

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter June, 2023

Frogs may not be the cutest things to look at and they are not exactly domestic

Frogs

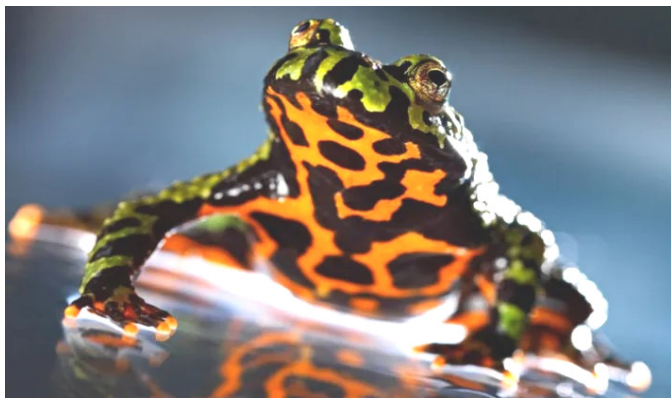
pet material, so they often escape the attention of the public eye. But, they are an absolutely essential species in the animal kingdom.

Frogspawn – a cluster of jelly-like eggs in shallow water – can be seen in the early spring and whenever I spot it, it never fails to bring a smile to my face and bring many fond memories from my childhood.

These creatures are some of the very few animals to undergo a full body transformation – metamorphosis – from the moment they hatch to becoming an adult. Quite remarkably, they can either hasten or delay their metamorphosis, depending on how favourable the surrounding conditions are, so what normally takes around 3 weeks, may take anywhere from only 2 weeks to up to even a year!

They represent a clear evolutionary step, when aquatic life forms transform in order to colonise terrestrial environments. Frogs spend most of their time on land, only needing a dip in water on occasion, and they don't need to drink water. Rather, they absorb moisture with their skin and protect themselves from drying out by a thin layer of mucus.

In terms of survival, their primary protection from predators (large birds, snakes, fish, reptiles) falls into two categories: large hind legs that allow them to leap a considerable distance away from danger; and either a mottled green or brown skin colour for camouflage or highly poisonous skin, often in bright lurid colour patterns, designed to “send a message” to a potential aggressor.



When not harassed by other wildlife, the humble frog goes about its business eradicating its local area of insects, slugs, worms, and all manner of creepy-crawlies found on the ground. They are very effective at controlling the world's insect population.



As the global biodiversity of insect life continues to decline, so does the population size of the amphibians, which also include newts, salamanders, and caecilians.

But their slow demise is not attributed only to their dwindling food sources. Habitat loss due to the draining of wetlands and desertification severely fragments their natural environment, and frogs often get killed on roads as they try to migrate from place to place in search of water, food, and mating grounds.

The climate change causes infectious fungi to spread more easily, affecting hundreds of frog species worldwide. Even unpredictable weather patterns can tip the scales, when a sudden frosty spell in spring is enough to kill off an entire colony of freshly laid eggs or young tadpoles.

Fortunately, many frog species live for up to 20 years, so if disaster strikes, they are likely to bounce back in numbers the next season.

Life always finds a way to survive and thrive.

Article by Marek

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

For bite-sized facts head off to this link:

<https://www.factretriever.com/frog-facts>

A *simile* uses “as” or “like” to link two different things that have a common quality. However, a *simile* is different from a simple comparison such as, “she looks like you”. In a *simile*, the object and subject are usually not directly related. See if you can guess the correct animals for these commonly used *similes*:

She jumped like a **frog** / **lizard** / **fish** when she heard the car engine backfire.

He was accused of stealing, but in truth, he was as innocent as a **fox** / **cow** / **lamb**.

My dog swims like a **penguin** / **fish** / **whale** when we take her to the beach.

He’s as proud as a **peacock** / **pigeon** / **eagle** now that he has graduated from college.

She slept like a **baby** / **teenager** / **doll** after she got home from work.

He’ll never see the truth, he’s as blind as a **sloth** / **snake** / **bat**.

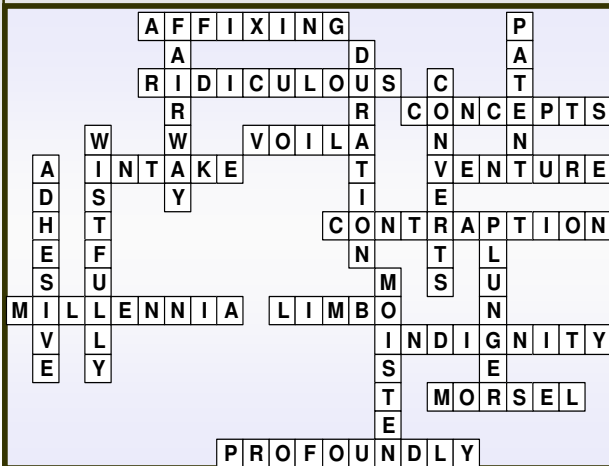
He’s as brave as a **giraffe** / **lion** / **crocodile** when it comes to protecting his family.

She has no time to talk with you now, she’s as busy as a **grasshopper** / **wasp** / **bee**.

My dog is as gentle as a **lamb** / **cat** / **parrot**. He would never hurt anyone.

I’d be careful if I were you. Your boss is as sly as a **cheetah** / **fox** / **mouse**.

I was as sick as a **rat** / **bandicoot** / **dog** when I got home from the party.



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 1 fastening or attaching
- 5 absurdly humorous
- 7 abstract ideas
- 9 "there you are!"
- 11 process of ingesting food
- 12 proceed despite risk
- 13 a device
- 16 1,000 years
- 17 in a state of disregard or forgotten
- 18 humiliation, shame
- 19 a small quantity of something
- 20 deeply and completely

DOWN

- 2 between the tee and the green on a golf course
- 3 gives an inventor sole rights to an invention
- 4 continuance of time
- 6 exchanges or replaces
- 8 sadly, pensively
- 10 a substance that bonds
- 14 a pushing action tool
- 15 to make wet



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