

Five Vertebrate Groups

	Fish	Amphibian	Reptiles	Birds	Mammals
Skin coverings	The body of the fish is covered in scales and has fins attached to help it move through the water.	The skin of amphibians is very thin and must always be kept wet.	The body of a reptile is covered in hard scales. Reptiles live on land, although many of them swim well and may feed in water, such as some snakes and lizards.	Birds have bodies covered with feathers. They do not have teeth but use their beaks to eat their food. Their bones are hollow and light. Their front limbs are adapted as wings, although not all birds fly. Examples of birds are the stork, the eagle and the penguin.	All mammals have a body covering of either hair or fur.
Respiratory system	Fish breathe using gills which take oxygen out of the water.	Amphibians breathe through their skin. They do have lungs, but their lungs are small and are not used very much.	They breathe using lungs.	Birds breathe using lungs. A type of breathing is called a double breath	They breathe using lungs.
Reproductive system	When male and female fish mate, the eggs often meet the sperm in the water. This is called external fertilization .	Fertilization of the eggs is external, taking place in the water. The eggs are covered with jelly to protect them. The larvae, called tadpoles, are aquatic. They slowly change (metamorphose) into the adult amphibian	When male and female mate fertilization is internal. The female lays soft-shelled eggs which are often buried in sand or in the earth to protect	Fertilization is internal and the females lay eggs with hard shells, usually in a nest. Most birds incubate their eggs until the eggs hatch.	Fertilization is internal and the females feed their young with milk from their mammary glands. Most mammals are viviparous. This means that the offspring are kept inside the female's body and feed through a

		which lives on land but always near water.	them while the young develop inside.		placenta.
Examples	Examples of fish are the herring, which lives in the sea, and the pike which is a freshwater fish.	Examples of amphibians are the frog and the newt.	Examples of reptiles are crocodiles, snakes and lizards.	Examples of birds are the stork, the eagle and the penguin.	The largest mammal is the blue whale. The smallest mammal is called the bumble bee bat