



## **December's Topic: ANIMAL COVERINGS**

- Animals have a variety of coverings on their bodies – feathers, fur, scales or bare skin.
- Mammals have fur, which provides warmth and camouflage. Many mammals do not hibernate over the winter and their thick fur provides protection against cold weather.
- Feathers provide warmth, a waterproof barrier for the skin underneath, and help with flight. Birds spend a lot of time “Preening”- straightening, cleaning, and applying oil from a special gland to their feathers. The oil creates the waterproof barrier.
- Fish and reptiles, such as snakes and lizards, are covered with scales. Scales help keep moisture in and provide a protective covering. As they grow, some reptiles will shed their “too tight” covering of scales.
- Amphibians, such as frogs, toads and salamanders, are covered with bare skin. Most like to keep their skin wet and cool, and protected from the sun.

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