

MRB Glossary

June 2021

absorbs: taking in or soaking up

acorns: the nuts of an oak tree

autumn: the season that comes after summer and before winter, sometimes called fall for the falling leaves during this season

African elephant: the largest land animal on Earth, native to Africa, with a long trunk, five toes, and enormous flapping ears

algae: a type of water plant that has no roots, stems, or leaves

ant: a small insect that lives in large groups called colonies

aquarium: a building that keeps collections of fish, water animals, and water plants

arms: the eight limbs of the octopus that are covered with suckers

Asian elephant: elephants, native to India, that are not as big as the African elephant and have smaller ears

balance: to put or keep in a steady position

bald eagle: a large, brown North American bird whose head feathers turn white around age five

beach: an area of sand or stones beside a large body of water

beak: the hard covering on the jaws of some animals used for catching and eating food

beaks: the hard coverings on the jaws of some animals used for catching and eating food

bear: a medium to large animal with heavy fur, long claws, and a very short tail; types include polar bears, black bears, and brown bears

bears: medium to large animals with heavy fur, long claws, and very short tails; types include black bears, brown bears, and polar bears

bell: the hollow, cup-shaped body of a sea jelly

beluga: a large, white, toothed whale

black rhinoceros: a two-horned rhinoceros, gray in color and native to Africa, different from other rhinoceroses because it has a finger-like upper lip that allows it to eat from trees and bushes

black-capped chickadee: a small North American bird with a black cap on its head, white cheeks, and a black throat

blink: to close and quickly open the eyes

bloom: when a large group of jellies suddenly appears together

blowhole: a hole on the top of the head through which whales breathe

blubber: a thick layer of fat below the skin of whales

botanist: a person who studies plants

breathe: to move air into and out of the lungs

breathes: taking air into the lungs then letting it out

bright: a bold, vivid color

bud: a small bump on a plant that will grow into a leaf or flower

bumblebee: a large, hairy bee that makes a loud buzzing sound when it flies

butterfly: an insect with four large, often colorful wings

calf: a baby elephant

calf: a baby giraffe

calf: the name of the baby animal of some mammals, including whales

carbon dioxide: a colorless gas in the air that green plants use to make their food

cardinal: a red North American songbird with a pointed crest on its head

cat: a furry animal that has a tail and sharp claws, and is a skilled hunter; a popular family pet

caterpillar: the wormlike baby of a butterfly or moth

catnap: a short, light sleep

chipmunk: a small ground squirrel with stripes on its face and back

chipmunk: a small ground squirrel with cheek pouches and striped fur, that lives in underground burrows

chrysalis: the hard-shelled case that encloses a developing butterfly

claws: strong, sharp, curved nails on the foot of an animal

cub: a baby bear

cub: a baby cheetah

cub: a baby lion

curved: a shape with a long, smooth bend

deciduous: a tree or shrub that loses its leaves in autumn every year

downy woodpecker: a small North American woodpecker with black and white feathers

dragonfly: an insect with two long, thin pairs of outstretched wings

egg: a round or oval object containing a developing insect or animal

entomologist: a person who studies insects

evergreen: a tree or shrub that is always green because it does not lose its leaves in autumn

eye: the part of the body through which people and animals see

eyelashes: the short, curved hairs on the eyelid that are sensitive to touch and protect the eye from debris

eyesight: the ability to see

feathers: the lightweight growths that cover the bodies of birds

fin: a thin part that sticks out from the body of a fish used for swimming and balancing

fins: the thin parts that stick out from the body of a fish used for swimming and balancing

fish: a cold-blooded animal that lives in water and has gills, a tail, fins, and sometimes scales

flexible: being able to bend

flippers: broad, flat body parts that some sea animals use for moving and swimming

fly: a type of flying insect with two wings

footpads: the thick, spongy skin on the bottom of the toes and feet of most furry animals

fur: hair covering an animal's body

geologist: a person who studies rocks and the earth

giant: being of great size

gills: the slits on the sides of a fish used for breathing

glare: a bright, reflected light

grasshopper: a chirping insect that has long hind legs that it uses for jumping

gray: a color that is a mixture of black and white

grizzly bear: a large, fearsome, and powerful brown bear that lives in northern regions of North America

hatch: to emerge or break out of an egg

hear: to detect sounds with the ear

hollow: an empty space inside something

honeybee: a bee that makes honey from flower nectar

horns: the plural of horn; a hard, pointed body part that grows on the head of some animals

insect: a small animal with three body parts and six legs

insulate: to cover in order to protect from cold, heat, sound, or electricity

jaw: the upper and lower bony parts of the mouth

jellies: soft, transparent, bell-shaped sea creatures with stinging tentacles, also called sea jellies

larva: the wormlike stage of an insect after hatching from an egg

legs: the limbs on which animals stand and walk

lettuce: a plant with large leaves that are often eaten raw

lioness: a female lion

manatee: a large mammal with flippers and a strong tail that lives in warm waters and eats plants

mane: long and heavy hair growing on the neck and head of some mammals

mantle: something that covers

mash: to soften by crushing

metamorphosis: the change in form and habit of an animal, such as the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly

milkweed: a wild plant found in fields that secretes a milky white liquid

moray eel: a type of eel; a long, colorful fish with sharp teeth that lives in warm waters

mouse: a small, furry animal with a long, thin tail

nails: the hard parts at the end of the flipper, like fingernails or toenails

necks: more than one neck; the part of the body that connects the head to the rest of the body

newt: a small, brightly colored salamander that lives in or around water

nocturnal: to be active at night

ocean: a large body of salt water

octopus: a sea creature that has a soft body and eight arms

observe: to see, watch, or notice

omnivores: animals that eat both plants and animals

oxygen: the most common element on earth, making up most of the air, needed by all plants and animals

padding: being covered by a layer of soft cushioning, such as the paws of a furry animal

pattern: a set of markings that repeats

paw: the foot of a furry animal, with pads and claws

paws: the feet of a furry animal, with pads and claws

photosynthesis: the process by which green plants use sunlight and carbon dioxide to make food and oxygen

poison: a substance that can cause injury, illness, or death when it comes in contact with a living creature

polar bear: a large white bear that lives near the North Pole

prey: an animal that is hunted and caught by another animal for food

pride: a group of lions

pupa: in insects, the stage of life between being a larva and being an adult

pups: the name for baby sharks

rabbit: a small animal with soft fur, long ears and a short tail, that lives in a hole in the ground

raccoon: a grey-brown furry animal with black masklike markings around the eyes and a bushy ringed tail

red-bellied woodpecker: a North American woodpecker with black and white stripes and a red cap on its head

relaxing: the act of becoming less tense

reptile: a cold-blooded animal that has a backbone, is covered with scaly skin or horny plates, and breathes with lungs

rescued: saved from additional harm

rhinoceros: any one of the five types of very large, heavy, thick-skinned, plant-eating, gray or brown animals, that have one or two horns and live in Africa or Asia

roar: a long, deep sound made by a lion

robin: a medium-sized North American songbird with an orange breast and a gray head and tail

root: the part of a hair that attaches to the skin

salamander: a small animal with smooth skin, four short legs, and a long tail that lives in or near water

scientist: a person who studies nature in order to understand how the world works

sea turtle: a large turtle that lives in the ocean

seahorse: a small fish that swims upright and has a head that looks like a horse

sensitive: quick to respond to influences such as sunlight, heat, and other conditions

shallow: in water, an area that is not very deep

shark: a large fish that has sharp teeth, a pointed fin on its back, and gills

shell: a hard, rigid covering

shrimp: small shellfish with long tails and many legs

shy: quiet and easily frightened

signal: an action that gives information

skin: the outer covering of an animal

smack: a group of jellies, sometimes called a swarm

smell: to detect odors with the nose

snout: the nose, mouth, and jaws on the front part of an animal's head

spine: the central skeletal support of an animal

sponges: types of sea animals with porous bodies

squirrel: a bushy-tailed animal that is a good climber and lives in trees

steer: to guide the direction in which one moves

stilts: thin posts that hold something above the surface of land or water

stingers: the part of an animal that goes through or touches skin and leaves behind poison

striped: having a pattern of repeated lines or bands

stripes: a pattern of repeated lines or bands

suckers: round suction cups on the limbs of an octopus

sunburned: a painful reddening burn on the skin caused by exposure to too much sunshine

tail: a thin, movable body part at the rear of an animal

tail: the part at the rear end of an animal's body that sticks out

teeth: the hard, bony structures in the mouth that are used for biting and chewing

tentacles: long, thin parts on some sea animals that are used for touch, movement, or protection

toad: a brown, froglike animal with dry, bumpy skin, that spends most of its time on land rather than in water

tongue: a soft, fleshy, muscular body part in the mouth of an animal that is used for licking, tasting, and swallowing

trunk: an elephant's long, strong, moveable nose that it uses to breathe and lift things

tusk: one of two long, pointed teeth that stick out to the sides of an elephant's closed mouth

unique: being unlike anything else

Velcro: popular brand of hook-and-loop binding, inspired by the prickly burrs found in woods that stick to clothing and fur

waddle: to walk with short steps while swaying from side to side

waddles: walks with short steps, while swaying from side to side

webbed: describes fingers or toes that are connected by a thin fold of skin

weight: the heaviness of something

whale: a very large mammal that breathes air and lives in the ocean

whiskers: long, stiff hairs growing on the face of an animal

whiskers: long, stiff hairs that grow near the mouth of some animals

wildflower: a flower from a plant growing in fields or forests that was not planted on purpose

wing: the feathered body part of a bird, used for flying and gliding

wings: the feathered body parts of birds used for flying, gliding, or swimming

woolly bear: a hairy, brown and black caterpillar