

African Pygmy Hedgehog

Atelerix albiventris

- Range: Central Africa, Southern Africa from Senegal to Sudan and Zambia
- Habitat: Savanna and steppe zones
- Diet: insects
- Life Cycle: April-September is mating season. 34-38 days of gestation and litter size is 4-6 babies. The babies hedgehogs are called hoglets and are white when first born. They tiny spines are covered with a membrane coating. Within hours after being born this shrivels up. At birth the spines are soft, but soon harden to offer protection from predators. The males do not help with the care of the young.
- Special Notes: A hedgehog is a nocturnal animal. In the winter, November-March, it passes into a state of hibernation when it rolls up into a ball in a nest. It will wake up on warm days to feed and drink water.
- The hedgehog protects itself by rolling up into a ball, from which spikes stand out in every direction. The hedgehog does this to protect the parts of its body that are not covered with spines. Its face, tail and feet are tucked out of sight. Most predators will leave it alone.
- Mammal: hair/fur, warm blooded, live birth, nurse young, breath air

Anole (Green)

Anolis carolinensis

- Range: S. Virginia to the Florida Keys; west to c. Texas and Oklahoma.
- Habitat: Arboreal. Encountered on vertical surfaces like fence posts and walls; but favors tree boles, shrubs, vines, tall grasses, palm fronds.
- General: 5-8" (12.7-20.3 cm). A slender lizard with extensible pink throat-fan, large toe pads. Snout long, wedge-shaped. Small dorsal crest immediately behind the head that is only visible during threat display. Usually green, but in seconds can change to brown or intermediate colors. Tail round.
- Behavior: Diurnal, but easily collected by night with the aid of a light; moisture on the skin makes these anoles shine as though covered with reflecting yellow paint. Adults prefer shaded perches. Juveniles prefer sunnier locations closer to ground. Basking anoles are typically brown; fighting males turn green with a black patch behind the eyes. They slowly stalk their prey: flies, beetles, moths, spiders, even small crabs.

Bearded Dragon

Pogona vitticeps

Range: Native to south, central Australia.

Habitat: Arid, rocky, semi-desert regions and arid open woodlands. They spend time both on the ground and in trees. They may also be found perched on bush branches and even fence posts.

Life Span: Up to 10 years in captivity.

Diet: Omnivores, but they eat primarily insects. They also eat leafy greens and finely chopped vegetables.

Life Cycle: Sexual maturity is reached at one to two years of age. Mature females typically lay clutches of 24 leathery eggs in early summer. They may lay up to 9 clutches per year. The eggs are laid in nests dug in sandy soil and unattended young hatch 3 month later.

Special A bulky body and the habit of basking allows them to store more heat

Adaptations: making it possible to operate at lower temperatures than other lizards. They can also survive higher temperatures for several hours, since they can regulate body temperature by evaporation.

Body When intimidated, they flatten their bodies and stand erect with mouth

Language: gaping. The light-colored mouth lining, spines bordering the lower jaw and puffed-out blackish beard give a formidable appearance. This defensive display has earned these lizards the common name of “bearded dragon”.

Aggressiveness to other members of the group can be shown by the tip of the tail curving slightly and the head bobbing rapidly.

Submission is signaled by rotating the arms in a full circular motion, which looks a bit like waving.

Bearded dragons have the ability to change shades of color, from light to dark, which helps them to regulate body temperature. Color changes can also depend on emotional state, and may also be used for concealment. When injured, sick or dying the back becomes black and the legs pale yellow.

Reptiles: *cold-blooded
*lay eggs – on land
*claws on their feet
*scales on their skin

Chinchilla

Chinchilla lanigera

- Range: Andes Mountains (15,000 feet).
- Habitat: High altitude rocky areas. Dry.
- Life Span: ~15 years
- Diet: Herbivores. Eats leaves, flowers, fruits.
- Life Cycle: Pregnancy lasts about 111 days. Birth takes place at night or in the early morning. 1-3 kits.
- Special Notes: Small feet to reduce heat loss and thick fur to protect from excess cold and heat. Whiskers are used as a tactile sense to help them maneuver at night.
- Mammals:** *warm-blooded
*live birth
*females nurse young
*fur

Cockatiel

Nymphicus hollandicus

- Range: Australia
- Habitat: Tropical rain forests
- Life Span: 15-20 years
- Diet: Seeds, fresh fruit and greens
- Special Notes: They will raise the feathers on their head when scared. The males are colorful to attract a mate. They have an oil gland by their tail that they rub around their body to stay waterproof.

Cockroach (Madagascar Hissing)

Gromphadorhina portentosa

Range: Madagascar

Habitat: Forest floor – hiding under debris during the day. Active at night.

Life History:

- Female cockroaches lay their eggs in a purse-like capsule which is retained inside the body until the eggs hatch.
- Females that have been successfully fertilized will retain eggs within this cavity for at least 60 days.
- Recently hatched nymphs will not be eaten by the adults.
- Nymphs molt roughly six times in their lifetime.
- The last molt occurs about five months after the nymph was born. At this last molt, the nymphal roaches become sexually mature adults.
- Adult roaches do not molt
- They may live for two or more years.

Notes: Spiracles- Breathing tubes present in pairs on most of the abdomen segments. Allow air to seep deep within the tissues where it can oxygenate the muscles. Allow carbon dioxide to diffuse outward and escape from the body. All spiracles have a constant inflow and outflow of gases.

Hiss: Produced by air exiting the modified fourth spiracle (counting from the front). All stages of roach can hiss. Hiss for a variety of reasons, including courtship, fighting and copulating.

Sex: Males have sensory hairs on antennae giving them a fuzzy look (especially at the base). Females do not. The ventral plate on the tip of the males' abdomen is much narrower than in the female. The prothorax (part of the thorax just behind the head) is developed into two protuberances. In the females the development is slight. In the male, the protrusions stand out, making the prothorax appear to be the head of a vertebrate animal.

Invertebrate: *no backbone

*exoskeleton

Dove

Range: Europe and Asia

Habitat: Forests

Life Span: 15 years

Diet: In the wild they eat a variety of seeds.

Special Notes: The dove's predators in the wild are people, cats, hawks, martins, owls and snakes.

Doves live in groups.

Both the male and the female care for the young.

Birds: *warm blooded
*lay eggs
*covered in feathers
*hollow bones

Ferrets (Domestic)

Mustela putorius furo

Range:

Special Notes: The domestic ferret is a member of the weasel family and an ancestor of the European Polecat. Some other members of the weasel family are minks, otters, and the endangered Black-Footed Ferret.

Domestic ferrets have been domesticated for thousands of years and are not wild animals. Once working animals, they were (and still are in the UK and some other countries) used for ridding barns of rodents and for flushing rabbits from their dens (ferreting). In the United States they are lovable house pets.

Diet: Ferret pellets and water (the black-footed ferret eats prairie dogs and other rodents in the wild)

Life Span: 5-7 years

Gecko (Leopard)

Eublepharis macularius

Range: Mid and Northeast Africa

Habitat: Dry, sandy, and rocky areas (deserts)

Diet: Insects and worms

Life Span: approx. 20 years

Life Cycle: Leopard geckos reach breeding maturity at about 2 years. One mating will serve to fertilize all eggs produced over the following 15 months. Females store sperm in seminal receptacles in the genital tract. The females lay as many as 5 pairs of eggs at monthly intervals over a 4 to 5 month period. Temperature determines the sex of the young.

Special Notes: Leopard geckos excrete nitrogenous waste in solid crystal form as uric acid instead of as urine. They are one of the few species of gecko with movable eyelids. Their legs are long and thin and allow the gecko to hold its body off the ground when it runs.

Gerbils

Meriones unguiculatus

Range: Mongolia

Habitat: They live in burrows with sandy soil and a little bit of grass, herbs and shrubs.

General: Fairly small rodents with long furry tails that have a little tuft of fur at the end. The wild type coloration is "agouti", where each hair is banded with gray, yellowish, and black, with off-white hair on the belly. However, through selective breeding, several lovely color variations are available.

Behavior: The amount of activity that gerbils exhibit is dependent on the season. They are primarily diurnal (active during the day) in the spring and early summer. In July they tend to be more active in the early morning and evening. They make squeaky whistles to communicate; 3-14 individuals can live together and visit other gerbil colonies that are connected.

Love Bird

Agapornis roseicollis

Range: Western and Central Africa

Habitat: They inhabit dry areas with shrubs or trees bordering forests, usually near bodies of water.

Life Span: 10-12 years (sometimes longer)

Diet: seeds and fruit

Life Cycle: The female will lay about 5 eggs, though the clutch could be as few as 3 eggs or as many as 8 eggs. The incubation period is 22 - 25 days, with 75% to 80% of the eggs hatching. The hen will start to brood after the second egg is hatched. Often the male will join the hen in the nest. The chicks will begin to leave the nest in about 38 - 50 days and will be independent about 2 weeks after leaving the nest.

Special Notes: In the wild they are seen in small flocks, and occasionally larger flocks when feeding in ripening crop fields.

Newts (Japanese Fire Bellied)

Cynops orientalis

- Range: Japan: Islands of Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu.
- Habitat: It inhabits ponds, ditches, slow stream pools, small lakes, and almost any body of still, clear water it can find.
- Life Span:
- Diet: Feeds on a variety of invertebrate prey in the wild. Will feed on an assortment of live and non-living foods in captivity: earthworms, chopped nightcrawlers, bloodworms (live and frozen), mosquito larvae, glassworms, glass/ghost shrimp, lean strips of beefheart, freeze-dried tubifex cubes.
- Life Cycle: At the onset of breeding, males develop smoother skin, a thin tail filament at the tip of the tail, and patches of bluish or purplish sheen along the tail and body. Courting males actively pursue females and compete for their attention by ramming them, blocking their path, and fanning their tail in the direction of the female. Tail fanning is a method of wafting pheromones towards the female. A female can lay up to 200 eggs in a breeding season. When possible, eggs are folded between the leaves of aquatic plants. The eggs hatch approximately 20 days after being laid (depending on temperature) and the larvae usually metamorphose about 3-5 months after.
- Metamorphosed juveniles often have a yellow to reddish dorsal stripe and are terrestrial for 1 to 3 years before returning to the water as sexually mature adults. This time can be shortened in captivity by increased feeding. Juveniles will eat whiteworms, pinhead crickets, fruitflies, small earthworms, small waxworms, and other tiny prey.
- Hibernation does not appear to be essential to breeding and many keepers (including myself) report these newts breeding even when kept at household temperatures year-round. However, reducing the temperature in the tank by about 10-15 degrees F during the winter undoubtedly promotes breeding activity and is recommended.
- Special Notes: A medium sized newt (9 - 13 cm; 3.5 - 5.5 inches) with distinct parotoid glands, rough skin, and an arched back. Coloration is chocolate brown to black above occasionally with red specks or spots along the dorso-lateral ridges and an orange to crimson colored belly with darker markings. The markings on the belly are highly variable and can be spots, blotches, wavy lines, or reticulations. Males can be distinguished from females by their swollen cloacas, and breeding males' tails develop a purplish or bluish iridescent sheen and a small filament at the tip (absent in some races). Breeding males also develop a smoother skin during the breeding season.

Newt (Red-Spotted)

Notophthalmus viridescens

Range: South Eastern Canada and the Eastern US.

Habitat: During the aquatic stages of its lifecycle, the newt inhabits ponds, marshes and other quiet bodies of freshwater. The terrestrial stage lives under leaves and moss in damp woodland areas.

Life Span:

Diet: Carnivores. They feed on small worms, snails and insects.

Life Cycle: Fertilized eggs hatch in approximately one month. Larval newts are aquatic. They breathe underwater using feathery gills which protrude from the back of the head. The larvae are olive green.

By late summer larvae turn bright orange or red. They also develop lungs for breathing and lose their gills. At this point the newts, now called efts, become terrestrial.

Efts usually remain on land for two years. In their third year they return to the water to breed. At this time the red efts become olive green adults (same color as larvae). Adult newts are completely aquatic.

Special Notes: The female lays over one hundred eggs which she attaches, one at a time, to the leaves and stems of aquatic vegetation. The eggs hatch in approximately one month depending on water temperature.

Newts secrete toxic substances through the skin and so are avoided by fish and other predators.

Amphibians: *cold-blooded
*lay eggs – in the water
*no claws
*thin skin – usually needs to stay moist

Painted Turtle (Eastern)

Chrysemys picta

- Range: Eastern Canada and US. West to Louisiana and north to Oklahoma.
- Habitat: Slow-moving streams, rivers and lakes. Likes soft bottoms with vegetation and half-submerged logs.
- Life Span: 10-15 years
- Size: 4 – 9”
- Diet: Young turtles are basically carnivorous, but become herbivorous as they mature.
- Life Cycle: Nests May – July. Lays 1-2 clutches a year. Each clutch contains 2 –20 elliptical eggs. Incubation averages 10 – 11 weeks. Males mature in 2-5 years, females 4-9. Hatchlings may overwinter in the nest.
- Special Notes: The most widespread turtle in North America.
It is fond of basking and dozens can often be observed on a single log.

- Reptiles:**
- *cold-blooded
 - *lay eggs – on land
 - *claws on their feet
 - *scales on their skin

Prairie Dogs

Cynomys ludovicianus

- Range: Great Plains of North America, with the river valley of Saskatchewan, Canada being the northern boundary and Mexico being the southern.
- Habitat: plains in underground tunnel colonies called “coteries” or “towns”
- Life Span: 10 years
- Diet: grasses, forbs, roots and flowers that grown around their town
- Life Cycle: aggression builds in the fall and during the winter months; the males often fight each other. This variation in attitude is closely linked to the gestation periods of the female. Breeding lasts from late February into April and actual gestation takes 30-35 days.
- Special Notes: Prairie Dogs are actually members of the squirrel and rodent families; they just get their “doggy” name from the barking sound they make.

Owls (Western Screech)

Megascops kennicottii

- Range: Through Rocky Mountains
- Habitat: from tropical lowlands to desert habitats in the south to temperate rainforests in the north. Most of the time, though, you will find them in open country with many deciduous trees around, mainly oaks, sycamores and riparian hardwoods.
- Diet: small mammals, insects, snakes, lizards, frogs, small birds and even crayfish and scorpions.
- Life Cycle: Young chicks are ready to leave the nest at 30-32 days of age. Around 73% of eggs hatched in the nest reach fledgling age.
- Special Notes: They have two distinct calls, neither of which are a screech. The first often described as a bouncing ball. The second is used when a male and female are having a duet.

Rabbits (Domestic)

Lagomorpha

- Range: North America
- Habitat: woods and gardens in the wild
- Life Span: 5-7 years
- Diet: vegetables and fruit
- Life Cycle: can have up to 6 or more babies in a litter
- Special Notes: They bang their hind legs on the ground when they sense danger; which helps them communicate with other rabbits. They are not rodents they belong to the *lagomorpha* order along with Hares and Pikas.

Rats (Fancy)

Rattus

- Range: All over the world
- Habitat: forests, deserts, and in cities
- Life Span: 2-3 years
- Diet: seeds, plants and berries
- Life Cycle: gestation period is 25-30 days, can have up to 10 babies in a litter, reproduce constantly if given the chance.
- Special Notes: Tails are opposable and help them balance by gripping. They are very clean and highly trainable. They rarely bite and make great pets.

Spiny Tail Lizards

Uromastix aegypticus

- Range: Native to the Saharan Desert (from Egypt to Morocco).
- Habitat: Arid, sandy areas.
- Life Span: ~20 years
- Diet: Omnivores, but they eat plant material almost exclusively. They obtain water from their food and thus do not have a water dish.
- Life Cycle: Sexual maturity is reached at one to two years of age. Mature females typically lay clutches of 11 – 16 oblong, leathery eggs in early summer. The eggs are laid in nests dug in sandy soil and unattended young hatch 3 month later.
- Special Adaptations: Thick tail for defending itself from predators (and other lizards). Low body for absorbing heat.
- Reptiles:**
- *cold-blooded
 - *lay eggs – on land
 - *claws on their feet
 - *scales on their skin

Tarantula (Rose Haired)

Range: North, Central and South America

Habitat: Deserts in the American Southwest. Treopical regions of Central and South America.

Life Span: 10-30 years

Diet: insects

Life Cycle: Females lay 100 to 1,000 eggs in a web which is constructed like a hammock. The egg sac is retained in the burrow, guarded, and usually held by the female. Eggs hatch in 45 to 60 days. Spiderlings hatch in July or later in the year within the egg sac. Once they leave the egg sac, the spiderlings may stay with the females for 3 to 6 days or longer before dispersing. Many of the young fall prey to other spiders or predators as they disperse to begin their own burrows. Females have lived in captivity for over 25 years. Males in Texas rarely live over two or three months after maturity.

Special Notes: While tarantulas are not particularly poisonous to humans, their bite can be quite painful. Like a bee sting, some people may be more sensitive than others to a bite.

While both males and females of this species spin silk, these tarantulas are ground dwellers and hunt their food rather than use a web to capture prey.

Green Tree Frog

Hyla cinerea

Range: Delaware south along the coastal plain into Florida and the Keys, west to s. Texas, and north through c. Arkansas and w. Tennessee to Illinois.

Habitat: Trees and shrubs growing in or near permanent water. During the day frequently found asleep on underside of large leaves or in other moist, shady places.

General: 1 1/4-2 1/2" (3.2-6.4 cm). Bright green, yellow, or greenish-gray. Has sharply defined light stripe along upper jaw and side of body; side stripe occasionally absent. Sometimes has tiny, black-edged gold spots on back. Large toe pads.

Behavior: Green Treefrogs congregate in large choruses of several hundred. A typical treefrog, this species prefers to walk rather than jump. When fleeing a predator in the trees it takes gangly leaps into space.

Wood Turtle (eastern)

Clemmys insculpta

Range: North America

Habitat: Woods and forests; found most commonly in streams but are not considered aquatic turtles.

Life Span: 40 +/- years

Diet: Greens, slugs, and bugs, and worms

Life Cycle: Alder groves and other plant communities on river banks play a vital role in the turtle's life cycle.

Special Notes: Habitat fragmentation, destruction, illegal collection and disturbance caused by some recreational activities have caused the few remaining known populations to become isolated from one and other.