

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

## Understanding Scientific Names or Latin Made Easy

As you recently found out, Linnaeus used descriptive Latin words to identify organisms in his binomial nomenclature. Therefore, if you could understand a little Latin, you might be able to identify an organism by its scientific name.

Following is a brief dictionary of Latin words and their definitions. You will be observing pictures and/or exhibits of creatures to see if you can match the organism with its correct scientific name. Remember scientific names consist of the genus followed by the species.

<u>LATIN</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>LATIN</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
acin	sharp	lemur	ghost
africanus	from Africa	lox	slanting
aix	water bird	lupis	wolf
americanus	from America	machaer	knife
apis	bee	macr	long or large
apten	unable to fly	mant	sooth sayer
aquila	eagle	maratim	of the sea
arctus	bear	mell	honey
aspersa	garden	musca	fly
aster	star	neator	killer
bos	ox	onyx	claw
canis	dog	ochraceous	pale yellow
cauda	tail	oct	eight
cent	point, to prick	panthera	big cat
cer	horn	papilia	butterfly
chrysites	gold colored	pard	spotted
cinerus	ash colored	patogonia	from Southern tip S. Am.
corrugata	wrinkled	phascalo	having a leather bag or s
cupid	with desire	physal	bubble
domesticus, -a	domestic	pis'	pea-like, small bumps
dont	tooth, tusk	pipien	peeping
dytikos	able to dive	plani	flat
elaphos	stag	primi	first
familiaris	familiar	prion	saw-like, jagged
felis	small cat	purpur	purple
fera	wild	pus	pod or foot
fulvus	reddish-yellow	radiata	rays
galer	helmet like covering	rana	frog like
gen	race, or kind	rattus	rat
glauca	shiny blue-gray	religiosa	religious
haliotis	ear-like	romal	strong body
harp	hook, sickle	rufus	reddish
harpy	winged monster	sapien	thinking, wise
helix	twisted	strongylo	round
homo	man	testa	shell
icus	to emphasize, calling attention to	thalarctos	of the arctic sea
jubatis	having a mane	typan	to drum
lat	side or flank	vulgar	common
leo	lion		

Below is a brief and incomplete table that will help you determine the proper endings for Latin words which you will come across in biological classification.

	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
Masculine	-us	(example: cactus, octopus)	-i	(example: cacti octopi)
Feminine	-a	(ameba, alga)	-ae	(amebae, algae)
Neuter	-um	(bacterium, paramecium)	-a	(bacteria, paramecia)

**PROCEDURE:** Place the number of the exhibit in front of the scientific name. Write the phrase(s) that defines the Latin words. Give the common name of the animal.

Acinonyx jubatus

Aix galericulata

Apis mellifera

Aptenodytes patagonica

Aquila chrysaetos

Canis lupis

Canis familiaris

Felis domesticus

Haliotis corrugata

Harpia harpyia

Helix aspersa

Homo sapiens

Lemur fulvus

Loxodonta africana

Macropus rufus

Mantis religiosa

Musca domestica

Neotor americanus

Octopus vulgaris

Panthera pardus

Panthera leo

Papilio machaon

Phasciartus cinereus

Physalia physalia

Pisaster ochraceus

Rana pipiens

Rattus rattus

Thalarctos maritimus