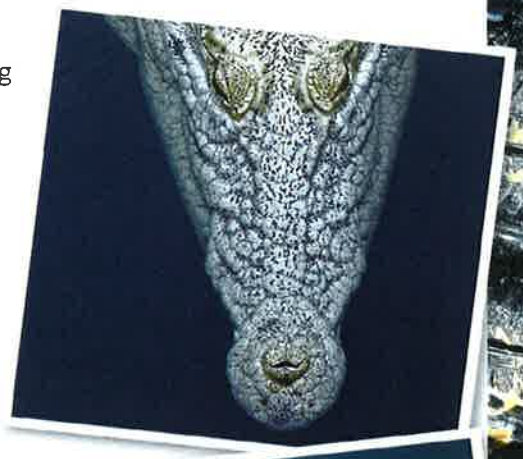
Crocodiles

Crocodiles are large reptiles that live in tropical countries all over the world. They are known for their large, powerful jaws, and their physical features mean they are excellent predators.

Hunting and diet

Crocodiles are carnivores, and eat birds, frogs, mammals, crustaceans and fish. Instead of chewing their food, crocodiles swallow it in large chunks. Crocodiles are ambush predators, which means they lay in wait for their prey to come close before they attack.



Snouts

Crocodiles have long, pointed snouts that look like a letter V from above. The shape of their snouts helps them to hunt a wide variety of prey, especially fish.



Teeth

Crocodiles have upper and lower jaws that are the same size. This means you can see both sets of teeth when a crocodile's mouth is closed. Their jaws are irregular, which means the teeth are not in a straight line. Each crocodile can have more than 100 teeth and may grow new teeth up to 50 times in its lifetime. This is useful because crocodiles often lose teeth in battles with prey.



Habitat

Crocodiles are cold-blooded, which means they can't generate their own heat. They live in the tropical habitats of Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas. They live in lakes, rivers, wetlands and saltwater regions.

Fascinating fact

Did you know that the closest relatives of crocodiles are birds and dinosaurs?

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Alligators

Although they were once close to extinction, alligators are now thriving. Their armoured bodies and muscular tails are a menacing sight, but it is these characteristics that make them such impressive hunters.

Hunting and diet

Alligators are carnivores, feeding mainly on fish, turtles, snakes and small mammals. They are ambush predators and are usually active at night. They wait near the shoreline to ambush their prey and drag it into the water. Their prey usually drowns before it is eaten.



Snouts

Alligators have a wide, rounded snout. Their snouts are strong, so they can crack open turtles and other hard-shelled creatures.



Teeth

Alligators have a wide upper jaw that overlaps the lower jaw. This means that the teeth in the lower jaw are almost completely hidden when the mouth closes, fitting into small dents in the upper jaw. They have about 80 teeth that are replaced many times in an alligator's life.

Habitat

Alligators like to live in freshwater habitats because they have a low tolerance for salt. Most alligators live in the freshwater lakes, rivers, marshes and swamps of the southeastern United States. They move slowly when out of the water but are excellent swimmers. They are cold-blooded, so they often lie in the Sun to warm their bodies.



Fascinating fact

Did you know that alligators can balance sticks or branches on their heads to attract birds looking for nesting materials?

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