

# The Animal Kingdom

## Mammals

Mammals are a diverse group of warm-blooded vertebrates distinguished by their ability to produce milk to nourish their young. They possess hair or fur at some stage of their lives and have highly developed brains. From the tiny bumblebee bat weighing just 2 grams to the magnificent blue whale reaching up to 200 tons, mammals have adapted to virtually every environment on Earth. They inhabit oceans, forests, deserts, mountains, and even the polar regions. Notable characteristics include a four-chambered heart, three middle ear bones, and a neocortex region in the brain.