Perspective

Brief Note on the Life Cycle of Amphibians

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DESCRIPTION

Amphibians are minor vertebrates that live in water or a moist environment to survive. Species like frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts belong to the group of amphibians. Amphibians absorb water through their skin. The skin plays a major role in their respiration. Amphibians consist of glands that produce proteins that help in the regulation of body temperature. These belong to the class of cold-blooded vertebrates. They mainly live in moist temperatures because they require moist skin to absorb oxygen through their lack of scales.

Life cycle

Amphibians fertilise eggs externally, consume meat, and develop legs when they mature. Most amphibians respire through their lungs and their skin; hence, their skin must be moist. The skin of amphibians is smooth and slimy. Many species of amphibians vocalize. Amphibians have a complex life cycle. Amphibians lay their eggs in seawater or in moist places because their eggs dry out quickly. The average number of eggs that an amphibian can lay ranges from 2,000 to 6,000. There are four stages in the life cycle of amphibians: Egg, tadpole, young frog, and adult frog. Frogs generally lay their eggs in moist areas, about 4000 eggs at a time. Then these eggs get converted into tadpoles. These eggs look like large masses of jelly that float in rivers, ponds, and

lakes. Hence, these eggs are also known as frogspawn. Tadpoles are the larvae of the frog. They remain stable for two to three weeks and will expend their time by absorbing the left-over yolk from their egg in order to get nutrients. The tadpoles are young and look like fish that spend time eating and growing. Tadpoles mainly feed on algae and other plants that live in water to get energy. As the tadpole develops, hind limbs appear, as well as the origin of their looking like small frogs with tails. They also start to develop lungs so they can inhale and exhale when they come to spend time on land. Generally, it takes 14 days to develop into an adult frog. The young frog develops front legs and its tail slowly gets shorter until it is no longer there. The tail contains the nutrients that are absorbed as food. This young frog is then ready to jump out of the water and live his life on land. As the frog grows into an adult frog, it starts to feed the insects rather than the plants. It takes the adult frog 4 years' time to get a mature frog. Once it matures, it begins to lay eggs and the life cycle of the frog can start all over again. Tadpoles have a high mortality rate. These are threatened by predators such as fish, mammals, turtles, and birds. In order to prevent this, add rocks and oxygenating plants to your pond. Plant a tree near your water source. Feed them, and build an exit ramp. The process of the development of a tadpole into a frog is called metamorphosis. The largest frog grows to 15 inches and weighs 7 pounds.

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