

# ANIMAL DIVERSITY WEB

## Background:

From the student conducting research, to the researcher looking to publish, online resources are the first point of contact for students and educators alike. The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology's Animal Diversity Web (ADW) is a free, interactive, multimedia website offering natural history information on thousands of animals worldwide.

## Goal:

- 1) To improve critical thinking by questioning sources of information
- 2) To explore the effectiveness of traditional, lecture-based pedagogy by presenting your findings in a non-traditional way (podcast, role play, cover song, interpretive dance...)

## Questions:

- University students who are not necessarily expert biologist write species-level text. If that's the case, how legitimate are the articles being published by this website?
- How effective are traditional lecture-based approaches to teaching?

## Task 1:

Since ADW has two main parts: <sup>(1)</sup> higher taxonomic levels (Phyla, Class etc.) <sup>(2)</sup> species account

1. Who are the authors of the first part? Who are the authors of the second part?
2. What are their credentials?
3. Do they cite sources of information, or references?
4. Choose a species account and look at the references that are cited. What kinds of references are likely to have higher quality information?
5. Go to one of the websites in the references (follow an external link, departing from ADW)
6. Does this website clearly state the author of the information and the author's credentials?
7. What sources does the author use?
8. Can you tell if the information is current?
9. Why is the author posting the information on the web?
10. Can you find corroboration of this information in a book or on another website?
11. Examine the bibliographies. What format do they follow? Is the information complete?
12. Find an error? Contact [adw\\_errors@umich.edu](mailto:adw_errors@umich.edu)! (include citation for credible reference)

## Task 2: (10)

1. Choose one species in one of the animal phylums. (avoid overlap and co-ordinate with Ms. P or Mr. T)
2. Consider a species of local interest, introduced species, endangered species... consider the various classes: bird, amphibian, fish, snail etc.
3. Pick a minimum of 5 key points (salient bits of information) related to the chosen species and consider a novel way to present this information to the class. Report the key characteristics that place the species in that particular phylum.

## Evaluation:

Item	Criteria	Mark
Knowledge	• Thorough understanding of species giving at least 5 pieces of information on the species	0 1 2 3 4 5
	• Excellent criteria given to show why the species is classified in its particular phylum/class	
Communication	• Presented species in a creative and unique manner	0 1 2 3 4 5
	• Clearly delivered information in an organized manner	

**TOTAL VALUE: 10 MARKS**