



Exercise: 1

Instructions: The amphibian section provides information on the evolutionary relationships among families of the Digital Atlas of Idaho amphibians, how to identify amphibian species in Idaho, and how each species goes about the business of making a living in nature. This exercise will help you to become much more familiar with this unique class of animals. Use your knowledge to answer the following questions completely and accurately.

1. What are the characteristics that distinguish amphibians from other animals?
2. What species are included in each of the two orders of amphibians found in Idaho?
3. What are the major differences between these two orders?
4. Using the family tree page, indicate which family of salamander is the least related to the other families of salamanders. Which family of the order Anura is the least related to the others?
5. Of the two families Ranidae and Pelobatidae, which one is more closely related to Bufonidae?
6. What do most amphibians eat?
7. Describe the basic life cycle of a frog. Trace the path of a frog from an egg to an adult.

Conservation: Visit the web site of the North American Reporting Center for Amphibian Malformations at: <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/narcam/>

1. What types of malformations did you observe?
2. What are the possible causes of these malformations?
3. Why do you think toxic chemicals influence frogs so easily?
4. What might happen to the genetic diversity of amphibians if they continue to decline?