

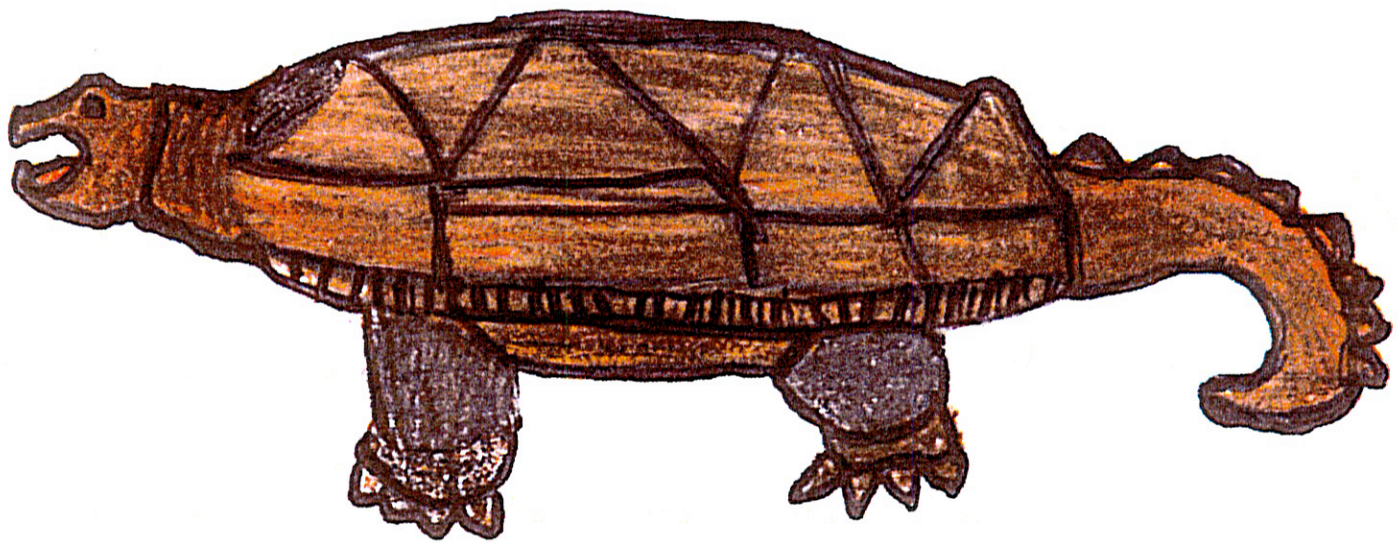
Snapping Turtle

Habitat

A snapping turtle is nearly always in water hiding in the muck in shallows, under stumps, and in dead weeds. A snapping turtle's classification is a reptile.

Prey and Predators

Snapping turtles eat fish, insects, frogs, small birds, plants, and crayfish. They will also eat baby muskrats. They move their heads very quickly and snap their jaws around their prey. When eating, a snapping turtle must remain under water. A blue heron is a predator to a baby snapping turtle.



Adaptations

Instead of teeth, the snapping turtle's powerful jaws have a hooked, razor sharp beak for slicing. They can cut through just about anything. Snapping turtles are strong. Sharp claws on their legs tear prey into pieces when it is too large to be swallowed whole.

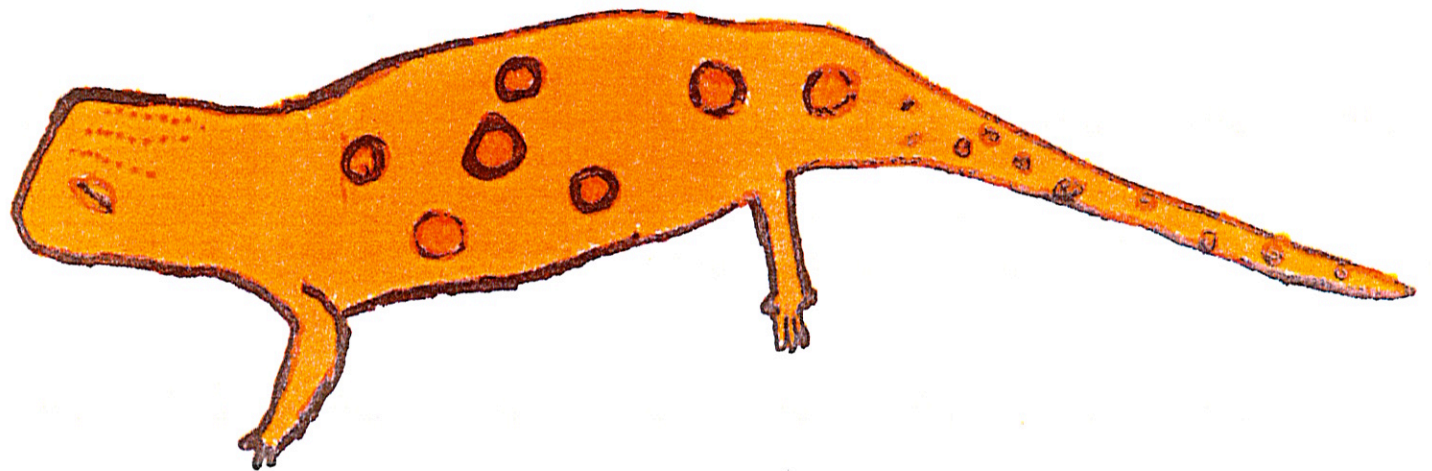
Interesting Facts and Observations

Snapping turtles are the largest freshwater turtle. They can be over 2 feet long and weigh over 45 pounds. Snapping turtles are very mean and have a deadly bite. Adult snapping turtles have a dark brown shell. The underside of the shell is small, allowing their heavy neck, legs, and very long tail freedom for quick movements.

Spotted Newt

Habitat

The eastern spotted newt is an amphibian. It lives in ponds, rivers, lakes and forests. Some newts stay under water for life. Others, such as the eastern spotted newt, live half their lives on land and half in water. When it's an adult, this newt returns to the water to lay eggs.



Adaptations

One adaptation that the eastern spotted newt has is its ability to camouflage itself so it can't be harmed. It blends in with leaves and nature. Another adaptation is that a newt stores fat in their bodies so they can stay alive during the coldest months in the pond mud. This newt also has a bad taste if eaten by a predator because it has a toxin in its body. This toxin can make any predator sick.

Prey and Predators

The eastern spotted newt's prey is small fish, leeches, insects, worms and snails. Its predators are dogs, big birds and water snakes.

Interesting Fact and Observations

The eastern spotted newt has four fingers on each front hand and five toes on each back foot. It has rough skin and its length is 3 to 4 inch. A newt is a type of salamander. The big difference is that a newt has rough skin and salamanders have soft smooth skin.

Muskrat

Habitat

The muskrat is a mammal. It lives in underground burrows in pond banks of wetlands, marshes, bogs and near rivers and streams. The muskrat builds a home shaped like a cone and it can be made of piled up cattail roots, phragmites, and mud.

Prey/Predators

The muskrat's predators are foxes, raccoons, great horned owls, herons, and hawks. The muskrat's foods are underwater plants, shellfish, cattail roots, and freshwater clams.



Adaptations

The muskrat has a flat tail that is scaly and can be up to 20cm long. The tail helps it swim and steer in the water. It is used to warn others of danger. Another adaptation is its claws which help it to borrow underground.

Interesting Facts/ Observations

Muskrats can hold their breath up to 15 minutes underwater. Muskrat babies are called kits and muskrat homes are called lodges.

Sources:

"Muskrats" [Twingroves](http://www.Twingroves.com). 21 April 2007
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"Muskrat" [ThinkQuest](http://www.Thinkquest.com). 27 April
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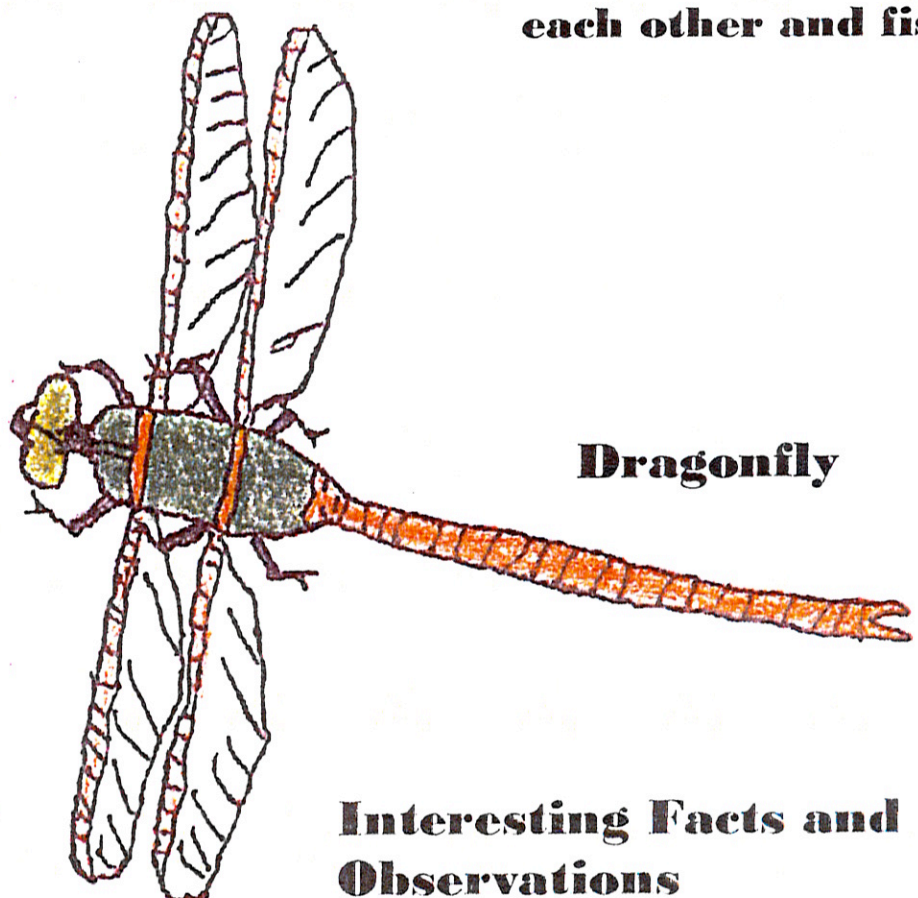
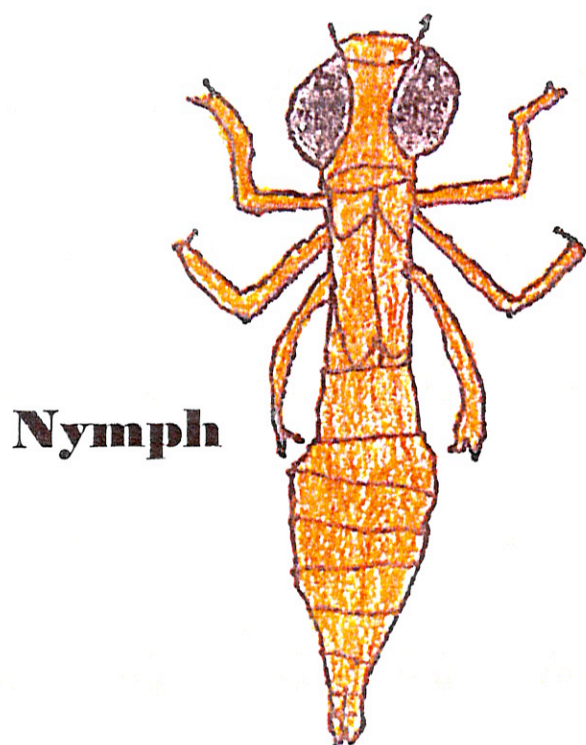
Dragonfly

Habitat

A green dragonfly is an amazing insect. Green dragonflies are invertebrates, which mean they do not have a backbone. They live in freshwater ponds, or streams. A dragonfly nymph lives on plants, among stones, or at the bottom of ponds or slow flowing rivers.

Prey and Predators

Dragonflies are very helpful to humans because they eat pests like mosquitoes. They eat mosquitoes, flies, gnats, bees, and butterflies. Birds can eat dragonflies but they are hard to catch. A dragonfly's nymph eats other insects in the water, and will eat each other. Its enemies are each other and fish.



Adaptations

One adaptation a dragonfly has is its eyes. Its eyes help it to see almost behind it, so it can spot its predators. The legs of a dragonfly help it catch its prey in mid-air. They use their legs like baskets to trap it. A nymph's adaptations are its lower lip and gills. The lower lip helps the nymph catch its prey. The gills help it breathe underwater.

Interesting Facts and Observations

Dragonflies are sometimes called the 'mosquito hawk' because they love mosquitoes. Dragonflies have been around for a very long time. Fossils have been found showing dragonflies with a wingspan of about three feet. Dragonflies can fly up to 38 mph. A nymph can't see very well, but it can bite more than an adult. It gives a nasty nip.

Sources:

{<http://www.scientificillustrator.com/illustration/insect/dragonfly-green-darner.html>}

"Dragonfly Nymph." [Buglopedia](http://www.bugsurvey.nsw.gov) 27 April 2007

{<http://www.bugsurvey.nsw.gov>}

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Cattails

Habitat

Do you know where a cattail lives? Cattails live in marshes, swamps, ponds, and other wetlands. The cattail tends to live in groups.



Adaptations:

An adaptation of a cattail plant is its roots. The roots help this plant suck up water and nutrients from the soil. A cattail has the ability to spread seeds, also. The top of the cattail pops open in late summer and they look just like cotton. Animals and the wind help to spread these seeds.

Prey and Predators

Cattails suck up water and nutrients from the soil. The cattail plant is a food source for many creatures. Muskrats, geese, beavers and even humans love to eat this plant. The central part of the root and the lower stalk belonging to the cattail plant was made into a type of meal by early settlers.

Interesting Facts and Observations:

One interesting fact is that people with aching teeth treated them by rubbing juice from the stem of the cattail plant their on their gums. Another interesting fact is that these plants were used by the Native Americans to weave baskets, mats and fish racks.

“Cattail.” Cattail Management. 1 May 2007
{www.twingroves.district96.k12.il.us}.

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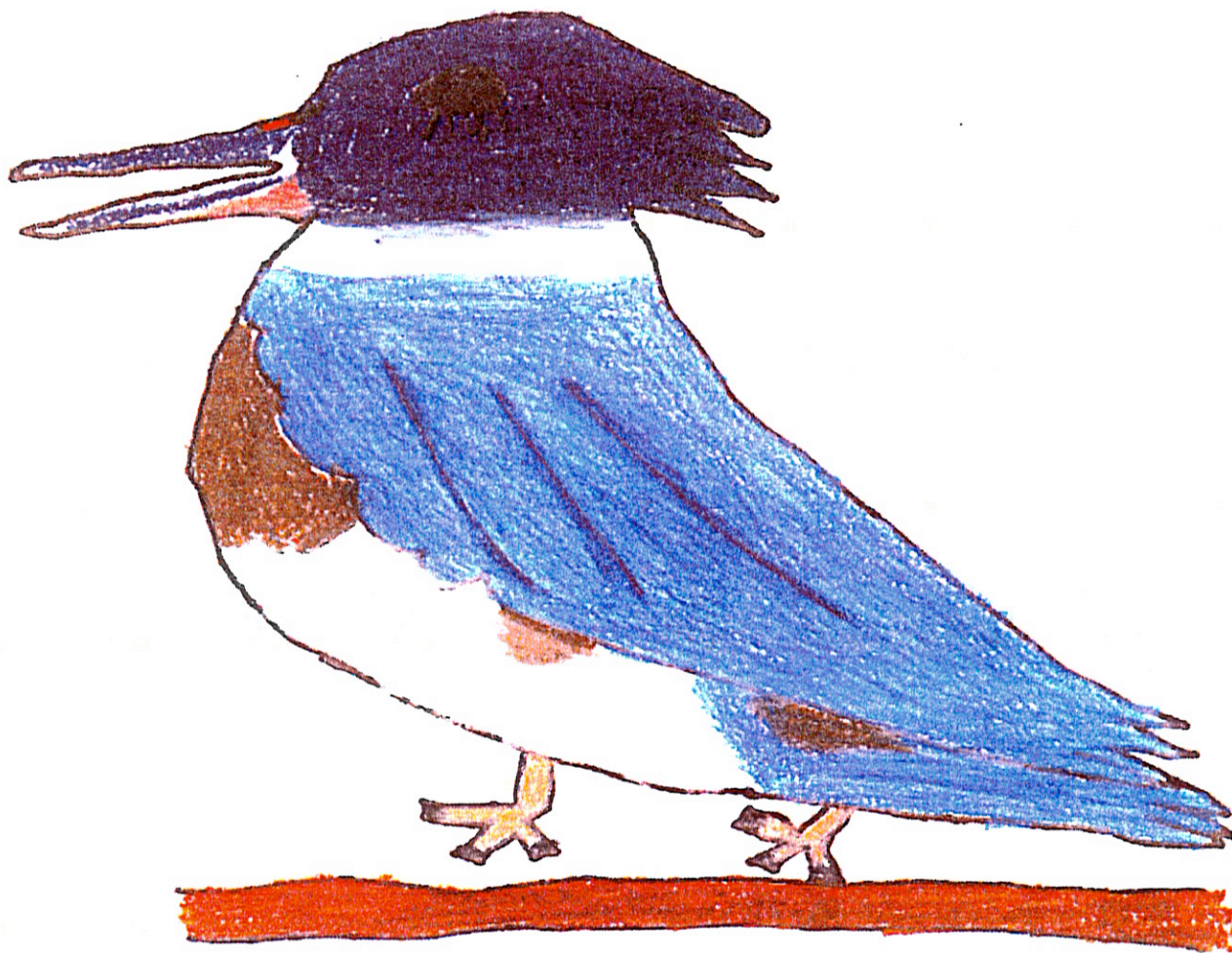
Kingfisher

Habitat

A Kingfisher is a bird. It lives in woodland and wetland areas and will make nests in trees. It lives near ponds or lakes.

Prey and Predators

The Kingfisher eats crayfish, frogs and insects. Also the Kingfisher has a predator. Its predator is a leech. The leech will attach itself and suck its prey's blood.



Adaptations

The Kingfisher has a very interesting way for it to see. Its eyes will turn in to an egg shape so it can see where it is going when it is in air.

Interesting Facts and Observations

When the Kingfisher is mad it will make a sound like it is laughing. Also the Kingfisher is on the back of the Canadian five dollar bill.

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"All About Birds" 23 April 2007 {www.Kingfisheradaptations.com}
"King fisher" Pond Critters 27 April 2007
{<http://www.umaine.edu/umext/earthconnections>}
Megaceryle Alcyon. Kingfisher. 1988

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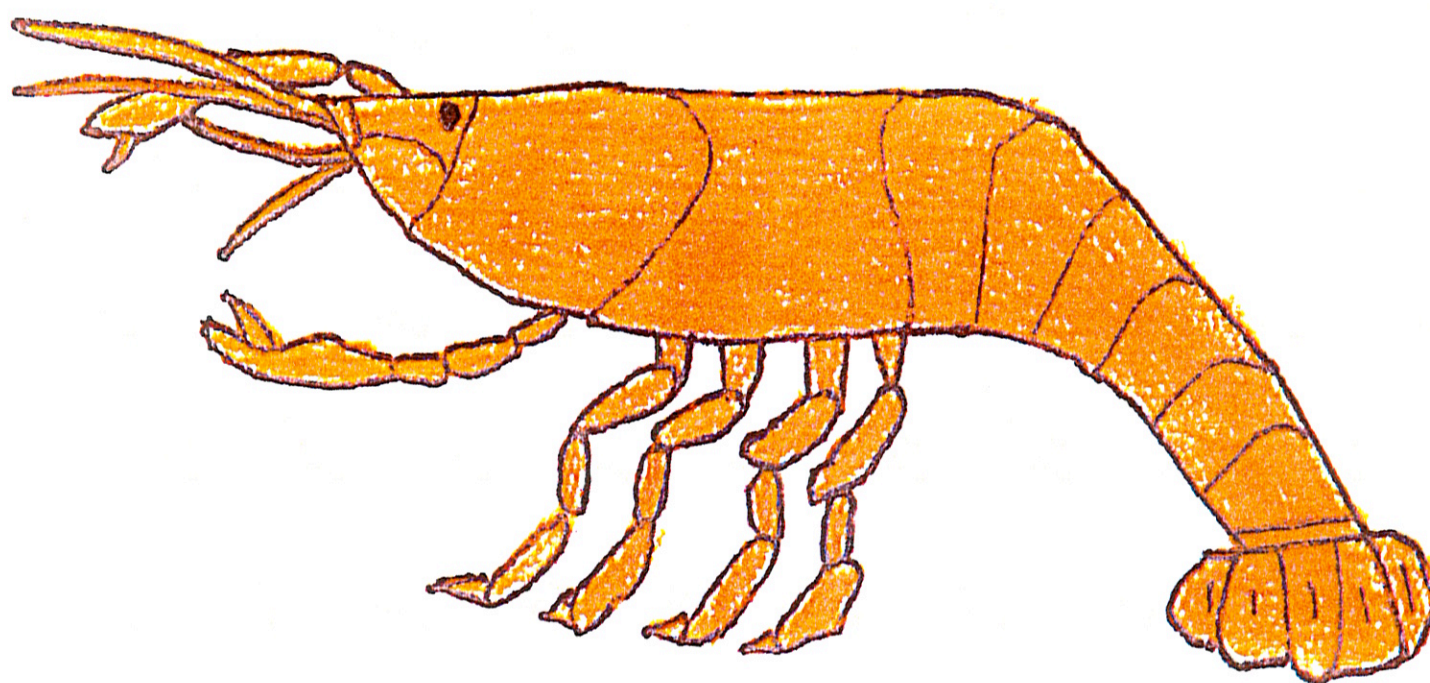
Crayfish

Habitat

Do you know what the habitat of the crayfish is? A crayfish's habitat is the swamps, ponds, streams, and lakes in our area.

Prey and Predators

A crayfish's predators are fish, eel, herons, mink, otters, snakes, and even people! A crayfish is an omnivore. That means it eats both plants and animals.



Adaptations

One adaptation of the crayfish is its hard exoskeleton that protects its body. A crayfish is usually hiding in its burrow during the day but active at night.

Interesting Facts and Observations

A crayfish's exoskeleton molts off the Crayfish's body as the crayfish grows. The crayfish is important to the balance of nature because it helps to keep the bothersome insects from producing at a considerable rate. A crayfish has no backbone, which makes it an invertebrate. A crayfish is also a crustacean.

Resources cited:

"Invertebrate." [Enchanted Learning](http://www.enchantedlearning.com)
27 April 2007 {www.enchantedlearning.com}

"Invertebrate." [Think Quest](http://www.thinkquest.com)
27 April 2007 {www.thinkquest.com}

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Spotted Salamanders

Habitat

Did you know that spotted salamanders are amphibians? Like some amphibians, they lay eggs in the water and then they change and live the rest of their life on land. Spotted salamanders are vertebrates. That means they have a backbone. The spotted salamander lives under logs and rocks. They need water to lay eggs and to keep their skin wet or they will die.

Prey and Predators

Spotted salamanders eat earthworms, grubs, and other spotted salamanders when they are very hungry. They also eat fungus. Their enemies are snakes, frogs, and birds.



Adaptations

Adult spotted salamanders have a toxic liquid in their skin. Spotted salamanders have bright colors to warn that they don't taste good. They have a magnificent nose! It can smell up to 7 feet away. The spotted salamander's nose is used to smell for food and danger.

Interesting Facts and Observation

The spotted salamander has a special dance to find their mate. A few days after the dance, the female goes and lays eggs in the water. The embryo (baby) is covered with a jelly to protect it. The spotted salamander is 6 to 7 inches in length.