

## Herpetology (Reptiles) Vocabulary

<b>Bridge:</b>	Joins the carapace and the plastron together
<b>Carapace:</b>	Hard upper shell
<b>Ectothermic:</b>	An organism whose body temperature is determined by the surrounding environment (cold-blooded)
<b>Endothermic:</b>	An animal that regulates its own body temperature internally (warm-blooded)
<b>Herpetology:</b>	Study of reptiles and amphibians
<b>Keystone Species:</b>	A species that has a disproportionate effect on its environment relative to its abundance. An ecosystem may experience a dramatic shift if a keystone species is removed, even though that species was a small part of the ecosystem by measures of biomass or productivity
<b>Metamorphosis:</b>	A change in the form or function of an organism by a natural process of growing or development
<b>Plastron:</b>	The nearly flat bottom part of a shell
<b>Poison:</b>	A toxin that causes harm by ingestion or touch
<b>Scute:</b>	An enlarged scale on a reptile
<b>Venom:</b>	A toxic substance that causes harm by injection
<b>Vertebrate:</b>	An animal possessing a backbone