

Leech

Classification:

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Annelida

Class: Clitellata

Subclass: Hirudinea

Order: Hirudinea



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For Further details [link](#)

Habit and habitat:

Leeches exhibit a range of feeding behaviors depending on their species and habitat, including blood-feeding, predation, and even scavenging

- **Fresh water:** The majority of leeches live in freshwater habitats such as ponds, lakes, swamps, and slow-moving streams.
- **Marine:** Some leeches are adapted to marine environments.

Characteristics and description:

Body Structure: Leeches have a soft, elongated, and dorso-ventrally flattened body. Their bodies are divided into segments (somites), which are further divided into annuli (rings).

Suckers: They have two suckers: an anterior (oral) sucker surrounding the mouth and a posterior (caudal) sucker for attachment and locomotion.

Segmentation: The body is metamerically segmented, meaning it's divided into repeating units. Their body is divided metamerically into 33 segments or somites. Each segment is further divided into annuli or rings

Locomotion: Leeches utilize their suckers to move by alternately attaching and releasing, creating a looping motion.

Feeding: Leeches are known for being blood-sucking parasites (ectoparasites), but some are also predatory. They have a proboscis (a feeding tube) or jaws for feeding. Some species secrete anticoagulants (like hirudin) to prevent blood clotting.

Reproduction: Leeches are hermaphroditic, meaning they have both male and female reproductive organs. They reproduce sexually, typically by mating and cross-fertilization.

Respiration: Leeches lack specialized respiratory organs and typically respire through their body surface.