Vocabulary: Eyes & Vision 3 – Sensing Light

Vocabulary

- Cone – A photoreceptor cell that responds to a certain color of light.
  - Cones work best in bright conditions.
  - Humans have three types of cones: red, green and blue.
  - Some animals have cones that are sensitive to UV light.
- Fovea – a small indent on the back of the retina where most of the light is focused.
  - In humans, the fovea contains mostly cone cells and very few rod cells.
  - Rod cells are found in the retina around the fovea.
- Nerve impulse – a signal that passes along a nerve cell.
  - When light hits a photoreceptor cell, a nerve impulse is triggered.
- Nocturnal – active at night.
  - Nocturnal animals are awake at night and sleep during the day.
- Optic nerve – a bundle of nerve cells that carry signals from the retina to the brain.
- Photoreceptor – a sensory cell that is activated by light.
  - Rods and cones are the two types of photoreceptors.
- Retina – a layer at the back of the eye that contains photoreceptor cells.

- Rod – a photoreceptor cell that is very sensitive to light.
  - Animals rely on rods to see in low-light conditions.
  - Because there is only one type of rod, they cannot be used to see in color.
- Ultraviolet light – light that has wavelengths shorter than violet light.
  - While humans cannot see ultraviolet (UV) light, many animals can.