

Did you know?

- Predators are creatures that catch and kill other animals for food. An animal caught, killed and eaten by a predator is called its prey.
- Predators are found on every continent and environment in the world: hot deserts, icy polar wastes, rainforests, jungles, mountain tops, valleys, forests, oceans and lakes.
- The biggest living predator is the blue whale. It measures over 30 metres in length!
- The fossilised stomach contents of a *Baryonyx* dinosaur contained fish scales, and the fossilised poo of a *Tyrannosaurus rex* revealed the crunched up bones of a *Triceratops*!
- Some predators outrun their prey in long chases, or like African wild dogs, tirelessly run their prey down.
- Many predators hunt alone, but some, such as army ants, Harris hawks, lions and dolphins, ambush and hunt in groups.
- Most predators catch and kill their prey by actively hunting, but this uses up lots of energy, so some lie in wait and ambush their prey. This tactic is commonly used by cold-blooded, predatory animals such as reptiles, amphibians and arachnids. These predators are very patient!
- Some predators construct elaborate traps or lures to catch prey. Lures are usually body parts of the predator which mimic attractive and tempting food for the prey to eat!
- The alligator snapping turtle, trapdoor spider, green heron, Mexican moccasin snake and Australian garden orb weaver spider all use sneaky traps and lures!
- Jellyfish, snakes and wasps have special mechanisms that stun or poison their victims.
- The Venus flytrap, sundew plant, pitcher plant and bladderwort plant catch flies and insects for their prey. Yum!
- Some tropical pitcher plants are even large enough to catch small lizards and mammals such as rats!
- Even fungi can be predatory, infecting their prey and slowly growing inside them. Fungi can attack flies, grasshoppers, locusts and moth pupae.
- Microscopic predators are too small for us to see, but there are more microscopic predators in the world than visible ones... scary!
- Some predators eat only the food that they have killed themselves, while others just scavenge on animal carcasses. Vultures are scavengers (better keep away from them!)