

For Creative Minds

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Match the Skin to the Animal

Match each animal to its skin.



spotted
salamander



porcupine



European
starling



snapping
turtle



How Animals Use Their Skins

Which of these animals uses its skin to:

1. breathe	2. crawl	3. keep warm
4. defend itself	5. camouflage itself	6. warn others

Some animals may use their skin for more than one purpose.



Answers: to breathe: American toad, red eft; to crawl along the ground: ring-necked snake; to keep warm: barred owl; to defend itself: American toad; to camouflage itself: Pero moth, American toad, barred owl; to warn others: red eft

Special Skins

Hairy-tailed Mole: Moles spend most of their life underground, in tunnels that they dig with their front feet. The fur coat of moles is short, soft and velvety. It can easily move forward or backward, so that the mole can travel in tight tunnels without getting stuck.



European Honey Bee: Honey bees are covered with branched hairs. As they travel from flower to flower collecting pollen grains for food for their hive, some of the pollen gets caught in their hairs. When honey bees visit a flower, some of the pollen covering their body is left behind and helps turn flowers into fruits (pollination).

Turkey Vulture: While most of a turkey vulture is covered with feathers, its red head is almost featherless. The reason for this may be so that when this scavenger is eating a decaying animal, it does not soil head feathers when it reaches into the rotting carcass to feed. The lack of feathers on its head may also help it stay cool in the summer, as heat from its body can escape more easily if it's not trapped by feathers.



Gray Treefrog: Gray treefrogs have the ability to change the color of their skin. They can be gray, green or brown, depending on the temperature, amount of light and their surroundings. Gray treefrogs tend to become darker when it is cold or dark, and lighter when it is hot and sunny. Their mottled skin blends in with bark, making it very hard to find them when they are on a branch.

Skins and Animal Classes

Animals with backbones are divided into five different groups, or classes: fish, birds, reptiles, mammals and amphibians. One of the several ways that scientists sort animals into these classes is by their skin covering!

- Mammals have fur (hair) at some point in their lives.
- Fish have moist scales.
- Birds are the only animals that have feathers.
- Amphibians have smooth, wet skin.
- Reptiles have dry scales.

Looking at their skin coverings, can you identify to which animal class these animals belong?



bear



owl



frog



snake



human



fish

Answers: Mammals: bear, human; Fish: fish; Bird: owl; Amphibian: frog; Reptile: snake