



Armadillos and opossums



Armadillos are related to anteaters and sloths. Opossums are marsupials, like kangaroos.



Armadillos

Armadillos are grayish brown animals with strong curved claws and peglike teeth without enamel. They are primarily active at night, digging for insects. During the day they hang out in burrows.



More armadillo lore

Armadillos are timid, when scared they draw their feet in, and they may wedge themselves with their plates into their burrows. They also leap into the air or play dead. Litters range from 1 to 12. They bear sets of quadruplets from a single egg—polyembryony. In ancient times giant armadillos existed, comically called carmadillos!

Armadillo habitat and diet

- Armadillo habitat—Armadillos live in a variety of temperate to warm habitats-- rain forests, grasslands, and semi-deserts. Armadillos burrow underground to sleep, sometimes 16 hours.
- Armadillo diet---Armadillos are primarily insectivores, but will eat invertebrates, fruit, eggs, and small animals, even carrion.



Armadillo armor

Armadillo shell is made of plates of bone connected by soft fibers of collagen,-- Sharpey's fibers. They form tiles covered in keratin epidermal scales. Overlapping plates cover the back, legs, head and tail with the underside uncovered.



Another armored animal

Pangolins are mammals, sometimes called scaly anteaters, that are covered in scales made of cemented hairs. They eat ants and termites.

Pangolins are found in Africa and Asia. They roll into a ball when threatened, which is the source of the name from a Malay word for roller..





Opossums

Opossums roamed the earth with dinosaurs. The opossum is a marsupial like a kangaroo. Opossums have 1 to 3 litters a year with up to 20, but typically 8 to 9 in a litter. Opossums are found across the United State.



Opossum facts

Opossums may “play dead” to try to fool predators. Opossums have 50 teeth and a hairless prehensile tail, as well as opposable thumbs on their hind feet. They are nocturnal searching for insects, snails and small rodents. Baby opossums cling to the mother’s back.

Opossum habitat and diet

- Opossum habitat—Opossums live in woodland areas along streams, ponds, lakes, swamps, and marshes, as well as farmland.
- Opossum diet—Opossums are omnivores feeding at night on insects, worms, carrion, reptiles, amphibians, birds and their eggs, crustaceans, berries, fruits, and small mammals.



Marsupials

A marsupial is a mammal whose young are born very early in their development. Newborn marsupials develop outside the mother's body in a pouch or skin fold.



Other marsupials

Examples of marsupials are kangaroos, wallabies, possums, bandicoots, quolls, wombats, tree kangaroos, Antechinus, dunnarts, bettongs, koalas, quokkas, sugar gliders, Tasmanian devils and Virginia opossums.



Finger creatures


Possum, possum with your
young,

On your back so tightly slung,
(touching back)

Possum, possum naked tail,
(touching rear)

Sharp of teeth and sharp of nail!
(pointing to teeth and nail)





Creature song to *Have You Ever Seen a Lassie*

Have you seen armadillo, a dillo, a dillo
Have you seen armadillo with 9 banded shell?
With plates carapace,
Legs and tails in place,
Have you seen armadillo with 9 banded shell?

Creature feature

Take a walk in the park. Can you find a home for an opossum or armadillo? Do you see dug up evidence of insect hunting?

What would you include on an omnivore buffet? Or could you make an armadillo's armor with candy corn?

Take a small cup—could you make it into an armadillo armor or an opossum pouch?



Art for little hands

You can put a baby opossum in the slit in the mommy opossum or let it ride on her back.

You can glue sequins on the armadillo to make the armor.



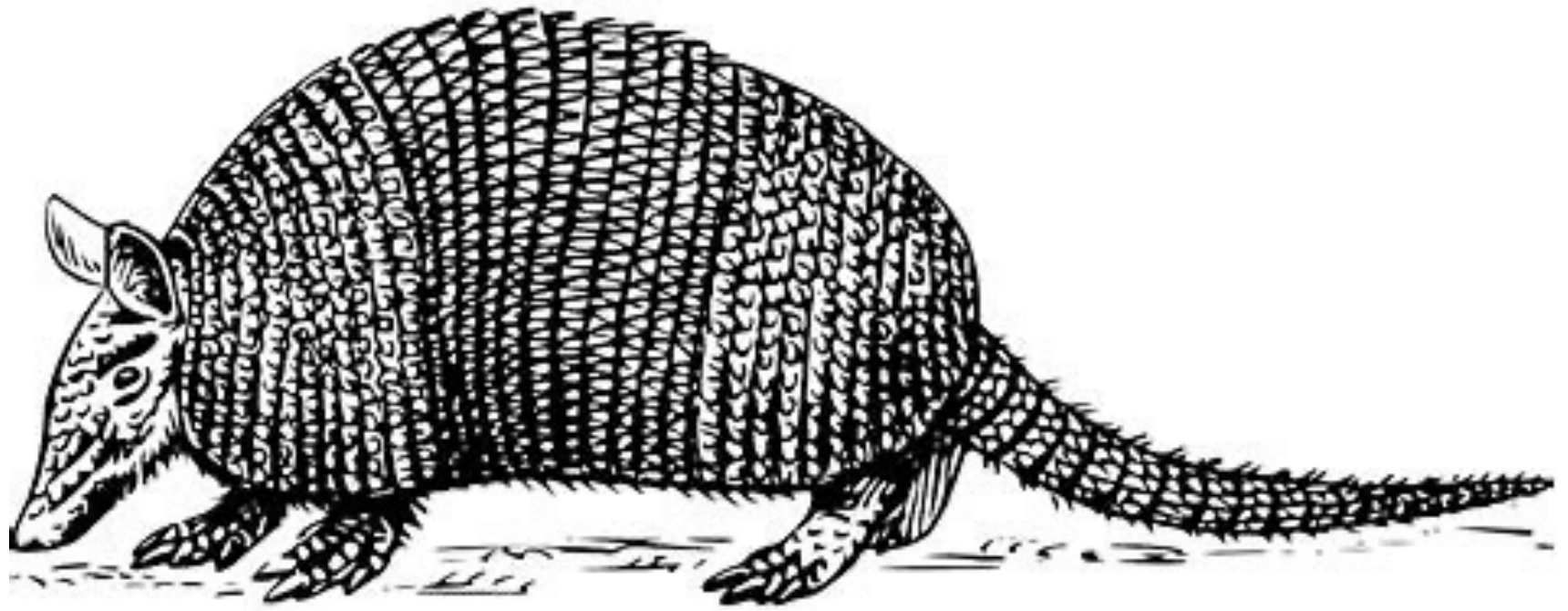
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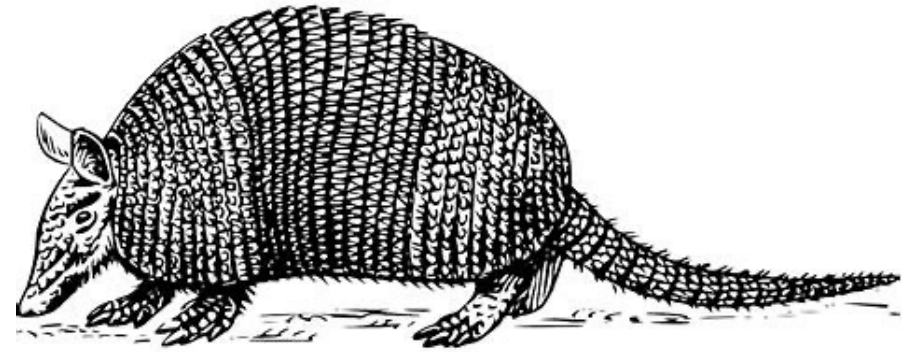
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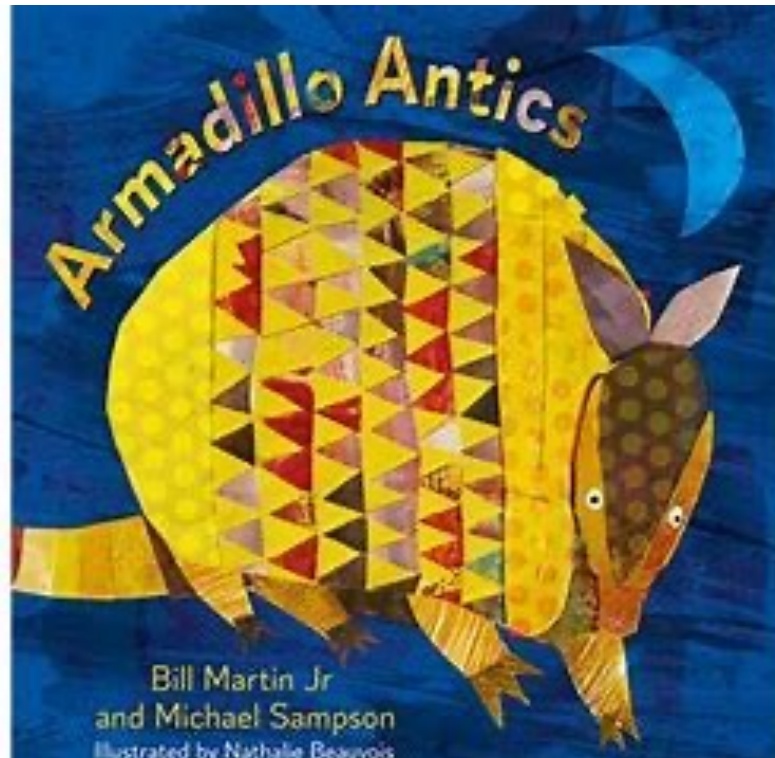






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