

FROGS MATTER

WHY DO FROGS (amphibians) MATTER SO MUCH ?



🐸 They are both predators and prey in the ecosystem ... they eat some animals and are eaten by others, thus ... they do useful jobs such as pest control.

🐸 Most frogs eat pesky bugs and insects which destroy crops that feed us and which carry deadly diseases that make us sick.


🐸 They provide food for a variety of animals - fish, crocodilians, turtles, birds, etc., some of which provide food for human beings and all of which are useful to ecosystems.


🐸 They are very useful in medical research because their insides are so much like other animals .. they are used to test new drugs. Students used to dissect them but now computers provide a similar experience without killing so many frogs.


🐸 Frog skin makes stuff offering possible medical cure for a variety of human diseases, including AIDS, heart ailments and cancer.




Fantastic Facts

 Frog skin soaks up matter so easily that harmful substances in the environment which could threaten human beings can be noted early .. scientists call them “nature’s indicators”.


 Frogs provide an “early warning systems” for environmental troubles .. they are the first kind of animals to be affected by problems in the environment.

 Frogs are a huge biological family with 6722 species in the world. Each species or “kind” holds unique genes, DNA, any of which could provide cures for illness or models for creating life saving chemical or mechanical items.

 Frogs make wonderful sounds at night, croaking and “ribbiting”. Almost any water body might have frogs in it providing comforting rhythmic music to fall asleep by. Frogs are (usually) friendly and safe providing a wonderful way to introduce small brothers and sisters to wildlife.

 Frogs have been culturally important for a very long time ... stories about them normally indicate good things.

 Frogs are irreplaceable as innocent ambassadors of the wild. Think how many things we use have frogs on them: stickpins, ties, underwear, pajams, jewelry, clothing, toys, table cloths, curio carvings ... on and on.

 Frogs are known for one bad thing only ... warts ... and that isn’t even true.

 They are an integral part of Biodiversity.

SOUTH ASIAN AMPHIBIANS -- HOW MANY KINDS?

HOW MANY?

There are more than **600** kinds (species) of amphibians which occur naturally in South Asia. About **300** kinds of them occur **only in South Asia** and NOWHERE ELSE. We call these “**endemic**” ... found naturally in one place and no other place (naturally). Rest of these we call “non-endemic”. They occur in South Asia and other places as well.

The Three Groups of Amphibians are

Anura (frogs and toads)
-- normal looking froggy types



**Caudata
or Urodela**
(newts and
salamanders) --
lizardey-looking creatures



Gymnophiona or Apoda
(caecilians -- Limbless
amphibians) – wormo-wallahs



WHY WE SHOULD WORRY about frogs ?

There are so many Threats of Amphibians

Threats to Amphibians:

- increased UV radiation
- pollution & pesticides
- alien species
- climate change
- over collection
- as well as disease so



Aside from being so useful and charming ...
they are very very old in the world ...

🐸 Frogs are older than your oldest elder and older than the human species on the earth.

🐸 Frogs have lived on Earth for more than 36 crore years but NOW a third to half of all kinds could vanish in the next 2 decades !

🐸 Remember dinosaurs? They vanished from the Earth. Now our Earth is in trouble like that again ...massive extinctions of frogs have been predicted.

🐸 For amphibians (frogs) it is particularly bad ... 2 or 3 kinds face extinction for every one kind of threatened bird or mammal.

🐸 We should protect them for the same reasons we respect and protect our grandparents and great grandparents.

Because it is our duty.

IS THERE A SOLUTION ?



🐸 There is a plan. If everyone does their part, it will be a solution.

🐸 All the amphibian scientists in the world have a strategy called the Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP).

🐸 ACAP consists of research, assessment, in-situ (on-site) conservation, frozen zoo, and education awareness.

🐸 All the scientific breeding facilities (zoos, research labs, private hobbists, etc.) in the world have a plan to rescue species that can't be saved in the wild.

🐸 This plan is called the Amphibian Ark which will rescue frogs and keep them in “protective custody” until the threats have been overcome and then return them to the wild if at all possible. They may also collect samples for several frozen zoos in the world.

🐸 Under this plan, hundreds of kinds of frogs and other amphibians will be saved from extinction - they will NOT vanish.

CAN I HELP?

🐸 Yes, you can help by learning about the amphibian crisis ... the frog misfortune ... and tell others.

🐸 You can help by telling your friends, your teachers, your parents and your politicians and policy makers about it.

🐸 You can learn about frogs generally ... so that you can explain what we will lose by losing amphibians.

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