

Characteristics of Animals Section 26-1



Features of Animals

Key Idea: Animals are
multicellular, heterotrophic
organisms with cells that lack cell
walls.



A **heterotroph** is an organisms that cannot make their own food.

The word **environment** means the surrounding natural conditions that affect an organism.



General Features of Animals

- Humans depend on other animals for food, companionship, and to pollinate crops.



Multicellularity

- Animals are *multicellular*, which means that they are made up of many cells.
- Most animals have many types of specialized cells that work together.
- Animal cells do not have cell walls.



Heterotrophy

- Most animals move to get food.
- But *filter eaters*, such as sponges and corals, catch particles of food that drift by in the water.



Movement

- Most animals move. **Locomotion** is the ability to move from place to place.
- Locomotion helps animals find food and favorable environments and helps them avoid predators.



Kinds of Animals

Key Idea: Animals are often informally grouped as **invertebrates** or **vertebrates**, although **vertebrates** make up only a subgroup of one phylum—**Chordata**. Most animals are **invertebrates**.



- An **invertebrate** is an animal that does not have a backbone.
- A **vertebrate** is a chordate that has a backbone.



Invertebrates

- Land invertebrates tend to be quite small because they do not have an internal skeleton to support them.
- Some invertebrates form the basis of entire organisms.
- For example, coral skeletons form coral reefs that provide a habitat for many other organisms.



Vertebrates

- Vertebrates have a cranium and an internal skeleton composed of bone or cartilage.
- The backbone supports and protects a dorsal nerve cord and provides a site for muscle attachment.

