

Greek and Latin Roots

Hopefully, learning some of these basic latin and greek terms will help you with some of the difficult names you may encounter in this class. Most of them have a logical meaning, that makes sense if you know the latin and greek roots. This list was adapted from *Vertebrate Life*, by Pough, Heiser, and McFarland. Hopefully it will be helpful to you in this course, and in future courses.

a, ab (L) away from
a, an (G) not, without
acanth (G) thorn
actin (G) a ray
ad (L) toward, at, near
aeros (G) the air
aga (G) very much, too much
aistos (G) unseen
ai, alula (L) a wing
allant (G) a sausage
alveol (L) a pit
amblys (G) blunt, stupid
ammos (G) sand
amnion (G) the fetus surrounding membrane
amphi, ampho (G) both, double
amplexus (L) an embracing
ampulla (L) a jug or flask
ana (G) up, upon, through
anat (L) a duck
angio (G) a reservoir, vessel
ankylos (G) crooked, bent
anomos (G) lawless
ant, anti (G) against
ante (L) before
antho (G) flower
anthrac (G) coal
apat (G) illusion, error
aphanes (G) invisible, unknown
apo, ap (G) away from, separate
apsid (G) an arch, loop
aqu (L) water
arachne (G) a spider
arch (G) beginning, first in time
argenteus (L) silvery
arthr (G) a joint
ascidion (G) a little bag or bladder
aspid (G) a shield
asteros (G) a star
atri, atrium (L) an entrance-room
audi (L) to hear
austri, australis (L) southern
av (L) a bird
baen (G) to walk or step
bas (G) base, bottom
batrachos (G) a frog
bentlios (G) the sea depths
bi, bio (G) life
bi, bis (L) two
blast (G) bud, sprout
brachi (G) arm
brachy (G) short
branchi (G) a fin
buce (L) the check
cal (G) beautiful
calie (L) a cup
capit (L) head
carn (L) flesh
caud (L) tail
cene, ceno (G) new, recent

cephal (G) head
cer, ceræ (G) a horn
cere (G) tail
chir, cheir (G) hand
choan (G) funnel, tube ["collar"]
chondr (G) grit, gristle
chord (G) guts, a string
chorio (G) skin, membrane
chrom (G) color
cloac (L) a sewer
coel (G) hollow
conus (L) cone
cornu (L) a horn
cortic, cortex (L) bark, rind
costa (L) a rib
cotyledon, kotuledon (G) cup, cup-shaped cavity
cnide (G) spine
cran (G) the skull
creta (L) chalk
cretio (L) separate, sift
crine (G) to separate
cten (G) a comb
cut, cutis (L) the skin
cyn (G) a dog
cytos (G) a cell
dactyl (G) a finger
de (L) down, away from
dectes (G) a biter
dendro (G) a tree
dent, dont (L) a tooth
derm (G) skin
desmos (G) a chain, tie, or band
deuteros (G) secondary
di, dia (G) through, across
di, diplo (G) two, double
din, dein (G) terrible, powerful
dir (G) the neck
disc (G) a disk
dory (G) a spear
draco (L) a dragon
drepan (G) a sickle
dromos (G) a running course
duct (L) a leading
dur (L) hard
e, ex (L) out of, from, without
echinos (G) a prickly being
eco, oikos (G) a house
ect (G) outside
edaphos (G) the soil or bottom
eid (G) form, appearance
elasma (G) a thin plate
eleutheros (G) free, not bound
elopos (G) a kind of sea fish
embolo (G) like a peg or stopper
embryon (G) a fetus
emys (G) a fresh-water turtle
end (G) within
enter (G) bowel, intestine
eos (G) the dawn or beginning

ep (G) on, upon
equi (L) a horse
ery (G) to drag or draw
erythr (G) red
eu, ev (G) good, true
eury (G) broad
extra (L) beyond, outside
falc (L) a sickle, scythe
fer, fera (L) carrier of, bearing
fil (L) a thread
foramen (L) hole
fundus (L) bottom, foundation
galeos (G) a shark
gallus (L) poultry
gaster (G) the belly
genos (G) birth
genus (L) a race or stock
gea (G) the earth
gephyr (G) a bridge
gerthron (G) made of wicker-work
glob (L) a ball
glom, glomer (L) a ball of yarn
gloss (G) the tongue
glyco (G) sweet
gnath (G) the jaw
gonia (G) a corner, angle or knee
gorgo (L) a female monster of terrible aspect
gracil (L) slender
grapto (G) inscribed, painted
gripho (G) intricate or puzzling
gul (L) the throat
gymn (G) naked
gyr (G) round, a circle
haem (G) blood
hal (G) the sea
hemi (G) half
hepat, hepaticos (G) the liver
herp (G) to creep
hetero (G) other, different
hippo (G) a horse
hist (G) web, tissue
hoi (G) whole, entire
homo (G) alike
hyp (G) under, beneath
hyper (G) above, beyond
hyps (G) high, height
ichthy (G) a fish
in (L) in, into, not, without
infra (L) below
inter (L) between, among
intr (L) inside
is, iso (G) similar, equal
kin (G) movement
konos (G) cone
kontos (G) pole, flagellum
labyrinthos (G) a tortuous passageway
lecith (G) yolk
lepis (G) a scale
leptos (G) thin, small, weak

lingu (L) tongue
liss (G) smooth
loph (G) crest, ridge
lumin, lumen (L) a light
lut (L) yellow
lychnos (G) a lamp
lyco (G) wolf
macr (G) long, large
magn (L) great, large
mamm (L) breast
mast (G) a breast
medull (L) marrow, pith
mela (G) black
mer (G) a part
mes, meso (G) middle
meta, met (G) next to
micr (G) small
mon, mono (G) single, one
morph (G) form, shape
mys (G) muscle, mouse
nect (G) swimming
neo (G) new, recent
nephro (G) kidney
nomen (L) a name
not (G) the back
odont, don (G) tooth
oikos (G) house
oligo (G) few, small, little
omni (L) all
opercul (L) a cover, lid
opisth, opisthios (G) behind, rear
ophio, ophis (G) snake
ops (G) appearance
ornith (G) a bird
orth (G) straight
osmos (G) pushing or thrusting
oste (G) bone
oxys, oxus (G) sharp, pointed
palae, paleo (G) ancient
par, para (G) beside
parous (L) to beget
peri (G) around, near
phag (G) to eat
phil (G) loving, friend
phor (G) to bear
phot (G) light
phyl (G) a tribe, race
phyll (G) leaf
phyton, phyto, phyte (G) plant
platy (G) broad
plesio (G) near, [close to root]
pleur (G) a rib, the side
pneuma, uma (G) breathing
pod (G) a foot
poikilos (G) variable
poly (G) many
por, porus (L) a passage, a pore
post (L) after, behind
prim (L) first
pro (G) before, in front of
prot, proto (G) first, primary
pseud (G) false
pter, pteron (G) wing, feather
pyg (G) the rump
ram (L) a branch
rept (L) to crawl
retor (L) backward
rhin (G) a nose

rhiza (G) root
rhynch (G) a beak, snout
sarc (G) flesh
saur (G) a lizard
seler (G) hard
scopos (G) a watchman
som (G) the body
sperma (G) seed, sperm
sphen (G) a wedge
splanchn (G) viscera
spondyl (G) vertebra
squam (L) a scale
steg (G) a roof
sten (G) narrow, straight
stom (G) mouth
styl (G) a pillar
sub (L) under, below
suchus (G) crocodile
super (L) above, over
syn, sym (G) together, same
tele (G) perfect, entire
tethy (G) a sea goddess
tetr (G) four
thec (G) a case
theri (G) a wild animal
therm (G) heat
tom (G) a cut, slice
top (G) a place
trem (G) a hole
tri (G) three
trich (G) a hair
trop (G) a turn, change
troph (G) one who feeds
tryma (G) a hole
ulna (L) the elbow
ultim (L) the farthest, last
unguis, ungula (L) claw, hoof, nail
ura, oura (G) tail
ureo, uric, urine (L) a vessel
vas (L) a vessel
velum (L) a veil or covering
ventr (L) the belly
vertebra (L) a joint, something turned
vibrissa (L) a nostril hair
viscera (L) the internal organs
vivus, vivi (L) alive
vor (L) to devour
xanthos (G) yellow colored
xen (G) a stranger or foreigner
zoo (G) an animal
zyg (G) a coupling or linkage