

Invertebrate Fact Sheet



<http://academic.reed.edu/>



<http://www.scuba-equipment-usa.com/>



<https://www.bluezooaquatics.com/>

FACT: Invertebrates were the first animals to evolve.

The first animals had soft bodies and for this reason they left little fossil evidence of their existence. Scientists have discovered fossilized burrows and tracks in sediments that date back nearly 1 billion years. The oldest fossil of an invertebrate dates back to the late Precambrian, about 600 million years ago.

FACT: The first invertebrates evolved from single-celled, food-eating microorganisms.

Scientists are still uncertain exactly how the first invertebrates evolved. Most experts agree that the first invertebrates evolved from single-celled, food-eating microorganisms. Scientists think that these microorganisms formed permanent symbiotic groups and in doing so, they were no longer single-celled, they had become multicellular. When this happened, animals had evolved.

FACT: Invertebrates are often most noted for what they lack: a backbone and a bony skeleton.

Invertebrates do not have bones, a bony skeleton, or a backbone. Instead, they gain structural support for their bodies in different ways. For example, sea anemones have a hydrostatic skeleton that produces support via sheets of muscles and an internal cavity filled with fluid. Other invertebrates such as insects and crustaceans have a hard outer shell or exoskeleton.

FACT: Invertebrates account for 97 percent of all known species.

An estimated 97% of all species alive today are invertebrates. Of all invertebrates, the insects are by far the most numerous. There are also some 10,000 species of sponges, 9,000 species of cnidarians, 100,000 species of mollusks, and 75,000 species of arachnids in addition to tens of thousands of species belonging to other lesser known groups.

FACT: Some species of invertebrates form large colonies.

Colonies are groups of animals of the same species that remain together throughout most of their life cycle. Members of a colony are often closely related and benefit from living together by dividing up the work of obtaining food, protecting themselves, and reproducing. Invertebrate colonies are most common in marine habitats where the members of the colony are often physically joined. Marine invertebrate colonies include corals, hydrozoans, Portuguese man-of-war, and sea squirts

FACT: Invertebrates will eat almost anything that was or is alive.

There are herbivores, carnivores, and detritivores in the invertebrate world. They go about obtaining food in a multitude of ways. Some aquatic invertebrates such as sponges are filter feeders while others such as sea stars actively hunt prey.

<http://animals.about.com/od/invertebrates/a/tenfactsinvertebrates.htm>