

# Kids page

## STRANGE PETS

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### Alligators in the bathtub

Dogs and cats are the most popular pets in America, but some people prefer more unusual creatures for companions. Visit a pet store, and you may see snakes, hermit crabs, tarantulas, hedgehogs and even Madagascar hissing cockroaches.

Of course, you would have a hard time finding a pet more unique than the one owned by Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president of the United States. He received a rare pygmy hippopotamus as a gift. The president gave the hippo, named Billy, to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.



Coolidge wasn't the only president to have a strange pet. Benjamin Harrison's family owned two opossums and a goat, and Theodore Roosevelt had a pet badger. John Quincy Adams and Herbert Hoover both had alligators. Adams kept his gator in a White House bathroom!



An alligator probably isn't the best idea for a pet, but it is an interesting part of God's creation. God made all the animals and provides for their needs. But His most special creation is you. God loves you so much He even counts the hairs on your head!

So if you happen to find a scary-looking alligator in your bathtub, you can call on God for help. He cares about everything that concerns you.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows" (Luke 12:6,7, NIV).



### Try this!

#### Make a pet rock

In the 1970s, it was popular to have a Pet Rock. The stone came in a cardboard carrying case with a funny training manual. Topics included: "How to make your Pet Rock roll over and play dead."



Try making your own pet rock. Find a smooth stone, and create a face using paint or markers. Then give your rock a name. No one else will have a pet quite like yours!

### Did you know?

- President Coolidge's pygmy hippo was one of the first to arrive in the United States. If you see one in a zoo today, it's likely one of Billy's descendants.
- Some people in the U.S. have pet wallabies. The native Australian animals look like small kangaroos. Breeders say they're friendly and love to cuddle.



### JUST FOR laughs

**How do you know when your pet elephant is hiding under your bed?**

You can touch the ceiling with your nose.

**How do you catch a rare animal?**

Unique up on it.

