

# Animal Fact Cards



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These four animals are widespread in North American cities. Use the cards with “Animal-ympics,” “Signs of Life,” “Fly It and Spy It,” and other animal activities where they are suitable.

## Grasshopper

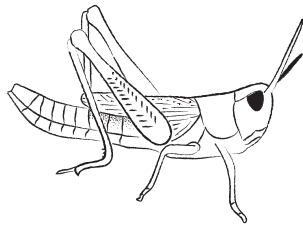
**Description:** An insect, an animal with six legs and three body parts

**Habitat:** Grassy areas throughout the city

**Food:** Grass and leaves

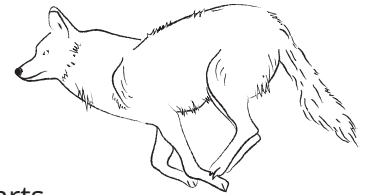
**Size:** About 2 inches long

**Speed:** Can jump 20 times its body length to escape predators!



## Coyote

**Description:**  
A cousin to dogs, wolves, and foxes



**Habitat:** Lives in all parts of a city—not just green spaces

**Food:** Eats almost anything: mice, insects, birds, and garbage

**Size:** About 2 feet tall and 3 feet long; weighs between 20 and 50 pounds

**Speed:** Can run up to 45 miles per hour!

## Hummingbirds

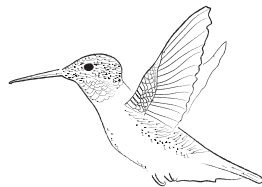
**Description:** The tiniest bird in the world!

**Habitat:** Forests, deserts, coasts, meadows, and cities

**Food:** Nectar and small insects, such as gnats and mosquitoes

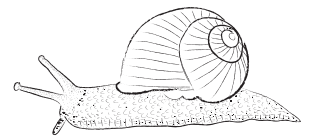
**Size:** 3 to 5 inches long, many weigh less than an ounce

**Speed:** Flaps its wings in a figure-8 pattern 40–80 times per second; flies forward, backward, and sideways at about 30 miles per hour



## Land Snail

**Description:** A gastropod, which means “stomach foot,” with a shell



**Habitat:** City parks and gardens and on the edges of rivers and streams

**Food:** Fresh and rotting plants, dirt (for calcium), and animal poop!

**Size:** Most are 1-2 inches long; the largest one is 12 inches

**Speed:** Moves using its one foot at about half an inch in 10 seconds, one of the slowest creatures on Earth!



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## Southwest Region

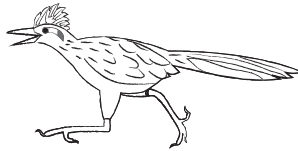


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These four animals can be found in desert cities of the southwest. Use the cards with “Animal-ympics,” “Signs of Life,” “Fly It and Spy It,” and other animal activities where they are suitable.

### Greater Roadrunner

**Description:** A long-tailed, black or brown bird with white stripes



**Habitat:** Grass fields, deserts with shrubs to hide, roadside

**Food:** Insects, spiders, small birds, snakes, lizards, mice, wood, and cacti

**Size:** 2 feet long with a 2-foot wing span, 8 to 12 ounces

**Cool fact:** They can only fly for a few seconds, but they run 17 mph. The long tail helps them steer, stop, and keep their balance.

### Cochineal (COTCH-ih-neeel)

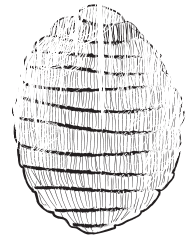
**Description:** Tiny insect covered with scale—a white, puffy coating that looks like cotton threads

**Habitat:** Look for groups of them on the pads of prickly pear cacti

**Food:** Sap—a sticky liquid inside the cactus pads

**Size:** About the size of a pea

**Cool fact:** People use squashed bugs to dye foods red! Look for “cochineal” or “carmine” on the food label.



### Queen Butterfly

**Description:**

The caterpillar: Black, white, and yellow stripes. Adult: Dark orange wings



**Habitat:** Sunny fields or pastures, open desert land, marshes, roadsides

**Food:** The adult drinks flower nectar (a sweet liquid); the caterpillar eats milkweed

**Size:** 3-inch wing span

**Cool fact:** On cool, cloudy days, they are too cold to fly. They need the sun’s heat to warm their body.

### Black-Tailed Jackrabbit

**Or Desert Hare**

**Description:** Not a rabbit, but a hare

**Habitat:** Open desert plains, foothills, roadsides

**Food:** Grass, mesquite seeds, cacti, crops

**Size:** Up to 2 feet long, 8 pounds; the ears are 4-6 inches!

**Cool fact:** When chased by its many predators, travels 40 to 45 mph with hops up to 20 feet!



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## Northeast Region



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These four animals are common in New England cities and elsewhere. Use the cards with "Animal-ympics," "Signs of Life," "Fly It and Spy It," and other animal activities where they are suitable.

### Red-Tailed Hawk

**Description:** A brown and white raptor (hunting bird) with sharp talons (claws) and a reddish-orange tail

**Habitat:** Cliffs or city buildings for nesting; open areas for hunting

**Food:** Mice, rats, rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, pigeons, and many other small animals

**Size:** 19 to 25 inches long, 2 to 3 pounds

**Cool fact:** Male-female pairs build nests, up to 3 feet tall, on the face of building ledges!



### White-Tailed Deer

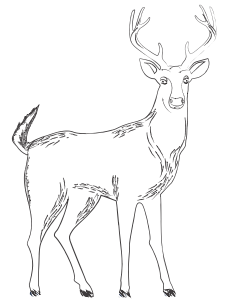
**Description:** A brown, four-legged animal with a short white tail; only males have antlers

**Habitat:** A very wide range of areas, including cities, that have trees or other places for hiding

**Food:** Leaves, twigs, shoots, acorns, berries, seeds, grass, and herbs

**Size:** 20 to 50 inches tall at the shoulder, 90 to 200 pounds

**Cool fact:** Predators are wolves, coyotes, cougars, bears... and human hunters, whose bright orange vests look gray to deer.



### Eastern Garter Snake

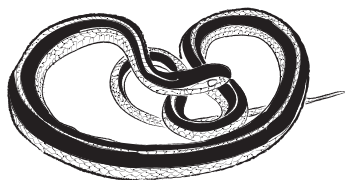
**Description:** Brown, yellow, and white striped snake

**Habitat:** Wet areas, edge of forests, vacant lots, gardens and yards in cities

**Food:** Earthworms, salamanders, frogs, toads, small fish—swallowed whole!

**Size:** 16 to 41 inches long

**Cool fact:** In winter, piles of snakes sleep in dens under buildings.



### Eastern Cottontail

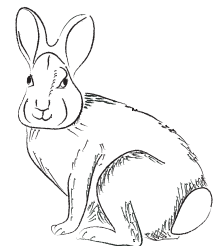
**Description:** A brown rabbit with flecks of white and gray and a puffy white tail

**Habitat:** Overgrown fields, the edges of woods, gardens

**Food:** At dawn and dusk, feeds on plants

**Size:** Lighter and smaller than a house cat—about 2 to 3 pounds

**Cool fact:** When in danger, they freeze to blend in but can run 18 mph and hop 15 feet!



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## Western Region



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These four animals are common in some cities west of the Rocky Mountains. Use the cards with "Animal-ympics," "Signs of Life," "Fly It and Spy It," and other animal activities where they are suitable.

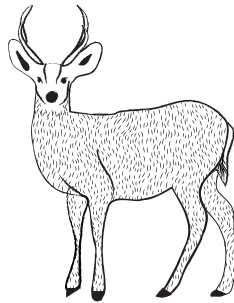
### Mule Deer

**Description:** A brown or gray animal with four hooved feet, very large ears, and light patches on the rump and throat

**Habitat:** Forests, deserts, mountains, and cities

**Food:** Leaves, flowers, acorns, seeds, fruits, and other plant parts

**Size:** 30 to 42 inches tall at the shoulder, 70 to 150 pounds



### Black Phoebe

(FEE-bee)

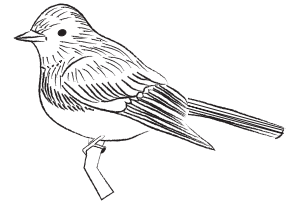
**Description:** A mostly gray-black bird with a white belly and long tail

**Habitat:** Near water in canyons, farms, towns, and cities

**Food:** Insects—they are part of a bird group called "flycatchers"

**Size:** About 6 inches long

**Cool fact:** Look for mud and grass nests under bridges, under overhanging roofs, and in the drain pipes under roads.



### Western Fence Lizard

**Description:** A small reptile with a dull-colored, patterned back and shiny blue marks on the belly

**Habitat:** Coasts, mountains, and cities, where they sun themselves on fence posts

**Food:** Insects, spiders, smaller lizards

**Size:** About 6 inches long (tail included)

**Cool fact:** When flipped on its back, it plays dead—looks stiff and still—so that predators lose interest.



### Desert Stink Beetle

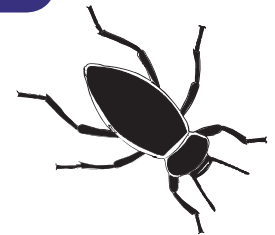
**Description:** Large, shiny black insect with six jointed legs and two antennae

**Habitat:** Deserts

**Food:** Dead plants, mushrooms, seeds

**Size:** Up to 2 inches long

**Cool fact:** When scared, it stands on its head, ready to spray a stinky liquid from its belly.



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## Northwest Region



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These four animals can be found in cities in Oregon and Washington state. Use the cards with “Animal-ympics,” “Signs of Life,” “Fly It and Spy It,” and other animal activities where they are suitable.

### Vaux's Swift

**Description:** A small gray or brown bird with wings and a tail built for fancy flying

**Habitat:** Chimneys, smokestacks, holes in old trees

**Food:** Insects

**Size:** 4 to 5 inches long

**Cool fact:** Large flocks of swifts go south every winter, and one famous stopping place is an elementary school in Portland, Oregon!



### Pacific Chorus Frog

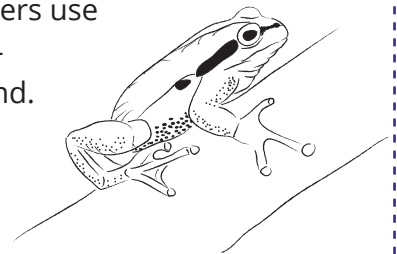
**Description:** A tiny green or brown frog with a dark stripe across the eyes

**Habitat:** In and near fresh water that has few fish—ponds, ditches, wetlands, and wet woods

**Food:** Insects, spiders

**Size:** 1 to 2 inches long

**Cool fact:** Movie makers use their song—“ribbit!”—as a general frog sound.



### River Otter

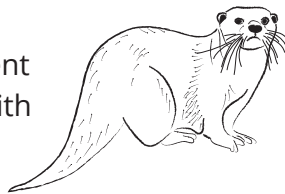
**Description:** A brown rodent (cousin to rats and mice) with webbed toes and other features that help it swim

**Habitat:** In and near fresh water—rivers, lakes, ponds, bays, canals

**Food:** Mostly fish but will eat almost any small animal

**Size:** 3 to 4 feet long (tail included), 20 to 28 pounds

**Cool fact:** They often build dens under and inside buildings instead of hollow logs or piles of rocks.



### Woodland Skipper

**Description:** A tiny orange butterfly that's fuzzy like a moth; the yellow-green caterpillar blends in with grass

**Habitat:** Sunny, open fields, gardens, and cities

**Food:** Adults drink nectar from a wide range of flowers; caterpillars eat grass

**Size:** 1-inch wingspan

**Cool fact:** They don't mind humans, so it's possible to watch them up close.



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## Midwest Region



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These four animals can be found in cities of the Midwest, Plains states, and elsewhere. Use the cards with "Animal-ympics," "Signs of Life," "Fly It and Spy It," and other animal activities where they are suitable.

### Monarch Butterfly



**Description:** The caterpillar has yellow, black, and white stripes and turns into an adult with bright orange and black wings

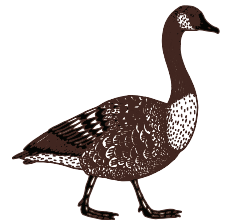
**Habitat:** Warm forest, which means they must migrate from Canada to Mexico in winter

**Food:** The adult eats fruit and flower nectar (a sweet liquid); the caterpillar eats milkweed

**Size:** 4-inch wingspan

**Cool fact:** A chemical in the milkweed stays in the butterfly's body and is harmful to frogs, lizards, and birds that eat butterflies.

### Canada Goose



**Description:** A web-footed waterbird with a long, dark neck and tan and white body

**Habitat:** Near fresh water—ponds, lakes, rivers, flooded fields, parks, city lawns

**Food:** Grass, grain crops

**Size:** Up to 40 inches tall with a wingspan of 4 to 5 feet, 7 to 20 pounds

**Cool fact:** Geese warn animals to stay away by pumping their head, opening their bill, hissing, honking, and shaking their neck feathers.

### Raccoon



**Description:** A brown to gray mammal with a black and white mask and ringed tail

**Habitat:** Forest, city, suburb

**Food:** Wide diet of plants (acorns, nuts, fruit, corn) and animals (insects, mice, bird eggs, turtles, fish), human garbage, pet food

**Size:** 26 to 39 inches long (tail included), 6 to 27 pounds

**Cool fact:** Many plants depend on raccoons to spread their seeds, which hitch a ride on fur or are eaten along with fruits.

### Pavement Ant



**Description:** A dark brown insect (animal with six legs, three body parts) that lives in colonies (groups) underground

**Habitat:** Under sidewalks, buildings, parking lots, rocks (look for little piles of soil that the ants dug out)

**Food:** Human garbage, flower nectar (a sweet liquid), sugar, fruit,

**Size:** About the size of the eraser on a pencil

**Cool fact:** They came to the United States from Europe and are now the most common ant in many cities because they can use pavement for shelter.



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## Southeast Region



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These four animals can be found in cities from North Carolina to Florida. Use the cards with “Animal-ym-pics,” “Signs of Life,” “Fly It and Spy It,” and other animal activities where they are suitable.

### Alligator

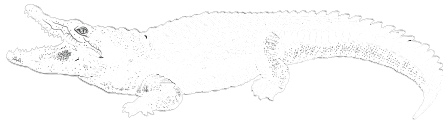
**Description:** A reptile, an animal with thick, scaly skin that needs the sun to heat its body

**Habitat:** Swamps, rivers, lakes, canals, ponds, swimming pools—fresh water!

**Food:** Fish, turtles, mice, bird eggs, insects, and other animals

**Size:** 7 inches at birth, they grow to about 10 to 15 feet long

**Cool fact:** They keep two nostrils (nose holes) above water to breathe.



### White Ibis

**Description:** Wading bird with long legs and a very long, thin curved beak

**Habitat:** Shallow water—marshes, lagoons, rice fields, flooded grass, ponds, small lakes, mudflats

**Food:** Crayfish, crabs, insects, snails, frogs, snakes, small fish

**Size:** 2-foot wingspan, about 2 pounds

**Cool fact:** They live in colonies of up to 15,000 birds! The huge numbers help scare off predators.



### Green Anole

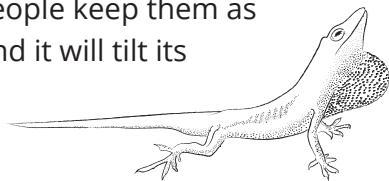
**Description:** A lizard that can change from dark brown to bright green; a puff of red skin under the chin of a male attracts females

**Habitat:** Swamps, forests, parks, and yards where the air is humid (wet)

**Food:** Spiders, flies, crickets, beetles, moths, butterflies, slugs, ants, termites

**Size:** 5 to 8 inches long (tail included)

**Cool fact:** Some people keep them as pets. Talk to one and it will tilt its head to listen!



### Zebra Butterfly

**Description:** A long-winged insect with yellow or white zebra stripes on the wings

**Habitat:** Warm, humid (wet) areas

**Food:** Adults eat pollen (a sticky powder) from passion flowers; caterpillars eat passion vine leaves

**Size:** About 3 inches long

**Cool fact:** Pollen (a protein) helps them lay more eggs and live longer than butterflies that drink nectar (a sugary liquid).



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## Mid-Atlantic Region

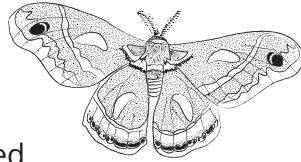


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These four animals can be found in eastern cities from New York to Baltimore. Use the cards with "Animal-ympics," "Signs of Life," "Fly It and Spy It," and other animal activities where they are suitable.

### Cecropia Silkmoth

**Description:** An orange, white, and black insect with feather-like antennae



**Habitat:** Forests and lighted areas like cities and porches in the evenings

**Food:** Adults don't eat (they mate and then die); the caterpillars eat leaves

**Size:** With a wingspan of 5 to 7 inches, it's the largest moth in North America!

**Cool fact:** Males can smell females up to a mile away!

### Redback Salamander

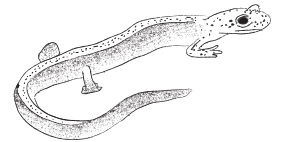
**Description:** An amphibian (cousin to frogs) with a bright red or orange stripe down the back and four very tiny legs

**Habitat:** Under rocks and logs or in burrows on the floors of forests that are often wet

**Food:** Spiders, insects, millipedes, centipedes, snails, worms

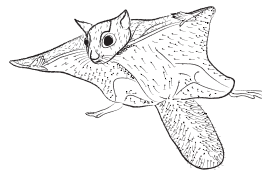
**Size:** 3 to 5 inches long

**Cool fact:** When attacked by birds, snakes, or other animals, they drop their tail, which later grows back!



### Northern Flying Squirrel

**Description:** A brown and gray rodent (cousin to mice and rats) with a light belly and a bushy tail almost as long as its body



**Habitat:** Woods, abandoned buildings, attics

**Food:** Nuts, seeds, fruits, fungi (like mushrooms), bird eggs, insects

**Size:** about 12 inches long (tail included), 4 to 5 ounces

**Cool fact:** They don't really fly, but they do glide from tree to tree up to 160 feet.

### Baltimore Oriole

**Description:** A blackbird with a bright orange belly (males) or yellow belly (females)

**Habitat:** City parks, backyards, orchards, the edges of woods

**Food:** Caterpillars, flower nectar (a sweet liquid), fruits, insects, spiders

**Size:** 7 inches long, 10-inch wingspan

**Cool fact:** Look and listen for them high in the trees. They sing two whistled high notes, repeated up to 7 times.



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