



*ground squirrel*



*common porcupine*



*kangaroo rat*

The largest group of mammals is the rodents. This group includes mice, rats, squirrels, beavers, guinea pigs, lemmings, marmots, muskrats, porcupines, prairie dogs, and chinchillas. All rodents are herbivores, which means that they eat plants.

Rodents are the mammals that gnaw. Their teeth are especially made for gnawing hard things such as nuts, seeds, and wood. Pictured above are three rodents: ground squirrel, common porcupine, and kangaroo rat.



*armadillo*



*aardvark*



*masked shrew*

Another group of mammals are those that eat insects. Mammals that eat ants and termites are echidnas, armadillos, pangolins, armadillos, anteaters, bats, shrews, moles, hedgehogs, and platypuses. The number of insects is kept under control by the meals that these many animals daily consume. Pictured above are some examples of insect eating mammals: armadillo, duck-billed platypus, and shrew.



Bats are the only mammals that fly. Bats are among the most numerous of all mammals. All bats can see, although many have limited vision. Some bats eat their weight in insects each night.



*echidna adult*



*echidna young*



*duck-billed platypus*

The echidna or spiny anteater is an egg-laying mammal with short spines. The duck-billed platypus, the only other mammal that lays eggs, has webbed feet giving it the ability to swim well.