



AMAZING ANIMAL ARMOR

About Animal Armor

Animals have all different ways of protecting themselves. Some animals can run fast, some can blend in to its surroundings, but some animals use different kinds of armor for protection. This armor is part of their external body and helps to keep the animal safe from danger. Some examples of armor include hard shells, thick skin, spines, and quills.

External Armor

The first example of an animal having external armor is the pangolin. Although the pangolin looks like an armadillo, it is actually quite different. This scaly mammal lives in parts of Africa and Asia. Its armor is actually made of keratin, which is what human fingernails are made of! The Pangolin uses its armor to stay safe from hungry animals like lions and leopards.



A pangolin! Notice the hard scales on his body.



An Armadillo—can you see how it is different from the pangolin?

Another example of an animal with armor is the armadillo. Armadillos live here in the United States and are another type of mammal. The armor they have covering their bodies is more like leather than a hard shell, but it still helps to keep the animal safe from danger.

Spines and Quills

Other examples of animal armor include spines and quills. One animal that has quills is the porcupine. The porcupine has hundreds of sharp points called quills that stick out from all over its body. When the porcupine feels threatened, it can stick these quills up and help keep danger away. Although some people think these animals can shoot their spines, that is a myth. The spines will come out easily when touched. A picture of a porcupine is shown below.



A porcupine.



A close-up picture of the quills

An animal that uses spines is one that is found in the ocean. The sea urchin is an interesting animal that feeds on the ocean floor. The spines of a sea urchin, like the other examples, help to protect the animal from danger like hungry fish.



A Sea Urchin

Hedgehogs are another animal that has spines. They are mammals. They may look like a porcupine, but they are very different. Hedgehogs will roll into a ball when danger is around and use their spines for protection.



A Hedgehog
