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Hibernation Riddles



30 riddles from easy to tricky. Write your answer on the line. Answers are on the last page.

Easy riddles ★

1. I'm a long, deep winter rest. An animal's body slows way down: its heartbeat, its breathing, even its temperature. It wakes up when spring comes. What am I?

   ANSWER _____

2. I'm a hidden, sheltered home where a bear spends the winter. I might be a cave, a hollow log or a hole dug under tree roots. What am I?

   ANSWER _____

3. I stay awake all winter, but in fall I bury hundreds of acorns and nuts all over the yard. I don't find all of them, and some grow into trees! What am I?

   ANSWER _____

4. I'm a long journey that some animals make every year, flying, swimming or walking to a warmer place for winter, then coming back in spring. What am I called?

   ANSWER _____

5. We honk as we fly south in a big V shape across the autumn sky. Taking turns at the front of the V helps us save energy. What are we?

   ANSWER _____

6. Before winter, a bear eats and eats, sometimes for most of the day. It's building up something under its skin that will keep it alive while it sleeps. What is it?

   ANSWER _____

7. I'm a chubby burrowing animal, and I sleep deep underground all winter. Every February 2, people watch to see whether I see my shadow. What am I?

   ANSWER _____

8. I'm the only mammal that can truly fly. In winter, many of us hang upside down in caves, folded up in our wings, and hibernate. What am I?

   ANSWER _____

9. I stay awake all winter inside my home of sticks and mud. Before the pond freezes, I store branches underwater, and I swim out under the ice to nibble them. What am I?

   ANSWER _____

10. I'm the season that sleepy animals wait for. When I arrive, days get longer, snow melts and food starts growing again. What am I?

    ANSWER _____

Medium riddles ★★

11. I'm like a short version of hibernation. An animal's body cools and slows down for a few hours or days, then it wakes up and gets moving again. What am I called?

ANSWER _____

12. I'm a small striped animal who sleeps in a burrow all winter, but I'm not a deep sleeper. Every few days I wake up and snack on the seeds I stored in my underground pantry. What am I?

ANSWER _____

13. I'm a tiny golden mouse-like animal with big black eyes and a fluffy tail. I curl up in a nest and can hibernate for half of the year. What am I?

ANSWER _____

14. I'm small and spiny. When it gets cold, I build a nest of leaves under a hedge or a woodpile and hibernate until spring. What am I?

ANSWER _____

15. I'm an orange and black butterfly. Every fall, millions of us fly south, some up to about 3,000 miles, to spend the winter in the mountain forests of Mexico. What am I?

ANSWER _____

16. I'm the word for the winter slowdown of snakes, turtles and lizards. These cold-blooded animals hide away and barely move until it warms up again. What am I called?

ANSWER _____

17. I spend the winter at the bottom of a frozen pond. I can't come up to breathe, so I take in some oxygen from the water through my skin. What am I?

ANSWER _____

18. I stay awake all winter, and I hide in plain sight: my brown summer fur turns white when the snow comes. My big furry feet keep me from sinking. What am I?

ANSWER _____

19. We don't sleep through winter. We pack into a tight ball inside our hive and shiver our flight muscles to make heat, keeping our queen warm until spring. What are we?

ANSWER _____

20. I'm one of the smallest birds in the world. My heart beats so fast that I could run out of energy overnight, so on cold nights my body slows into torpor, and I wake up each morning. What am I?

ANSWER _____

Tricky riddles ★★★

21. In winter, much of the water in my body turns to ice. My heart stops beating and I stop breathing. In spring, I thaw out, my heart starts again, and I hop away. What am I?

ANSWER _____

22. Scientists argue about whether I'm a "true" hibernator, because my body temperature drops only a few degrees and I can wake up quickly. But I can go months without eating, drinking, peeing or pooping. What am I?

ANSWER _____

23. In some places in Canada, tens of thousands of us snakes spend the winter together in the same underground dens, then pour out in a giant wriggling crowd in spring. What kind of snake are we?

ANSWER _____

24. I'm a seabird that flies from the Arctic to the Antarctic and back every year. I see more daylight than any other animal, and I have the longest migration on Earth. What am I?

ANSWER _____

25. I'm the special name for the place an animal hibernates, whether it's a cave full of bats, a hedgehog's leaf nest or a pile of snakes in a den. What am I called?

ANSWER _____

26. When a hibernating bat or squirrel needs to wake up, it burns a special kind of body fat that makes heat quickly, like a built-in heater. What color is that fat?

ANSWER _____

27. A groundhog's heart beats about 80 times a minute in summer. In deep hibernation it slows to just a handful of beats a minute. What part of the body are we measuring?

ANSWER _____

28. I'm a deer with big antlers, and I don't hibernate. Instead, my herds walk huge distances between summer and winter grounds, some of the longest journeys of any land animal. In Europe, people call me a reindeer. What am I called in North America?

ANSWER _____

29. We're small red beetles with black spots. In fall, hundreds or even thousands of us crowd together in a sheltered spot and wait out the winter in a big group. What are we?

ANSWER _____

30. Mice and voles stay awake all winter. To stay warm and hidden, they tunnel through a secret space where the air is warmer than outside. Where is it?

ANSWER _____

Answers

Hibernation Riddles · answer key · print or fold this page away before you hand out the sheet

1. **Hibernation**
2. **A den**
3. **A squirrel.** Tree squirrels don't hibernate; they live on the food they hid in the fall.
4. **Migration**
5. **Geese**
6. **Fat**
7. **A groundhog**
8. **A bat**
9. **A beaver**
10. **Spring**
11. **Torpor**
12. **A chipmunk**
13. **A dormouse**
14. **A hedgehog**
15. **A monarch butterfly**
16. **Brumation**
17. **A painted turtle**
18. **A snowshoe hare**
19. **Honeybees**
20. **A hummingbird**
21. **A wood frog.** Sugar in its body works like antifreeze and protects its cells.
22. **A bear**
23. **Garter snakes**
24. **The Arctic tern**
25. **A hibernaculum**
26. **Brown.** Brown fat burns to make heat fast.
27. **The heartbeat** (heart rate)
28. **A caribou**
29. **Ladybugs**
30. **Under the snow.** Scientists call this space the subnivean zone.

Need a hint? Every riddle has one at **riddlepedia.com/hibernation-riddles/**, where you can also play them as a game.