

國中部自選(2)

Why Do Giraffes Have Blue Tongues?

Giraffes are best known for their long necks, but did you know they also possess very special tongues? A giraffe's tongue is usually dark blue, purple, or even black, and this unusual color is not just for appearance. It actually helps the animal survive in its natural environment and daily life.

The dark color comes from a pigment called melanin. Melanin is the same substance that gives human skin and hair their color. Interestingly, only the front part of a giraffe's tongue is dark, while the back part remains pink. Scientists believe this feature is an important adaptation, because the front of the tongue is exposed to sunlight more often during feeding and movement.

Giraffes spend many hours each day eating leaves from tall trees. As they reach up and pull leaves into their mouths, their tongues are frequently exposed to strong sunlight in the open African plains. In some cases, they may eat for up to 20 hours a day. Melanin acts like a natural sunscreen, protecting the tongue from sunburn, dryness, and other kinds of damage.

In this way, nature has equipped giraffes not only with long necks, but also with sun-protected tongues that help them feed safely, comfortably, and efficiently every single day, even in hot climates where sunlight is especially strong.