

学校的理想装备

电子图书·学校专集

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《为什么——动物篇》



Questions About Animals

1 What Are Monkeys Always Looking For in Their Hair?

Visiting a zoo, we always see monkeys gather together and look for something to eat in each other's hair. What they find there are grains of salt. Why do monkeys have grains of salt on their body? It is because monkeys perspire, too, and after the sweat evaporates grains of salt remain in their hair. Since salt is an important nutrient for them and their usual food provides them with little salt, they always look for salt in each other's hair when they have leisure time. Grooming each other is also one of the ways monkeys show their intimacy.

2. Why Do Monkeys Eat So Fast?

in zoos, you often see monkeys stuffing their mouth with food. They seem to swallow it without chewing. But actually, what they throw into their mouths just stays in their mouths.

Monkeys have two cheek pouches like two pockets. They can store food. When there is enough food in its mouth, it will find a safe place and pull out what it has stored. Then, the monkey will enjoy more careful eating.

3. What Is the Smallest Monkey?

The smallest monkeys on earth are the marmosets living in South America's Ecuador, northern Peru, and western Brazil. Their body measures only 15 centimeters long, their tail 12 centimetres, and they weigh about 48 to 79 grams.

A small, lower species of monkeys, marmosets fall into more than twenty varieties. All of them are animated, mild and domesticable. They feed on insects such as moths, flies and spiders, and also eat fruits. They are also named "Pocket Monkeys," for domesticated marmosets can be put into pockets or hand cages.

4. Why Do Tigers Sleep During Daytime?

Tigers are fierce animals. They live in forests and deep valleys. In forests, small animals seldom move about during the daytime, but often come out at night. So, to catch these small animals, tigers also have to come out at night. It has become their habit to move about at night and sleep during the day. This habit is kept even after they are sent to the zoo.

5. What Is the Largest Monkey?

The largest monkeys on earth are the baboons living in Africa and the Arab countries. Baboons from West Africa weigh as much as 54 kilograms. Some are said as heavy as 59 kilograms and as tall as 90 centimetres. Baboons live in groups of twenty to sixty, and the largest group has more than one hundred members.

All the group members sleep together in forests during the night and look for food together at daytime. Every group has a "king". @ng their activities, the king's order must be obeyed by all the group members. Grown-up male baboons must advance in the front and at the end of the group to protect the whole group's safety.

6. Why Do Wolves' Eyes Shine at Night?

Wolves like to move about at night. Their shining eyes search in the darkness for live animals. But their eyes do not shine because they can give out light. At the bottom of their eyes, there are many, many reflective crystalline grains. In darkness, these small crystalline grains can concentrate light. So, people think wolves' eyes can give out light. Like wolves, cats' and tigers' eyes shine at night, too.

7. What Can Elephants Do with Their Trunks?

An elephant's long trunk has many uses. It can breathe, smell and suck up water to give the elephant a wash. The elephants can also pull up grasses and roll them up to their mouths. When walking, the trunk can explore the way like a stick. In danger, it serves as a weapon, rolling the enemy up and throwing him off hard. With great strength, it can carry logs. Besides doing heavy manual work, an elephant's trunk can do skilled work,

too. It has a single fingerlike projection on its upper tip. This projection is so sensitive and flexible that even a needle can be picked up from the ground. Sometimes, animal keepers train elephants to play the mouth organ, beat the drum and give performances with their long trunk.

8. Do All Elephants Have Ivory Tusks?

Elephants have long and flexible trunks. On both sides of the trunk are two long and pointed ivory tusks. They are used as weapons to defend themselves and as tools to dig for food. But not all elephants have such ivory tusks. Big-eared African elephants, both males and females, have tusks. But among small-eared Asian elephants, such as elephants from Yunnan Province of China, only males have ivory tusks; females don't have them.

9. What Animal Runs the Fastest?

The cheetah is the fastest animal in the world. It can cover 110 kilometres per hour in short spurts. Cheetahs live in Africa's open flatlands and in Southwest Asia's mountainous area!,. Very much like leopards, cheetahs have light yellow fur with small black But they are smaller than leopards in size and longer in the legs and tall.

Swift and easily tamed, trained in India to hell, in hunting. Unlike ferocious beasts such as lions, tigers and leopards, cheetahs, catch prey by outrunning it instead of hiding, somewhere and making a sudden attack on their prey.

10. Why Can Camels Go Without Water?

Some people say camels are not afraid of thirst because there is a big water sac within their body. But this is not true. Actually, it is because camels have a special ability to save water. They have a special nostril in which there are many thin, winding passages. Usually, these passages are wet by the fluid produced by the body. As soon as the body is short of water, all these passages stop secreting fluid and become hard on the surface. This surface can absorb water pro-

duced by the lung. In this way, water is kept within the body. When breathing, the lung uses the water just absorbed by the hard nostril, making full and repeated use of the water within the body. This is why camels are not afraid of thirst. Because of this special ability, camels can live well without drinking water for several consecutive days. So, they are regarded as the transportation tools of the deserts.

11. What's the Use of Squirrels' Long Tails?

Squirrels have long, plumelike tails. These tails are not only beautiful, but also have many uses.

Agile and nimble, squirrels like to jump from high trees. When falling from trees, this plumelike tail will slow the squirrel's descent and help it land steadily. When running into wild beasts, a squirrel will jump from tree to tree. Its tail will straighten up to control the direction, like the rudder of a boat and help it cover a long distance at one jump. When night falls, the tail is spread over its body and head to give it a safe and comfortable sleep. It thus becomes, a cozy blanket.

12. Why Do White Rabbits Have Red Eyes?

Rabbits have different hair colours: white, black, brown, gray, and so on. Have you ever noticed that the colour of their hair and their eyes is always the same? This is because rabbits of different colours have different pigments within their bodies. For example, a gray-haired rabbit has gray pigment, so his hair and eyes are all gray.

But white rabbits are an exception. Though they have white hair, their eyes are red. Why? It turns out that there is no pigment in white rabbits' body, so they have white hair and white eyeballs. But the blood in their eyes is red, so their eyes become red, too.

13. Why Are Cat's Whiskers So Long?

If cats had no "whiskers", they would not be able to get into caves and catch mice. The length of a cat's whiskers is just the breadth of its body. When cats pursue mice in darkness, they often run about under tables and cupboards, and sometimes have to crawl into caves and holes. If their whiskers run against the edge of the passage or the cave, they know the cave or passage is too narrow to get through. If their whiskers touch nothing, they know it is wide enough for it to enter. Thus, their whiskers, serve as their ruler.

14. Why Can Cat's Pupils Change in Size?

Cat's pupils change three times a day to adapt to the changes of light. At noon, when the light is strongest, the pupils become a thin line. In the morning, when it is moderately light, the pupil is bigger, like a jujube-pit. At night, in complete darkness, the pupil becomes large and round and can see anything. Because of their special eyes, cats can catch mice in darkness.

15. Why Do Cats Always Lick Their Hairs?

After enjoying the sunshine, cats always lie on the ground and lick their hair. Then their hair becomes clean and smooth. Some people think cats lick their hair to give themselves a bath. But this is wrong. They are not having a bath, but are eating a -nutrient. Something hidden in their hair becomes Vitamin D after absorbing sunshine. So, cats are actually eating Vitamin D. If they lack Vitamin D, cats develop osteomalacia and appear listless all day long.

16. Why Don't Cats Make Noise When Walking?

At night when cats run around in the room, chasing after mice, people cannot hear any footfalls. either can any noise be heard when they jump from heights. Why don't cats make loud footsteps? It is because cats' claws are protected by a thick and soft skin sheath. The sharp, curved claws can be stretched and retracted. When catching mice, cats stretch their claws. But when walking or at rest, they withdraw them. Thus they make no noise, and their claws will not be worn out.

17. Why Don't Cats Ever Hurt Themselves When jumping from Heights?

While a cat jumps from a height, his eyes will observe the ground and tell what he sees to his brain through his nerves. At the same time, his feet are ready for landing. His long tail will help his balance and ensure he lands on his feet. Besides, his toes are protected by a thick and soft skin sheath. This skin sheath will reduce vibration. That is why cats never get hurt when jumping off heights.

18. How Can Kittens from the Same Litter Be Different Colours?

A black-haired mother cat gives birth to a litter of kittens, Some babies are black all over, just like their mother. But others are yellow-haired, and still others are variegate

It turns out that though their mother is black-haired, their father is yellow. So, some of them are like their mother and some are like their father. Then, why are still other kittens neither black nor yellow, but variegated? It is because they have inherited their grandparents' features, So a cat mother's babies may have various colours of hair.

19. What Is the Function of a Dog's Tail?

As other animals do, dogs also use their tails to keep their balance. Besides, they may express their various emotions by different tail gestures. When feeling proud and complacent, they will hold up their tails. When the tails are motionless, they must be uneasy. If the tails are tucked between the legs, they must be frightened. They wag their tails to show their friendliness. Seeing their master--,, they shake their heads and wag their tails to show their intimacy.

20. Do Dogs Always Press One of Their Ears Against the Ground While Sleeping?

Dogs have an acute sense of smell, and their ears also sharp. Police dogs are especially so. They always prick up their ears to gather noise in all directions. Even while sleeping, they maintain sharp vigilance and can hear the softest footsteps. How can they do this? It is because dogs have an extraordinary habit: while sleeping, they always press one of their ears against the ground. Since the ground conducts sound much faster than the air does, dogs can hear sound far away even during sleep.

21. Why Do Dogs Always Stick Their Tongues Out When Panting?

In summer, dogs are always seen sitting and panting with their tongues out. This phenomenon has the same purpose as a human being's perspiration.

Within the human body there are many sweat glands that find their way out on the skin. But dogs don't have sweat glands on their skin. Instead, their sweat glands are on their tongues and toes. When the day is hot, sweat is excreted through these sweat glands. As the sweat evaporates, body heat is taken away. So, we feel somewhat cooler.

But dogs don't have sweat glands within their bodies. But instead, their sweat glands are on their tongues and toes. So, in hot summer weather, dogs stick their tongues out and breathe heavily in order to expel their body heat. Thus, they can feel cooler and much more comfortable.

22. How Can Dogs Find Their Way Home?

No matter how far away a dog escorts his master out, he can always come home alone and never loses his way. Do you know why?

Dogs were born with this special ability. When they go out, they keep pissing a little on the way so as to mark their way home. Also, dogs have very good noses: no matter how long a distance they have covered, or whether it is in daytime or at night, they never fail to smell out their own urine and recognize their way home accordingly.

23. How Do Horses Sleep?

Horses also need sleep. But unlike human beings, they don't have to sleep at night nor for the whole night. Without disturbance, they can have their sleep at any time, at any place, and in any posture. They can have a sound sleep while standing, crouching or lying down. Usually, a horse sleeps eight or nine times per -day, for a total of six hours. But during the two hours before daybreak they sleep most soundly. During sleep, horses still can feel. If a fly lands on their bodies, they will swing their ears and shake their ears and hair to frighten it away. As soon as their master calls them, they will immediately wake up. Horses never get up late

24. Why Do Cattle Keep Chewing Long After Eating Grass?

Cattle eat grass very quickly, only chewing a few times before swallowing. Later, when they rest, they will regurgitate the grass and chew it carefully. This is because cattle have a specially complex stomach; they have four stomachs: a rumen (or paunch), a reticulum, an omasum, and an abomasum. The rumen is like a temporary storehouse to store the swallowed grass. Then the reticulum ferment and soften the grass and make it into balls. When the cattle are at rest, these grass balls will be coughed up to be chewed thoroughly and then into the omasum and abomasum to be digested.

25. Why Do Birds Withdraw Their Feet While Flying?

Birds fly very fast. If they kept their feet outstretched while flying, they would expand their body contact with air, thus increasing air resistance and reducing their speed. So before starting to fly, they naturally withdraw their feet closely to their belly.

Some birds, such as the egret and the red-crowned crane, have such long legs that they cannot be withdrawn to their belly. So, they extend their feet parallel to their bodies so as to lessen air resistance and fly faster.

26. Why Don't Birds Fall Off Branches While Asleep?

When night comes and the forest quiets down, tree branches become birds' little beds. On these thin branches, birds squat and sleep without falling off. How? It is because the birds' feet are very nimble; they grip the branches tightly during sleep. Besides, birds have a good brain that can keep the body well-balanced. So, they can stay on branches steadily.

27. Why Are Birds' Beaks Different?

Watching carefully, you will be amused that birds have various shapes of beaks or bills. A sparrow has a short, pointed beak that can quickly peck from the ground. A duck has a flat and broad bill edged with serrations, and can grip slippery fish. A crossbill's beak is like pincers and can open nuts. A woodpecker's bill is sharp and straight, and can peck through the bark; then its long, hooked tongue can extract destructive insects from inside the tree. A hawk has curved, hook-like beak that can tear its prey to pieces.

Birds have no hands. They have to use their beaks or bills to live. Since they eat different food, they grow different beaks or bills.

28. Are Bats Birds?

Bats can fly. So, some children suppose they are birds. But, in fact, they are flying mammals. Birds multiply by laying eggs, while bats bear live baby bats that grow up on their mother's milk. Birds have feather but bats do not; they only have a thin layer of supple hair, just like other types of mammals do. Birds have wings, while bats have four limbs as other mammals do. Bats' forelimbs have changed, and between the forelimbs and lower legs is a thin layer of wing membranes. It is this layer of wing membranes that enables bats to fly.

29. Why Are Woodpeckers Called "The Doctors of the Forest"?

Flying back and forth in the forest, woodpeckers stop at this tree at one moment and that tree the next. A woodpecker holds the tree trunk tightly with its claws, props itself up with its tail and knocks at the tree trunk with its beak to see whether there are any worms inside the trunk. If the knock doesn't sound right, a wood-pecker will peck a hole into the tree with its long beak, stretch the tip into the hole, dig out the worm with its thin, long, hooked tongue, and eat it. In this way, woodpeckers patrol and knock in the forest day by day, eating injurious worms inside trees. So, woodpeckers are called "the doctors of the forest."

30. Why Can Birds Fly?

Birds can fly because they have special Organs-wings. When birds flap their wings, an ascending air current pushes up their wings, making their bodies fly up. Birds have well-developed breast muscles, they can beat their wings endlessly, and the air holds birds' bodies forward and upward. Thus birds can fly in the sky.

Besides wings, birds' bodies have many other advantageous conditions. They are round in the front and sharp in the rear. When flying, birds have little air resistance. Feathers cover birds' whole bodies, and there are no teeth in birds' mouths. Bones are hollow and bodies are very light. They don't keep excrement and urine in the body, but excrete them at all times. All these provide favourable conditions for bird's flying.

31. Why Do Birds Moults Every Year?

Birds rely on their feathers to fly. After a long time in wind and rains, the feathers are weak and easily broken. Birds can't fly with those broken feathers. Therefore, most birds lose their old feathers and grow new ones every year, but some birds moult twice a year.

Besides, feathers can keep a bird warm, just like clothing keeps people warm. With the change of seasons, some birds moult much like we change clothes, wearing lightweight clothes in the summer, and heavier clothes in the winter. Some birds even change their feather's colors. In winter, the feathers are light, while in summer they become dark. The changes in their colour can also prevent the birds from being attacked. However, birds, unlike people who change their clothes consciously, moult instinctively.

32. Can All Birds Fly?

You probably think that all birds can fly. As a matter of fact, some birds with wings, such as ostriches, can't fly.

Ostrich is the biggest bird on land. it is over two metres tall and sometimes weighs more than 150 kilogrammes. ostrich is W too heavy to fly. Although ostrich can't fly, it can run 60 kilomertes per hour, as fast as a bus.

The fat penguin can't fly either, but it can swim rapidly.

Birds like cassowary and kiwi can't fly either.

33. Is There Any Bird That Shines?

In the forests of Africa, there are orange-coloured birds that shine at night. Local people love the birds and call them glowbirds. Many people raise the birds in cages and carry them as lamps to light their way at night. How can the birds shine? These birds have feathers only on their heads and wings, while other parts of the body grow a layer of orange-coloured hard shell. Inside the shell are luminous cells. At night light comes from the hard shell and shines like a small lamp.

34. Why Don't Carrier Pigeons Ever Lose Their Way?

Many birds are capable of remembering the way they fly, especially those migrating from one place to another, such as wild geese and swallows. As pigeons have a special power of recognizing their way and are easily raised and tamed, they have been trained for delivering letters since ancient times. Why do carrier pigeons never lose their way? Scientists discovered, after many years of research, that pigeons determine their directions not only

according to the location of the sun and stars, but also according to the organs inside their bodies, which, like a compass, can feel the changes of the magnetic field of the earth. After strict training, carrier pigeons learn how to deliver letters for their masters.

3 S. Why Don't Pigeons Settle on Tree Branches? 35. Why Don't Pigeons Settle on Tree Branches?

Many birds like setting up homes on trees, but quite a few birds don't do so. They like settling down in groves, at river and on cliffs. Every bird has its own habit,, and characteristics of living.

Wad Pigeons live in the crevices of rocks and often look for food in groups on the ground. After eating, they fly back to the crevices to rest. Domestic Pigeons are tamed from wild ones. Their master-s make cages for them and feed them with millet, maize and sorghum every day. After eating their fill, they enjoy themselves on the roof and in the sky; when tired, they go back to their cages to rest. Many birds stay on tree bank to look for insects, food or to rest, while pigeons don't have to do so.

36. Why Are Owls Considered Good Birds?

Owl looks very special. It has a big, round head with feathers growing on both sides of the head. When the feathers are pricked up, they look like two ear-s. Two big eyes are inside the feather-s. The owl's sturdy beak looks fierce. It flies soundlessly because of its soft feathers, making people feel owl is a mysterious bird. What is more, owls often utter strange sounds when they come out at night.

Owls are experts on catching votes. An owl can wipe out over 1,000 votes and a great number of injurious insects in one summer Thus owls are considered birds and Of crops.

37. How Can Penguins Tolerate Cold?

Some penguins live in the Antarctic Region, which is covered by snow all the year round. It is extremely cold there. Sometimes the temperature drops to -100°C , but the penguins don't die. How can they survive? A penguin's feathers are fine and dense and wrap its body tightly like a heavy padded coat. The penguin also has a layer of thick fat, which can keep its body warm. Therefore, penguins can live in the cold Antarctic freely and they are not afraid of ice, snow or severe cold.

38. Do Chickens have Ears?

Like cats and dogs that have ears on their heads, chickens also have ears so that they can hear the calls of their master and the hen.

But the ears of chickens don't grow on the sides of the head, but beside the eyes. The chicken ears, with plat earholes, are covered with a layer of thin feathers. If you don't look carefully, you will not find where they are. so some children may think that chickens have no ears at all.

39. Why Can't Chickens Fly, Even Though They Have Wings?

Chickens have wings. But no matter whether they are roosters or hens, they can't fly in the sky. Why is that?

The chickens we see today have evolved from wild ones. Long, long ago, the wild chickens lived in forests. There was a kind of wild chicken with red feathers that looked and sounded like present chickens. They flew in forests and have a free life. Later, because people wanted to eat the eggs and meat of chickens, they caught them and put them in cages. The wild chickens could no longer fly freely in the forests, and their appearance and habits changed slowly. After long years of being raised by people, chickens have become fat, and they don't use their wings as they used to. Gradually, they lost their flying ability, so they don't fly in the sky any more.

40. Why Do Hens Cackle After Laying Eggs?

Hen often cackles after laying an egg, as if telling its master, "I've laid an egg, come and take it quickly." Hearing the cackle, its master will go and take the egg. Actually, the cackle shows that the hen is very happy.

Do you know that it is very difficult for a hen to lay an egg? A hen will be in the hencoop for half an hour or even longer to lay an egg. After laying the egg, the hen feels relaxed at once, and starts to cackle at once. If you give the hen a handful of rice at this time, the hen will peck at the rice and finish it in no time, then rub its beak on the ground with satisfaction.

41. Why Can Ducks Swim?

On the tip of a duck's tail there is a grease gland which can secrete "oil." Duck always smears the oil on its feather-s with its bill, so the feathers don't get wet. Besides, duck floats on the water like a small boat because of its dense, thick and soft feathers. There is also a layer of skin between the toes of the duck, which looks like a small fan and is called a web. Duck paddles the water with its feet, just like a rower uses oars. So, ducks can swim on the water.

42. How Does a Tadpole Become a Frog?

Small tadpoles are children of frogs. A frog lays eggs in the water which turn into tadpoles later. These tadpoles look like fish when they are first hatched. They get bigger day by day and grow two hind legs. Several days later, two forelegs grow and their tails become short. Finally, the tails disappear and the tadpoles change into frogs.

To see this change, you may scoop up two tadpoles from a stream and put them in a glass bottle. You can observe carefully how tadpoles become frogs.

43. How Do Frogs Catch?

Frogs are on catching destructive insects. It can eat such injurious insects as snout moth's sarvas, locusts and mole crickets. A frog has four legs, two short and two long hindlegs, so it can jump high. Frogs often squat on the truck h of grass beside water. When a flying insect passes by, the frog will jump suddenly, open its mouth and extend its tongue, devouring the insect at one go. With its long and wide t frog can catch The end of its tongue on the front of its mouth, and of the tongue goes backward and has branches that have a lot of mucus on the surface. When catching , a frog shoots its tongue outside the mouth and catch the on the sticky surface. Then the frog back its tongue and eats the insects.

44. Where Do Frogs Hide During the Winter?

Frogs are not only on catching injurious but they are also singers. You may hear the croak of frogs throughout the whole summer. But where do frogs hide during the winter?

It is very cold outside in the winter. Frogs hide in warm mud holes to have a long sleep, which is known as hibernation. Frogs don't move or eat in the mud holes; they sleep until the following spring, when the weather becomes warm and the ground has thawed out. Then they creep out of the holes to lay eggs and help farmers catch injurious insects.

45. Why Don't House Lizards Fall Off the Wall?

At night, small house lizards are often seen crawling on the wall to catch mosquitos. Sometimes they even crawl on the ceiling. Why don't they fall off the wall or the?

Small house lizard has very special hooked feet with a sucker. The sucker to be like a magnet that sticks to the wall tightly. That's why ,they don't fall off the wall.

46. Why Can a House Lizard Grow a New Tail After the Old One Breaks Off?

Sometimes, a house lizard will break off its tail and run away from small animals which bully it. The small catch only the tail of the lizard. Why can a house lizard grow a new tail soon after the old one breaks off?

House lizard has a strong capability of regeneration of the tail. Therefore, a new tail can grow several days after the old one breaks off. However, this new tail is a little bit shorter than the original one. Breaking off its tail to save its life is a special ability by house lizard.

47. How Can Snakes Crawl Without Feet?

Snakes have a long spine which is formed by many vertebrae that are linked to each other. There is a rib on each side of every vertebrae. Because every rib connected with the scale on the belly, each pair of ribs can move forward or backward freely. When the spine muscles contract, the ribs drive the scales to move about. The snake uses its scales like the tread of a tractor to crawl forward.

48. Why Do Snakes Always Stick Their Tongues Out?

The snake has a thin, long and branched tongue, which is different from a person's tongue. The snake's tongue can help smell. Because the small nasal organ of the snake is inside the mouth, the snake must stick out its tongue, draw the fragrant and foul smells to the tongue and send it back to a special smell organ made the mouth. So in order to look for food and to judge the environmental conditions, snakes stick out their tongues to scent about.

49. How Can Snakes Swallow Frogs That Are Bigger Than Their Own Heads?

How can a thin snake devour a frog that is thicker than its own body?

This has something to do with the bones of , s head. The mandible of the snake different from that of people. It is loosely connected to the head bone by ligaments. The

lower jaw 'Ls composed of two parts, which are linked by elastic ligaments in the middle and can expand on thh sides. So, snake can open its mouth widely.

Snakes have no sternums. Food can go to the stomach easily.

50. Do All Snakes Lay Eggs?

There are many kinds of snakes in the world. Different snakes have different ways of multiplying.

Most nonpoisonous snakes and a few venomous snakes lay eggs in mud puddles, rock cracks and piles of falling leaves. Snake eggs are smaller and longer than hen eggs, with harder shells. Some days later, small snakes are hatched from the eggs. Venomous snakes like the cobras and nonpoisonous snakes like the boas can all lay eggs. Sometimes, they can lay thirty or even forty eggs at one time. Some the snakes often guard the eggs they have just laid.

Some snakes, such as the pallas pit viper, cant lay eggs. They are ovoviviparous Their newborn babies are covered by ovum memberanes. When the membranes break, the small snakes crawl out ,from them.

51. Why Do Snakes Shed Their Skins?

On its surface, the snake grows a layer of cutin scales, which are called the skin. The snake's cutin scales don't grow. Once every few months, the snake outgrows its skin. In order to grow, the snake must escape from its tight, small and narrow "clothes".

When it is time for snakes to shed their skins, they become very slow in action, and they can't see very clearly.

When the snake sheds the skin, the snake first rubs its mouth against a rough place. When the skin on the mouth becomes loose, the head comes out before the whole skin sheds off the tail.

52. How Large b the Largest Snake?

The anaconda, the largest and longest t m the world, lives. the marshes and rivers of South America. The anaconda often measures 9 metres long. One anaconda killed in Brazil in 1960 was 11 metres long and weighed, 230 kilogrammes. A newborn anaconda may be 73 centimetres length.

The anaconda has a body, white abdomen with small black spots. On its back are two rows of black stripes. The anaconda mainly lives in the water; occasionally, it climbs trees. Its head often emerges from the water, waiting for the food. The anaconda has nocturnal habits and seeks its prey only at night.

53. How Is the Tortoise Born?

Chickens are hatched after the hen has been incubating the eggs for twenty-one days.

The tortoises also lay eggs first. They lay eggs in sand pits and cover them with sand. Unlike the hen's eggs which have one sharp end, the tortoise eggs are round. Tortoises never hatch their eggs. The sun shines over the eggs and makes them warm. Small tortoises crawl from the eggshells after they have developed.

54. Why Do Green Turtles "Shed Tears"?

Green turtles live in the oceans, eating animals and plants which contain a lot of salts and get the bitter, salty seawater all day long. So, green turtles store up a lot of salts in their body. Where do green turtles drain the useless salts?

Behind the green turtle's eye socket grows an organ called the salt gland which can drain the excess salts outside its body. Ordinarily, the stuff like tears shed from its eyes is actually excessive salt the green turtle drains off its body.

55. What Are the Special Skills of Dolphins?

Dolphin is the cleverest animal in the ocean. It has a developed central nerve system and special intelligence. After being trained by tamers, dolphins can play basketball, do high jump and plunge through hoops.

Dolphin can also save people who fall into the sea, and predict the weather. When dolphin jump up and down on the sea's surface far from the coast, an experienced fisherman knows that a sea knows is on its way. Now, scientists are doing research and experiments, letting dolphins help mankind do more things.

56. Why Don't Hippopotami Drown in the River?

Hippopotamus is a kind of mammal. Since they live at the bottom of rivers and lakes in tropical Africa for a long time, hippopotamus get used to the life in water. A large hippopotamus may weigh 3,000-4,000 kilogrammes. With his thick fat, a hippopotamus can easily float on the water surface. It also has an excellent diving capability. It can shut its ears and nostrils so that the water will not enter. When encountering enemies, a hippopotamus may dive a few hundred metres at a stretch.

If a hippopotamus doesn't stay under the water, its skin will become dry and chapped after a certain period of time. So, the hippopotamus always remains submerged in the daytime. At night when it becomes cool, the animal goes to the land to sleep or look for food.

57. Are Whales Fish?

Like mammals on the land, whales are viviparous animals. That is to say, a female whale gives birth to a baby whale, and the baby whale grows up by the feeding on its mother's breast. However, most fishes are oviparous. The breathing method of whales is different from that of fishes. Generally speaking, fishes breathe with the gills, while whales breathe with lungs. A whale will float onto the surface of water to take a breath after a certain period of time.

Long, long ago, whales lived on the land; later, they lived in water, and their bodies became streamlined like fish.

58. What Do Large Blue Whales Eat?

Blue whale is the largest animal in the world. The largest blue whale is as large as thirty elephants put together. Though the blue whale is very large, it feeds on small fish and shrimps.

Blue whales have no teeth at all. On either side of the upper jaw grows two fins of baleen. When the blue whale opens its mouth, it swallows such small animals as fish, shrimps and squids. Then the whale filtrates the water and food with its baleen like a screen; the water flows out of the chink of the baleen and the food remains in its mouth.

Blue whales have extremely good appetites, one blue whale can eat four to five tons of small fish and shrimps a day.

59. Do Crocodiles Eat People?

Crocodiles often live in water. As a matter of fact, crocodile is not a fish but a kind of reptile.

With a big mouth, sharp teeth and hard scales, crocodile is very ugly. Some crocodile are violent, they eat not only fish and shrimps in water, but also the animals on land. For example, the gulf crocodiles living in the Malay Peninsula and India, and the Nile crocodiles of Africa, often wound people swimming in water, sometimes kill people and attack small boats. During their breeding season, Crocodiles behave much more violently.

Some crocodiles, such as the renowned Chinese alligators living in the middle and upper reaches of the Yangtze River, have mild tempers. They feed mainly on such small animals as fish, frogs, tortoises, clams, and river snails, and do not attack actively.

60. Why Can Flying Fish Fly?

In the East China Sea and South China Sea there is a kind of fish that can glide. At the turn of spring and summer every year, they often jump out of water in groups to a height of five to six metres, gliding over one hundred metres. When gliding, they look like they can fly; therefore, they are called flying fish.

Flying fish have such developed pectoral fins that when they jump out of water they can use them as birds' wings. Why do flying fish jump out of the water?

While swimming, flying fish sometimes encounter violent large fish chasing after them. Then they have to swim with the highest speed. They beat the seawater with the latter part of their bodies to jump out of water and "fly" back to the sea after flying a certain distance.

61. What Is the Smallest Fish?

Less than one centimetre long from head to toe, Gobiid is the smallest fish in the world. It lives in the rivers and lakes of Nuzon Island in the Philippines. Gobiid has a transparent body and its internal organs can be seen clearly.

Gobiid has strong capability of reproduction, so there are a great number of them in the Philippines, and they serve as major food for local inhabitants. Gobiid can live for several months if you feed them with thin rice in fish bowls.

There are many kinds of gobiids, which can grow both in seawater and fresh water.

62. Why Do Fish Keep Moving Their Tails from Side to Side?

Swimming in water, a fish's tail functions as a boat's oar and helm. When a fish wants to turn to the right, it moves its tail towards the left; when a fish wants to turn to the left, it moves its tail towards the right. Fish also depends on its tail to move forward. Without tails fish wouldn't be able to swim.

63. Do Goldfish Sleep?

Small goldfish always keep their eyes wide open, neither winking nor closing their eyes. Don't the small goldfish feel tired? Don't they sleep?

As a matter of fact, small goldfish also need sleep. Goldfish have no eyelids at all. Therefore, they keep their eyes wide open even in sleep.

64. Why Do Fish Bound over the Water's Surface?

Many fish like jumping out of the water. Different fishes have different jumping capabilities. There is a kind of "jumping fish that can jump five to six metres out of the water' surface. They are really the "champion high jumpers' of all the fishes.

There are several reasons for fish to jump out of water. Some fish do it to stay away from or scare away the enemy; some fish simply enjoy jumping; and sometimes fish bound over the water surface because there are too many fish and too little air in the water during hot and suffocating weather.

65. What Is the Use of a Fish's Fin?

Fishes usually have fins, for example, dorsal fins on the back, caudal fins on the tail, and pectoral fins on the bosom, as well as ventral fins and anal fins.

Each fin has its own special function. if a fish's body is likened to a small boat, the caudal fins are like a scull and rudder, and the pectoral and ventral fins are the oars. A fish moves its fins and body to swim back and forth in the water. The dorsal fins keep the fish's body balanced. If the dorsal and anal fins. are destroyed, some fish will turn upside down in water.

Some fishes, such as hailtails and sail- fishes, grow long and sharp sticks on the ventral fins to protect themselves from being attacked by other animals in the water.

66. Why Do Bees Buzz While Flying?

We can hear buzzing sound when bees fly. But when they land on flowers, the buzzing disappears. What is the matter? Bees beat their fan-like wings to circulate the air with a speed of 200 times in the twinkling of an eye, so we can hear the buzzing. When staying on flowers, they stop beating their wings, so we cannot hear the buzzing sound.

67. Do Cicadas Chirp with Their Mouths?

In summer, the hotter the weather, the more the cicadas chirp. Some little friends ask, "Do these cicadas get when they chirp with their mouth day and night?"

As a matter of fact, cicadas don't chirp with their mouths. Cicada's "mouth- is a long and thin tube, which into trees to get nutrients. The chirps come from the belly. They produce the shrill and g sounds with the drum-like membranes on the sides of their abdomen. The male cicadas buzz around, while the female cicadas cannot Produce the 9 sounds since they have no membranes on the abdomen.

68. Where Do Butterflies Go on Rainy Days?

When the sky is clear, butterflies fly back and forth in the flowering shrubs. But when it rains, they disappear. Where are they in rainy days? They hide in the stems of flowers and grass or on the back of leaves. They close their wings and hang themselves by the feet so that the rain drops can't hit them. Besides, the underside of their wings are a dull colour, so they are not easily found.

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