail and large bulbous eyes. It got its name from the thick, very sticky substance that adheres to skin like glue. In fact, it's so sticky, it causes dust, dirt, or bits of dead leaves to stick to one's hands!



Think About This...

Females deposit 15 or more eggs to a thin stalk suspended from the ceiling of a cavity. The eggs hang in a grape-like cluster!

X is for *Xylophone Newt*



Fast Facts

Region: Around the World

Habitat: Theatre and musical productions

Diet: Musical notes

Size: Over 10 inches long

Lifespan: Forever

The Xylophone Newt is a colorful critter that loves to make music. It depends on being struck with a wooden mallet, to release the musical tunes hidden deep within its body. No one really knows much about the Xylophone Newt; however, we believe that Smarty Pants like you could make us a great story!



Think About This...

Each bar on a real Xylophone is tuned to a specific note!

Y is for Yellow Spotted Tree Toad



Fast Facts

Region: Malaysia

Habitat: High up in trees

Diet: Insects, particularly ants

Size: 4 inches long

Lifespan: 15 years

These frogs only come out of the trees to breed in quiet pools and slow-moving water. They can be found as high as 82 feet in the forest trees. This toad has long fingers and long slender legs.



Think About This...

Males are usually brownish-orange, while females are pale green with yellow spots.

Z is for Zhang's Horned Toad



Fast Facts

Region: China

Habitat: Temperate forests and rivers

Diet: Insects

Size: 1 to 4 inches long

Lifespan: Approximately 6 years (depending on species)

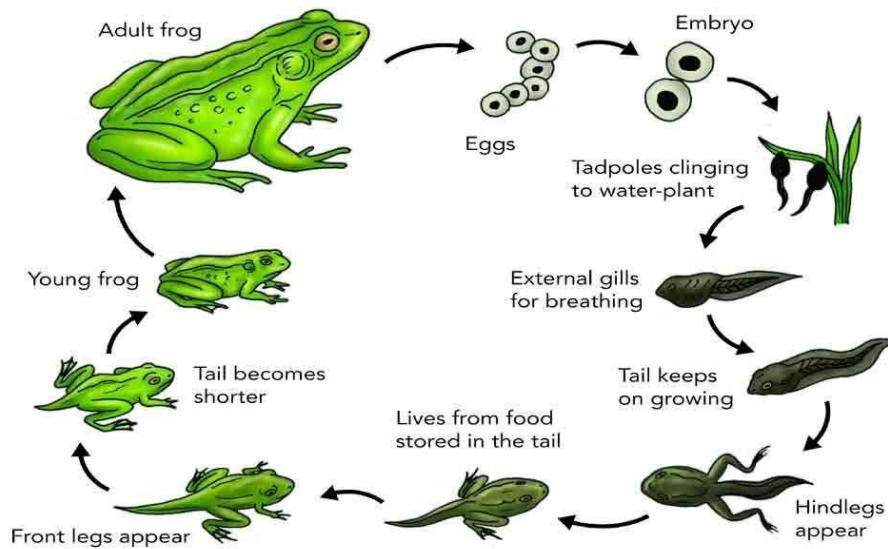
There is little data on the Zhang's Horned Toad. However, we do know it is one of about 138 species of frogs and toads in the *Megophryidae* family. These frogs and toads range from 1 inch to 4 inches long.



Think About This...

Some of these amphibians live on the forest floor and have leaf-like projections on their bodies that help them blend in!

METAMORPHOSIS IN AMPHIBIANS



Metamorphosis In Frogs & Toads



Metamorphosis in Salamanders & Newts

A-Z Series

S	L	I	T	H	E	R	M	L	I	S	W	I	M
M	I	N	I	S	I	I	S	S	O	T	W	S	I
E	F	R	O	G	S	M	L	P	E	T	E	O	S
T	F	T	A	A	M	P	H	I	B	I	A	N	S
A	C	O	L	O	R	S	D	I	S	S	E	T	R
M	H	N	O	I	G	E	R	G	N	C	S	W	E
O	O	A	R	N	B	N	I	A	I	L	I	K	D
R	E	O	B	O	M	A	F	S	N	I	F	L	N
P	M	I	W	I	N	P	O	H	S	F	N	A	A
H	S	I	L	T	T	E	T	L	E	E	E	W	M
O	T	H	H	M	S	A	T	S	C	S	W	A	A
S	A	T	S	I	A	I	T	P	T	P	T	E	L
I	M	O	T	O	A	D	S	L	S	A	S	S	A
S	S	M	A	L	L	S	S	D	E	N	S	R	S

HOP
 HABITAT
 AMPHIBIANS
 LIFESPAN
 GIANT
 FROGS
 SMALL
 DIET
 METAMORPHOSIS
 INSECTS
 REGION
 SLITHER
 NEWTS
 SALAMANDERS
 WALK
 SWIM
 TOADS
 COLORS



Think About This...

For extra fun, try using a green highlighter or pencil crayon to find the words...it's the "Amphibian" way!

TAKE THE AMPHIBIAN QUIZ

1. What is a Ghat?
2. What is the Vampire Frog's diet?
3. Which amphibian is not real?
4. What is the lifespan of the Olm?
5. Which amphibian emits toxins through its skin by pushing its ribs out?
6. Which salamander is very sticky?
7. How big does the Goliath Frog get?
8. Which female frog can lay up to 1,000 eggs at one time?
9. Which toad likes to hang out 82 feet up in the trees?
10. Which amphibian is the smallest of them all?

HOW DID YOU DO?

10 OUT OF 10 - YOU'RE AMPHIB-A-FABULOUS!

5-9 - TAKE ANOTHER HOP!

**0-4: YOU NEED MORE
METAMORPHOSIS**