

Georgia State Animals & Plants: Habitats and Adaptations

Level: C

Perky Penguin: Good afternoon, ladies and gentleman. I am Perky Penguin, your host for today! We are going to be talking about the habitats of Georgia. Take a look at this map. It shows the regions of Georgia.

I do not live in Georgia! It is WAY too warm for me! I live in the South Pole where the saltwater is very cold!

Winifred Right Whale: Did someone say 'saltwater'?

Perky Penguin: Yes, I did. Friends, this is Winifred Right Whale. She is a very interesting lady- she is Georgia's official Marine Mammal! Her habitat is the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Georgia.

Winifred Right Whale: That's right, Perky. I live in the Atlantic Ocean. I am an endangered species. There are only about 300 of us left in the world!

Perky Penguin: Winifred, do you have any special parts that help you adapt to living in your ocean habitat?

Winifred Right Whale: Oh yes. I have a long and narrow shape. It helps me glide through the water. I have a big tail that helps me swim. I make sounds to talk with my friends and family. Oh, I hear them calling for me now—see you later!

Perky Penguin: Good-bye Winifred!

Tamara Tortoise: Hi Winifred!

Perky Penguin: Hi Tamara. Friends, this is Tamara Tortoise. She is a Gopher Tortoise, the Georgia State Reptile.

Tamara Tortoise: I live in the coastal plain of Georgia. It gets hot! We make our homes in burrows. I have big claws and flat front legs to help me dig. These are special adaptations!

Perky Penguin: Do you have any other special adaptations?

Tamara Tortoise: The burrow I dig. My burrow is so deep that I stay at just the right temperature no matter how hot or cold it is outside.

Perky Penguin: Wow!

Here comes Freddie Tree Frog.

Freddie Tree Frog: Hello, I am Freddie Tree frog. The tree frog is Georgia's State Amphibian. You might find some of my green tree frog cousins in your backyard. I live in Southern Georgia and the Piedmont. I like to hang around by your porch lights to catch the flying insects.

Perky Penguin: That's a great adaptation, especially, because you share your habitat with humans.

Freddie Tree Frog: I also have a special tongue. It is very long and I can catch bugs as they fly by. My tongue is sticky to hold bugs until I can get them back to my mouth. I can do that fast!

I live in habitats that are wet. I can change the color of my skin to camouflage myself and hide.

I also have sticky feet to help me climb trees.

Perky Penguin: Those are great adaptations!

Freddie Tree Frog: Thank you! I am going back to the pond. Bye, Perky!

Perky Penguin: Bye!

Penelope Possum: Well, hello Perky. I am Penelope Possum, and this is my baby. Let me tell you about Possums. You can find us in any Georgia habitat. We are awake at night so we are called nocturnal.

Perky Penguin: What kinds of foods do possums eat?

Penelope Possum: Everything! We eat snails, bugs, rats, and snakes. We like fruit and other food that is falling out of trash cans!

Liking lots of food is an adaptation that makes it easy for us to live most anywhere- from the country to the city.

Perky Penguin: You do like lots of foods!

Penelope Possum: It was fun talking to you, Perky! Bye!

Perky Penguin: Bye!

Sammy Swallowtail: Hello, Perky! I am Sammy Swallowtail. I am Georgia's state butterfly. A butterfly is an insect. I live in all regions of Georgia. I like places like your backyard if there are good flowers around.

Perky Penguin: Do you have any adaptations?

Sammy Swallowtail: Yes. Butterflies use their sense of smell to find food. Then I use my special tongue called a proboscis. It is like a straw. I sip the juice inside a flower.

Perky Penguin: That is a cool way to have dinner!

Sammy Swallowtail: I have another special adaptation- my color. I am yellow. Yellow means poisonous in the animal world. Other animals stay away from me.

Perky Penguin: Swallowtail butterflies have cool adaptations!

Sammy Swallowtail: You are right! I am going to go find some more flowers! Bye!

Perky Penguin: Bye! Here comes a flower now. This is Azalea Annie.

Azalea Annie: Hi. I am Azalea Annie. I am the Georgia State Wildflower. I like cool, shaded spots. I like to live under pine trees.

Perky Penguin: Where would we find places that you like in Georgia?

Azalea Annie: Mountains are one of my favorite habitats. I can grow in backyards or other places in the state if the area is just right.

Perky Penguin: Do you have any special adaptations?

Azalea Annie: Of course. I have roots that do not go deep. This is perfect for thin mountain soils.

Also, I have a secret adaptation. You won't tell the birds if I tell you, will you?

Perky Penguin: Not a chance!

Azalea Annie: OK, here is the secret: I have long branches that are sort of open. They are perfect for the birds to hide in. The birds sit on my branches all the time.

When my flowers make seeds, the birds pick up the seeds and take them somewhere else. New plants grow in new places. All I had to do was attract birds, and they carry my seeds away for me.

Perky Penguin: Azalea Annie that is one of the smartest adaptations I have ever heard!

Azalea Annie: Thank you! Plants have great adaptations just like animals do! I am going to find some shade. Bye!

Perky Penguin: Bye! Look who is here now. It is Byron Bass.

Byron Bass: Hello Perky! I am Byron Largemouth Bass. I am the Georgia State fish!

Perky Penguin: Wow! I am glad to meet you! Tell me about your habitat.

Byron Bass: A beautiful, clear, Georgia river is my favorite habitat. I also like lakes, ponds, streams, even swamps. But the water must be clear, not polluted.

I like having lots of plants on the banks. They give me hiding places in their roots or branches hanging down in the water. I like quiet water too.

You can find me in all the Georgia regions, except of course the Atlantic Ocean! I need freshwater to live in, not saltwater like Winifred Right Whale.

Perky Penguin: Can you tell me any special adaptations you have for your habitat?

Byron Bass: Sure, Perky! I am dark green on my back and sides. I am white on my belly. If you are above me, you just see the dark that blends in with the water. If you are below me you just see the white that blends in with the sunlight above. Pretty smart, isn't it?

Perky Penguin: It sure is a good adaptation that a lot of animals use!

Nice talking with you Byron Largemouth Bass.

Byron Bass: Nice chatting with you, Perky.

Perky Penguin: *{To Audience}* Nice chatting with you all today too. I hope that you learned about Georgia habitats and animals. Don't forget the animals you met and the adaptations that help them survive!