

Habitat and Adaptation



Common caiman (Caiman crocodilus), also called Narrow-snouted spectacled caiman. French Guiana.

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Every organism has a unique ecosystem within which it lives. This ecosystem is its natural habitat. This is where the basic needs of the organism to survive are met: food, water, shelter from the weather and place to breed its young. All organisms need to adapt to their habitat to be able to survive.

This means adapting to be able to survive the climatic conditions of the ecosystem, predators, and other species that compete for the same food and space. An adaptation is a modification or change in the organism's body or behaviour that helps it to survive. Explore the links given here to know more about habitats and how different plants and animals.

An animal may adapt to its habitat in different ways. It may be a physical or structural adaptation, just as the limbs of birds have modified into wings or the way the cheetah is shaped for running at a fast speed.

It may be in the way the body works in circulating and respiration, for instance the gills that fish have enable them to breathe in water. Or it may be the way the animal behaves whether it is hunting for food, or running fast to avoid predators or migrating to other places for food or survival. To know more about different types of adaptations [visit the link](#).

An animal's environment consists of many different things. The climate, the kinds of food plants that grow in it, other animals that may be predators or competitors- the animal must learn to adapt to each of these factors in order to survive. With increasing population growth and human activity that disturbs the natural habitat, animals must learn to adapt to these kind of threats as well.

Animals in the wild can only live in places they are adapted to. They must have the right kind of habitat where they can find the food and space they need. [Visit the link](#) for a brief overview of how animals adapt to their habitat.

Did you know that animals camouflage themselves so they can adapt to their environment? Adaptation can protect animals from predators or from harsh weather. Many birds can hide in the tall grass and weeds and insects can change their colour to blend into the surroundings. This makes it difficult for predators to seek them out for food.

Some animals, like the apple snail, can survive in different ecosystems- from swamps, ditches and ponds to lakes and rivers. It has a lung/gills combination that reflects its adaptation to habitats with oxygen poor water. This is often the case in swamps and shallow waters. To know more about how the apple snail can survive in different habitats [visit the link](#).

In the harsh cold climate of Alaska, the animals have learnt to adapt to the weather by storing food in their body and protecting themselves from the cold with thick furs. Human inhabitants in Alaska have also learnt to cope with the environment by building shelters that insulate and hold the heat, and yet do not allow the structure to melt. To know more about this [go to this website](#).