

## PHOTOFEATURE

# Oddities of the Natural World — Animals with Unusual Appearances



Male and female Proboscis monkey  
Image credit: Flickr

### Proboscis Monkey

Proboscis monkeys (*Nasalis larvatus*) are known as bekantan in Indonesian and orang belanda in Malay; they are endemic to Borneo. They are sexually dimorphic, with males having distinctive bulbous noses that droop over their mouths, whereas females have snouts that turn slightly upward. Their webbed fingers and toes help them swim and navigate river and coastal environments.



Image credit: Flickr

### Star-nosed Mole

*Condylura cristata*, with the common name star-nosed mole, is native to North America and mainly inhabits wetland areas. The unique, odd-looking creature is known for its snout, which contains 22 little pink tentacles arranged in a star shape. Although the mole does have eyes, but its vision is poor; instead, it depends mainly on its nose. The star nose possesses some special organs that help it locate food sources and navigate its environment. According to a report from *Nature*, this is the world's fastest eater, identifying and consuming its food in just a quarter of a second.



### Hammerhead Shark

Hammerhead Shark (*Sphyrnidae*) is one of the unique sharks with a wide, flattened head that gives it a T-shape look. The distinctive appearance of the shark helps it find its food. Its eyes are positioned on the edges of its wide head, which allows it to scan a broader area. Moreover, the Hammerhead's head contains special sensors which help to find the electrical fields of its prey species. With its mouth on the underside of its head, the Hammerhead has very sharp teeth which look like the serrated edge of a saw.



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