

Toads



What do toads look like?

Toads have poison glands (called parotids) behind their eyes, a chubby body, and shorter legs than frogs. Toads have no teeth, and most toads have warty skin. The largest toads are over 8 inches (20 cm) long. Females are larger than males.

What habitat does the toad like?

Toads live in a variety of habitats, but most prefer moist areas. Although they breathe air through lungs, many can stay underwater for long periods, absorbing oxygen in the water through the skin. Like all amphibians, a toad's body temperature depends on its surroundings. In colder regions, the animal burrows in mud to hibernate through the winter.



American Toads like to hibernate together to increase body temperatures over winter.

Toads will double in size before hibernating for the winter.

How do toads catch their food and what do they eat?

The tongue of a toad is attached at the front of the mouth instead of the rear and is covered with a sticky substance, making it a trap for prey. It also produces mucus to help in swallowing. All toads blink when they swallow; because no bone exists between the eye and the mouth, the eye is pushed against the roof of the mouth, forcing the food farther back.

Frogs and toads are carnivorous, feeding principally on insects, worms, spiders, and other invertebrates. Larger toads eat prey as large as mice or newborn water snakes. Occasionally toads catch living food too large to swallow all at once and will leave it sticking out of its mouth, ingesting it gradually or even choking on it or regurgitating the food.



Do toads give live birth?

Most toads lay their eggs in water, where they hatch into tadpoles, or fishlike larvae, in early spring or summer. A young toad characteristically goes through a true metamorphosis, starting with the tadpole stage, during which it has gills and a tail. As the animal matures, its tail is absorbed, lungs develop, the gills disappear, legs appear, and the adult emerges from the water onto land.



How can you tell the difference between a toad and a frog?

- Toads have dry, warty skin, while frogs have smooth, wet skin.
- Toads do not have teeth; frogs have tiny teeth.
- Toads have shorter back legs than frogs.
- Toads hop and frogs jump



Which one of these is the toad?

How do toads communicate to each other?

Most toads, especially males, are quite vocal. As the animal forces air from the lungs, vocal cords in the voice box, or larynx, vibrate to make the distinctive call of each species. A much louder sound is produced by males of species with a vocal sac; the sac swells enormously when the toad calls to attract a mate.



Myth

Toads cannot give you warts.

