



Masters of Disguise: Animal Mimicry

In the wild, some animals use *mimicry* to survive. Mimicry means copying something else, like colors, (1)....., or even sounds or smells. This clever trick helps animals hide from predators or catch food. Let's explore some amazing examples!

The **stick insect** is an insect that looks exactly like a stick or twig. Its long, thin body and brown (2)..... make it almost invisible on tree branches. When it stays still, predators like birds cannot see it. This mimicry helps the stick insect (3)..... safe.

Another insect with amazing mimicry is the **leaf insect**. This insect looks just like a green leaf, complete with "veins" on its body. When it (4)....., it even sways like a leaf blowing in the wind. Predators think it's just a leaf and leave it alone.

In the ocean, the **mimic octopus** is a true master of disguise. It can change its color and shape to look like other sea animals, such as a snake, a (5)....., or even a jellyfish. This helps it scare predators or sneak up on its prey.

Birds use mimicry too! The **lyrebird** from Australia is famous for copying sounds. It can mimic the (6)..... of other birds, as well as noises like cameras or (7)..... This ability helps it attract a mate by showing how talented it is.

Mammals can also mimic! The **margay**, a small wild cat from South America, mimics the sounds of baby monkeys. This confuses the adult monkeys and makes them come (8)..... The margay then hunts the monkeys for food.

Another unusual example is the **harlequin filefish**, a type of fish. It mimics the smell of coral to avoid being eaten. Predators (9)..... nearby think the fish is just part of the coral reef and ignore it.

Mimicry shows how creative animals can be to survive in the wild. From insects to mammals, this skill helps them stay safe, find food, or (10)..... a mate. Which mimic do you find the most fascinating?

Word Bank

swimming, fish, color, smelling, closer, moves, chainsaws, shapes, attract, stay, songs