

Animals

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Insects on the Move

A grasshopper can jump a distance of more than 20 times the length of its body! That means a 2-inch grasshopper can jump more than 3 feet!

Amazing Insects

These insects take the prize for their athletic abilities. Some are expert runners, swimmers, or fliers. Others can jump very far or even do acrobatics. They can really move!

The **dragonfly** is one of the fastest flying insects. Some dragonflies can reach 35 miles per hour. This insect is also acrobatic. It can fly backward and turn around quickly. It can also **hover**, or hang, in the air.



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The record for longest insect flight goes to the **monarch butterfly**. Each fall, millions of monarch butterflies from North America spread their wings and fly more than 2,000 miles to forests in Mexico.



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Diving Beetle

The **diving beetle** is an expert swimmer. When it is above water, the bubble on its back fills with air. That lets the beetle breathe underwater. As it swims, the bubble refills with oxygen taken from the water.

A favorite to win the long jump contest is the flea. This tiny insect (the size of a pinhead) can jump a distance of 150 times the length of its body. When a flea bends its legs, its rubbery knees spring back, and off it goes!

The **Australian tiger beetle** is one of the fastest running insects. This long-legged beetle can reach speeds of 5 1/2 miles per hour. The beetle's speed comes in handy when it is chasing other insects to eat.

Bug Power

Teamwork

How do some insects work together?

What do termites, ants, and honeybees have in common? They are all social (SOH-shuhl) insects. Social insects live together in large groups called colonies. Social insects always have at least one queen. The queen is the mother. She lays the eggs. The rest of the group divides the work.

Amazing Ants

Ants often live in underground nests. The nests have thousands of rooms connected by tunnels. Millions of ants may live together in a nest. It can contain more than one queen. Worker ants take care of all the other ants. Larger worker ants are called soldier ants. Their job is to guard the nest.

Busy Bees

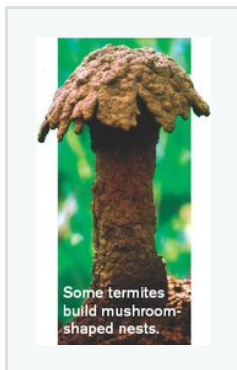


Gerry Ellis/Getty Images

Life in a honeybee hive is busy. Up to 60,000 bees may live together. Only one queen bee lives in a hive. Worker bees do all the chores. They care for the young bees and the queen. They clean and

guard the hive and control the hive's temperature. The workers also make food for all the bees in the hive.

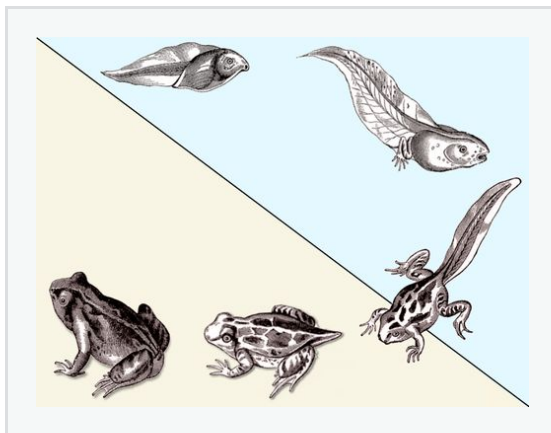
Talented Termites



Oxford Scientific/Jupiter Images

Termites build tall nests in wood or soil. A nest can be up to 40 feet high. Millions of termites may live in one nest. Every colony has a king and a queen. They make the eggs. Worker termites build the nest and care for the eggs. Soldier termites protect the colony.

A Frog's Life



life cycle of a frog

From Egg to Frog

Watch a frog grow.

What would your life be like as a frog? You would have to know how to swim and hop. Frogs are **amphibians** (am-FI-bee-uhnz). Amphibians spend part of their lives in water and part on land. Most have smooth, wet skin. Most amphibians hatch from eggs.

Learn about the **life cycle** of a frog. A life cycle shows the stages in an animal's life.

(1) Egg

Most frogs come from tiny eggs. A mother frog lays eggs in or near water. A frog can lay thousands of eggs at once. The eggs are in large clumps. A jelly coating makes the eggs slippery. That protects them from being eaten by other animals.

(2) Tadpole

A tiny **tadpole** grows inside each egg. A few weeks later, the tadpole hatches. A tadpole lives in water. It breathes using **gills**. It uses its long tail to swim and moves like a fish. Tadpoles eat tiny water plants called **algae** (AL-jee).

(3) Froglet

During the next few weeks, the tadpole grows legs and toes. The tadpole's gills grow smaller, and the tadpole starts to grow **lungs**. It swims to the top of the water to breathe air. The tadpole starts to look more like a frog. It is called a **froglet**.

(4) Frog

The froglet's tail gets smaller and soon disappears. Now the frog is an adult. It leaves the water and lives mostly on land. It breathes using lungs. It eats insects, worms, and snails. Mother frogs return to the water to lay eggs. Then the life cycle begins again.

Bat News

A bat hangs upside down while it sleeps. Read about someone who hangs with bats.



Carey Kirkella for Weekly Reader

This man is not a superhero, but he knows a lot about bats.

To the Bat Cave!

Meet Joseph D'Angeli, New Jersey's very own bat man. D'Angeli is a **chiroptologist** (kigh-rop-TAH-luh-jist), or a person who studies bats. He keeps about 19 bats as pets in his home. He learns about the bats by watching them.

D'Angeli wanted to be a bat scientist when he was young. "When I was a teen, I loved watching bats everywhere — at zoos, out in the wild, on TV, everywhere," says D'Angeli.

Bats are **nocturnal** animals. They are active at night. Many people are afraid of these night creatures. D'Angeli teaches people that some bats are shy, loving, and even helpful!

Bat Facts

Bats are **mammals**. Mammals are warm-blooded animals that have hair on their bodies.

Some people put bat houses in their yards. Bats eat pesky insects.

Some bats eat fruits. They help plants grow by dropping the seeds in different places.

Bats sleep upside down. Their home is called a **roost**.

Bat babies are called pups. Female bats feed their babies milk from their bodies.

Amazing Animal Helpers



Brien Aho/U.S. Navy/Getty Images

K-Dog, a bottlenose dolphin, has a camera attached to its flipper to record underwater objects.

This dolphin is helping soldiers. How? It looks for hidden objects on the ocean floor. Other animals help people too. Jump inside to learn all about them!

Animals Have Special Jobs!

Many different types of animals help people. See how these animals lend a hand—or a flipper, hoof, or paw!

Diving Dolphins

A special team of bottlenose dolphins helps the U.S. Navy in the ocean waters near Iraq. The dolphins use **sonar** to find unsafe objects in the water. Sonar is the use of sound to find things. After the dolphins finish their job, they are rewarded with a favorite snack—fish! The dolphins' work helps keep our troops safe from harm.

Reading Dogs

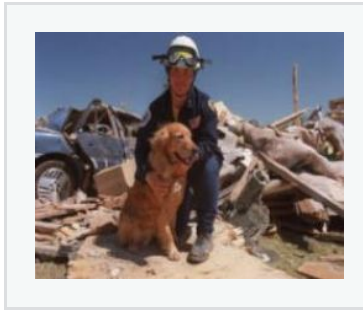
Reading dogs listen to the children read. That helps kids feel confident while they read. The dogs do not rush the kids or correct them.

Helpful Horses

Cuddles, a guide horse, is full-grown at 2 feet tall. That is about the size of a large dog. Cuddles helps guide her owner, who is blind. Cuddles wears special sneakers to protect her hooves.

Marvelous Monkeys

Some monkeys help people who cannot move their arms or legs. The monkeys are trained to do tasks such as getting water from the refrigerator or putting a CD in a music player.



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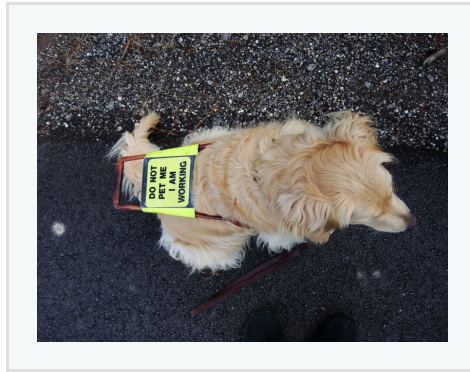
This dog helps find people buried in collapsed buildings.

Hot Dogs!

Take a look at some ways these furry friends help people.

- Some dogs look for people who could be buried in snow.
- A dog can search for people in the water.
- Other dogs work to cheer up sick children in hospitals.
- A colorful poodle might visit a child in a hospital.

Should Dogs Work?



service dog

Many pet dogs spend their days sleeping around the house. They play catch with their owners. They have all their meals delivered straight to their bowls. Pet dogs give their owners love and friendship. In return, the dogs live carefree lives.

Some dogs don't have it so easy. They are put to work, but these dogs are not paid in cash. They are paid in shelter, food, and love. Those are the same things that many pet dogs get. Service dogs give more than pet dogs give. People depend on them for serious work. There are many kinds of service dogs. Some dogs guide people who are deaf or blind. The dogs act as people's eyes and ears.

Other dogs do police work. There are about 15,000 police dogs in the United States. The dogs search for missing people and hunt down criminals. Many dogs are also used to search for drugs and bombs. Service dogs often work long hours. Meanwhile, pet dogs have the freedom to sleep and play whenever they want to. Is it fair that some dogs should have to work? Read the debate and then decide.

Yes! Dogs Should Work

Service dogs are workers and pets. Usually, they get more attention than pets get. Service dogs often work for their owners, so the dogs spend a lot of time with the people who care for them. Service dogs live happy and useful lives.

Service dogs have to work hard, but they enjoy what they do. Their work can be stressful at times. Since the work can be stressful, the owners make sure that the dogs stay happy. To do that, they give the dogs lots of love and praise for their work. This makes the dogs feel good about the work

they do. It makes the dogs want to work more.

Police and service work can be dangerous for dogs. Dogs are brave to do this kind of work. They are willing to face danger when they work.

In 2001, about 350 dogs worked at the World Trade Center site. One rescue worker said, "If these dogs only knew the difference they make. Certainly, there's nothing that can replace... a dog's nose. And absolutely nothing that can replace a dog's heart."

No! Dogs Should Not Work

Dogs are meant to be pets. They live short lives compared to humans. They should be allowed to enjoy all of their days. Dogs are meant to be companions, not workers. Service dogs are put under too much stress. Their jobs are not fun. Some service dogs are servants. They do things like opening dresser drawers and pulling their owners' wheelchairs.

Servant dogs, such as guide dogs for people who are blind, are not put in danger. But police dogs are not as lucky. They face life-and-death situations. While people can choose to put their lives on the line, dogs don't have that choice.

In 2001, a police dog was shot and killed by police officers. The dog had caught a person the police were chasing. The police officers didn't realize that the dog was on their side. They thought he was vicious. So they killed him. Weeks before the dog was killed, he had acted as a search-and-rescue dog when the World Trade Center was attacked in New York City.