

### 3.2. Amphibians

Amphibians live in water when they are young, but they live on land when they are adults.

Their skin is wet and slimy and they don't have scales. When they are larvae (**tadpoles**), they have a long tail and no limbs. The adults develop limbs. Some adult amphibians, such as frogs and toads, lose their tail.

Amphibians are **poikilotherms**. The larvae breathe through gills (gill respiration). The adults breathe through their skin (cutaneous respiration) and also have lungs (pulmonary respiration). They are carnivores.

Most amphibians are oviparous. They lay their eggs in water and these produce larvae. The larvae undergo metamorphosis (lungs replace the gills and limbs develop) until they become adults.

The most important orders of the amphibian class are **anurans** (frogs and toads) and **urodeles** (salamanders and newts).



**Anurans.** Adults don't have tails and the back legs are twice as long as the front legs.



**Urodeles.** Adults have a highly developed tail and four legs that are the same length.

### 3.3. Reptiles

Some reptiles live on land, but others live in water. All reptiles breathe through lungs; they don't have gills.

Most reptiles (except snakes and other reptiles without legs) have elongated bodies with a separate head, neck, trunk, tail and four legs. Their bodies are covered with thick **scales**.

Reptiles are **poikilotherms**. Most reptiles lay eggs that are covered with a hard shell to prevent **dehydration**. They lay the eggs on land and the young are similar to the parents.

Most reptiles are carnivorous, but some lizards, tortoises (land and freshwater) and turtles (saltwater) are herbivores. They include the following orders: **Chelonia** (tortoises and freshwater turtles), **Squamata** (lizards, chameleons and snakes) and **Crocodylia** (crocodiles, caimans and alligators). Snakes are in a subgroup called **Ophidia**.



**Chelonia**



**Squamata**



**Ophidia**



**Crocodylia**

### KEY WORDS

**dehydration:** water loss