

# Animals Adapt

Over time and through natural selection animals have adapted to their environments, sometimes in amazing ways.



Zebras don't have many places to go when a lion is hungry. But, a zebra can hide in plain sight thanks to an adaptation called "disruptive coloring." When zebras clump together in a herd, their stripes make it hard for a lion to pick one individual for dinner.

Sharks can adjust their internal temperature to survive in different climates. Although they have few natural predators their most deadly predator is man. Overfishing of shark populations can have a negative affect on the ecosystem, causing those populations lower on the food chain to become over concentrated.



The Bat-eared Fox has ears that look too big for its head. This might seem funny but there is a reason. The large ears allow the fox to hear nearby predators and prey. In addition, the color of their fur makes them camouflaged in the surrounding grasslands.

## **The Desert Elephants of Mali**

Numbering approximately 500 elephants, and involving many family groups, this herd of elephants are the northern-most group of African elephants on the continent. They have learned to live in the harsh, arid landscape that borders the Sahara desert. Over many years, the destruction of habitat and development of towns and settlements by humans gradually pushed the elephants to their last refuge in the very center of the country.

