

# What is Parasitism?

Parasitism describes a relationship between two species, a parasite and its host, in which the parasite benefits while the host is harmed. Parasitism is always bad, in fact some can be quite beneficial. For example, leeches are used to help reattach unattached fingers and some circulation problems.



## Resources:

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leech#Medicinal\\_use\\_of\\_leeches](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leech#Medicinal_use_of_leeches)
- <http://www.petsandparasites.org>

# Parasitism

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## Leeches

Leeches get attached using a mixture of their saliva and suction. The majority of leeches can be found in freshwater.

### Who's and What's

- Leeches are the one who benefit

While leeches are used by some for medical uses (they used to use leeches for blood letting back in ancient India, for example) They can drink up to a tablespoon of blood.

- Most leeches can live up to 1 year or more.
- Leeches do not carry any diseases that they can give to their host.
- They do not seem to have any positive benefits to the ecosystem.

## Mosquitos

Mosquitos get blood from the host with a little needle like body piece they insert into the hosts body.

### Who's and What's

- *Mosquitos are the ones who benefit.*
- Mosquitos don't have much purpose to many species. One species that does benefit is fish, who consume their eggs as food.
- They have many diseases such as malaria, yellow fever, dengue fever. They also carry a large threat to pets and livestock.
- Science says their fossils can date back to 2 hundred million years ago!



## Ticks

Ticks attach to the host by inserting their mouth-parts into your skin. They produce a sticky glue like substance to help to them remain attached.

### Who's' and What's

- Ticks can give you diseases. Limes disease is the most common one. This can have long term negative effects on the hosts system
- Although rare, tick can consume enough blood to cause a deficiency called anemia, in dogs.
- You most commonly get ticks when you are outdoors as they mostly live in the woods.
- They get their host by detecting animals breath or body odors, by body heat, moistures, and vibration.
- They do not seem to have any positive benefits to the ecosystem.

