

Week 26

The Animal That Can Survive in Space

Some of the toughest animals on Earth are far too small to see. (13) These tiny creatures are called tardigrades, or water bears. (22) They are microscopic animals that live in water and damp places. (32) Despite their size, tardigrades are famous for incredible survival abilities. (41) Scientists have discovered that tardigrades can survive extreme conditions. (50)

They can live in freezing temperatures far below normal limits. (60) They also survive intense heat that would destroy most animals. (70) Tardigrades can live without water for many years. (78) During dry periods, they shrink into a protective resting form. (88) In this state, their bodies stop most activity completely. (97) Scientists have even sent tardigrades into outer space. (105) They were exposed to freezing temperatures and strong radiation. (114) Surprisingly, many tardigrades survived the harsh space conditions. (122) After returning to Earth, they became active again. (130) This discovery amazed scientists studying extreme survival abilities. (137) Researchers continue studying tardigrades to understand survival secrets. (145)

Their strength may help scientists design future space missions. (154) Studying these animals may improve protection for astronauts. (162) Tardigrades show how life can adapt to extreme environments. (171) Their survival abilities remind scientists how powerful nature can be. (180)

Even the smallest creatures can hold extraordinary survival secrets. (188) These discoveries encourage scientists to explore beyond Earth. (196) Tiny creatures hold surprising scientific secrets. (202)

Total Words: 202

Comprehension Questions

1. What makes tardigrades different from most other animals?
2. What happened when scientists sent tardigrades into space?
3. What does the word **microscopic** most nearly mean?
 - a) very large
 - b) too small to see without help
 - c) brightly coloured
 - d) able to fly
4. Why are scientists interested in studying tardigrades?