

# THERE ARE AMPHIBIANS EVERYWHERE

Amphibians are remarkable animals. Their name means "double life" and many of them start their lives as small tadpoles, before going through an incredible transformation as they change into adults. While some of them are camouflaged, so they can hide from predators and prey, others have brightly coloured skin.



Amphibians are water-loving creatures, so the best place to find them is around ponds and pools. All of these amphibians live on land or in freshwater. There are three types that manage to survive in salty water - which is a very special skill for an amphibian. Can you guess which ones they are?



# MOVING

As animals that live both on land and in water, amphibians have had to develop many ways to get around, hunt and escape danger. Young amphibians that live in water, as tadpoles, are good swimmers, but adult amphibians have all sorts of ways to move - they can glide, crawl, climb, swim, leap and even bounce!

## JUMPING

Frogs, and some toads, use their long hind legs to jump. The sharp-nosed frog is a champion jumper. It is tiny - about 5 cm long, but it can leap an astonishing 10.5 m in just three hops!

## SWIMMING

Frogs and toads use their long legs and webbed feet to swim. They draw their legs up to their body then push them back straight out to propel themselves forward. It is the same movement that humans use when they do the breaststroke! Webbed toes work like flippers to make each movement more powerful.

Swimming salamanders tuck their legs against their body, and swing their body from side to side, as if their tail to push forward. When they walk, they move their bodies in the same S-shape waves, swaying as they move.

## PONDS, POOLS AND MARSHES

Some frogs spend almost their whole lives in, or next to, water. Northern cricket frogs like to sunbathe on pond plants and dive into the water if they sense danger.

## CLIMBING

Many frogs and toads can climb, where they find good places to hide and food to eat. Climbing amphibians often have small bodies but big feet with large, sticky pads on their club-like toes that grip onto the bark.

## GLIDING

Amphibians can't fly, but some frogs are able to glide through the air. Wallace's flying frogs have flaps of skin, called membranes, between their toes and on the sides of their body. As they leap out of a tree the membranes stretch and spread, like a parachute, to help the frogs to soar and land gently. Gliding frogs can travel impressive distances and change direction when they are in the air. A Wallace's tree frog can leap from a height of 6 m and travel up to 5 m in a single glide.

## CAN YOU FIND?

It's easy to see a flying frog when it is soaring through the air, but much harder to see one when it is hiding amongst the green leaves of a tree. Can you find a Wallace's flying frog that is resting between flights?

## BURROWING

Caecilians may lack legs, but they do have a strong skull, which helps them to burrow through the ground. They tense and relax the muscles in a sequence to push their bodies forward, just like an earthworm. A smooth, slimy skin makes it easier for a caecilian to slip through soil and mud.

species of frogs and toads are also adapted to burrow beneath the ground. These species burrow down in the soil to reach moisture, where they can remain for a long time.

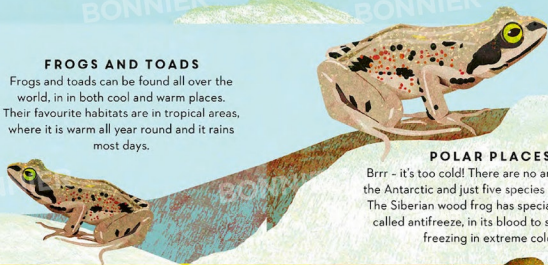


# WHERE DO AMPHIBIANS LIVE?

The place where an animal lives is called its habitat. Although amphibians like to stay near watery habitats, they have been able to spread all across the world, from dark caves to mountain streams and from lush tropical forests to hot, dry deserts. Some types even survive in dry habitats for most of the year but travel back to ponds to breed.

## FROGS AND TOADS

Frogs and toads can be found all over the world, in both cool and warm places. Their favourite habitats are in tropical areas, where it is warm all year round and it rains most days.



## POLAR PLACES

Brrr - it's too cold! There are no amphibians in the Antarctic and just five species in the Arctic. The Siberian wood frog has special chemicals, called antifreeze, in its blood to stop it from freezing in extreme cold.



## DRY GRASSLANDS

The bushveld rain frog lives in burrows beneath the dry grasslands of southern Africa. It stays there until the rain comes, when it pops out to find food or mates before returning home.



## DESERTS

It is hot and dry in the deserts of North America, where Couch's spadefoot frogs live. It copes with the heat by using its spade-like feet to dig a hole where it buries itself. It wraps itself in a cocoon made from its own dead skin to stop it from drying out and waits there until it rains.



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## SALAMANDERS

Almost all salamanders live in the northern half of the world, with only about 30 species living south of the Equator. They are most common in North and Central America, especially in forest habitats.



## MOUNTAINS

Giant salamanders are the biggest amphibians in the world, and they can live for up to 50 years. The Japanese giant salamander lives in rocky, fast-flowing mountain streams.

## CAVES

Olm are salamanders that live in caves, where they swim in streams and hunt small animals to eat. They have pink skin and little legs.



## WOODLAND

For most of the year, California newts can survive away from water, living in forest habitats, forests or grasslands. From November to December, they return to ponds to breed.



## RIVERS

Cayenne caecilians have lungs, but they spend their lives in water. They use a paddle-shaped tail to swim, like an eel.



## CAECILIANS

Most caecilians live in moist soil alongside streams, lakes and swamps, although a few species spend their whole lives in water. Caecilians are found only in tropical areas of the world.