

# Behavior Terms Glossary: Reptiles

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There is a wealth of jargon used throughout the reptile world. This is especially true when discussing reptile behaviors. Learning this vocabulary allows you to better understand articles and what veterinarians, reptile hobbyists and other reptile owners are saying. The following list of terms, while in no way comprehensive, contains some of the terms used to discuss reptile behavior.

## Arboreal

A reptile that lives mostly in high places such as trees and bushes.

## Aquatic

A reptile that lives most of its life in water.

## Brumation

Inactivity and lower metabolic rate as a response to prolonged cold weather periods; partial hibernation.

## Crepuscular

A reptile that is most active at dawn and dusk, spending the rest of the day sleeping.

## Diurnal

A reptile that is active during the day and asleep at night.

## Estivation

The way in which some reptiles deal with extended periods of heat or draught. Characterized by lower metabolic activity, inactivity, and sluggishness. Also spelled as aestivation.

## Fossorial

A reptile that burrows or digs underground, in substrate, or under vegetation.

## Hibernation

To pass through a cold season in a state of lower metabolic activity and dormancy.

## Nocturnal

A reptile that is active at night and sleeps through the day.

## Saxicolous

A reptile that is a rock and crevice dweller.

## Semi-Aquatic

A reptile that lives both on land and in water. Some spend only part of their time in water while others spend much of their time in water.

## Terrestrial

A reptile that lives mainly on land.

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