Reptiles

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Vocabulary

Vertebrate: an animal that has a spine.

Scales: very small, flat pieces that cover the skin of fish, snakes, etc.

Pant: to breathe quickly and loudly through your mouth, usually because you have been doing something very energetic.

Larvae: forms of insects or animals such as a frog that has left its egg but has not yet developed into an adult insect or animal.

Hibernate: to spend the winter sleeping.

Non-venomous: unable to inflict a poisoned bite, sting, or wound; not poisonous.

Decipher: to succeed in understanding, interpreting, or identifying something.

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What Are Reptiles?

Reptiles are air-breathing **vertebrates** covered in special skin made up of **scales**, bony plates, or a combination of both.

Unlike birds and mammals, reptiles do not maintain a constant internal body temperature. Without fur or feathers, they cannot stay warm on a cold day, and without sweat glands or the ability to **pant**, they cannot cool off on a hot one. Instead, they move into the sun or into the shade as needed.

During cooler parts of the year they become inactive. Because of their slow metabolism and heat-seeking behavior, reptiles are called cold-blooded.

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