

All About Critters

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Introduction

I did this report for nature and animals in nature.

We went to the “Snakes, Scales and Turtle Tails” presentation at Gring’s Mill. It was presented by Phil Witman, educator and reptile extraordinaire.

He spoke about all of these animals, and we got to see them live! (everyone except the copperhead - we just saw a photo, which still spooks me.)

Snakes

Pueblan Milk Snake

- Adult Size: 30 - 36 in.
- Pattern: Red - Black - White - Black - Red ...
- Not Venomous
- Found in Mexico
- Often confused with the venomous Coral Snake

*Red Touch Yellow, Kills a Fellow.
Red Touch Black, Friend of Jack.*



Isaac Says: So cute!

Black Rat Snake

- Adult Size: 42 to 72 in.
- Completely black except for a white chin
- Not Venomous
- Spray a foul smelling musk when picked up by predators
- Found locally in Pennsylvania
- Can climb trees

Isaac Says: Awesome!



Northern Water Snake

- Adult Size: 24 to 42 in.
- Not Venomous
- Found locally in Pennsylvania
- At my Grandpa's house in a river we found a **dead** Northern Water Snake.

Isaac Says: Whoa baby (because its dead)



Copperhead

- Adult Size: 24 to 36 in.
- Found Locally in Pennsylvania
- Venomous Snake
- Copperheads are pit vipers (like rattlesnakes and water moccasins)
- Pit Vipers have heat-sensory pits between eye and nostril on each side of head which are able to detect minute differences in temperatures so that the snakes can accurately strike the source of heat (often potential prey).

Isaac Says: It's very beautiful, but don't come near this!



Lizards

Chameleon

- Adult Size: 13" long
- Found in Africa (native to the Sahel and Nile Valley)
- Bulbous eyes which can move independently of each other.
- Can hold on to thin sticks - even when the stick is shaking like crazy.
- Chameleons change color by changing the space between the guanine crystals, which changes the wavelength of light reflected off the crystals which changes the color of the chameleon skin.

Isaac Says: Cute egg!



Blue Tongued Skink

- Adult Size: up to 24"
- Found in Australia
- Can live up to 20 years in captivity
- Omnivores: Eat snails, spiders, raw meats, and vegetables.
- They belong to the skink family, *Scincidae*, which means *shiny scaled*
- When threatened, these animals open their bright pink mouths wide, hiss and stick out their big blue tongues. This scares away predators.

Isaac Says: aah!



Glass Lizard

- Adult Size: 4 ft. ($\frac{2}{3}$ of its tail)
- Found all over the world (we saw a glass lizard from Central Europe).
- Most species have no legs, their head shapes, movable eyelids, and external ear openings identify them as lizards
- The name of glass lizard comes from the fact that they can drop off part of the tail which breaks into several pieces, like glass. The tail remains mobile, while the lizard becomes motionless, distracting the predator.
- Glass lizards eat a wide variety of insects, spiders, and other invertebrates as well as small reptiles and probably young rodents.

Isaac Says: It's a snake - no it's a lizard!



Turtles/Tortoises

Box Turtle

- Adult size: 4.5 to 6 inches
- Box turtles are omnivores. A box turtle will "basically eat anything it can catch".
- Average lifespan is 50 years.
- A vulnerable species; likely to become endangered unless the circumstances threatening its survival and reproduction improve.

Isaac Says: I like strawberries too!



Snapping Turtle

- Snapping turtles live in muddy lakes, ponds, and slow-moving rivers.
- Average lifespan of snapping turtles is 30 to 40 years.
- They are a popular ingredients in turtle soup.
- Snapping turtles will also eat just about anything, including: aquatic plants, fish, frogs and tadpoles, salamanders, insects, snails

Isaac Says: Yum! (because of the soup)



Musk Turtle

- Adult Size: 3 to 5 inches
- Also called the STINKPOT due to its ability to release a foul musky odor from scent glands on the edge of its shell, possibly to deter predators.
- Native to southeastern Canada and the Eastern United States.
- Musk turtles are omnivores. They eat small snails, mollusks, crayfish, small tadpoles, insects such as dragonfly and damselfly nymphs and will occasionally consume plant matter such as duckweed.

Isaac Says: Gross!



Sulcata Tortoise

- Adult size: 24 to 36 inches long; Adults can weigh 100 to 200 pounds.
- Inhabits the southern edge of the Sahara desert in Northern Africa.
- Third largest species of tortoise in the world. (1st - Galapagos Tortoise; 2nd - Aldabra Giant Tortoise)
- Sulcata tortoises are herbivores. They eat a high fiber, low protein diet of grasses and plants.
- A vulnerable species; likely to become endangered unless the circumstances threatening its survival and reproduction improve.



Isaac Says: So big!