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# Reptiles Honor



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### Leatherback Turtle Cont.

Adults are prone to long-distance bouts of migration. Migration in leatherback turtles occurs between the cold waters in which mature leatherbacks cruise in to feed on the



abundant masses of jellyfish that occur in those waters, to the tropical and subtropical beaches in the regions where they were hatched from. In the Atlantic, individual females tagged in French Guiana off the coast of South America have been recaptured on the other side of the ocean in Morocco and Spain.

Mating between leatherback turtles take place at sea. Leatherback males never leave the water once they enter it unlike females which crawl onto land to nest.

While the other species of sea turtles almost-always return to the same beaches they hatched from, female leatherback turtles have been found to be capable of switching to another beach within the same general region of their "home" beach. Chosen nesting beaches are comprised of soft sand since their shells and plastrons (the turtle's underside) are softer and easily damaged by hard rocks. Nesting beaches also have shallower approach angles from the sea. This is a source of vulnerability for the turtles because such beaches are easily eroded. Females excavate a nest above the high-tide line with their flippers. One female may lay as many as nine clutches in one breeding season. About nine days pass between nesting events. The average clutch size of this particular species is around 110 eggs per nest, 85% of which are viable. The female carefully back-fills the nest after, disguising it from predators with a scattering of sand.

The eggs hatch in about sixty to seventy days. After nightfall, the hatchlings dig their way to the surface and make their way to the sea.



1. What characteristics must an animal have to be classed as a reptile?

Reptiles are **cold blooded** animals. They are **thick-skinned**. Most have **scales** and reproduce by **egg-laying**, but several give birth to live young. The **lack of a larval stage** distinguishes reptiles from amphibians.

2. Fill in the five venomous reptiles of the United States of America and note the location of their fangs and geographical distribution.

Reptile	Distribution	Location of Fangs
<b>Copperhead</b>	Massachusetts south to Florida west to Texas north to Iowa	Upper jaw, front of mouth
<b>Coral Snake</b>	Southern and eastern United States	Upper jaw, front of mouth
<b>Cottonmouth</b>	Eastern US from Virginia, south through the Florida peninsula and west to Arkansas, southeastern Kansas, eastern and southern Oklahoma, and eastern and central Texas.	Upper jaw, front of mouth
<b>Gila Monster</b>	Southwest US, Northern Mexico	Lower jaw
<b>Rattlesnake</b>	Several species, some ranging from southern Canada, others to South America	Upper jaw

### Leopard Gecko

Leopard Geckos become sexually mature at around 10-14 months of age. The Leopard Gecko's gender can be determined once the animal reaches an adult length of 5+".



Leopard Geckos breed from March through September with some variation. Thirty days later, the female will lay one or two eggs with a leathery shell. Clutches of two eggs will then be laid every two weeks to monthly throughout the rest of the mating season varying from each gecko according to age, with older females gradually laying fewer eggs with each year. The eggs will need to be incubated.

Like many other egg-laying reptiles the sex of Leopard geckos are determined by incubation temperature. Eggs incubated at 79 F will result in a majority of female neonates, where as eggs incubated at 85 - 87 F will result in a more even sex ratio and eggs incubated at 89 - 90 F in the first four weeks will result in more males. Females hatched from these eggs are generally more aggressive than other females, and they tend to reach sexual maturity later if at all. An incubation temperature lower than 77 F or higher than 97 F will cause deformities and usually death of the neonates incubated at these temperatures.

The eggs hatch 6-12 weeks after being laid depending on temperature. The gecko breaks the surface of the egg and pushes its head out, remaining in this position from 2 to 4 hours adapting to lung breathing and obtaining oxygen from the egg membranes as well as absorbing yolk from inside the egg.

7. Listen as your instructor tells the life history of one type of lizard, snake, & turtle. Compare lizards, snakes, turtles, and crocodiles.

Leopard Gecko



Garter snake



Leatherback Turtle



Reptile	Eye lids	Ears	Teeth	Heart	Lungs	Limbs	Tails	Scales
<b>Lizards</b>	movable eyelids	external	sharp, tricuspid	3 chambers	2 full lungs	4 legs	Can break off	do not grow, but
<b>Snakes</b>	transparent eyelids, permanently closed	internal	grooved or hollow	3 chambers	left lung smaller or absent	none	does not detach	do not grow, but sheds
<b>Turtles</b>	have eyelids	external	no teeth, have	3 chambers	2 full lungs	4 legs	tucks into shell	grow some form shell
<b>Crocodiles</b>	one transparent, one opaque	have "earlids"	sharp, designed to tear	4 chambers	2 full lungs	4 legs	powerful	grow

4. Tell what to do if you are bitten by a venomous snake.

Identify the snake or take a Photograph

Keep bitten area comfortable

Do not feed or medicate the victim

Position the bite below the heart level

take off anything that may restrict swelling

Avoid any more bites

Keep everyone calm

Call for help (9-1-1)

Keep the victim still

Do not incise the bite

5. Tell what to do if you are bitten by a non-venomous snake.

Treatment of a non-venomous snakebite is essentially the same as the treatment for other types of puncture wounds. Clean the wound, cover it with a sterile bandage, and seek medical attention.

6. Locate two Bible stories in which a reptile(s) played an important part. What is the Bible Reference and Title of the Stories?

- Eve tempted by the serpent in the garden of Eden (Genesis 3)
- Moses and Aaron's staffs becoming snakes (Exodus 4 & 7)
- People who were bit by snakes could look at bronze snake on pole to live (Numbers 21)
- Paul was bitten by a viper, which he shook off into the fire. The people thought he was a god since he didn't die. (Acts 28)

3. Discover 20 different reptiles at the Zoo. Place a check in the box for any that can be found in your State or Conference.

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