

Restless Planet

“On Your Own” at the Virginia Aquarium

Malaysian Peat Swamp – Carboniferous Period (315 MYA)

- This freshwater fish can move over land and can even breathe out of water for up to four days. This fish is called a _____head Fish (circle one)

Lizard

Snake

Giant

Reptile

Walking



Look at the fish – what body part helps it move over land? _____

- Animals use **camouflage** to blend into their surroundings, making them hard to see. Try to find the pit vipers in their habitat. Why do you think they want to be green?

- The tomistomas are crocodiles living in freshwater swamps and can grow up to 16 feet long. Using your paper as a 1-foot ruler, estimate their length.

1. _____

2. _____

Coastal Desert – Silurian Period (420 MYA)

- You have just entered a hot, dry climate with snakes and scorpions. What do you call this type of habitat? (circle one)

Rainforest

Grasslands

Desert

Polar



- Birds, jackals and wild dogs prey on the Algerian hedgehog. By looking at their body, how do you think the hedgehog protects itself?

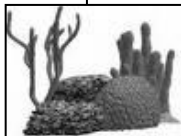
- These animals are well-camouflaged in their sandy habitat so we need a special light to see them. Which animal in the exhibit glows in the dark? _____



- Mediterranean seahorses are not strong swimmers so they must have support from something in their habitat. Look for the seahorses and describe where you find them in their habitat.

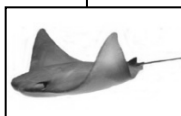
The Red Sea – Triassic Period (200 MYA)

- **The Coral Aquarium:** Corals are tiny animals that live in colonies, and provide a habitat for other animals. When the coral die, they leave behind a hard limestone skeleton which builds the reef.



- Draw your favorite coral or fish from the Coral Aquarium below:

- What is your animal doing in its habitat? (Example: swimming, eating, not moving)?



- Why is coral a good habitat for other animals? _____

- **The Walk-Through Aquarium:** Eagle Rays are the biggest animal in this Aquarium. They can get up to 5 feet across! How many rays do you see? _____

Flores Island – Precambrian Period (760 MYA)

- Flores is a volcanic island and home to Komodo Dragons, one of the few places they live in the wild. Komodos are the largest lizard in the world and are endangered (there are not many of them left.)



- What characteristics make the komodo a reptile? (circle one)

Feathers

Scales

Moist Skin

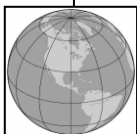
Fur

Wings

- What evidence do you see that the komodo dragons are exploring their habitat?

Conclusion

- Now you have seen all the animals in the Restless Planet exhibit. Match each animal below to its correct habitat:



Tomistoma (crocodile)

Komodo dragon

Coral

Scorpions

Red Sea

Peat Swamp

Coastal Desert

Restless Planet – ANSWER KEY

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Malaysian Peat Swamp – Carboniferous Period (315 MYA)

- This freshwater fish can move over land and can even breathe out of water for up to four days. This fish is called a _____head Fish (circle one)

Lizard

Snake

Giant

Reptile

Walking



Look at the fish – what body part helps it move over land? Fins

- Animals use **camouflage** to blend into their surroundings, making them hard to see. Try to find the pit vipers in their habitat. Why do you think they want to be green?

To blend into its environment (trees/bushes that are green) to avoid animals that want to eat them

- The tomistomas are crocodiles living in freshwater swamps and can grow up to 16 feet long. Using your paper as a 1-foot ruler, estimate their length.

2. _____

2. _____

Coastal Desert – Silurian Period (420 MYA)

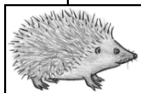
- You have just entered a hot, dry climate with snakes and scorpions. What do you call this type of habitat? (circle one)

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Grasslands

Desert

Polar



- Birds, jackals and wild dogs prey on the Algerian hedgehog. By looking at their body, how do you think the hedgehog protects itself?

Rolls into a ball and points its quills out

- These animals are well-camouflaged in their sandy habitat so we need a special light to see them. Which animal in the exhibit glows in the dark? Scorpions

- Mediterranean seahorses are not strong swimmers so they must have support from something in their habitat. Look for the seahorses and describe where you find them in their habitat.

Hidden in the sea grasses



The Red Sea – Triassic Period (200 MYA)

- **The Coral Aquarium:** Corals are tiny animals that live in colonies, and provide a habitat for other animals. When the coral die, they leave behind a hard limestone skeleton which builds the reef.



- Draw your favorite coral or fish from the Coral Aquarium below:

- What is your animal doing in its habitat? (Example: swimming, eating, not moving)?



- Why is coral a good habitat for other animals? Makes a good place to hide, offers protection, good place to find food (algae, small fish, coral, etc.)

- **The Walk-Through Aquarium:** Eagle Rays are the biggest animal in this Aquarium. They can get up to 5 feet across! How many rays do you see? 6

Flores Island – Precambrian Period (760 MYA)

- Flores is a volcanic island and home to Komodo Dragons, one of the few places they live in the wild. Komodos are the largest lizard in the world and are endangered (there are not many of them left.)



- What characteristic make the komodo a reptile? (circle one)

Feathers

Scales

Moist Skin

Fur

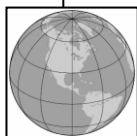
Wings

- What evidence do you see that the komodo dragons are exploring their habitat?

Foot marks/digging in the dirt, piles of scat (poop) saliva on the windows/dome

Conclusion

- Now you have seen all the animals in the Restless Planet exhibit. Match each animal below to its correct habitat:



Tomistoma (crocodile)

Red Sea

Komodo dragon

Peat Swamp

Coral

Coastal Desert

Scorpions

Volcanic Island