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Ammon | amphibious

Ammon var. of AMUN.

a

ammonia /ə'məʊniə/ *n.* **1** *Chem.* a colourless gas (chem. formula: NH_3) with a characteristic pungent smell. **2** (in full **ammonia water**) (in general use) a strongly alkaline solution of ammonia gas in water. [mod.L f. SAL AMMONIAC]

ammoniacal /ə'mə'naɪk(ə)/ *adj.* of, relating to, or containing ammonia or sal ammoniac. [ME *ammoniac* f. OF (*arm-, ammi-*) f. L f. Gk *ammoniakos* of Ammon (cf. SAL AMMONIAC) + -AL¹]

ammoniated /ə'məʊni,etɪd/ *adj.* combined or treated with ammonia.

ammonite /'æmə'naɪt/ *n.* an extinct cephalopod mollusc of the mainly Mesozoic order Ammonoidea, having a flat coiled spiral shell commonly found as a fossil. [mod.L *ammonites*, after med.L *cornu Ammonis*, = L *Ammonis cornu*, horn of (Jupiter) Ammon (cf. AMUN)]

ammonium /ə'məʊniəm/ *n.* *Chem.* the ion NH_4^+ , present in solutions and salts of ammonia. [AMMONIA + -IUM]

ammunition /æmju'niʃ(ə)n/ *n.* **1** a supply of projectiles (esp. bullets, shells, and grenades). **2** points used or usable to advantage in an argument. [obs. F *amunition*, corrupt. of (la) *munition* (the) MUNITION]

amnesia /æm'ni:ziə/ *n.* a partial or total loss of memory. □ **amnesic** *adj.* & *n.* **amnesiac** /-zi,æk/ *n.* [mod.L f. Gk, = forgetfulness]

amnesty /'æmnɪsti/ *n.* & *v.* **1** (pl. **-ies**) a general pardon, esp. for political offences. **2** *vtr.* (**-ies, -ied**) grant an amnesty to. [F *amnestie* or L f. Gk *amnestia* oblivion]

Amnesty International an international human rights organization, founded in London in 1961. Politically unaligned, it actively seeks the release of political prisoners and condemns torture and the death penalty. It was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977.

amnio /'æmniəʊ/ *n.* (pl. **-os**) *colloq.* amniocentesis. [abbr.]

amniocentesis /æmniə'sen'ti:sis/ *n.* (pl. **amniocenteses** /-si:z/) *Med.* the sampling of amniotic fluid by insertion of a hollow needle into the uterus, performed in order to determine the condition of a foetus. [AMNION + Gk *kentēsis* pricking f. *kentō* to prick]

amnion /'æmniən/ *n.* (pl. **amnia** /-niə/) *Zool. & Physiol.* the innermost membrane that encloses the embryo of a reptile, bird, or mammal. □ **amniotic** /æmni'ɒtɪk/ *adj.* [Gk, = caul (dimin. of *amnos* lamb)]

amniote /'æmni,əʊt/ *n.* & *adj.* *Zool.* **1** *n.* an animal whose embryo develops in an amnion. **2** *adj.* of or relating to such animals. [back-form. f. AMNIOTIC]

amoeba /ə'mi:bə/ *n.* (US **ameba**) (pl. **amoebas** or **amoebae** /-bi:/) *a* usu. aquatic protozoan of the genus *Amoeba*, which constantly changes its shape, esp. *A. proteus*. □ **amoeboid** *adj.* [mod.L f. Gk *amōibe* change]

amoebic /ə'mi:bɪk/ *adj.* (US **amebic**) of or relating to amoebae. □ **amoebic dysentery** dysentery caused by infection of the gut with certain amoebae.

amok /ə'mɒk/ *adv.* (also **amuck** /ə'mʌk/) □ **run amok** run about wildly in an uncontrollable violent rage. [Malay *amok* rushing in a frenzy]

among /ə'mʌŋ/ *prep.* (also **amongst** /ə'mʌŋst/) **1** surrounded by; in the company of (lived *among* the trees; be *among* friends). **2** in the number of (among us were those who disagreed). **3** an example of; in the class or category of (is *among* the richest men alive). **4** *a* between; within the limits of (collectively or distributively); shared by (had £5 *among* us; divide it *among* you). **b** by the joint action or from the joint resources of (among us we can manage it). **5** with one another; by the reciprocal action of (was decided *among* the participants; talked *among* themselves). **6** as distinguished from; pre-eminent in the category of (she is one *among* many). [OE *ongemang* f. on ON + *gemang* assemblage (cf. MINGLE); -st = adverbial genitive -s + t as in AGAINST]

amontillado /ə'mɒntɪ'lædɔ:/ *n.* (pl. **-os**) a medium dry sherry. [Sp. f. Montilla in Spain + -ado = -ATE²]

moral /ci'mɒrəl/ *adj.* **1** not concerned with or outside the scope of morality (cf. IMMORAL). **2** having no moral principles. □ **amoralism** *n.* **amoralist** *n.* **amorality** /ci'mɔ:'rælɪti/ *n.*

amoretto /ə'mɔ:'retəʊ/ *n.* (pl. **amoretto** /-ti/) a Cupid. [It., dimin. of *amore* love f. L (as AMOUR)]

amorist /'æmərist/ *n.* a person who professes or writes of (esp. sexual) love. [L *amor* or F *amour* + -IST]

Amorite /'æmə'raɪt/ *n.* & *adj.* **1** *n.* a member of an ancient people whose semi-nomadic culture flourished in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Syria in the 3rd millennium BC and who founded a number of states and dynasties, including Mari on the Euphrates and the first dynasty of Babylon. **2** *adj.* of or relating to this people. [Heb. 'emōrī f. Akkadian (Sumerian *martu* west)]

amoroso /'æmə'rəʊsəʊ/ *adv.* & *adj.* *Mus.* in a loving or tender manner. [It.]

amoroso /'æmə'rəʊsəʊ/ *n.* (pl. **-os**) a full rich type of sherry. [Sp., = amorous]

amorous /'æmə'rəs/ *adj.* **1** showing, feeling, or inclined to sexual love. **2** of or relating to sexual love. □ **amorously** *adv.* **amorousness** *n.* [ME f. OF f. med.L *amorousus* f. L *amor* love]

amorphous /ə'mɔ:fəs/ *adj.* **1** shapeless. **2** vague, ill-organized. **3** *Mineral. & Chem.* non-crystalline; having neither definite form nor structure. □ **amorphously** *adv.* **amorphousness** *n.* [med.L *amorphus* f. Gk *amorphos* shapeless f. *a-* not + *morphe* form]

amortize /ə'mɔ:taɪz/ *vtr.* (also **-ise**) *Commerce* **1** gradually extinguish (a debt) by money regularly put aside. **2** gradually write off the initial cost of (assets). **3** transfer (land) to a corporation in mortmain. □ **amortization** /ə'mɔ:taɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ *n.* [ME f. OF *amortir* (stem *amortiss-*) ult. f. L *ad* to + *mors* mort- death]

Amos /'eɪmɒs/ **1** a Hebrew minor prophet (c.760 BC), a shepherd of Tekoa, near Jerusalem. **2** a book of the Bible containing his prophecies.

amount /ə'maʊnt/ *n.* & *v.* **1** a quantity, esp. the total of a thing or things in number, size, value, extent, etc. (a large amount of money; came to a considerable amount). **2** the full effect or significance. **3** *vtr.* (foll. by *to*) **1** be equivalent to in number, size, significance, etc. (amounted to £100; amounted to a disaster). **2** (of a person) develop into, become (might one day amount to something). □ **any amount** of a great deal of. **no amount** of not even the greatest possible amount of. [ME f. OF *amunter* f. *amont* upward, uphill, f. L *ad montem*]

amour /ə'mʊə(r)/ *n.* a love affair, esp. a secret one. [F, = love, f. L *amor* amoris]

amour propre /æ'mʊə'prɒprə/ *n.* self-respect. [F]

Amoy /ə'mɔɪ/ an alternative name for XIAMEN.

AMP *abbr.* Biochem. adenosine monophosphate.

amp /æmp/ *n.* *Electr.* an ampere. [abbr.]

amp /æmp/ *n.* *colloq.* an amplifier. [abbr.]

ampelopsis /æm'pɛlɒpsɪs/ *n.* (pl. same) a vine of the genus *Ampelopsis* or *Parthenocissus*, e.g. Virginia creeper. [mod.L f. Gk *ampelos* vine + *opsis* appearance]

amperage /æm'pærɪdʒ/ *n.* *Electr.* the strength of an electric current in amperes.

Ampère /'æmpeə(r), ɑpər/ André-Marie (1775–1836), French physicist, mathematician, and philosopher. He was a child prodigy who became one of the founders of electromagnetism and electrodynamics, and is best known for his analysis of the relationship between magnetic force and electric current. Ampère also developed a precursor of the galvanometer.

ampere /'æmpeə(r)/ *n.* *Electr.* a unit of electric current (symbol: **A**), equal to a flow of one coulomb per second. The ampere is the SI base unit of electric current, and is that constant current which, if maintained in two straight parallel conductors of infinite length, of negligible circular cross-section, and placed 1 metre apart in a vacuum, would produce between these conductors a force of 2×10^{-7} newton per metre. [AMPÈRE]

ampersand /'æmpə,sænd/ *n.* the sign & (= and, Latin et). [corrupt. of *and per se and* ('&' by itself is 'and')]

amphetamine /æm'fetəmin, -mi:n/ *n.* a synthetic drug used esp. as a stimulant. [abbr. of chem. name alpha-methyl phenethylamine]

amphi- /'æmfɪ/ *comb. form* **1** both. **2** of both kinds. **3** on both sides. **4** around. [Gk]

amphibian /æm'fɪbiən/ *adj.* & *n.* **1** *adj.* **1** living both on land and in water. **2** *Zool.* of or relating to the class Amphibia. **3** (of a vehicle) able to operate on land and water. **2** *n.* **1** *Zool.* a vertebrate of the class Amphibia. (See note below) **2** (in general use) a creature living both on land and in water. **3** an amphibian vehicle. [mod.L *amphibium* f. Gk *amphibion* f. AMPHI- + *bios* life]

The amphibians typically have an aquatic larval stage with gills (e.g. a tadpole) and an air-breathing four-legged adult stage. There are about 2,400 living species, divided into two main groups: tailless forms (frogs and toads) and those with tails (e.g. newts and salamanders). Amphibians, which evolved from fish in the Devonian period, were the first vertebrates to live on land, preceding the reptiles. Their eggs lack shells and require water or damp conditions to survive, and so, unlike reptiles, amphibians cannot be completely independent of a moist environment.

amphibious /æm'fɪbiəs/ *adj.* **1** living both on land and in water. **2** of