

Classifying Animals

All animals are made up of many cells and cannot make their own food. Scientists look at many characteristics of animals to classify them.

All animals with backbones are classified as **vertebrates**. Feel the bones along your back. You have a backbone. You are a vertebrate. Vertebrates include mammals, birds, reptiles, **amphibians**, and fish.

Vertebrates may be warm-blooded or cold-blooded. Warm-blooded animals keep the inside of their bodies at a constant temperature. Cold-blooded animals take on the temperature of their surroundings. Birds and mammals are warm-blooded. Reptiles, amphibians, and most fish are cold-blooded.

All animals without backbones are classified as **invertebrates**. This group has the largest number of animal species. For example, sponges are very simple invertebrates that have no tissues or organs. Sponges also have no **symmetry**.

Other invertebrates are more complex animals than sponges. These include **cnidarians**, echinoderms, worms, mollusks, and arthropods. Arthropods are the most numerous species in the animal kingdom. Spiders, crabs, and butterflies are all different arthropods.

Vertebrates



Mammal



Bird



Amphibian



Reptile

Invertebrates



Sponge



Mollusk



Arthropod



Worm

