

Reptile: The Cold-Blooded Kind

What Is a Reptile?

Reptiles are unique animals! They are cold-blooded, which means they cannot maintain a constant body temperature. They lay out in the sun in order to keep their body heat up. Reptiles don't have to eat nearly as much food as other animals because they don't burn as much energy keeping their body warm. Most reptiles lay eggs and have skin that is covered in hard, dry scales.

Different Types of Reptiles

There are four different groups of reptiles: crocodiles and alligators, lizards and snakes, turtles and tortoises, and tuataras. These animals can be found on every continent except for Antarctica. Why do you think reptiles can't live in Antarctica?

The biggest reptile is the salt water crocodile. They can grow to be 2,000 pounds and 12 ½ feet long. Alligators and crocodiles look like they might be slow, but don't be fooled! They can move very quickly when they are attacking their prey. Crocodiles have been known to swallow rocks so that they can dive deeper into the water.

Snakes and lizards are very similar, but lizards have legs and snakes do not. Snakes move along the ground by flexing their body. Even though they don't have legs, they can move quickly! Very few snakes are actually poisonous, but watch out for constrictors! They squeeze their prey with their bodies until the animal is dead, and then they swallow it whole! If they eat a large meal, they can go weeks or even months without needing to eat again. The smallest snake, the thread snake, only grows to about 4 in. long.

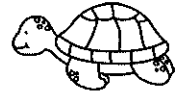
Which reptile can live for more than 100 years? TURTLES! They have a protective shell with about 60 hard bones that connect together. Turtles do not have ears, but they use their excellent eye sight and keen sense of smell to survive. They also feel vibrations from loud sounds, which helps protect them from predators.

Tuataras are very unique animals. They are only found in the wild in New Zealand. What makes them so cool is that they have three eyes. Their third "eye" isn't actually used for seeing but helping them determine the season or time of day! Just like some lizards, if a tuatara loses its tail, it can regrow it.

Group _____



Reptile Facts



Reptile group being researched (circle one):

Crocodylians

Snakes/Lizards

Turtles/Tortoises

Tuataras

Describe your reptile's habitat.	
What is unique about your reptile's body?	
How does your reptile protect itself?	
Interesting Fact #1	
Interesting Fact #2	
Interesting Fact #3	

Draw a picture of a reptile from your group in its natural habitat.