



# OUTDOOR WILDLIFE AWARD



## PROJECT: REPTILES

### GOALS

**A. REPTILE FACTS:** Identify four different **reptiles** and four characteristics of all **reptiles**.

**B. REPTILE CHALLENGE:** Complete one of four.

### A. REPTILE FACTS

**Reptile Examples** (Identify 4.)

- lizard, turtle, snake, alligator, crocodile, gecko, chameleon

**Reptile Characteristics** (Identify 4.)

- have scales (or modified scales)
- breathe air through lungs
- typically lay eggs with hard, leathery shells
- usually live on land
- are related to amphibians, but lack gills (among other differences)

**ANIMAL SAFETY:** Do not approach or feed wild animals—for your safety and the health of the animals. Use caution in any wilderness setting when wildlife is present.

### B. REPTILE CHALLENGE

Research one of these options and make a five-minute presentation to another family member. (The checklists will get you started.)

#### Option 1—Lizard Presentation

Research an unusual lizard in the world or in your area. *Ideas:* chameleons, Komodo dragons, iguanas, monitor lizards

##### Lizard Checklist

- home and habitat
- diet
- unusual camouflage or defense mechanisms
- length, weight, and life expectancy
- other fun facts

**FUN FACT: FLYING GECKOS** have extra flaps of skin on their head, arms, legs, sides, and tail. When they jump, these flaps catch the air and allow the geckos to glide like a paper airplane.

#### Option 2—Crocodile/Alligator Presentation

Research these beasts—and find out how to stay safe around one.

##### Crocodile/Alligator Checklist

- differences between crocodiles and alligators
- where they live
- how they hunt
- what they eat
- speed and fighting techniques
- safety for humans on land and boats

**FUN FACT: NILE CROCODILES** are quite large and have fearsome reputations as hunters (from large fish to small hippos). But Nile crocs are caring and attentive parents—though most reptiles lay their eggs and leave, Nile crocs guard their nests until the eggs hatch.



### Option 3—Snake Presentation

Research three to five different snakes that live in your area. *Ideas:* king snake, garter snake, rattlesnake, coral snake, water snake

#### **Snake Checklist**

- snake name
- home and habitat
- eating habits
- behavior patterns
- danger level to humans
- size and coloring

### Option 4—Turtle Presentation

Visit a pet store or aquarium and learn about three to five types of turtles. Take pictures, write down breads, and ask an attendant questions. If he/she doesn't know, research on your own!

#### **Turtle Checklist**

- turtle name
- home and habitat
- conditions it needs to thrive
- hunting and eating habits
- coloring; body and shell characteristics
- parenting habits
- typical size and age

**FUN FACT: MATAMATA TURTLES** of the Amazon region are most unusual looking. They have a triangle-shaped head with horns protruding out, a tube nose, and strong jaws to help it hunt fish.

### **RESEARCH MORE**

- *My Pet Turtle* by Lynn Hamilton
- *Reptiles* by DK Eyewonder
- Field guides for "Snakes of North America," "Reptiles and Amphibians," "Turtles," etc.
- *The Ultimate Survival Manual* by Rich Johnson and Outdoor Life
- *NationalGeographic.com* (look for Animals > Reptiles)
- *eNature.com* (search Field Guides > Reptiles, then Turtles, Crocodylians, Lizards, or Snakes)

*My child has successfully completed the Project Goals for the topic—Reptiles.*

Adult Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Complete SIX projects to earn your WILDLIFE award)*