

How Animals Take Care of their Eggs

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ALL animals need to reproduce to prevent their species from extinction. Not all animals that lay eggs care for their eggs or young ones. Perpetuation of race can be maintained either by the over-production of eggs or by caring for a small number of eggs. Rearing or caring for young ones is an achievement in the evolution trend. Different animals have their own ways of ensuring the survival of their species. Laying of lots of eggs ensures that some of the eggs have the chance to grow up into adults. Most insect species lay their eggs and evolve survival strategies, such as enclosing the embryo in an eggshell to help it survive. Many species go to a great length to set their progeny off on the right path; Orangutan mothers have been known to breastfeed for eight years; the male penguin braves the brutal Antarctic winter to warm a single egg; mother wolf spider carries her dozens of offspring wherever she goes. Similarly, many other creatures take care of their eggs differently. Let's explore a few!

Sexually matured earthworms have clitellum, a modification of a section of the body wall consisting of a glandular, saddle-like thickening, slightly bulged, discoloured organ that produces a cocoon for enclosing the worms' eggs. The clitellum at the time of egg laying is pushed forward and slipped off the anterior end of the worm. The two ends of the clitellum close, and a capsule is formed with eggs. This capsule secretes an albuminous nutritive fluid. Though the cocoon has several eggs, only some will survive.



Clitellum

Female cockroaches produce egg cases known as oothecae. They contain many eggs and are enclosed by a protein substance that gradually hardens into strong protective casing. Some cockroaches drop the egg case, while some carry it until the eggs are ready to hatch.



Ootheca

The female *Belostoma*, a hemipteran bug, lays eggs on the back of its mate, and from this point onwards, it is the male's job to care for them till they are hatched.



Belostoma

Unlike some other arthropods, the female scorpion does not lay eggs. She keeps the fertilised eggs inside body until they hatch, at which point the baby until the first moulting period. At this time, their exoskeletons will become strong enough to survive independently without protection.

In *Ianthina*, a gastropod mollusc, the foot secretes a float in the female to which eggs are attached, forming a raft. The float with capsules is suspended underneath. Each capsule is provided with a stalk. The number of eggs per capsule ranges from 1500 to 2500. *Ianthina* is a predatory snail that achieves