



Alligators

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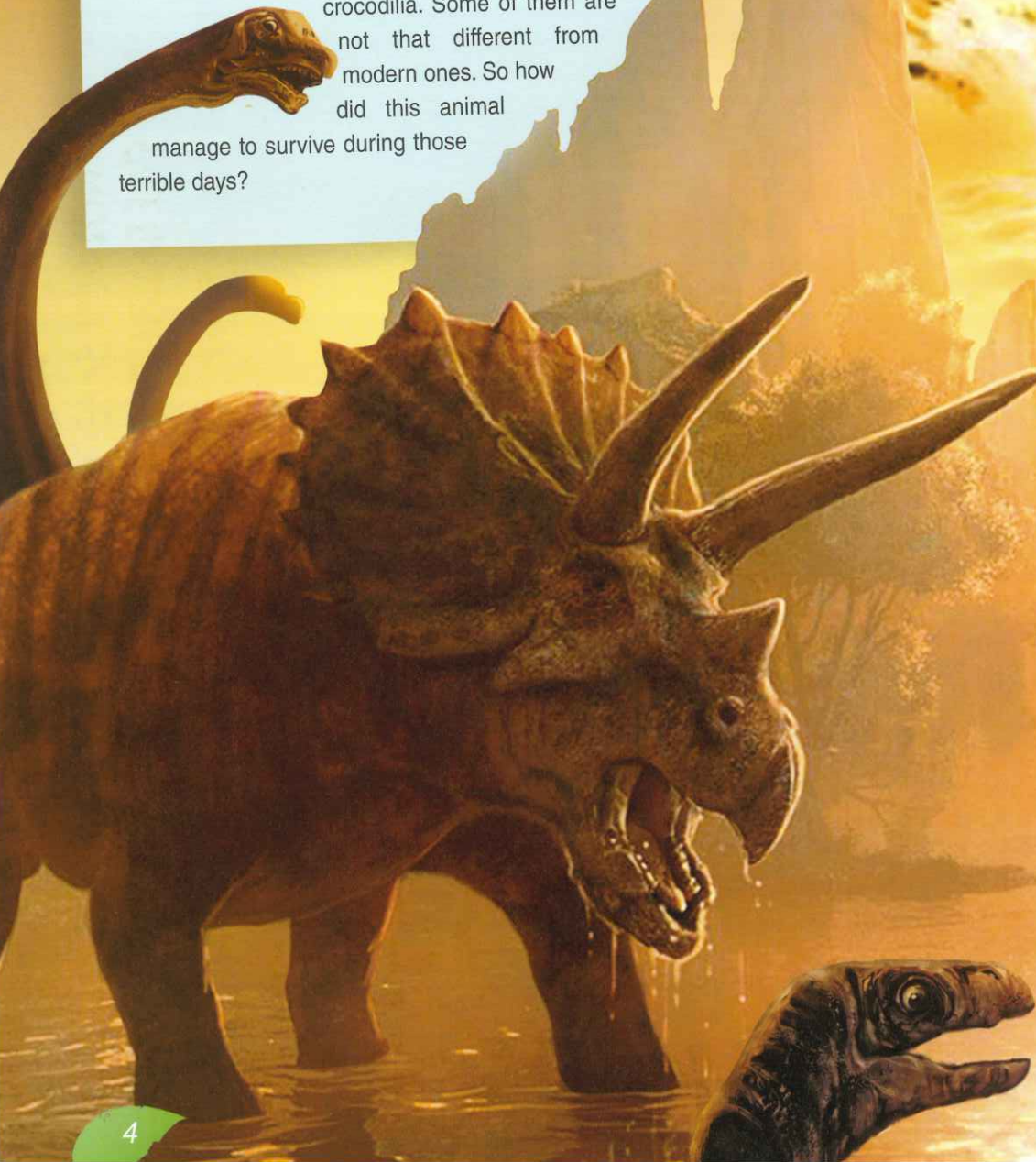
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Introduction

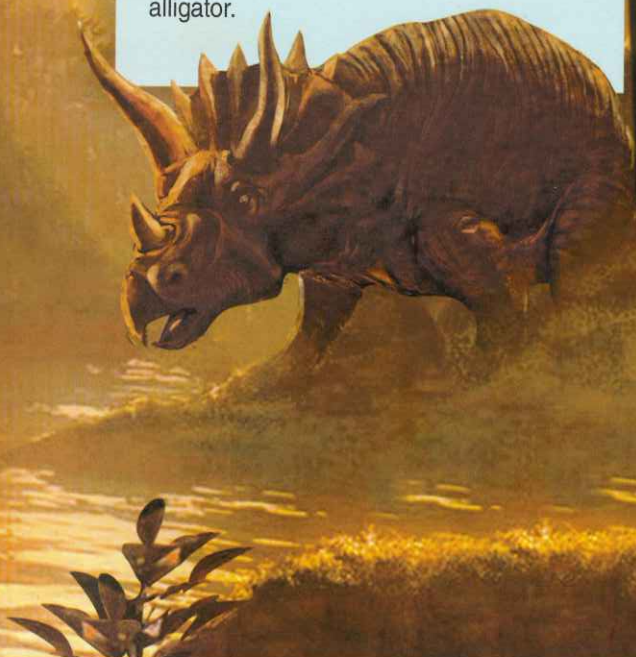
About 100 million years ago, a group of large reptiles called crocodylia roamed the Earth. They still do, but we know them as crocodiles and alligators. Sixty-five million years ago, the world changed. Many scientists believe that a massive asteroid crashed into the Earth. Black clouds blocked the sun and for a long time, it was very dark and cold. Then poisonous gases entered the atmosphere. After that, the world became extremely hot. During that time, the environmental conditions killed most dinosaurs. Seventy percent of all other plants and animals died, too – but not the crocodylia! Scientists have found fossils of many species of prehistoric crocodylia. Some of them are not that different from modern ones. So how did this animal manage to survive during those terrible days?



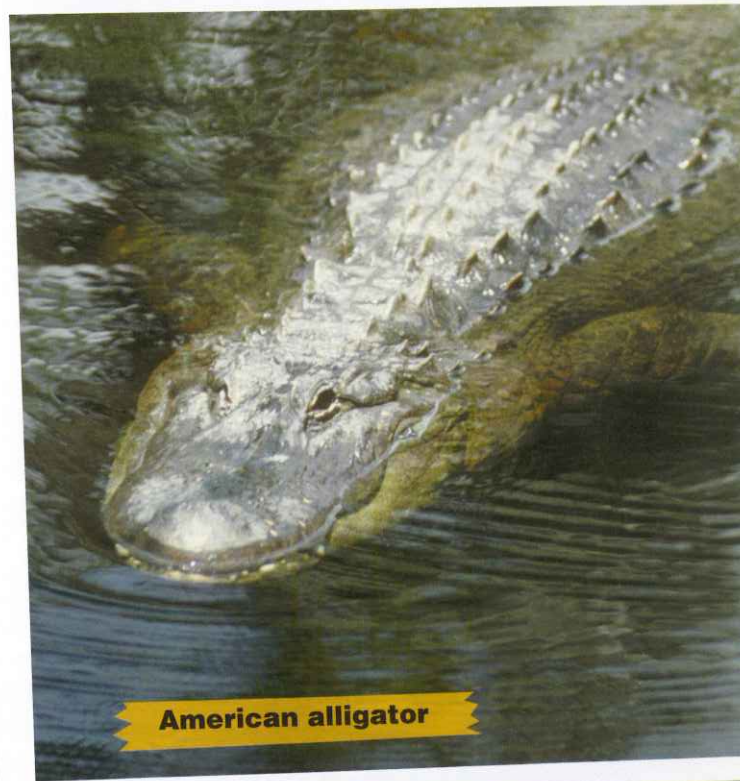


Crocodiles, alligators, and their relatives are incredibly resilient. They can survive almost anything. The prehistoric crocodiles adapted to the dark and cold conditions and managed to survive.

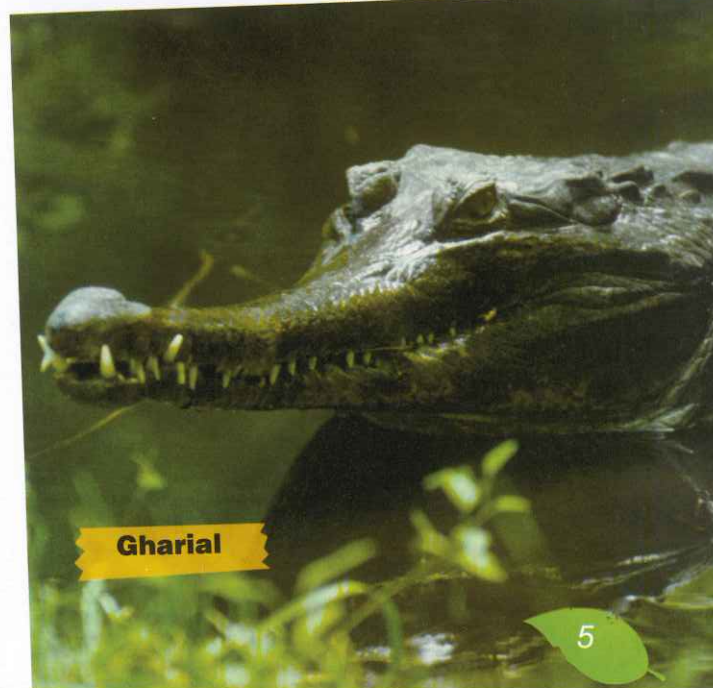
Today, they live in many parts of the world. There are crocodiles in the United States, Central and South America, Africa, Australia, and parts of Asia. Europe and Antarctica are the only crocodile-free continents. Three of the largest members of crocodylia are the Australian saltwater crocodile, the gharial, and the American alligator.



Saltwater crocodile



American alligator



Gharial

Introduction

Word Bank

(pp. 4-5)

crocodilia (n) = a class of reptiles which consists of crocodiles, alligators, caimans, and gharials

roam (v) = to wander

asteroid (n) = a large rock that moves through space

crash (into) (v) = to collide with

poisonous gas (phr) = a toxic substance in the air

environmental conditions (phr) = the quality of the air, land, etc. in a place

fossil (n) = the remains of a plant or an animal (that existed a long time ago) found inside a rock

species (n) = an animal or plant group with similar features

prehistoric (adj) = relating to the period before history was written down

survive (v) = to remain alive

relative (n) = a plant or an animal that belongs to the same group as another one

resilient (adj) = tough

adapt (to) (v) = to change to suit new circumstances


(pp. 6-7)

swamp (n) = wet marshy land

reptile (n) = a cold-blooded animal

rip (apart) (v) = to tear to pieces

effortlessly (adv) = easily

lizard (n) = 

encounter (v) = to meet

measure (v) = to be of a particular length, size, etc.

blend (v) = to combine together

eyelid (n) = the covering of the eye when it is closed

membrane (n) = a thin piece of skin that covers or protects parts of the body

freshwater habitat (n) = an area of water that does not contain salt such as a river, a lake, etc.

marsh (n) = a wet area of land

rare (adj) = uncommon

classify (v) = to categorize

critically endangered (phr) = very close to becoming extinct

(pp. 8-9)

similar (to) (adj) = the same as

inspection (n) = examination

distinguish (between) (v) = to tell the difference (between)

tell-tale sign (phr) = a very noticeable indication of sth

snout (n) = the long nose and mouth of some animals

jaw (n) = the part of the mouth that holds the teeth

toothy grin (phr) = a broad smile showing a lot of teeth

overlap (v) = to cover a part of sth

slot (n) = a narrow opening like a hole

stick out (phr v) = to extend outwards

interlock (v) = to go through each other

margin (n) = the edge of sth

visible (adj) = in view; able to be seen

niche (n) = an opening

crush (v) = to press hard and break into pieces

hard-shelled (adj) = having a hard covering


prey (n) = an animal hunted and killed for food

snatch (v) = to grab

Pre-Reading activities

1 a) Decide if the following sentences are *T* (true) or *F* (false).

- 1 Crocodilia survived the asteroid impact that wiped out the dinosaurs.
- 2 Europe is the only continent on which crocodilia do not live.
- 3 American alligators are among the smallest species of crocodilia.
- 4 Alligators cannot see underwater.
- 5 Alligators' top and bottom jaws are different sizes.

b)  Listen, read, and check.

While-Reading activities

2 Read the text. Choose the correct answer from A, B, C, or D.

- The alligator originally was given the name "el lagarto de Indias" by
 - Native Americans
 - English settlers
 - Spaniards
 - Indian explorers
- The most distinctive difference between crocodiles and alligators is their
 - snout
 - teeth
 - tail
 - scales
- A crocodilian's plays a role in its diet.
 - size of teeth
 - width of snout
 - number of teeth
 - length of snout

3 Replace the words/phrases in bold with the following: *rare, similar, grin, species, effortlessly*.

- The crocodile and the alligator may seem **the same** at first.
- There are two **kinds** of alligator: the American alligator and the Chinese alligator.
- An alligator does not have a very toothy **smile**.
- It can **easily** knock a man over with its tail.
- The American alligator is not **uncommon** in the wild like the Chinese alligator.

4 Which of the following is NOT true about crocodilians?

- They first appeared on Earth sixty-five million years ago.
- Some of them could soon become extinct.
- They can easily adapt to harsh environmental conditions.
- They outlasted dinosaurs.

5 SUBJECT-SPECIFIC VOCABULARY: Complete the summary. Choose the correct item.

Crocodylia **1) survived/managed** the event that killed the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. **2) Fossils/Species** of prehistoric crocodilians show they were similar to those living today. Modern crocodiles and alligators are also incredibly **3) visible/resilient** and live in many parts of the world.

When the Spanish arrived in Florida they found a fearsome **4) lizard/reptile** that had sharp teeth, armor-like **5) eyelids/scales**, and a powerful tail. The Native Americans had **6) blended/encountered** it before but it was new to the Spanish. Large populations of alligators live in the freshwater **7) places/habitats** of Florida and Louisiana. However, in China, alligators are classified as critically **8) rare/endangered** and are only found around the Yangtze River region.

After-Reading activities

6 a) SUBJECT-SPECIFIC VOCABULARY: Fill in: *overlaps, slides, interlock, wide, snatch, stick out, narrow, crush*.

	ALLIGATORS	CROCODILES
SNOUT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1) U-shaped snout • 2) hard-shelled prey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3) V-shaped snout • 4) prey
JAW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • top jaw • 5) lower jaw • top row of teeth • 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teeth • 7) and are all visible • large fourth bottom tooth that • 8) into a niche of the top jaw

b) Use the information in the table to talk about the differences between alligators and crocodiles.

7 **ICT** Collect information about the similarities and differences between alligators and crocodiles. Present your findings to the class.