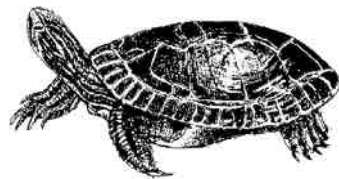


Aquatic Adaptations

When animals live in the water, they must have special adaptations to help them survive in an aquatic habitat. The more time an animal spends in the water, the more adaptations the animal will have for an aquatic life. Below are examples of some of these adaptations:

1. Streamlined body reduces friction when the animal moves through the water.
2. Smooth, almost furless body helps aquatic mammals move through the water with little friction.
3. Dense fur helps streamline the bodies of some aquatic mammals and keeps them warm.
4. Dense waterproof feathers keep cold water away from bird's skin and prevent wetting of the feathers.
5. Webbed feet, formed from thin skin between the toes, work like paddles.
6. Long legs and necks keep the bodies of wading birds out of the water and are thin, light, and easy to move, and the long neck helps the birds to reach the water, or below it, for food.
7. Strainers in the mouth filter food particles from the water.
8. Flippers provide a large surface for pushing against water and act like paddles.
9. Eyes positioned on top of the head allow animals to hide almost fully submerged in water and still detect predators or prey above the water.
10. Nostrils positioned near the top of the head allow animals to come to the surface to breathe while only a small part of the body can be seen.
11. Nostrils close when the animal goes under the water.
12. Blubber, a thick layer of fat or oil stored between the skin and muscles of the body, provides insulation.
13. Transparent eyelids cover the eyes of animals swimming underwater.
14. Flattened tails serve as paddles.

Print this page and take it to the zoo with you. Observe the river otter and one of the turtles. On the line below each animal picture, write the numbers of the adaptations that animal uses.



Name another animal at the zoo that has an aquatic adaptation and the number of its adaptation.
