

Strange but True: Animals



There are many weird and wonderful creatures on planet Earth. Read on to find out some unusual and interesting facts about members of the animal kingdom.

Animal Criminals?



In 1975, police officers in London began to collect fingerprints from chimpanzees and orangutans at a local zoo. When they looked at them closely, it became clear that these members of the animal kingdom are the same as humans in one special way. Police officers were surprised to see that

the fingerprints of the chimpanzees and orangutans were very similar to human fingerprints!

Chimpanzees, orangutans and even koalas all have ridged patterns of loops, whorls and arches in their fingerprints. These are the same as those found in human fingerprints. When studied under a microscope, investigators in Australia could not tell the difference between the prints left by humans and those made by koalas!

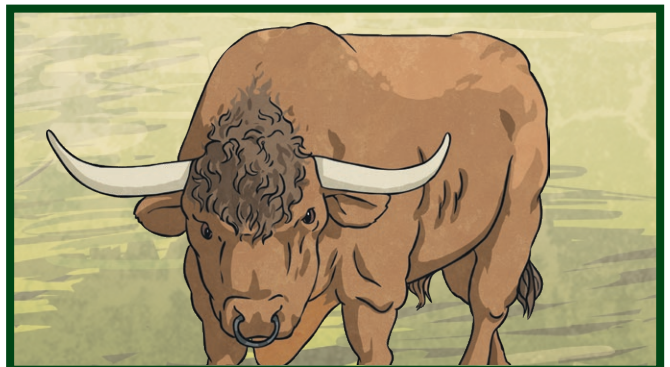
Fact or Fiction? Elephants are the only animal that can't jump.

This is a myth. In fact, there are many animals that cannot jump, such as sloths, hippos and rhinos.



Fact or Fiction? Bulls charge when they see the colour red.

This is a myth. Bulls do not hate the colour red. In fact, they cannot see the colour red because cattle are colour-blind. Bulls only become interested in items and charge at them when the items are moving around. It does not matter what colour those items are.



Slippery Suspects



Did you know that snails have thousands of teeth? Snails munch on leaves and shrubs using rows of microscopic teeth that are on their tongue. This toothy tongue is called a radula. In fact, a single garden snail can have up to 14,000 teeth!

Another way that snails experience the world around them is by using four tentacles! Most snails have two upper and two lower tentacles. They use their two upper tentacles to see with and their two lower tentacles for smelling their environment. Impressively, a snail can move all four of its tentacles separately. This means that it can be looking at you while it is smelling your friend!

Fact or Fiction? Goldfish can only remember things for three seconds.

This is a myth. Studies have shown that your goldfish can remember things for far longer than you might think. This could even be for at least six months! Scientists believe that goldfish are more intelligent than many people think.



Fact or Fiction? Frogs can't vomit.

This is true. If a frog needs to remove something from its stomach, it pushes its stomach out of its mouth. Then, the food either falls out or is wiped out by the frog using its feet!

Questions

1. **This is a myth.**

How else could the author have written this sentence? Tick one.

- This is true.
- This is false.
- We are unsure.
- I do not know.

2. How many lower tentacles do most snails have? Tick one.

- one
- two
- three
- four

3. Number the animals from 1-5 to show the order in which they first appear in the text.

The first one has been done for you.

- elephants
- goldfish
- 1 chimpanzees
- snails
- frogs

4. Draw **four** lines and complete each sentence.

In 1975, police officers...	similar to human fingerprints.
The fingerprints of chimpanzees were...	have ridged patterns in their fingerprints.
Chimpanzees, orangutans and koalas...	began to collect fingerprints.
When studied under a microscope,...	Australian detectives could not tell human and koala prints apart.

5. Look at the section called **Slippery Suspects**.

Find and copy one word which means 'very small'.

6. Look at the section called **Animal Criminals?**

Find and copy a phrase from this section that shows that the police officers did not expect to make such a discovery.

7. Summarise what you have learnt about bulls using 15 words or fewer.

8. Which fact were you most surprised to learn? Explain your answer.

Answers

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- 4** goldfish
- 1** chimpanzees
- 3** snails
- 5** frogs

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Find and copy one word which means 'very small'.

microscopic

6. Look at the section called **Animal Criminals?**

Find and copy a phrase from this section that shows that the police officers did not expect to make such a discovery.

(Police officers) were surprised (to see...)

7. Summarise what you have learnt about bulls using 15 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Bulls are colour-blind and they charge towards items when they are moving.

8. Which fact were you most surprised to learn? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I was most surprised to learn that goldfish have a good memory because I have a pet goldfish and I did not know that it was so clever.