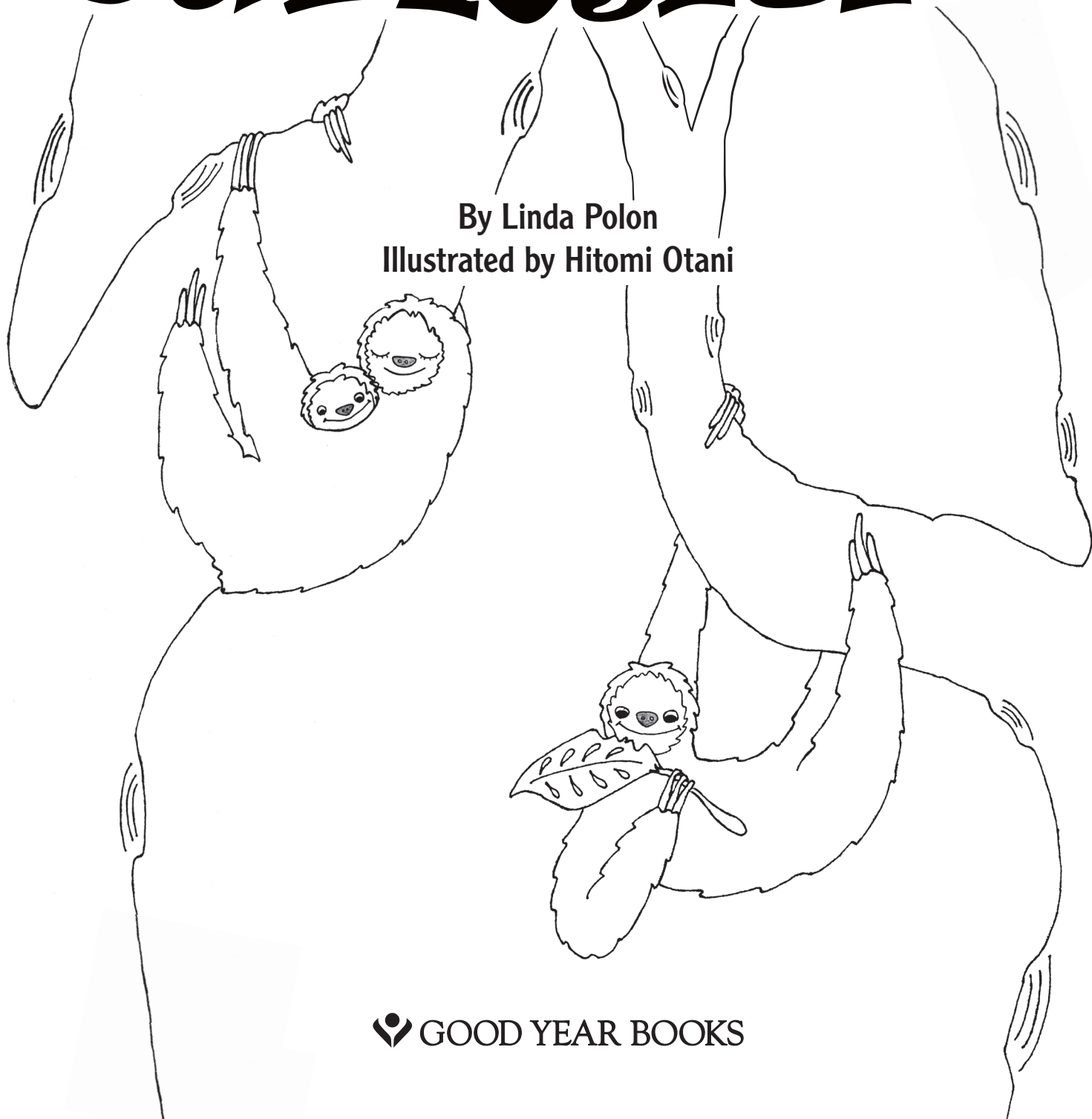


# Animal Curiosities

By Linda Polon  
Illustrated by Hitomi Otani



## Dedication

I dedicate this work to Phillip Frascinella, who child-tested this book; my close friends Philene Vaivods and Gail Hendricks, who are survivors; my writer friend Jules Minton; Ruth Mezquita, a supportive friend; and Rebecca Farish, who has brightened my life. I would also like to dedicate this book to my caring family—Courtney, Ewan, and Ryan McNeil, Debby Wolff, and Rosalie Abrams, and my second mom, Helen Kinsley—and to all the animals who share our planet.



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*Animal Curiosities* contains lessons and activities that develop skills as defined by the Common Core State Standards for grades 4 through 6. These lessons meet the Common Core standards for Reading Informational Texts as mentioned below:

1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
2. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

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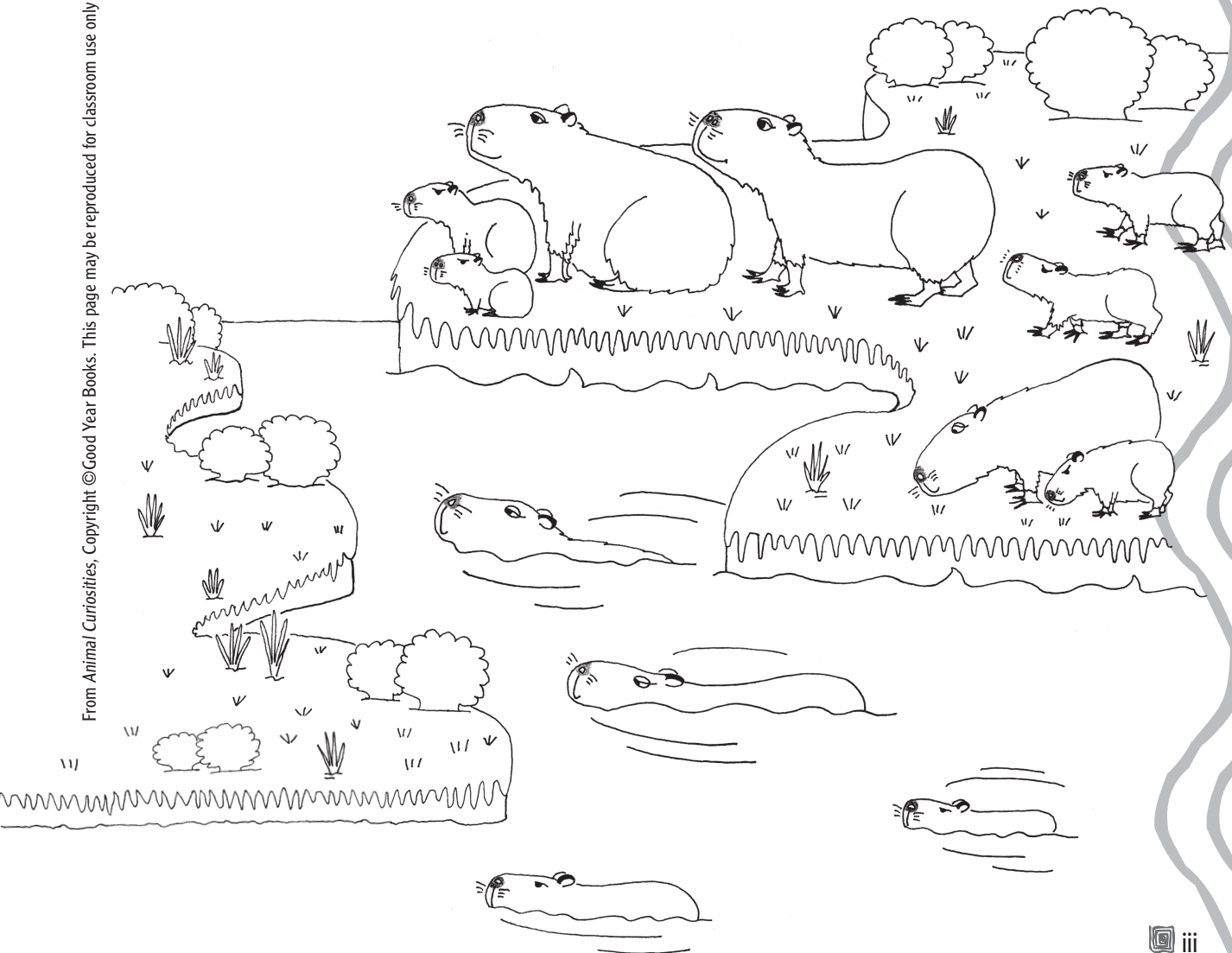
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# Preface

Welcome to the wonderful world of *Animal Curiosities*! I wrote this book because of my true love of animals, and a wish to share my fascinating and compelling studies of them with you. Perhaps you have heard of some of these intriguing creatures, or perhaps not. In any event, I hope you enjoy reading about how they live and survive in their environments. Dive in and explore all of these extraordinary and exceptional animals.

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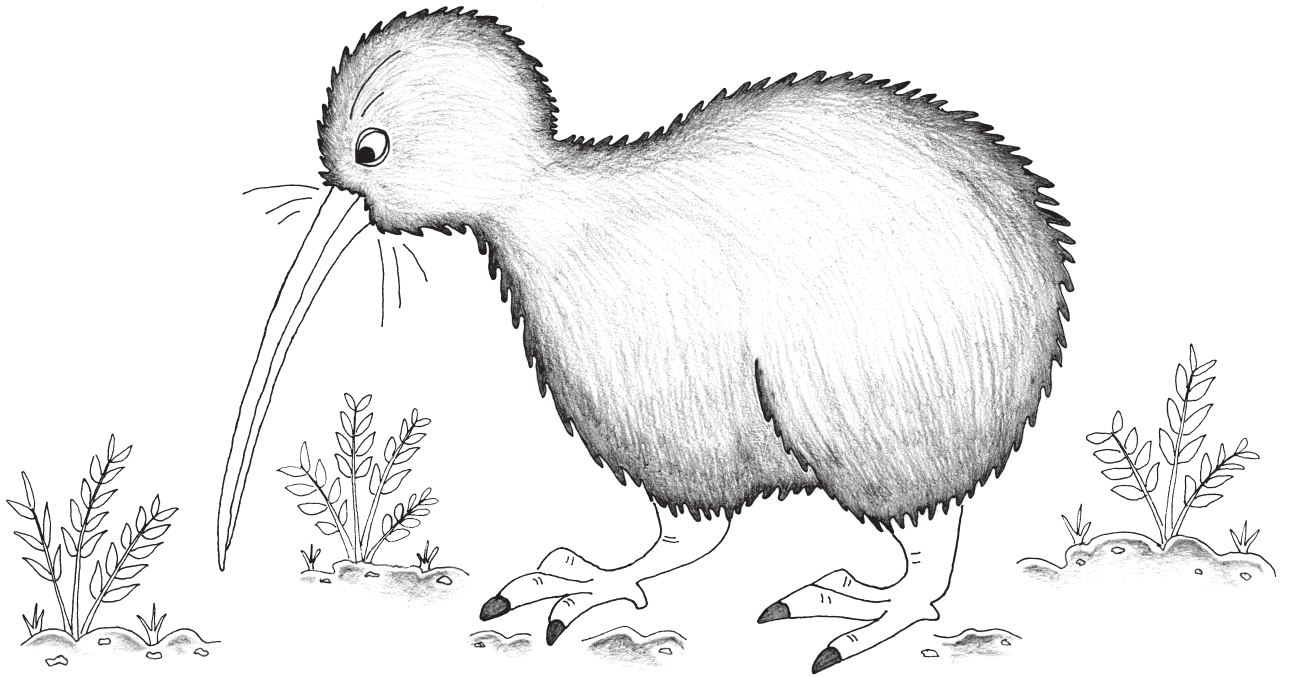
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# Animals





# Mudskipper

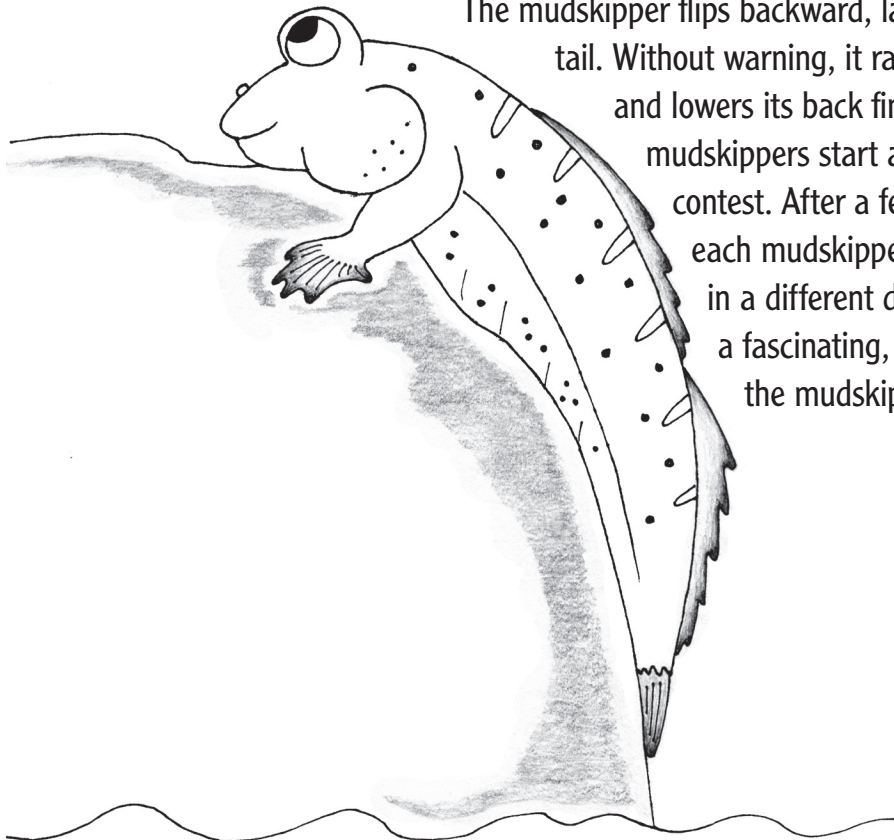
Would you believe there is a fish that lives out of water most of its life? That fish is called an *amphibian fish*, or *mudskipper*. The mudskipper is usually greenish brown and is four to 12 inches long. It resides in swampy areas on the coasts of Africa, Australia, Japan, and India and in other tropical and temperate regions of the world.

The mudskipper has an interesting way of breathing out of water for up to 36 hours. After that time, its gills become dry. There is no more oxygen inside them, so the mudskipper returns to the water of the swamp. The mudskipper has special cavities behind its ears where brackish water (a combination of river water and salt water from a nearby ocean) from the swamp enters. This water provides the oxygen the mudskipper needs to crawl back on land. A few scientists think a mudskipper places its long tail in the water to absorb oxygen.

This animal likes doing back flips, skips, and jumps around the muddy mangrove flats. It hops around the swamp or perches on mangrove tree roots. The mudskipper utilizes its pectoral fins on either side of its body to climb onto the gigantic tree roots.

The mudskipper has a funny, unusual way to protect its own territory, which is about three feet around. When meeting another mudskipper, it does strange movements.

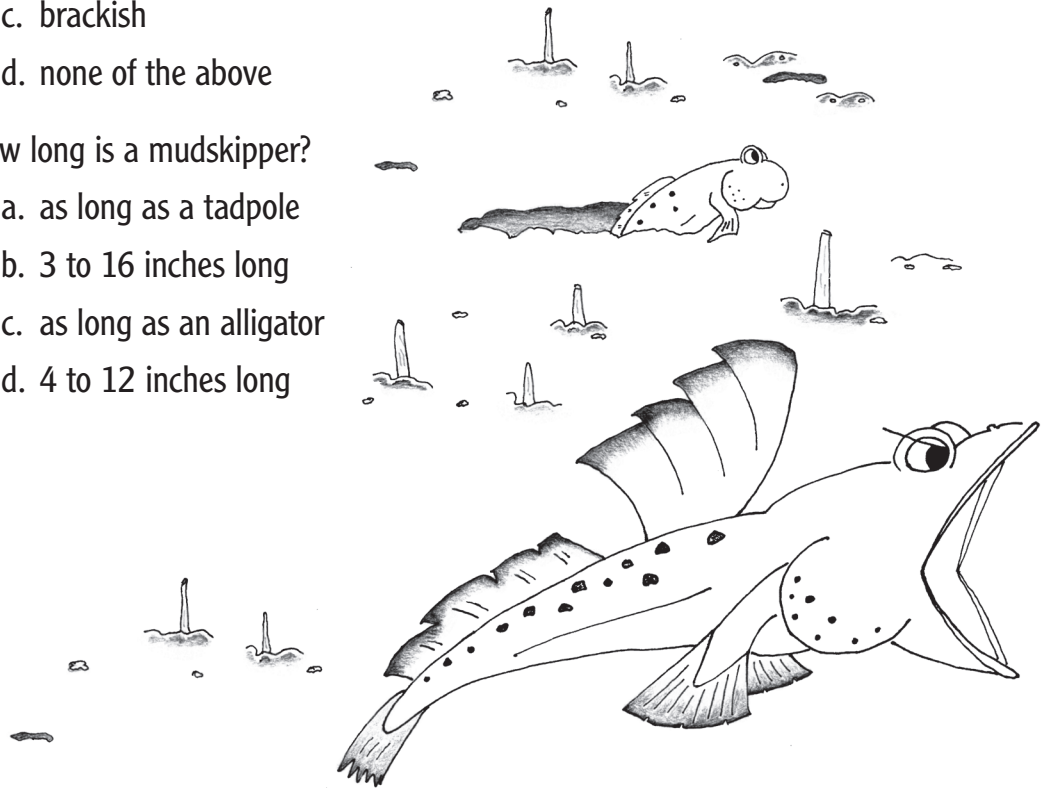
The mudskipper flips backward, landing on its tail. Without warning, it rapidly raises and lowers its back fins. Then, both mudskippers start a pushing contest. After a few minutes, each mudskipper crawls away in a different direction. What a fascinating, unique fish is the mudskipper!



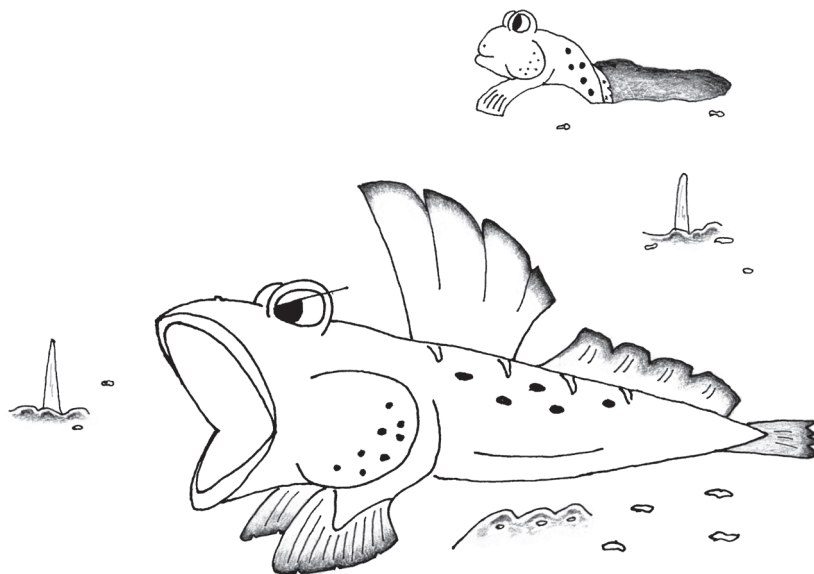
# Mudskipper

A. Circle the letter next to the best answer to each question.

1. What is the main idea of the story?
  - a. The mudskipper crawls on mangrove tree roots.
  - b. The mudskipper lives most of its life out of the water.
  - c. The mudskipper fights over its territory.
  - d. The mudskipper lays its eggs in a burrow.
2. How can a mudskipper breathe out of water?
  - a. It can't breathe out of water, because it is a fish.
  - b. It takes gulps of air.
  - c. It breathes oxygen from water-filled cavities behind its ears.
  - d. It jumps into the water every hour to breathe oxygen.
3. The mangrove swamps are so close to the ocean that the mixture of waters has what name?
  - a. clear
  - b. muddy
  - c. brackish
  - d. none of the above
4. How long is a mudskipper?
  - a. as long as a tadpole
  - b. 3 to 16 inches long
  - c. as long as an alligator
  - d. 4 to 12 inches long



5. When the mudskipper stays out of the water, where does it remain?
  - a. on the rocks
  - b. on lily pads
  - c. on muddy mangrove flats
  - d. none of the above
6. What does the male mudskipper dig so the female can lay her eggs?
  - a. burrow
  - b. tunnel
  - c. hole
  - d. none of above
7. What is a good title for this story?
  - a. How a Mudskipper Uses Its Fins
  - b. The Muddy Mangrove Swamps
  - c. Getting Oxygen from the Water
  - d. A Mudskipper's Life
8. What is the author's purpose of this story?
  - a. to inform the reader about the life of a mudskipper
  - b. to persuade the reader to fly to a country where mudskippers live
  - c. to entertain the reader by telling how funny the mudskipper can be



B. Words can have more than one meaning. For each of the following words, find the synonym, or word with the similar meaning.

1. resides

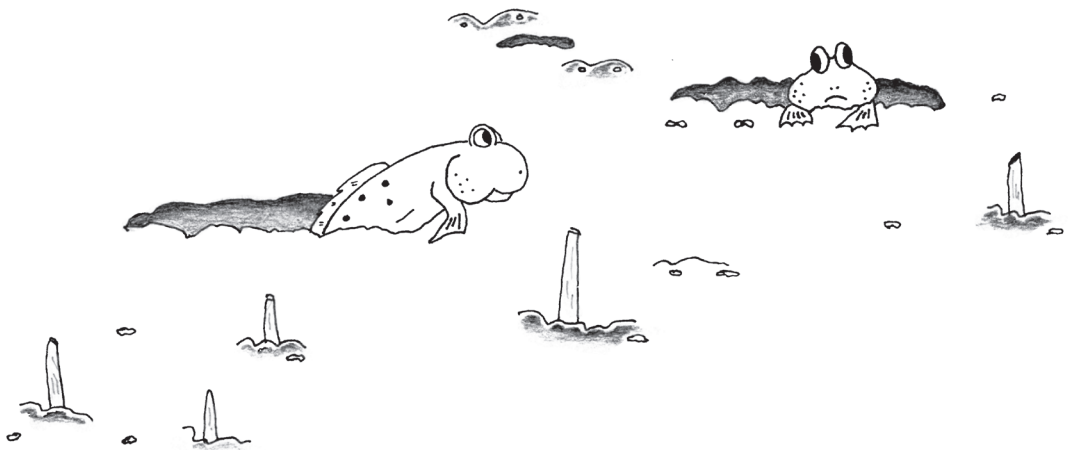
- a. lives
- b. travels
- c. likes

2. absorbs

- a. breaks off
- b. gives away
- c. soaks up

3. utilizes

- a. pushes
- b. uses
- c. trims





# Dolphin and Porpoise

Dolphins and porpoises look alike to most people, but they are different animals. A dolphin has a pointed beak and a longer, streamlined body. It can be up to 25 feet long, three times as long as a third or fourth grader is tall. A porpoise has a round snout with a smaller, four-foot compact frame. There are about six kinds of porpoises and up to 35 types of dolphins in the world.

Both dolphins and porpoises are covered with a thick layer of blubber to keep them warm in cold waters. Both swim in waters all over the world. Some people think they are fish, but dolphins and porpoises are mammals and are related to whales. Dolphins and porpoises both breathe out of water using blowholes on top of their heads. Like you, they are warm-blooded.

Dolphins and porpoises each have one baby a year. Their babies are born alive, not hatched from eggs, and both dolphins and porpoises produce milk to feed their babies. Each baby swims close to its mother for protection until it is between three and eight years old.

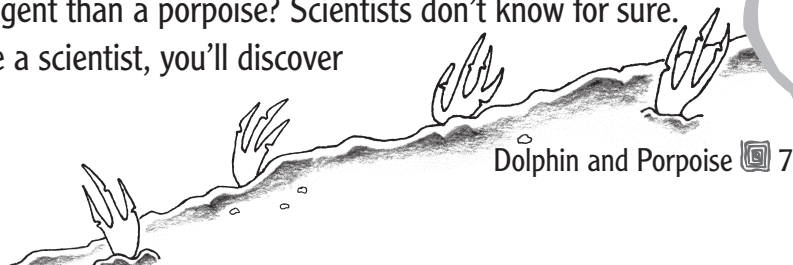
The dolphin and porpoise are carnivorous and have enormous appetites. They both eat fish such as salmon, squid, and shrimp. Although they dwell in water, they live like desert animals with no direct source of drinkable water. Most of the water they get is from the animals they consume.

The dolphin is more playful than the porpoise and will show off this lightheartedness through thrilling jumps and flips. It is an acrobatic swimmer and has no fear of humans. The dolphin will ride the waves alongside a boat, amusing people with exhilarating delight. At some private enclosed beaches or in the ocean, you can swim with a dolphin because of its friendliness. You must put on a mask and snorkel for the adventure. If you are lucky, you can glide close enough to one, or possibly grasp onto one of its fins. You just may make a new friend.

On the other hand, a porpoise is timid and won't venture near you. You are less likely to see one, except when it swims to the ocean's surface for air.

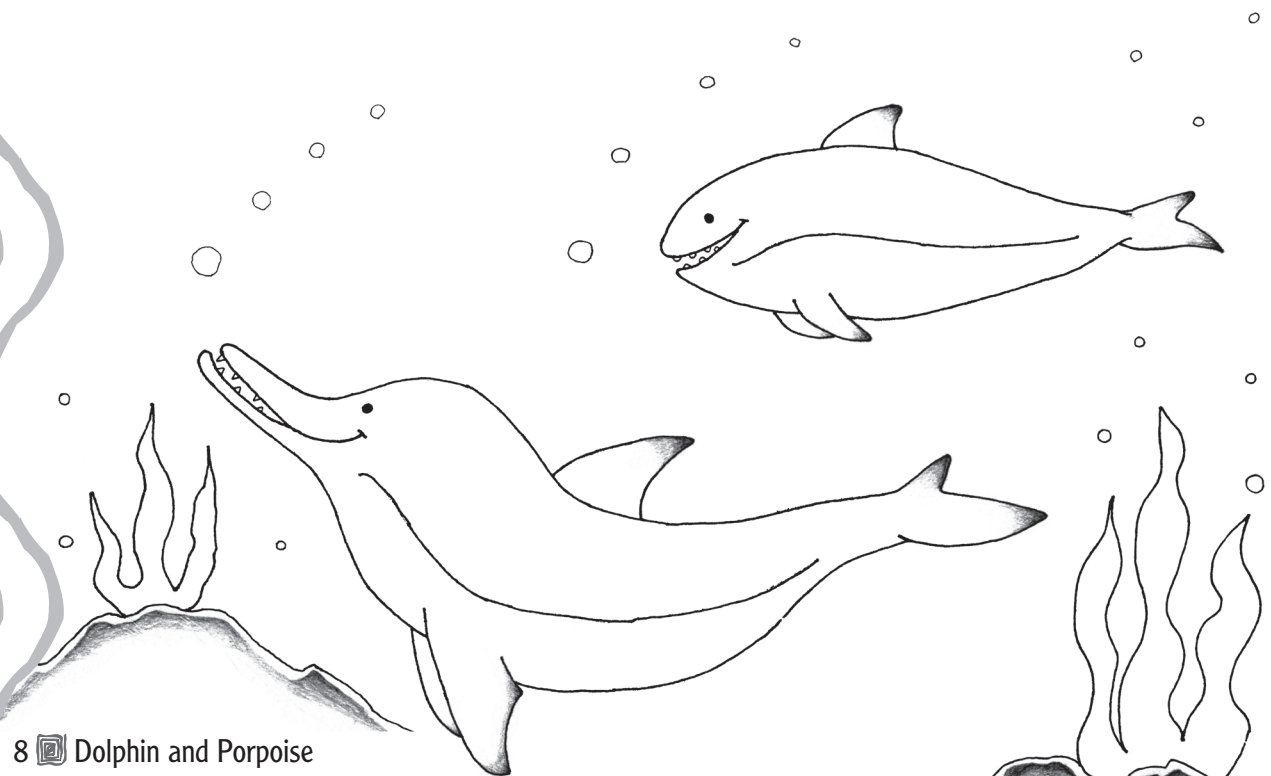
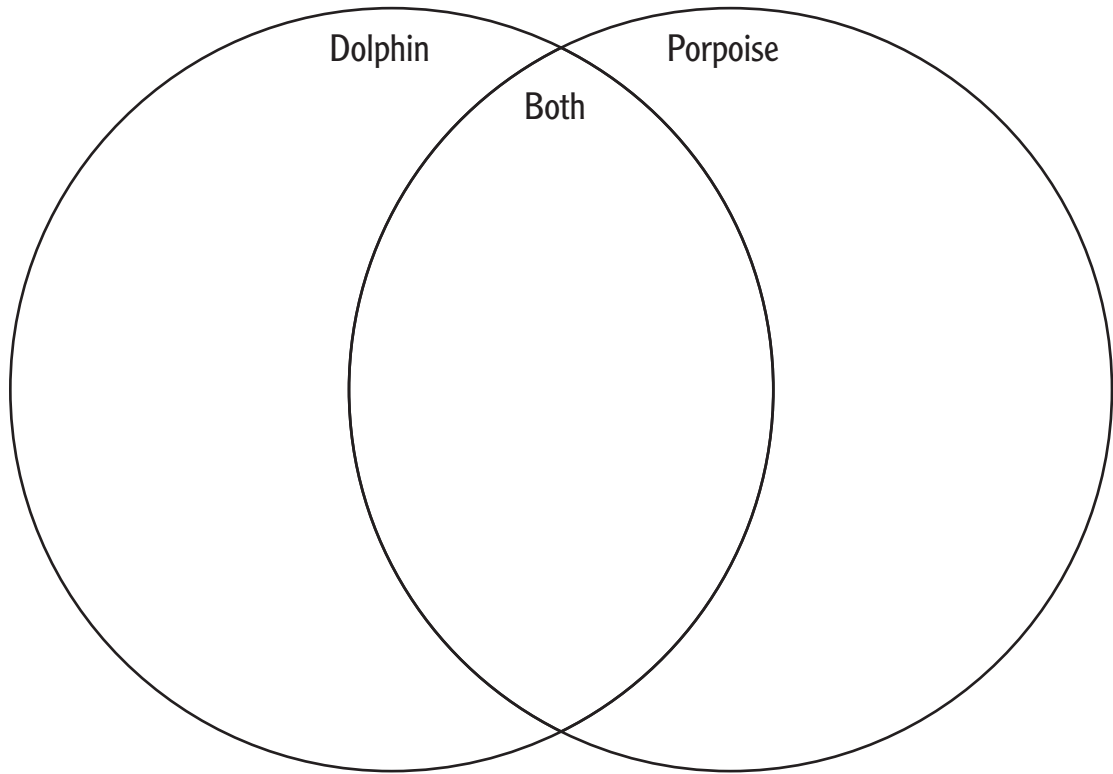
Dolphins are fast learners and respond to commands. Both dolphins and porpoises have the ability to emit sounds, like clicks, to locate prey and to communicate with one another.

Is a dolphin more intelligent than a porpoise? Scientists don't know for sure. Perhaps one day if you become a scientist, you'll discover the answer.



# Dolphin and Porpoise

A. Fill in the Venn diagram to compare and contrast a dolphin with a porpoise. At the left, fill in what is unique about the dolphin. On the right, fill in what is unique about the porpoise. In the center where the circles meet, write information that applies to both animals.



B. Words can have more than one meaning. Circle the word from each list below that defines each word as it was used in the reading.

1. **blubber**

skin

bony

fat

2. **exhilarating**

sad

happy

jealous

3. **streamlined shape**

sleek

round

bold

4. **timid**

bold

shy

bright

5. **prey**

food

thing

object

6. **compact**

flabby

well-proportioned

largest

7. **dwel**

move

live

travel

8. **consume**

play

study

eat

9. **emit**

produce

dislike

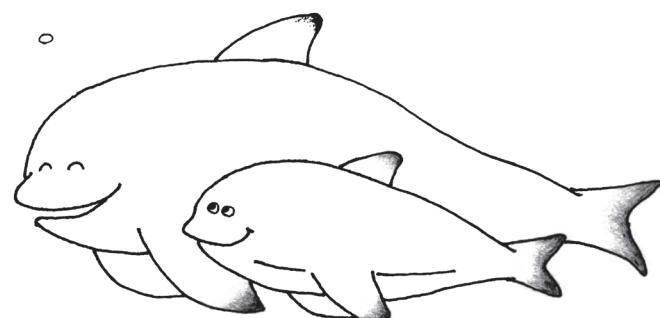
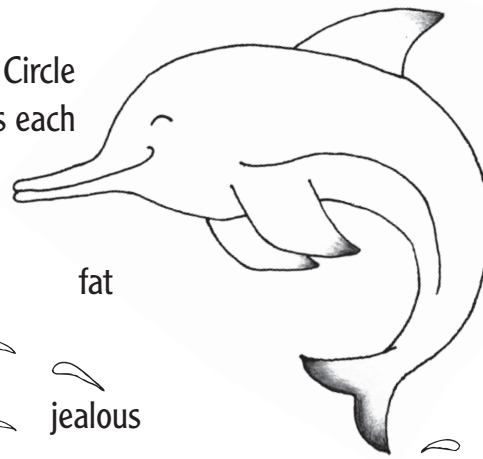
strike

10. **venture**

to play

to journey

to splash



# Sloth

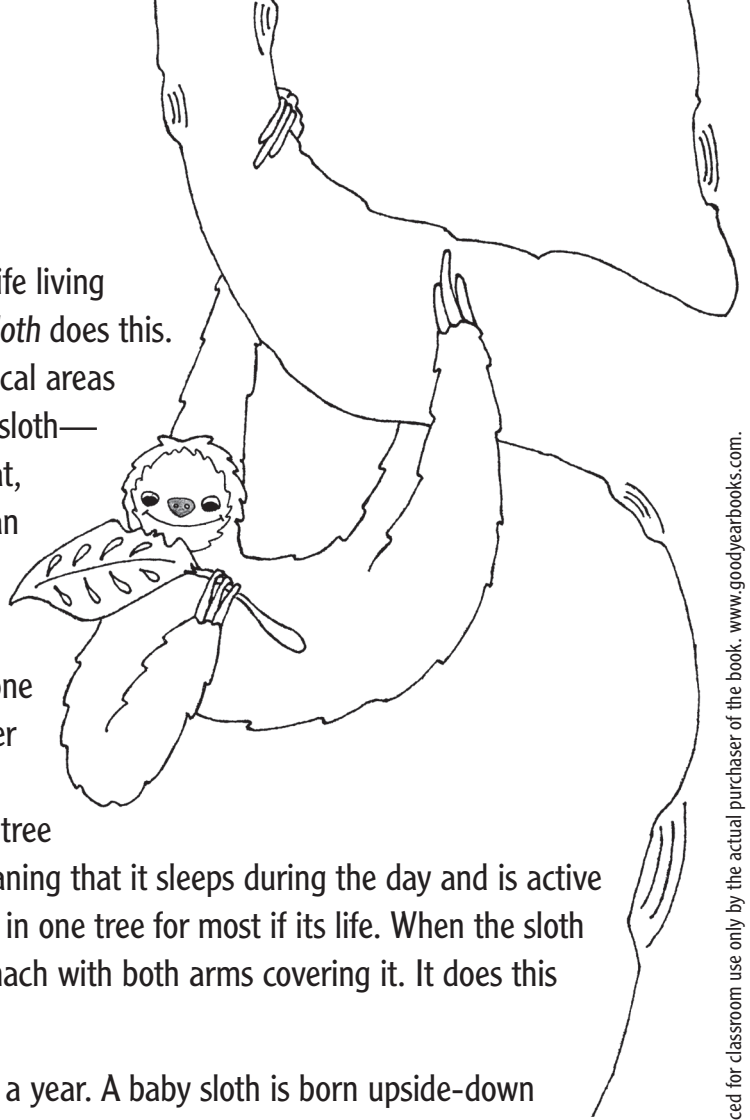
How would you like to spend your life living upside-down? An animal called a *sloth* does this. It is a timid mammal from the tropical areas of North and Central America. The sloth—which is about the size of a large cat, except for its lengthy forearms—can live for about 20 years.

There are two types of sloths. They look alike except that one has two sets of claws while the other has three. The sloth uses its sharp, curved claws to dangle tightly on a tree limb. It is a nocturnal creature, meaning that it sleeps during the day and is active at night. Believe it or not, it resides in one tree for most of its life. When the sloth sleeps, it curls its head into its stomach with both arms covering it. It does this to disguise itself from predators.

An adult sloth has one baby a year. A baby sloth is born upside-down and clings onto its mother's back until it is a few months old. The young won't leave the mom until they can fend for themselves. Most times when a baby departs, it moves only to the next branch because it wants to keep close ties to its mom.

The sloth is omnivorous, eating plants—like tender shoots, buds, and fruit—as well as small lizards, bird eggs, insects, dead animals, and even the algae on its back. It is an extremely slow eater. By the time you consume dinner, the sloth would be finished nibbling on one tiny leaf.

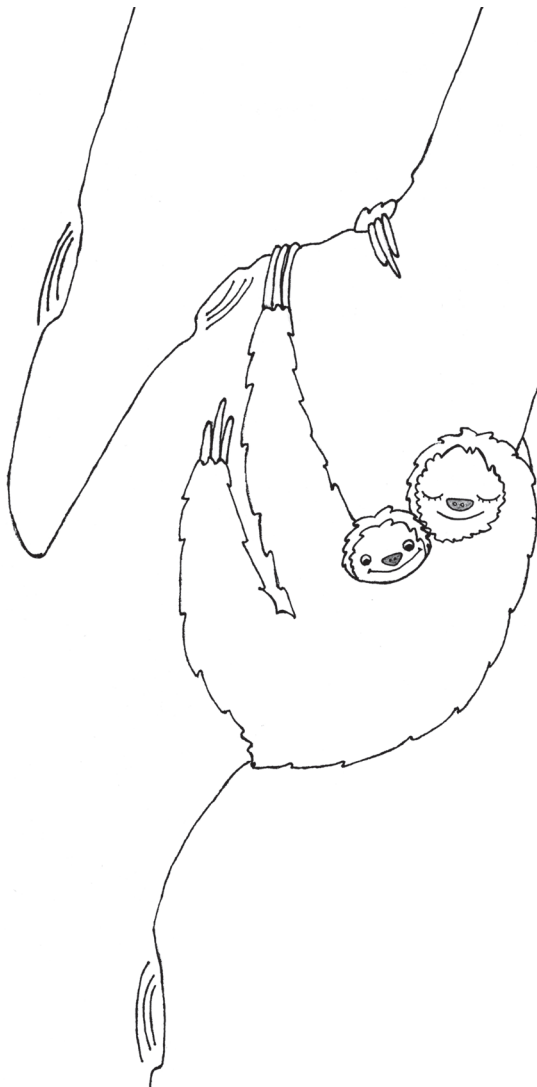
Like a bird, the sloth can turn its head almost all the way around. It appears to be looking backward because of the way its greenish-brown hair grows. Actually, this animal is brown and the greenish tint is algae, which is a plant-like substance filled with chlorophyll that grows on its hair.



# Sloth

Read the following sentences about the sloth. Write **F** if the statement is a fact, or something that can be proved. Write **O** if the statement is an opinion, or something one believes.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The sloth is the most interesting animal alive.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ The sloth spends most of its life in a tree hanging upside-down.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ A sloth is nocturnal.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ A sloth eats a well-balanced diet.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ A sloth moves and eats slowly.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ A sloth is brown with a greenish tint.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Sloths are funny-looking animals.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ A sloth is omnivorous.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Sloths are lazy animals because they do not move much.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ A sloth is a mammal from the tropical areas of North and Central America.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ The baby sloth is born upside-down and clings to its mother's back.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Sloths are dangerous animals because they have sharp claws.



# Platypus

A platypus is unique because it is one of three mammals in the world that lay eggs. It is the size of a large cat. Nicknamed *duck mole*, the platypus is a carnivore that resides in Australia and Tasmania. The oldest known platypus fossil is believed to be more than 100,000 years old. Much of the world was not familiar with this animal until 1939, when *National Geographic* first published a picture of a platypus.

The platypus has grayish-brown fur and a streamlined body. Its most prominent feature is a long, oversized leathery snout that resembles a duck's bill. In fact, it looks as if someone has sewn a duck's bill on a beaver. The platypus makes good use of its bill, though: it wiggles the bill in mud to attract food—frogs, insect larvae, and shellfish. The platypus has webbed feet, which it uses to swim—the front ones are for paddling and the back ones are for steering in the water. It uses its broad, flat tail for swimming and storing energy.

Underneath its webbed feet are claws that the platypus uses like shovels for digging burrow-type tunnels alongside ponds, streams, or slow-moving rivers. While the entrance to a burrow is above ground, each burrow can be up to 50 feet long.

When a platypus becomes scared or nervous, it dives into its tunnel and emits a strange growling sound like a dog might make. Platypuses also use their burrows as resting places and for nesting. After a female and male mate in September or October, the female readies her burrow for nesting by blocking off one end of it with leaves and reeds. Then, she makes a nest in part of the tunnel with folded wet leaves. She curls around two to three eggs during the incubation period, which lasts for ten days. Platypus babies are born hairless and blind. The mom nurses her newborns with milk that flows through pores under her belly. After ten days, she leaves the nest for the first time to forage for food. In 17 weeks the babies are ready to leave the nest and be on their own.

A platypus is active at dusk and all through the night. That means that the platypus is nocturnal.

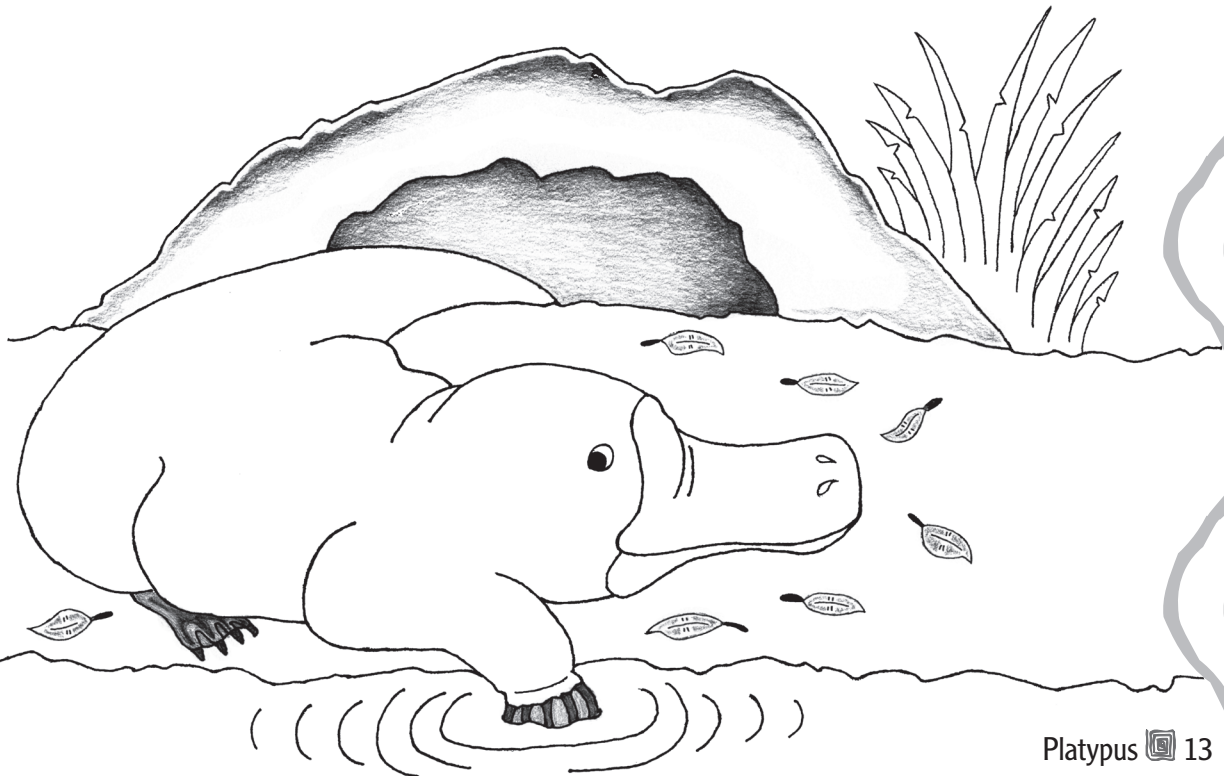
At one time people hunted the platypus for its fur, but people have presented a far worse threat to the animal by destroying its habitat. In 1974, the parliament of New South Wales, Australia, passed the National Parks Wildlife Act, which protects the platypus and other animals as well as their habitats. In the year 2000, the platypus was chosen as one of the mascots for the games of the summer Olympics, which were held in Sydney, Australia.




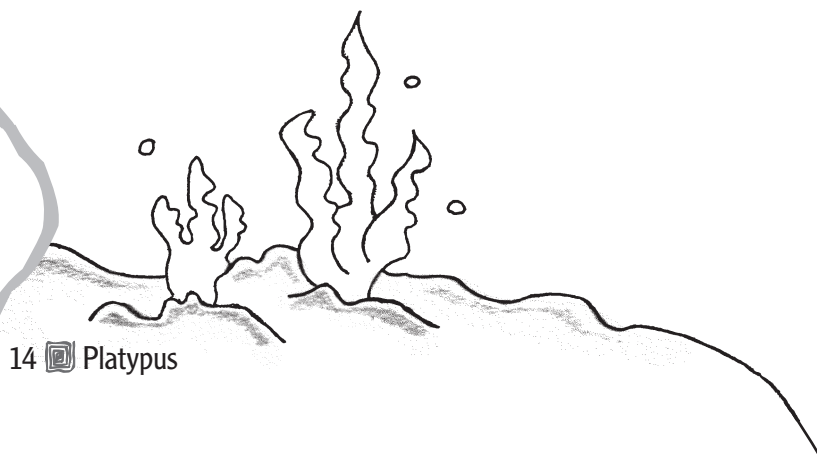
# Platypus

A. Answer the following questions in complete sentences. If you need help, reread the story.

1. Why is the platypus such a unique animal?
2. In what countries does it live?
3. Describe what the platypus looks like.
4. How and when was the platypus introduced to the world?



- 
5. What does the platypus use its webbed feet and tail for?
  6. What is the first thing you might notice about the platypus?
  7. When and why does a platypus dig burrows?
  8. What does a mother platypus do to take care of her eggs?
  9. When does a platypus look for food?
  10. What 1974 law protects the platypus, and why was it passed?

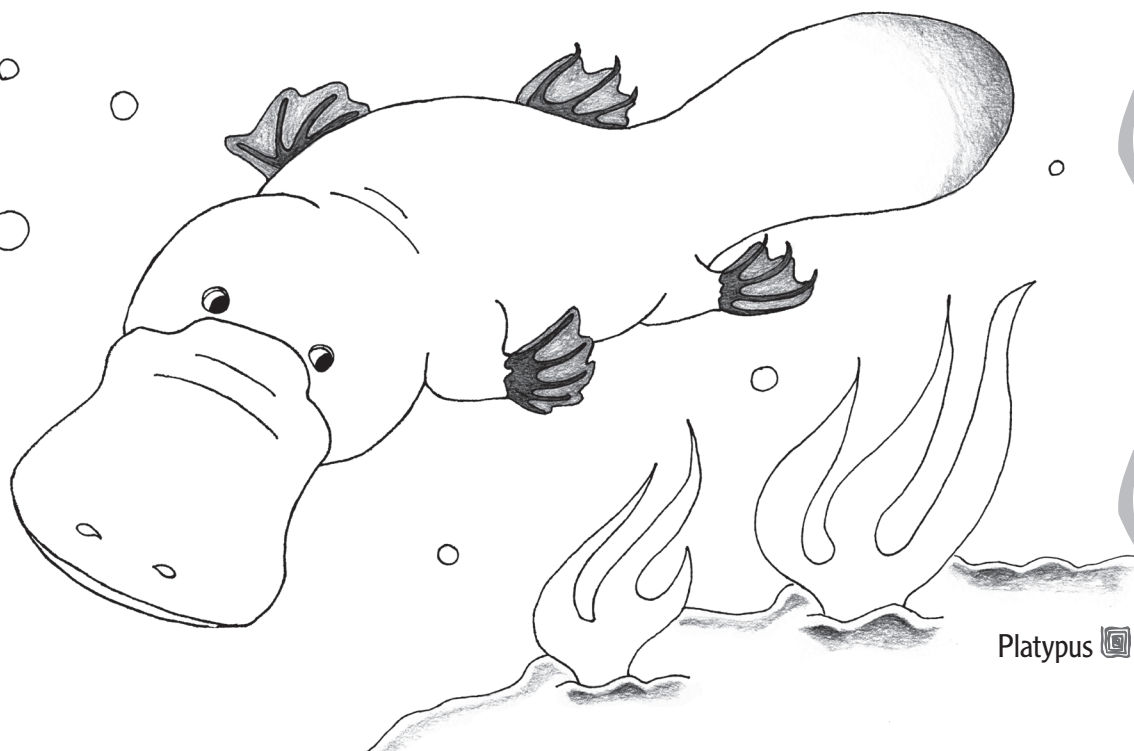




B. Search for the words that match the descriptions below. (Hint: These words are found in the platypus story.)

- one of a kind
- remains preserved in a mold in a rock
- nocturnal
- able to be eaten
- period when an egg is protected by its parent
- to search for
- looks like
- symbol of an event
- partial
- twilight
- meat eater

E D I B L E S R P I  
 U Y A M U K E E A N  
 F O R A G E R S R C  
 O F A S S B C E T U  
 S D R C T R N M P B  
 S U E O O E G B H A  
 I S A T L P U L Z T  
 L K U N I Q U E T I  
 A N I G H T A S E O  
 C A R N I V O R E N



# Leaf Deer

The leaf muntjac deer, or leaf deer, is the world's smallest deer. It is the size of a large chicken, about 15 to 20 inches tall, and weighs between ten to 20 pounds. It gets its name from the fact that because it is so tiny, you could wrap one gigantic leaf around its body.

A biologist discovered this miniature mammal in 1997 in a remote mountainous region of Myanmar in Southeast Asia. The leaf deer thrives in dense forests at 1,500 to 2,000 feet above sea level, between tropical forests and temperate zones.

The female and male leaf deer look alike except that the male has antlers an inch tall. They shed the antlers once a year but the antlers grow back the following season. The leaf deer is reddish brown in color with a slightly darker V shape running from its forehead to nose. It has huge dark eyes that help it see better at night. Its legs are thin as pencils and the tail remains straight up.

The leaf deer is timid and cautious, and that's why it lives in heavily shaded wooded areas. Anytime it approaches something new, it moves one of its legs in front of the other, so slowly that it appears as if it is not even moving. The leaf deer is so cautious that when it feels threatened, it barks like a dog, earning it the nickname of the *barking deer*.

The leaf deer is a solitary animal, but the male and female mate and stay together for life. Their offspring are the only deer that do not bear any spots when they are born. The newborn deer is born deep in the dense jungle covered with bushes for protection because it is so tiny, weighing only a pound or so. The mother keeps her young well hidden. The babies do not venture out for a week or more until they are able to walk with their mother. It is believed that males live to be about 16 years old and females can live to be 18 years old.

Unlike most animals, the leaf deer catches catnaps. It is active during parts of the day and at night, making it both diurnal and nocturnal—unlike most animals that are strictly nocturnal. The leaf deer is a hardy eater, munching mostly on grasses, leaves, and fruit.

Isn't it interesting how the leaf deer, with all its potential enemies, manages to survive?

# Leaf Deer

A. What is the main idea of this story?

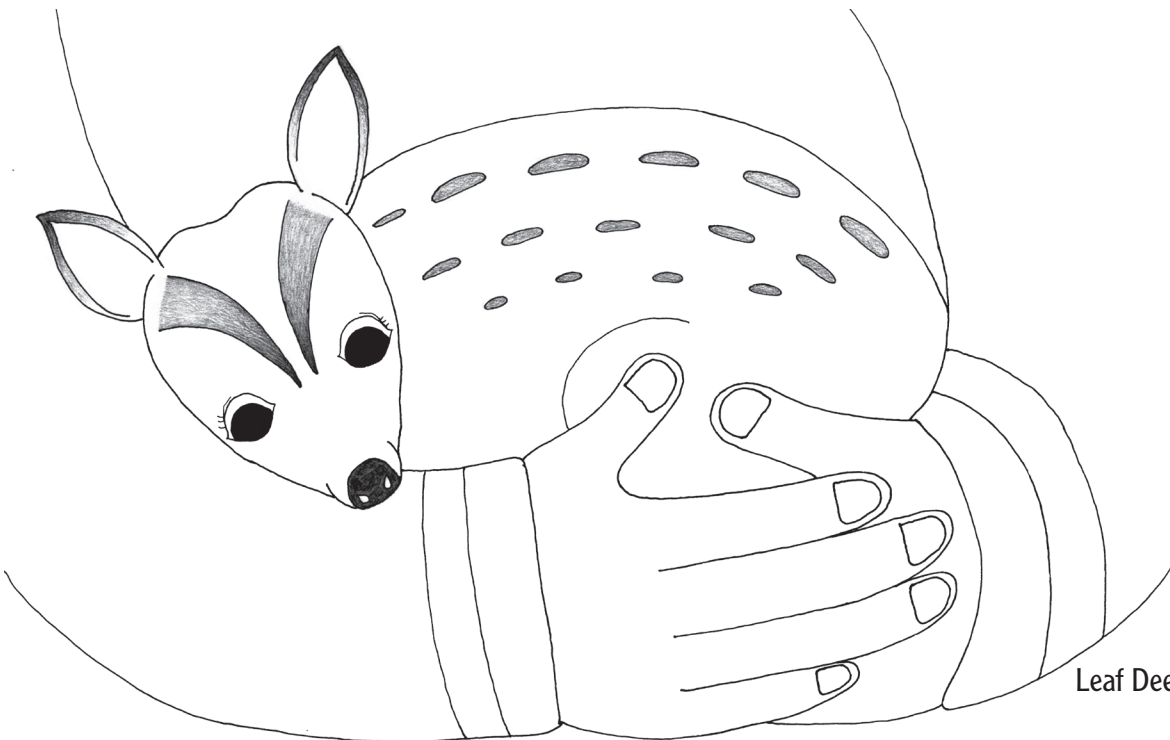
B. What are four details that support the main idea of the story?

1.

2.

3.

4.



C. What is the most interesting fact you learned about the leaf deer?

D. Select the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. Which of the following is not a part of the story of the leaf deer?

- a. The leaf deer is as big as a large chicken.
- b. The leaf deer was discovered in Myanmar.
- c. The leaf deer will grow as tall as most deer.

2. After the female leaf deer has her baby, what does she do next?

- a. hides it in the bushes
- b. walks away until it stands up
- c. buries it in a log

3. What does it mean to be in a remote area?

- a. close to other people or animals
- b. near other people or animals
- c. far from other people or animals

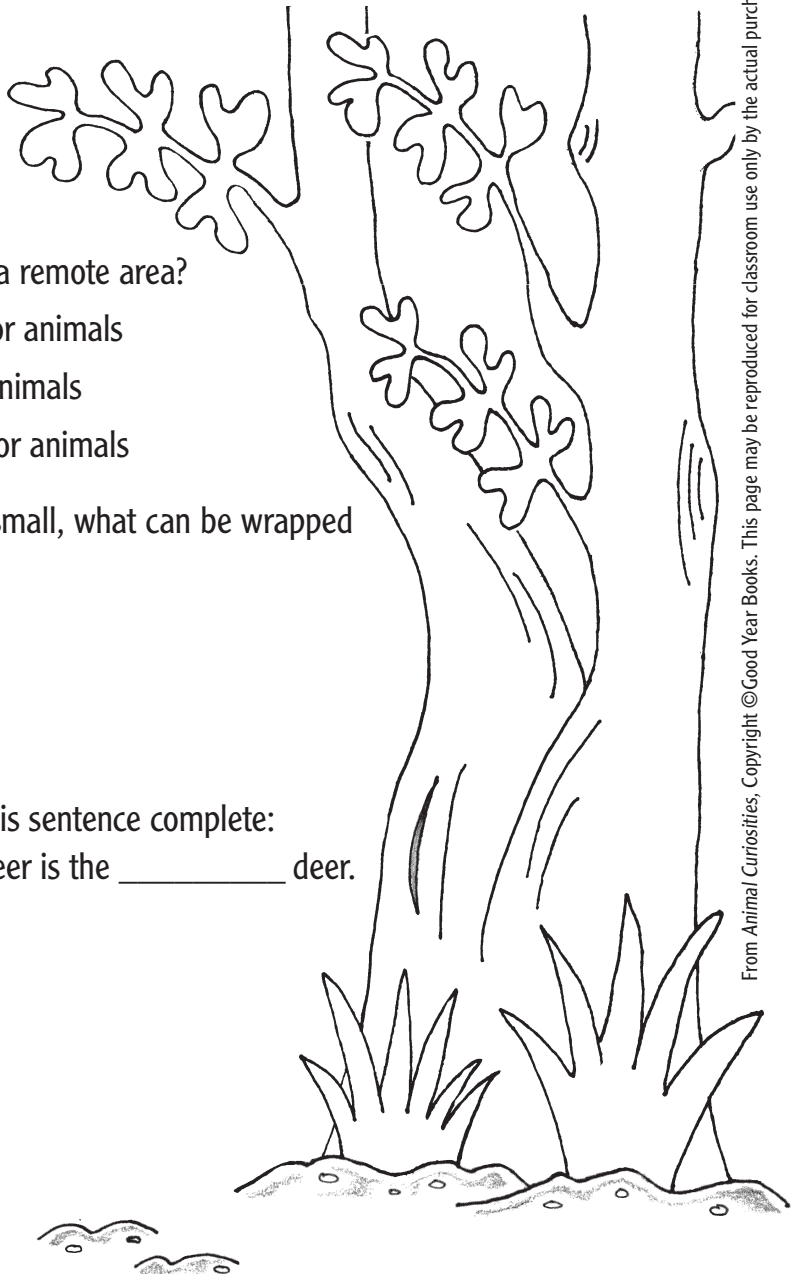
4. Because the leaf deer is so small, what can be wrapped around it?

- a. a paper towel
- b. a gigantic leaf
- c. a newspaper

5. Find the word that makes this sentence complete:

Another name for the leaf deer is the \_\_\_\_\_ deer.

- a. crying
- b. screaming
- c. barking



6. What does the word *catnap* mean?

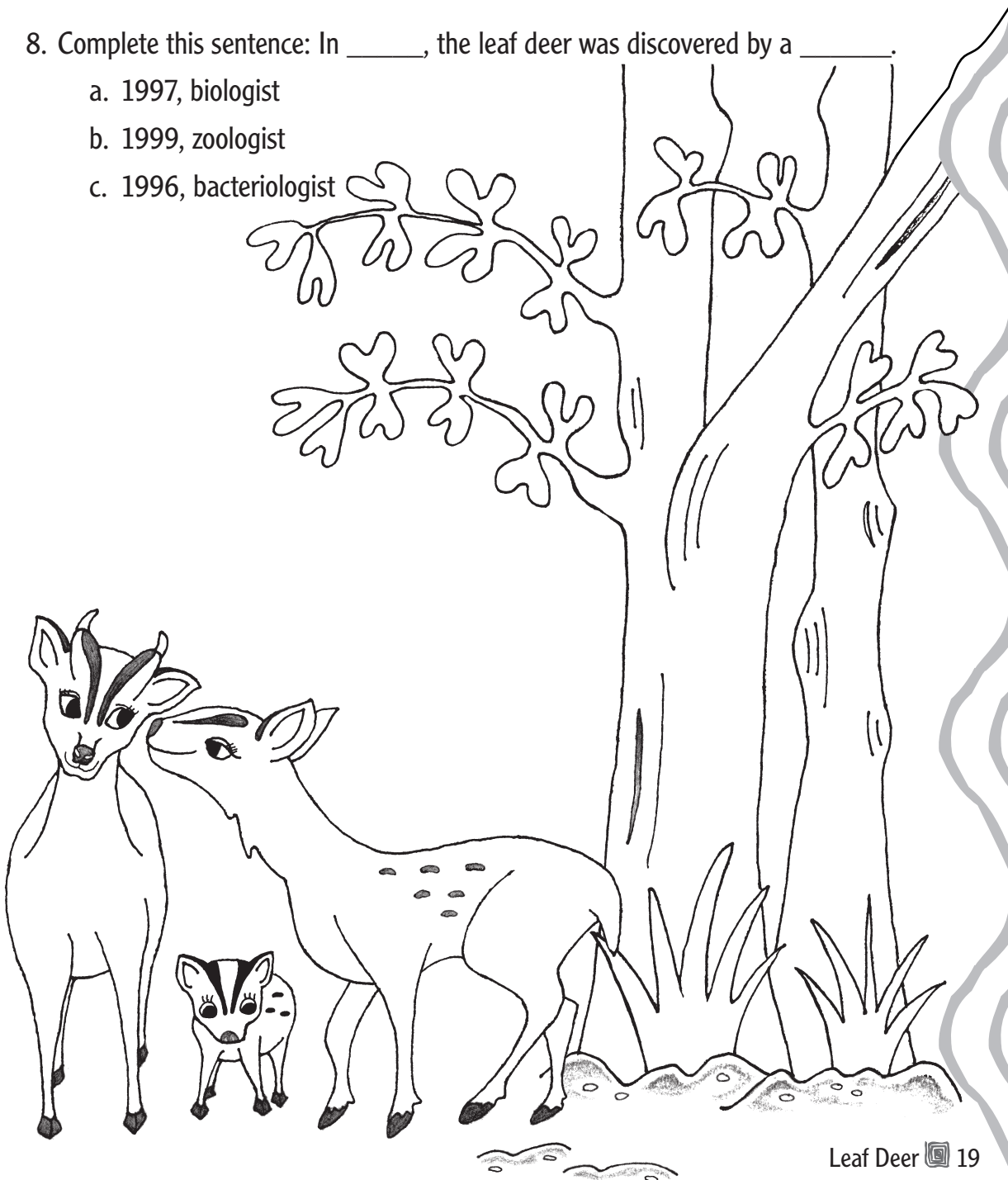
- a. long nap
- b. short nap
- c. all day sleep

7. Why does a leaf deer live in dense, heavily wooded forests?

- a. to hide from its enemies because it is so small
- b. to live in lots of rain
- c. to roam around freely

8. Complete this sentence: In \_\_\_\_\_, the leaf deer was discovered by a \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. 1997, biologist
- b. 1999, zoologist
- c. 1996, bacteriologist



# meerkat

People have become more familiar with meerkats since Walt Disney Studios included one in the movie *The Lion King*. Later, they appeared in their own television program, *Meerkat Manor*, on the Animal Planet network. Now we know what a wonderfully beautiful sight it is to glimpse meerkats standing in their famous upright posture on the Kalahari plains in South Africa! They use their tails like a camera's tripod to balance themselves in that upright position.

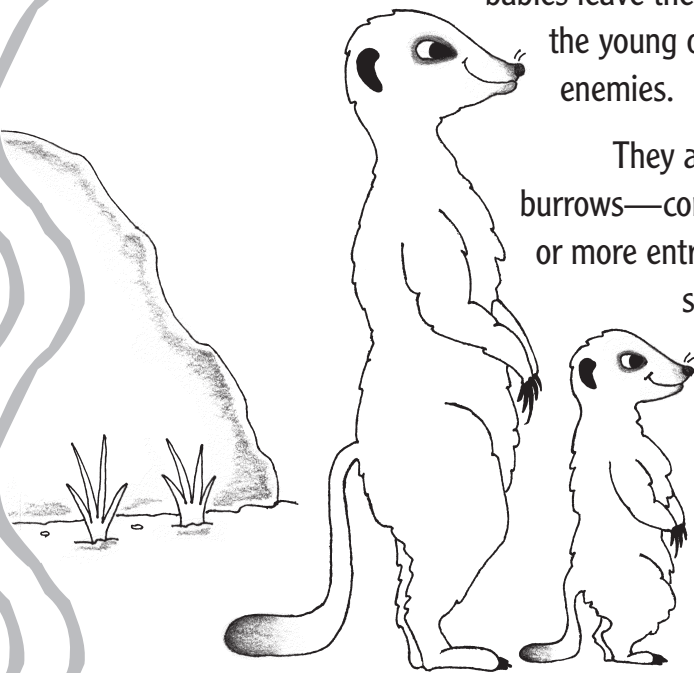
Squirrel-sized meerkats are 12 inches tall and weigh two pounds. Usually, they are silver-tan with dark eye patches. These black marks act as built-in sunglasses to reduce the powerful sun's glare and assist meerkats to see further distances to spy on their predators—falcons, eagles, and jackals.

Meerkats are gregarious and live in groups of up to thirty called a *mob*. One dominant male and one dominant female rule each mob. These two, called the *alpha male* and *alpha female*, do most of the breeding for the mob. Meerkat moms have one to five pups at a time, and they are born with their eyes and ears shut and are mostly hairless.

While meerkat moms are foraging, other meerkats babysit. Babies can drink milk from their moms who are lying down or standing up. When the babies are weaned, their moms bring them food and teach them how to eat. Once the curious babies leave the tunnel to explore, other meerkats tutor the young on how to forage, eat, and look for enemies.

They are burrowers, digging and excavating burrows—complex tunnel systems with at least 15 or more entrances and exit holes and numerous sleeping chambers. When they dig, they close their ears so sand won't get in them. Fortunately, the tunnels, lined with leaves and grass, are almost seven feet below ground, keeping temperatures perfect, neither too hot or cold, under the broiling African sun. Meerkats are extremely territorial, digging their tunnels as

long as three square miles to protect themselves from other meerkat mobs.

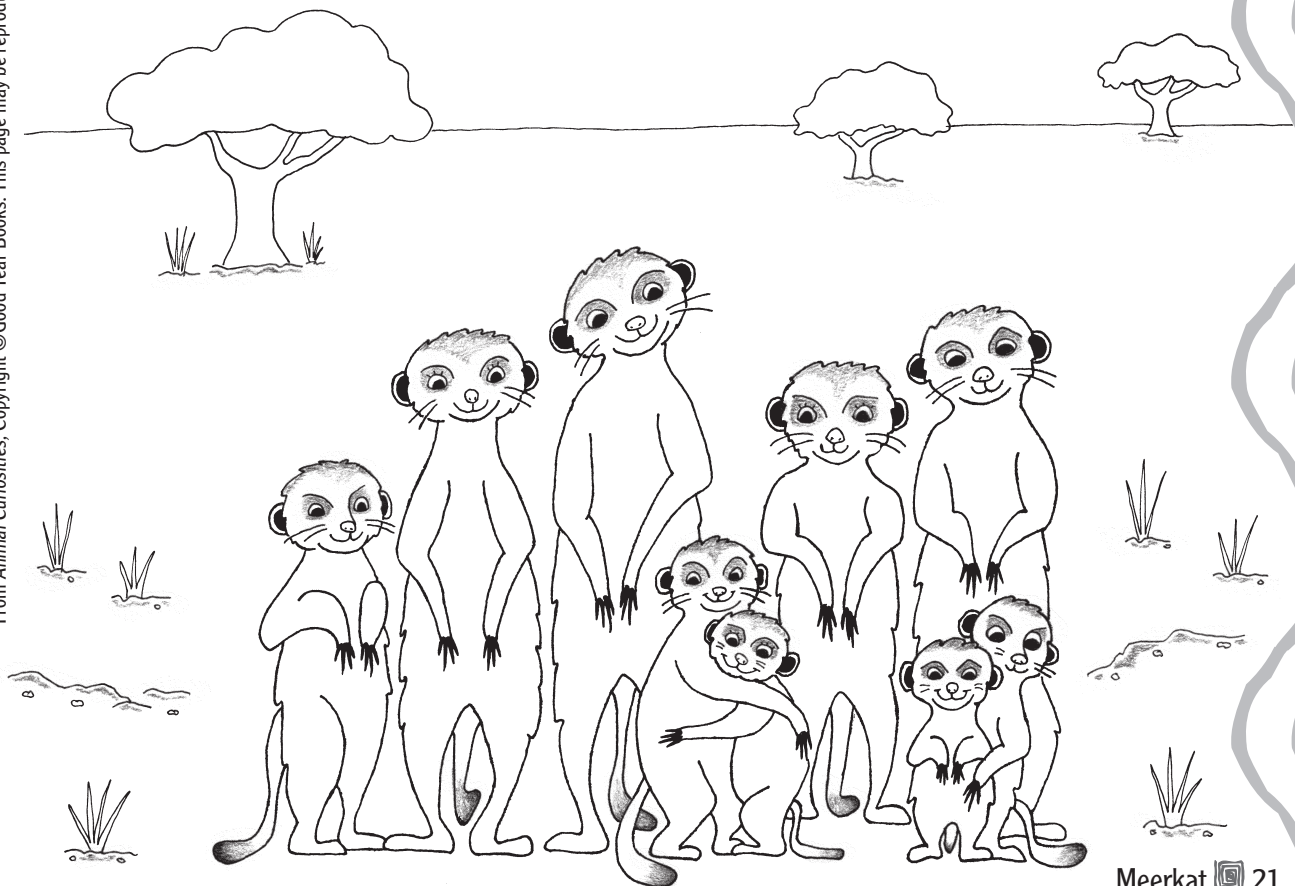




Meerkats sleep by night in their burrows, curling up and snuggling next to one another for warmth. These cute animals are diurnal, which means that they carefully emerge from the burrow at sunrise and spend time sunbathing and grooming each other. Soon after, most meerkats, who are insectivores, forage on worms and bugs but also tiny lizards, snakes, scorpions, small birds, eggs, and plants. Scorpions are venomous, but meerkats bite off their tails, poisonous stinger and all.

Before searching for food, adults take turns acting as guards, on the lookout for enemies. The guards climb onto the highest rock, termite mound, or bush, and look around to see if there are any dangers. A guard who spots trouble will bark—sending the other meerkats running for protective cover. (Young meerkats become so frightened when they see something fly above them that even an airplane will send them running!) If all is clear, at least one guard produces a low constant peeping sound known as the “watchman’s song.” When they hear that song, other meerkats know it is safe to hunt.

In addition to the resources mentioned above, meerkats figure prominently in a book called *Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling, which you may want to read one day.



# meerkats

A. Match each word to its definition. Then write the number of the definition next to its word.

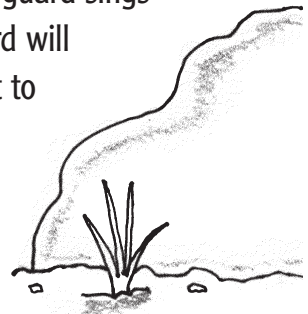
- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| _____ 1. weaned      | a. friendly                                    |
| _____ 2. complex     | b. to look at                                  |
| _____ 3. upright     | c. to eat solid food rather than mother's milk |
| _____ 4. territorial | d. move out of                                 |
| _____ 5. alpha       | e. defends an area strongly                    |
| _____ 6. excavating  | f. straight up                                 |
| _____ 7. gregarious  | g. complicated                                 |
| _____ 8. emerge      | h. digging                                     |
| _____ 9. glimpse     | i. leader                                      |

B. Fill in the blanks to complete this summary of the story.

The main characters in this story are \_\_\_\_\_. They reside on the \_\_\_\_\_ plains in South \_\_\_\_\_. The cute, adorable meerkats are famous for standing \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_-sized meerkats are 12 inches tall and weigh two pounds. Meerkats are known as \_\_\_\_\_ because they dig tunnels called burrows. The tunnels are \_\_\_\_\_ feet underground, \_\_\_\_\_ them from the boiling African sun. Their tunnels occupy \_\_\_\_\_ square miles.

Meerkats live in groups, called \_\_\_\_\_. They sleep at night but are \_\_\_\_\_, awake during the day, when they \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ for food. Meanwhile, one or more \_\_\_\_\_ stand on large rocks, looking for enemies. If it is clear, at least one guard sings a peeping sound to say that all is safe. If it is not, a guard will \_\_\_\_\_. Meerkats are territorial and will fight to protect their area from another mob.

An \_\_\_\_\_ male and female are the bosses of a mob. The female can have up to five \_\_\_\_\_. Besides the mom, \_\_\_\_\_ teach the young how to forage, eat, and look for enemies.





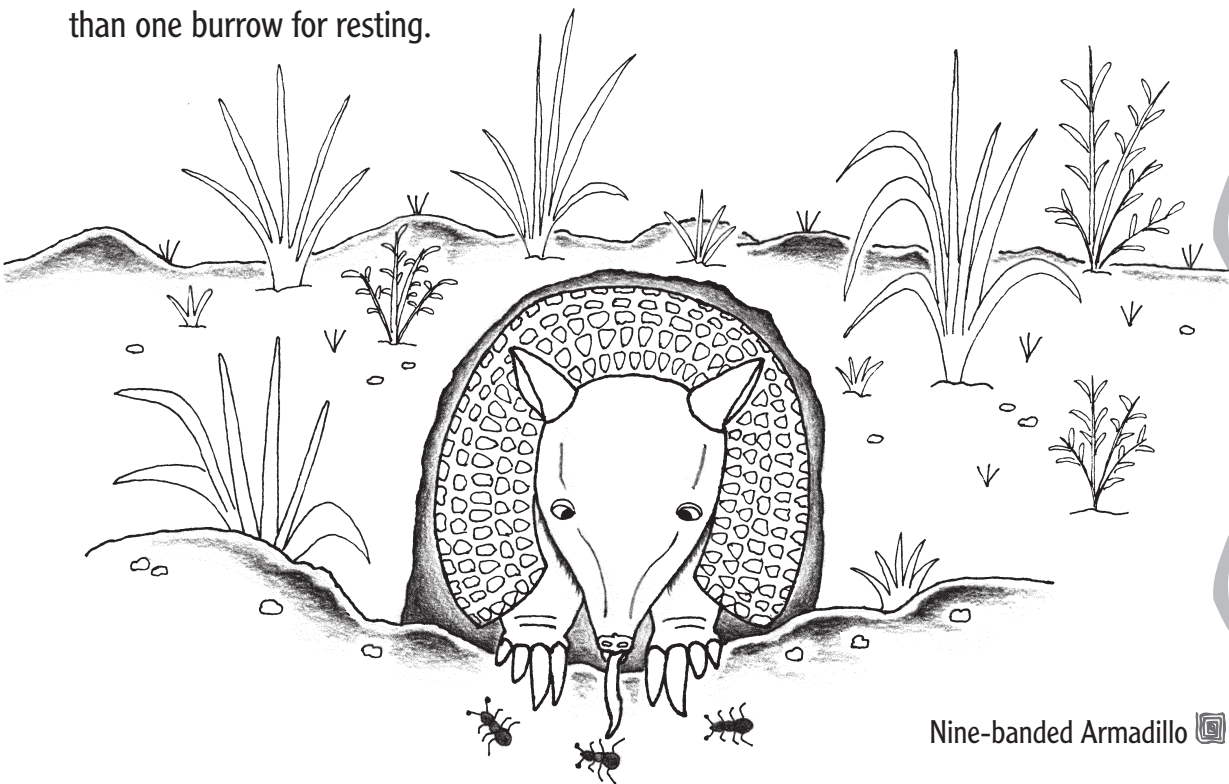
# Nine-banded Armadillo

Nearly hairless and covered with bony plates, the nine-banded armadillo is related to the anteater and sloth. This weird-looking animal looks like a knight dressed in a suit of armor. It is about the size of a small dog with a long, pointy, shoveled-shaped nose and small, beady eyes. Most nine-banded armadillos are brown-gray with razor-sharp claws.

In Spanish *armadillo* means “little armored one.” This name refers to the bony plate protection covering an armadillo’s back, legs, and tail. The back armor hangs down over the body, protecting its soft underparts, which are covered by a denser layer of scattered hair. The armadillo is the only living mammal that wears a shell.

There are different types of this digging animal, but most live in South America. The smallest armadillo is the 6-inch pink fairy armadillo weighing a couple of pounds, and the largest is the giant armadillo, which weighs 120 pounds.

Only the nine-banded armadillo lives in the United States, in an area from eastern New Mexico to South Carolina and as far north as southern Nebraska down to the Gulf Coast. The armadillo population continues to expand into new territory because of a lack of predators. Usually, the armadillo builds a burrow close to the banks of a river or stream or near a tree trunk. Sometimes an armadillo has more than one burrow for resting.



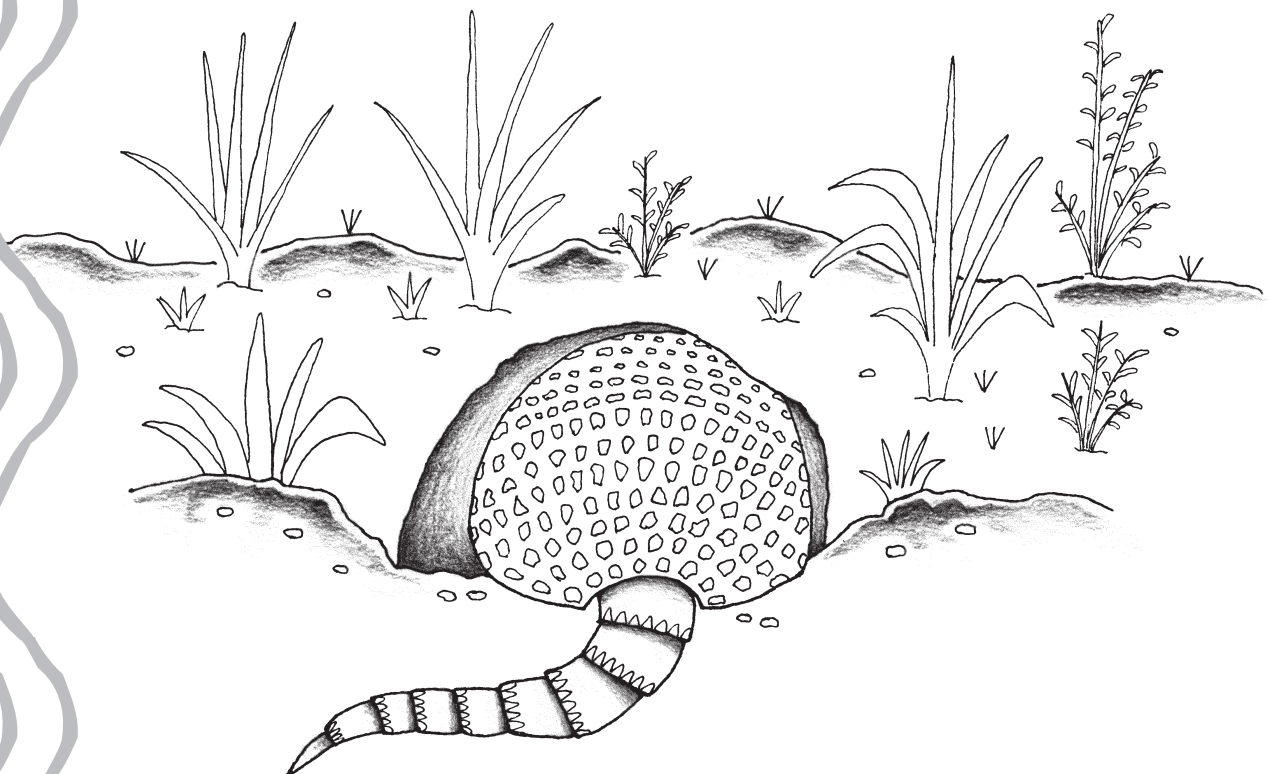
No other animal can do what a nine-banded armadillo mom can: she gives birth, in a burrow, to four identical babies, or quadruplets, from a single fertilized egg. Newborn armadillos have soft skin that hardens as they mature. The babies remain with the mom from spring through summer before going off by themselves.

The nine-banded armadillo sleeps 16 hours a day, coming out to find food in the evening. It uses its claws to dig into the soil, unearthing at least 40,000 insects, like ants, beetles, and grub, which it slurps up with its long, sticky tongue. If this isn't a large enough meal, the armadillo can also dine on bird eggs, plant roots, lizards, and even rotting, decaying animal flesh called *carrion*.

Oddly enough, the nine-banded armadillo has two unique ways of crossing a river. It inflates its stomach with air and floats across, or it sinks down to the bottom of the riverbed and crawls across it, holding its breath up to six minutes.

When an enemy, such as a bear or coyote, startles a nine-banded armadillo, it jumps three to four feet straight up in the air to scare off the foe. If that doesn't intimidate the larger animal, the armadillo may lash out with its claws. It also wedges itself in dirt or races off to find a burrow or a hole to leap into and hide.

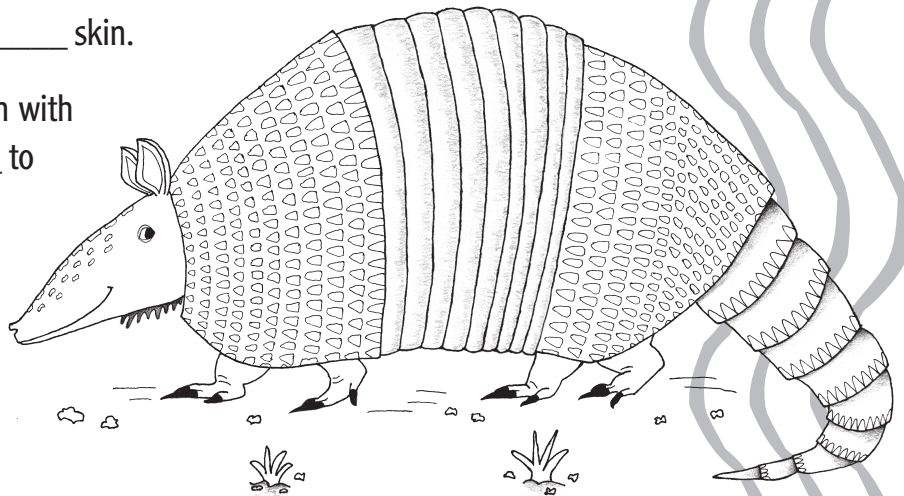
The city of Armadillo, Texas, was named for this animal. In 1981, the nine-banded armadillo became Texas's state mascot.



# Nine-banded Armadillo

Complete each sentence.

1. In Spanish, *armadillo* means \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The armadillo is the only living animal that wears a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Most armadillos reside in what country? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The smallest armadillo is called a \_\_\_\_\_ and is \_\_\_\_\_ long.
5. The giant armadillo weighs \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.
6. The nine-banded armadillo lives in an area from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The armadillo's land area is expanding because of lack of \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The nine-banded armadillo's enemies are the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The nine-banded armadillo sleeps \_\_\_\_\_ hours daily.
10. The armadillo eats up to \_\_\_\_\_ insects daily.
11. It also eats rotting, decaying animal flesh called \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The nine-banded armadillo gives birth to \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Newborn armadillos are born in a \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The newborns have \_\_\_\_\_ skin.
15. The armadillo babies remain with their mom from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
16. In 1981, the nine-banded armadillo became Texas's state \_\_\_\_\_.



# Capybara

Have you ever seen a rat or guinea pig that weighs 100 pounds? The capybara from tropical South America is a rodent that looks like an enormous guinea pig—to which it is related. The capybara has two nicknames: water pig and water hog.

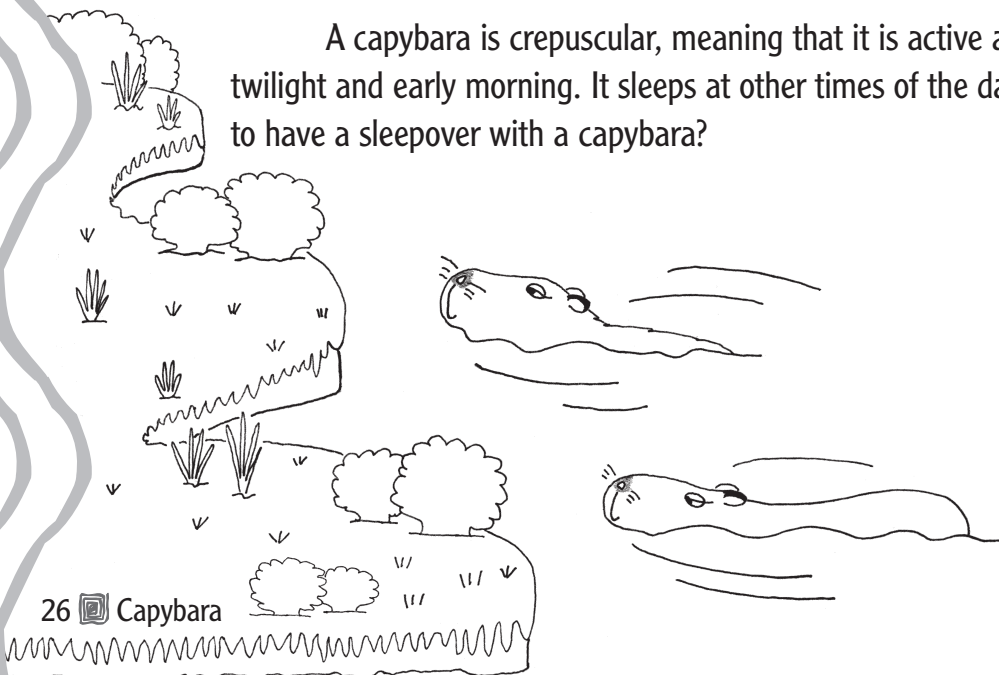
Usually, the female capybara has four to five babies a year, each weighing four pounds. The young are born on land, and within a month or so, the babies follow their mom everywhere. The little ones nibble on grass but still drink milk from their mom for several months.

The adult capybara is a herbivore, eating only plants. It consumes six to eight pounds of grass, aquatic plants, fruit, and tree bark in a day. Because it is a rodent, its teeth never stop growing, but its diet helps keep its teeth from growing too long. Often, it gobbles down its own waste for nutrition.

The capybara is semi-aquatic and lives near rivers and streams in groups of ten to twenty. Its feet are partially webbed, which help it swim. Sometimes it spends so much time in the water that its coarse hair doesn't dry out. When worried if an enemy is about, the capybara jumps into the water, where it can hold its breath for up to five minutes. The capybara sunburns easily, so it spends a lot of time in the water or in the shade. While in the shade, it digs an immense hole in the mud and enjoys rolling around in it, covering and protecting its gray skin.

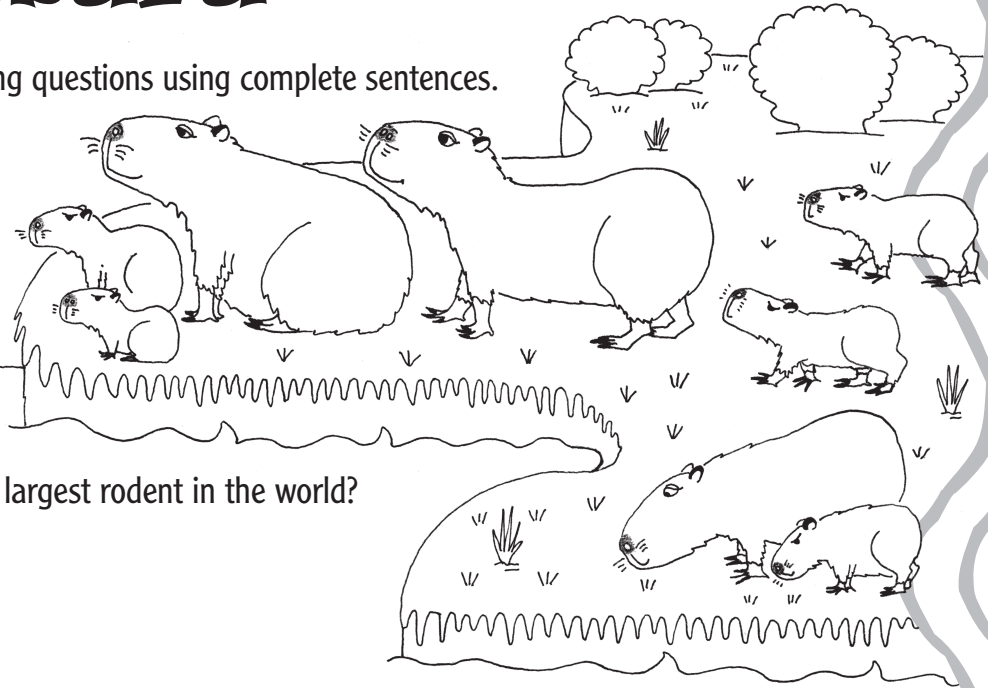
A capybara makes different vocal sounds, like whistling, grunting, and purring like a cat. These noises help keep the group together. If the capybara barks, it means an enemy is nearby. Sometimes, the group pushes the babies into the water and surrounds them for protection.

A capybara is crepuscular, meaning that it is active and alert at twilight and early morning. It sleeps at other times of the day. Would you like to have a sleepover with a capybara?



# Capybara

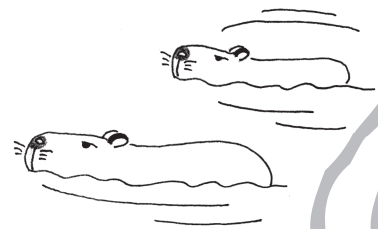
Answer the following questions using complete sentences.



1. What is the largest rodent in the world?

2. Where does the capybara live?

3. What are the capybara's two nicknames?



4. How long can a capybara hold its breath?

5. What part of the capybara's body is best suited for swimming?



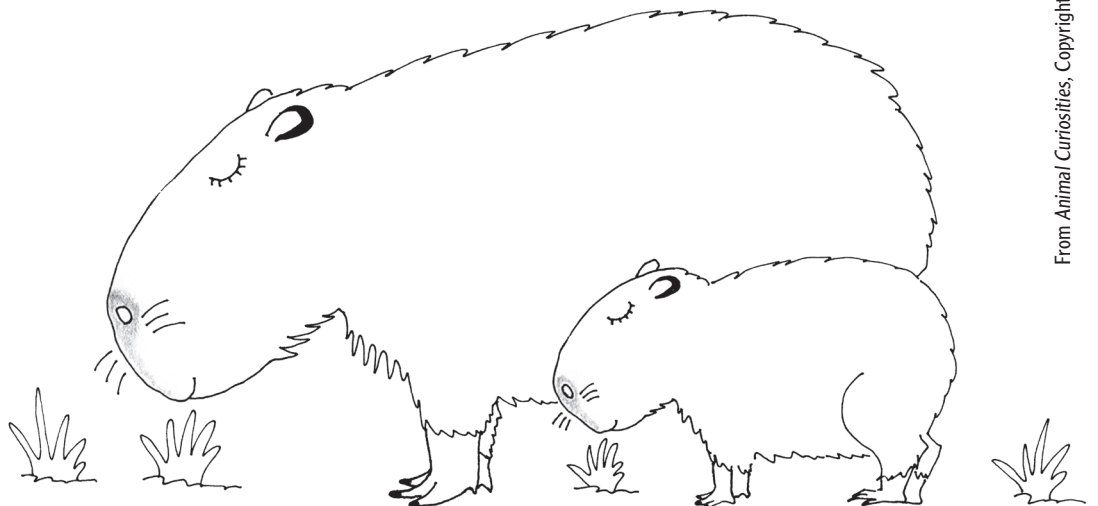
6. When does a capybara rush to leap into water?

7. Why does a capybara make certain vocal sounds?

8. What is a herbivore?

9. Why does the capybara have to eat at least six to eight pounds of plants each day?

10. Why is a capybara called *crepuscular*?



# Kookaburra

If the kookaburra went to school, its screaming laugh would surely get it in trouble. From dusk to dawn, the bird announces its presence with its crazy laughter. The national bird of Australia, where it lives in woodlands and forests in the eastern and western areas of the country, the kookaburra is also found in Tasmania and New Guinea.



The kookaburra has a feathery brown back and spotted pale blue spots on its wings. The male has a white head, but the female is yellowish brown. This bird has a striped tail and is 19 inches long and 17 inches in height, and it weighs around one pound.

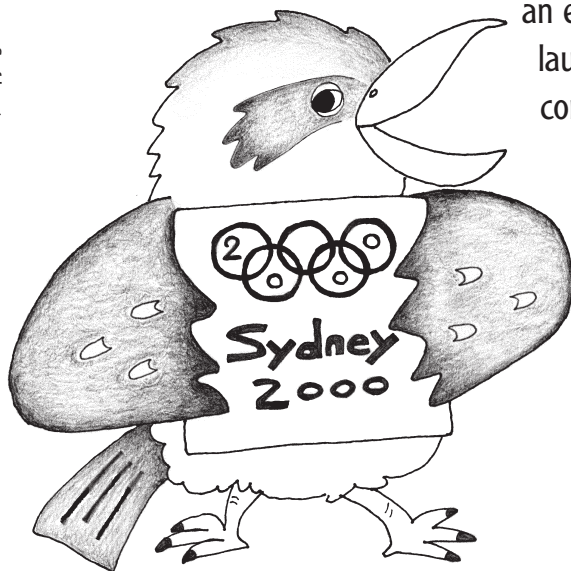
A female lays two to four eggs in the hollow of a tree trunk, in tree holes, or in an excavated termites' nest. The male and female take turns sitting on the eggs for 25 days. The newborns stay in the nest for 30 days after hatching. The parents continue to feed the babies for another 40 days. Then the young fly away.

The kookaburra is carnivorous, munching on insects, lizards, earthworms, some tiny reptiles, mice, snakes, and amphibians. The bird has an unusual way of gobbling its food: it pounds its meal against a tree, branch, or rock to make it softer to eat. A kookaburra can be friendly around humans, but they are usually looking for handouts, such as raw or cooked meat.

Aborigines, the original inhabitants of Australia, tell a legend about the kookaburra. At sunrise, the god Bayane orders the bird to utter its almost human laughter in order to wake up mankind so they will not miss the wonderful sunrise. Also, the Aborigines believed that any child who insulted this bird would grow

an extra, long slanting tooth. A kookaburra's laugh is actually a warning call or a form of communication with another kookaburra.

The kookaburra has become a symbol of Australia. In the year 2000, the bird was chosen as one of the mascots for the games of the summer Olympics, which were held in Sydney, Australia.



# Kookaburra

Match each word on the left with its definition on the right.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| _____ 1. mascot      | a. empty   |
| _____ 2. carnivorous | b. digs  |
| _____ 3. inhabits    | c. a symbol of an event                            |
| _____ 4. legend      | d. one of the earliest groups to inhabit Australia |
| _____ 5. handouts    | e. an old story handed down through generations    |
| _____ 6. hollow      | f. meat eater                                      |
| _____ 7. excavates   | g. something given out                             |
| _____ 8. Aborigines  | h. lives in a place                                |





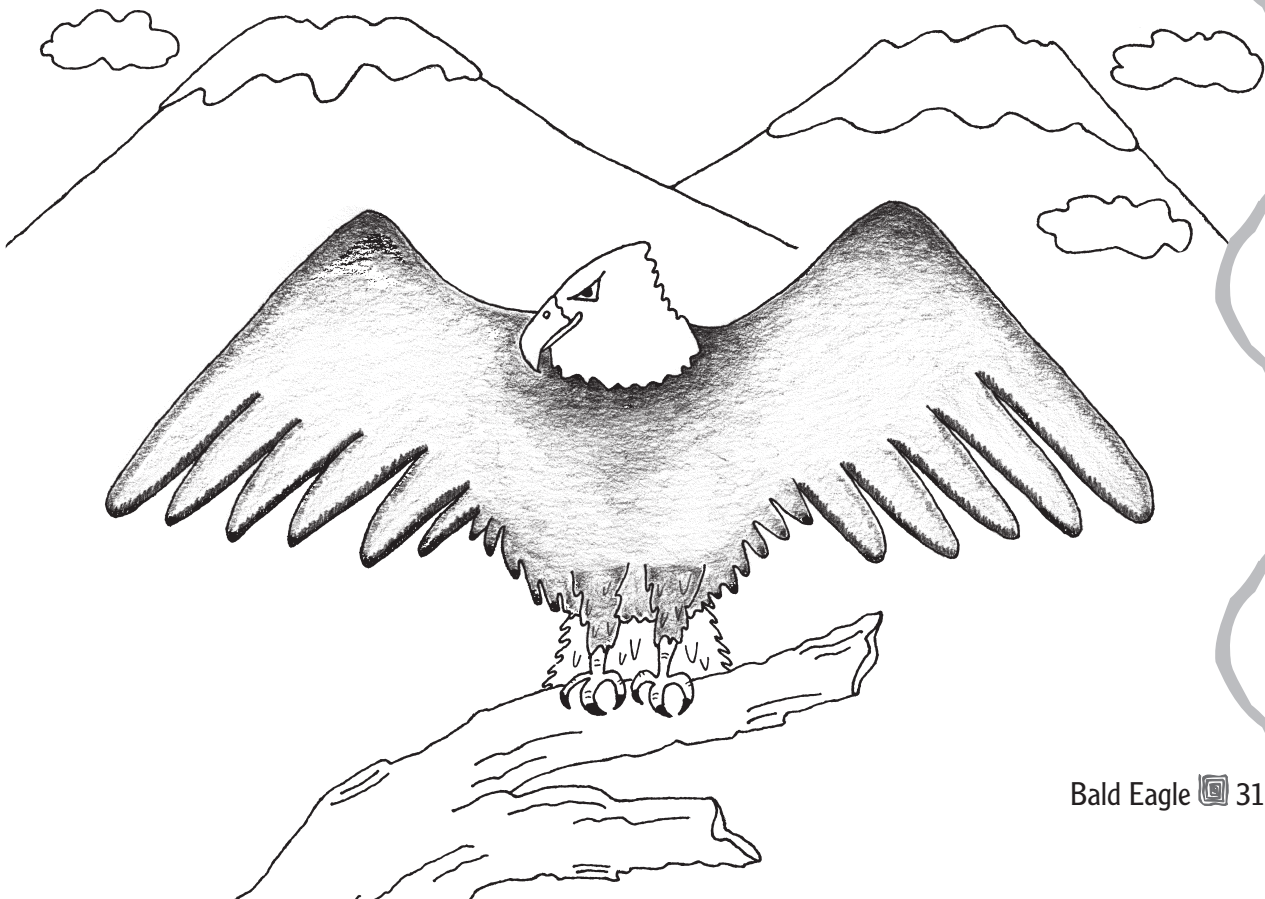
# Bald Eagle

The bald eagle is famous and recognized all over the United States. This bird is not bald but has a head of snowy feathers. The rest of its body has striking, dark brown feathers. The bald eagle has bright yellow legs and talons. A baby eagle is mostly brown and doesn't turn the colors of its parents until the age of five.

The bald eagle has been the United States' national symbol since 1782. During one of the first battles of the Revolutionary War, noises from a battle awoke nearby eagles, and the birds circled and shrieked above the fighting men, who later said they believed that the birds were crying out for freedom. Since that time, images of eagles have appeared on the country's official seal, as well as on coins and stamps.

The bald eagle does not fly by flapping its wings. Both males and females have wingspans between 71 to 92 inches (somewhere between six and 7.5 feet). With such a wide wingspan, an eagle flies by gliding and soaring at almost 40 miles per hour. It weighs between ten to 16 pounds and has a lifting power of four pounds.

Male and female bald eagles have an interesting courtship ritual. Both fly in mid-air, make high-pitched squeaking noises, and flip over. Then, they clasp their talons together as they do cartwheels. After this, they begin to free fall, unlocking their claws before hitting the ground.



Bald eagles mate for life. Males and females build their nest from sticks, twigs, green grass, and other soft material. An eagle's nest is larger than that of any other bird; 13 feet around and nine feet across, with a weight of about a ton, or 2,000 pounds. Eagles usually build their nests in coniferous trees that are at least 75 feet high, usually on cliffs near an ocean, river, stream, or marsh. A tree must offer the eagle good visibility while at the same time having enough arms and leaves to protect the birds and their newborns, called *eaglets*, from intense sun and enemies. These nests are so special that they are used over and over again by different pairs of eagles.

A female lays one to three eggs in the nest, and then both the female and male take turns sitting on the eggs. When the female warms the eggs, the male hunts for food, such as fish, raccoons, beavers, and so on. Sometimes, it is not fussy and eats at campsites, picnic spots, and garbage dumps. The female feeds her eaglets for about three months before they are ready to fly away.

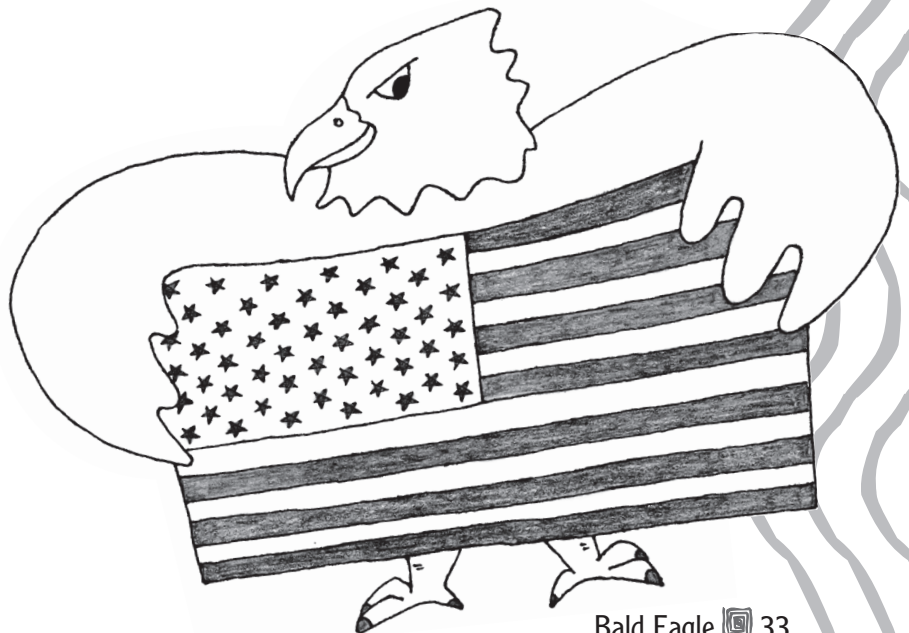
Eagles live from 20 to 30 years in the wild, and in captivity they can live up to 48 years. At one time the bald eagle almost became extinct because hunters and DDT, a poison sprayed on crops to kill insects, harmed the population. DDT weakened the eaglets' eggshells so that they cracked before the birds were ready to hatch, killing many eaglets. Although the poison was banned in 1972, the bald eagle population had not recovered enough to avoid the U.S. government naming it an endangered species in 1978. In 1995, the population had grown to the point that the bald eagle was moved off the endangered list but was still considered a threatened species. Today, after being taken off both lists, there are about 55,000 bald eagles in the United States, and they are still protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.



# Bald Eagle

A. Complete the following sentences with the word or words that make them true.

1. The most recognized bird in the United States is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The bald eagle was chosen as the national symbol of freedom after the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The bald eagle doesn't fly like other birds but \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Female and male bald eagles have some interesting courtship rituals such as \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Bald eagles mate for \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The bald eagle's nest is \_\_\_\_\_ feet around, \_\_\_\_\_ feet wide, and weighs \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.
7. The eagles look to build their nests in trees that are at least \_\_\_\_\_ feet high.
8. A baby eagle is an \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Both female and male take turns \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Hunters and DDT poisons almost made the bald eagle \_\_\_\_\_.



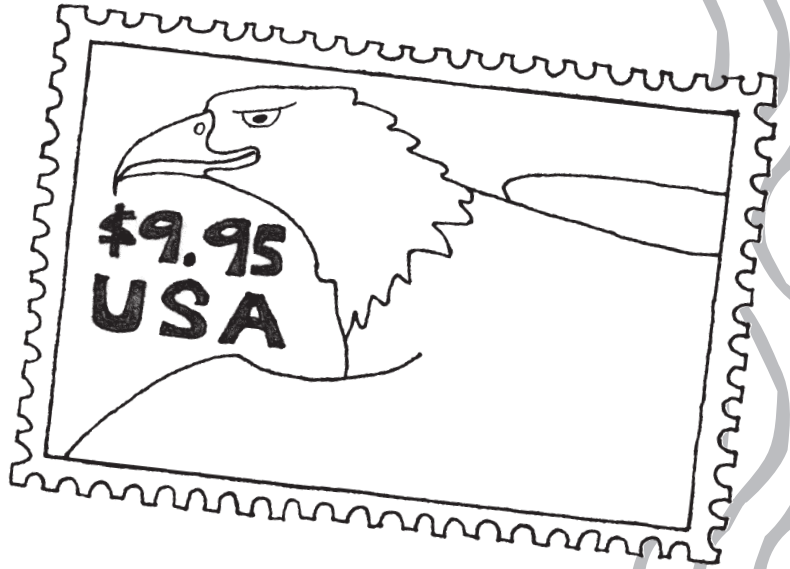
B. Match each word on the left with its definition on the right.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. talons      | a. yell   |
| _____ 2. coniferous  | b. hard to please                                   |
| _____ 3. visibility  | c. able to be seen                                  |
| _____ 4. intense     | d. claws  |
| _____ 5. wingspan    | e. bears cones                                      |
| _____ 6. captivity   | f. no members of a group are still alive            |
| _____ 7. shriek      | g. very strong                                      |
| _____ 8. fussy       | h. measurement of wings from end to end when spread |
| _____ 9. extinct     | i. kept in a cage                                   |
| _____ 10. endangered | j. facing serious risk of extinction                |

C. Read each sentence below and determine a definition for the word in parentheses. Then circle the letter next to the correct definition.

1. Some birds have huge (talons) to catch their prey. What does the word *talons* mean?  
a. claws  
b. mouths
2. The (coniferous) trees had no leaves to lose. What does the word *coniferous* mean?  
a. flowers  
b. cones
3. It was so cloudy that night that there was no (visibility). What does the word *visibility* mean?  
a. brightness  
b. able to be seen
4. The sunlight was so (intense) that I kept blinking my eyes. What does the word *intense* mean?  
a. strong  
b. weak

5. The bird had a (wingspan) of about six feet. What does the word *wingspan* mean?
  - a. measurement of wings from end to end when spread
  - b. built for wide bricks
6. The bald eagle can live up to 48 years in (captivity). What does the word *captivity* mean?
  - a. kept in a cage
  - b. allowed to live free
7. Ralph (shrieked) when he spotted the alien. What does the word *shrieked* mean?
  - a. squeaked
  - b. yelled
8. The teacher was so (fussy) that Ryan had to do his book report again. What does the word *fussy* mean?
  - a. hard to please
  - b. nice
9. Because of overfishing, certain fish are (extinct). What does the word *extinct* mean?
  - a. widespread
  - b. no members of a group are still alive
10. There are so few Bengal tigers alive that they are considered an (endangered) species. What does the word *endangered* mean?
  - a. long-lived
  - b. facing serious risk of extinction





# Koala

You have probably seen a stuffed toy that looks like a koala. These toys usually resemble cute, cuddly stuffed bears. Most people refer to the koala as a koala bear, but the koala is not a bear. It is a marsupial. Female marsupials have pouches where they carry their babies. Other marsupial animals are the wombat, kangaroo, wallaby, and opossum.

The koala lives in Eastern Australia. It has thick, soft, woolly grey fur that acts like a raincoat and protects it from the heat and cold. The koala has white patches of fur on its stomach and chest and little white tufts of fur on the sides of its face. It also has an immense, round head, with a dark leathery nose and huge, fluffy ears.

A baby koala is called a joey, and at birth it is the size of a jellybean. It has no ears or hair and can't see. As soon as it is born, the baby journeys, by crawling and tugging, across its mom's tummy to her pouch. The joey remains there safely tucked away, growing and developing as it laps up its mom's milk. Most of the baby's growth takes place in the mom's

pouch for at least six months. After this time, the mother feeds her young pap, which is made up of digestive juices, including the bacteria necessary to be able to digest eucalyptus leaves. During this time the joey clings to either the mother's stomach or back.

By the age of 12 months, the joey becomes independent and is ready to survive on its own. If the mom does not reproduce each year, her joey stays longer and then has a greater chance of survival.

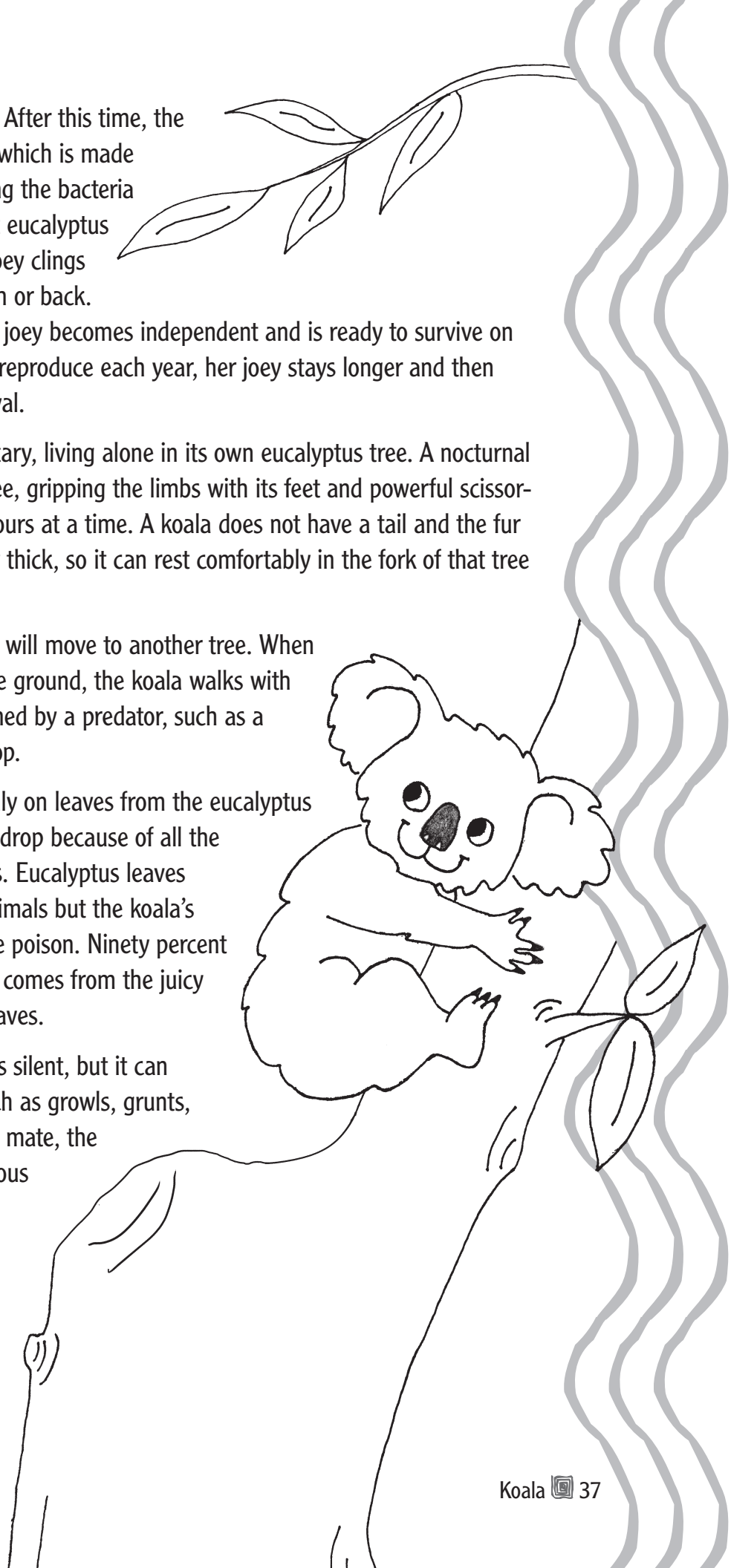
The adult koala is solitary, living alone in its own eucalyptus tree. A nocturnal animal, it curls itself in the tree, gripping the limbs with its feet and powerful scissor-like claws for as long as 20 hours at a time. A koala does not have a tail and the fur on its bottom is tremendously thick, so it can rest comfortably in the fork of that tree for a long time.

Occasionally the koala will move to another tree. When it travels long distances on the ground, the koala walks with a slow, gawky gait. If threatened by a predator, such as a dingo, fox, or dog, it can gallop.

The koala munches only on leaves from the eucalyptus tree, so it smells like a cough drop because of all the eucalyptus leaves it consumes. Eucalyptus leaves are poisonous to nearly all animals but the koala's digestive system detoxifies the poison. Ninety percent of the water in a koala's body comes from the juicy and soft part of eucalyptus leaves.

Usually, a koala bear is silent, but it can communicate with sounds such as growls, grunts, and a low bellow. To attract a mate, the male koala lets out an enormous bellow sound.

A koala lives between nine to 20 years, and even longer in captivity.





# Koala

Complete the following sentences.

1. The koala is not a bear. It is a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. A female koala has a \_\_\_\_\_ to carry its \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The koala lives in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The fur on a koala's bottom is thick so that it can \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The koala resides in \_\_\_\_\_ most of the time, but occasionally it will \_\_\_\_\_.

6. When the koala travels long distances on the ground, it walks with a \_\_\_\_\_.

7. If it needs to, a koala can \_\_\_\_\_ when threatened by a \_\_\_\_\_ such as a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

8. A koala lives alone, so it is called \_\_\_\_\_.

9. A koala eats only \_\_\_\_\_.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ percent of a koala's water comes from \_\_\_\_\_.

11. A baby koala is called a \_\_\_\_\_.

12. A baby koala's food is called \_\_\_\_\_ and is made up of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

# Hummingbird

There are 325 different kinds of hummingbirds living all over the world.

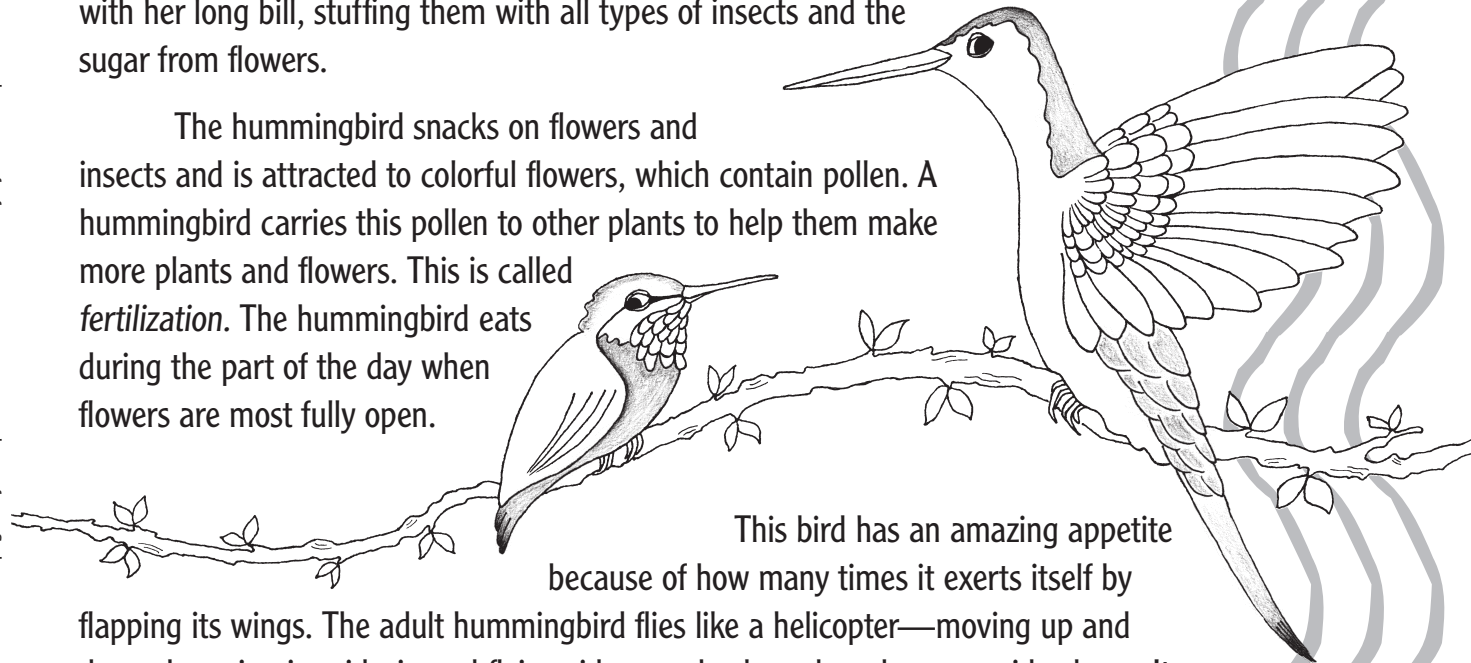
Hummingbirds come in all colors of a rainbow and all different sizes, ranging from the size of a large bumblebee, which is about two inches long, to nine inches long. A male hummingbird has a few red feathers under its black eyes, while the female has white feather edges on its tail. A hummingbird can live three to 19 years.

The male has nothing to do with making a nest or raising his children. The female hummingbird constructs her cup-shaped nest out of leaves, plant down, and fluffy seed coverings and wraps around all these with spider webs. The female then lays one to two eggs, each the size of an M & M candy. She feeds her young with her long bill, stuffing them with all types of insects and the sugar from flowers.

The hummingbird snacks on flowers and insects and is attracted to colorful flowers, which contain pollen. A hummingbird carries this pollen to other plants to help them make more plants and flowers. This is called *fertilization*. The hummingbird eats during the part of the day when flowers are most fully open.

This bird has an amazing appetite because of how many times it exerts itself by flapping its wings. The adult hummingbird flies like a helicopter—moving up and down, hovering in mid-air, and flying sideways, backward, and even upside-down. It flaps its wings up to 75 times a second and making pulsating sounds with its wings. Its little heart beats as many as 1,200 times a minute. One kind of hummingbird is the fastest in the world, flying up to 93 miles an hour over short distances.

Although the hummingbird is an excellent flyer, it is helpless on the ground. When it needs to bathe, the hummingbird flutters about in shallow water. To escape large birds of prey, the hummingbird dives like a bomber plane, giving a high-pitched sound and flying away from trouble. The hummingbird is not social. It flies solo, never in flocks. By all accounts, it never seems lonesome.



# Hummingbird

Mark the following statements **T** for true or **F** for false.

1. \_\_\_\_ A hummingbird makes pulsating sounds by beating its wings.
2. \_\_\_\_ There are only 316 kinds of hummingbirds in the world.
3. \_\_\_\_ A hummingbird can fly up and sideways, and it hovers in mid-air.
4. \_\_\_\_ Often, a hummingbird flies down to the ground.
5. \_\_\_\_ A hummingbird flies in flocks.
6. \_\_\_\_ A hummingbird can be as small as two inches.
7. \_\_\_\_ A hummingbird snacks on twigs and leaves.
8. \_\_\_\_ Hummingbirds come in many colors.
9. \_\_\_\_ One type of hummingbird is not the fastest flyer in the world.
10. \_\_\_\_ There is no difference between the colors of female and male hummingbirds.
11. \_\_\_\_ A hummingbird pollinates flowers and plants.
12. \_\_\_\_ A mother hummingbird feeds insects and sugar water to its newborn.



# Kiwi

In 1908 a new shoe polish came on the international market. The wife of the manufacturer was from New Zealand, and she had convinced her husband to name the polish after a bird from her native country. Thus, the picture on the tin of Kiwi Shoe Polish introduced people to what is now the national bird of New Zealand.

The kiwi is a strange bird with hair-like feathers, tiny, useless wings, and no tail. It has whiskers on a long, yellow beak with nostrils at the end of it that covers one-third of its body. The five different kinds of kiwi belong to part of the bird family called *ratites*. They are related to flightless birds, like the African ostrich, South American rhea, and Australian emu. It is thought that the kiwi got its name from the loud, shrill noise it makes: “Kee-wee, kee-wee.”

Each kiwi lives in a burrow that it digs with its razor-sharp claws. It is nocturnal and weighs between three to nine pounds. It has a high sense of touch and smell; in fact, it scouts out its prey by smell because a kiwi can’t see well. It uses its extended beak to pinpoint its food, such as tiny fish, amphibians, worms, seeds, grub, and fruit. At times, the kiwi makes weird snuffling noises to clean dirt from its clogged nostrils.

The kiwi lays one to two eggs between winter and summer. An egg weighs about one pound and is creamy white to green. It takes between 63 to 92 days to hatch. The kiwi places each egg in a log, under a tree root, or in a burrow. The male sits on the egg to keep it warm during incubation while the female hunts for food. She grunts, growls, and hisses when searching for food. The mom brings food back to her mate. The male and female stay together for life. The young kiwi emerges from the egg wearing shaggy adult plumage. The young chick is not fed by the adults at the beginning, but instead survives on a large reserve of yolk in its belly. Then, the young chases after its dad or mom looking for food, and soon after forages for food on its own.

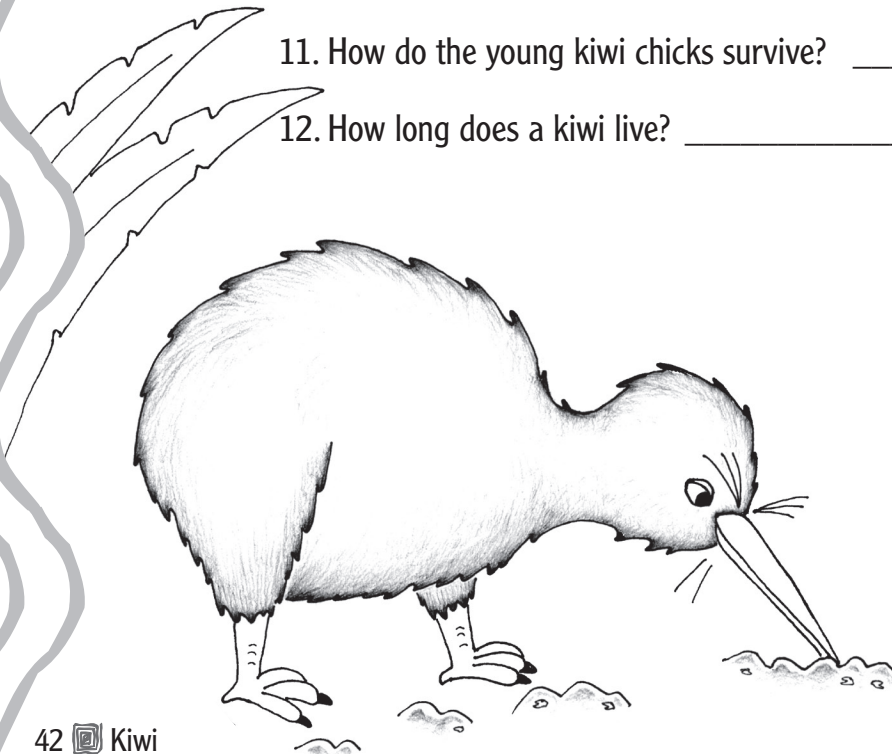
These birds are endangered in New Zealand, and the country has moved to protect its 50,000–60,000 kiwis by creating fenced sanctuaries to keep out enemies. The bird is so important there that the dollar bill is called a kiwi and soldiers wear kiwi patches (badges) on their uniforms.



# Kiwi

Answer the following questions.

1. What does a kiwi look like?
2. What birds are the kiwi related to? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. How many species of kiwi are there? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What country is the kiwi native to? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where does a kiwi make its nest? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How much does a kiwi weigh? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How does a kiwi scout its prey? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What does a kiwi eat? \_\_\_\_\_
9. When does a kiwi lay its eggs and how many does it lay?
10. How long do the eggs take to hatch? \_\_\_\_\_
11. How do the young kiwi chicks survive? \_\_\_\_\_
12. How long does a kiwi live? \_\_\_\_\_





# Aye-Aye

If you have seen the movie *Madagascar*, you may remember an odd-looking animal from that movie. The aye-aye looks as if it is made up of parts of other animals. It has a head shaped like a raccoon and the features of a rodent, a body like a monkey, and claws like a sloth. Because of its peculiar look, zoologists didn't know what to make of this animal. At first, they thought it was a squirrel. Since then, scientists have decided that the aye-aye is a primate and belongs to the lemur family.

The dark brown aye-aye has a bushy tail larger than the rest of its body. It has enormous luminous, beady, and piercing eyes. It possesses dish-like ears that rotate independently, and because of this, it is blessed with excellent, sensitive hearing. Because it has opposable big toes, the aye-aye can dangle comfortably from branches.

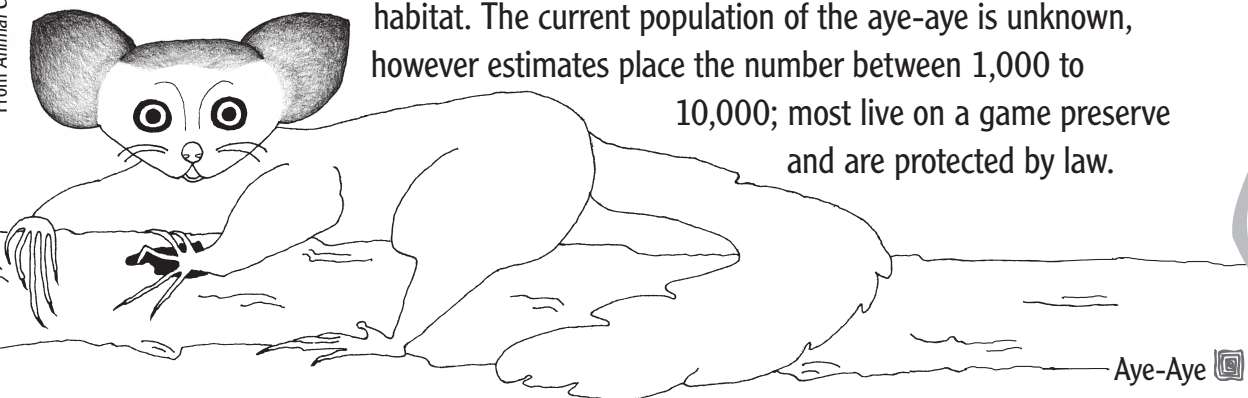
The female aye-aye builds a spherical nest of leaves and twigs with one entrance. Usually, she will have one baby every two to three years. The baby bonds with its mom for more than a year as it drinks milk. The young aye-aye is playful and often wrestles and plays "peek-a-boo."

This nocturnal animal resides in trees and avoids the ground. During daylight, it curls up in a ball and sleeps in a nest of leaves and small branches. The aye-aye is the woodpecker of Madagascar, because it taps and taps its middle finger, or digit, on trees. It listens for wood-boring insect larvae moving underneath the bark. It gnaws at the tree with hungry delight and then uses its middle finger to fish out tasty bugs for a meal. It also scoops out the flesh from coconuts and fruit and nuts.

Because of its unusual appearance, superstitious people of Madagascar felt threatened by the aye-aye. They believed that the aye-aye is an omen of bad luck. A sighting of this animal could mean that a whole village would collapse in ruins. If an aye-aye pointed the middle finger at a person, that person might die. Thus, by the 1930s many aye-ayes had been killed and the species had all but disappeared. More recently, the growth of coconut and fruit plantations have destroyed the aye-aye's

habitat. The current population of the aye-aye is unknown, however estimates place the number between 1,000 to

10,000; most live on a game preserve and are protected by law.



# Aye-Aye

Fill in the bubble of each correct answer.

1. Why is the aye-aye strange looking?

- ☐ It was drawn that way in a movie.
- ☐ It looks like it is made up of different animal parts.
- ☐ It gets rained on a lot.
- ☐ none of the above

2. What did zoologists first think the aye-aye looked like?

- ☐ raccoon
- ☐ squirrel
- ☐ groundhog
- ☐ none of the above

3. Why can the aye-aye hang onto a tree branch?

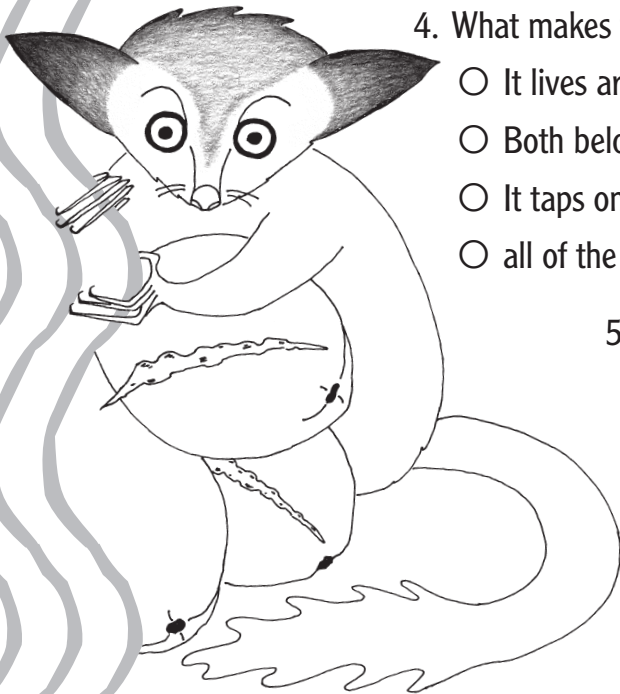
- ☐ It has opposable thumbs.
- ☐ It has long fingers.
- ☐ It has strong hands.
- ☐ none of the above

4. What makes the aye-aye like a woodpecker?

- ☐ It lives around trees.
- ☐ Both belong to the mammal family.
- ☐ It taps on trees with its middle finger, listening for insects.
- ☐ all of the above

5. Where does the aye-aye stay during the day?

- ☐ curled up in a ball, sleeping
- ☐ stretched out on a branch
- ☐ It is awake, looking out for predators.
- ☐ none of above





6. How often does the aye-aye have a baby?
  - ☐ every two years to three years
  - ☐ every year
  - ☐ every 1½ years
  - ☐ none of the above
7. Why are Madagascar people superstitious of the aye-aye?
  - ☐ It is big.
  - ☐ It has a scary appearance.
  - ☐ It moves dangerously.
  - ☐ none of the above
8. If one saw an aye-aye, what would that be considered?
  - ☐ an omen of good will
  - ☐ a chance of good luck
  - ☐ an omen of bad luck
  - ☐ none of the above
9. What has occurred because of the ugliness of the aye-aye?
  - ☐ It is threatened with extinction.
  - ☐ It is respected as a special animal.
  - ☐ It is thought of as unique.
  - ☐ none of the above
10. What is the purpose of this story?
  - ☐ to inform the reader about the aye-aye
  - ☐ to persuade the reader to visit Madagascar
  - ☐ to entertain the reader about the life an aye-aye
  - ☐ none of the above



# Groundhog

The groundhog, also known as a woodchuck or land beaver, resides in the United States. It belongs to the ground squirrel family called *marmots*.

The groundhog wears two coats of fur. The one closest to the skin is dense grey and is covered by longer guard hairs, giving this rodent a unique frosted appearance.

After mating, the male groundhog leaves its den before the young are born. The female will usually have a litter of two to five babies, which are born blind, hairless, and helpless. In about five to six weeks, the young are ready to seek their own burrows.

Burrowing is a special part of the adult groundhog's life. It digs and pushes massive amounts of dirt, more than 700 pounds, to construct burrows 50 feet long five feet underground with two to five entrances for easy escape.

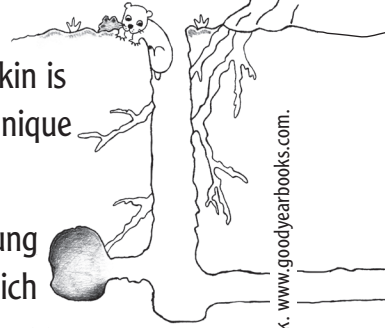
When the groundhog is outside its burrow or den, it is always alert. If frightened, it whistles to warn other groundhogs of danger, and all scatter to nearby burrows.

The groundhog's enemies are the wolf, coyote, fox, bear, large hawk, and dog. The groundhog is a good swimmer and tree climber, both of which are wonderful talents to have when escaping enemies. If cornered by a foe, the groundhog can use its two long incisor teeth and sharp front claws as defense.

In the winter months the groundhog hibernates. Sometimes it builds a separate winter burrow for this purpose. All summer, the groundhog gorges and stuffs itself with food. At the sign of the first frost in late fall, the groundhog retreats to its burrow and snoozes until spring. During this winter time, it lives off its body fat.

In the United States and Canada, people honor the groundhog in celebrations and festivals every year on February 2nd. According to folklore, a groundhog is a weather predictor. If the animal comes out of its burrow and sees its shadow, it retreats quickly back into the burrow and there will be six more weeks of winter. If he does not see his shadow, spring will come early.

Punastawney Phil from Pennsylvania is a well-known groundhog starring in a 1993 movie called *Groundhog Day*.



# Groundhog

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. What other names does a groundhog have?

2. To what family does the groundhog belong?

3. Why is burrowing a special part of the groundhog's life?

4. How much dirt can a groundhog push when making a burrow?

5. What methods does a groundhog use to escape from its enemies?

6. What does a groundhog do to warn other groundhogs that an enemy is near?

7. When does the groundhog hibernate?

8. Where is Groundhog Day celebrated?

9. When a groundhog does not see his shadow, what does that mean?

10. What happens to the weather if the groundhog sees his shadow?



# Great Hammerhead Shark

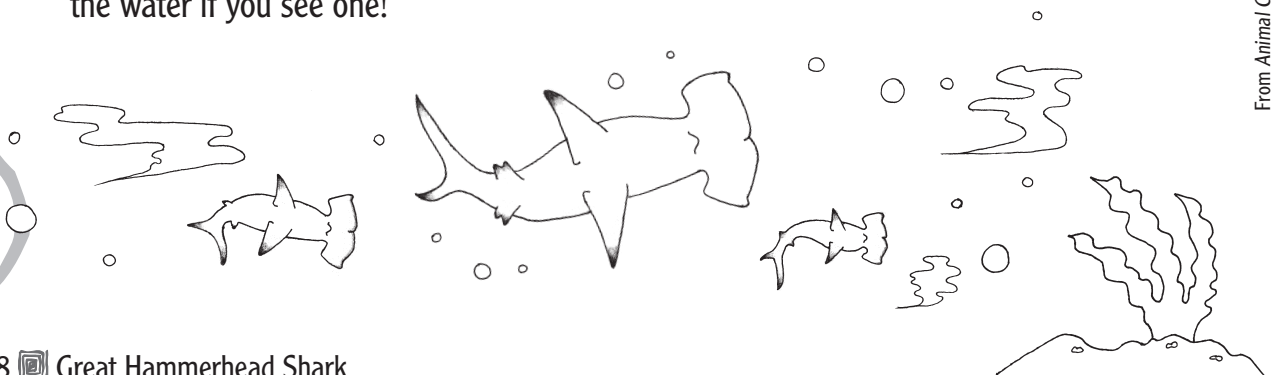
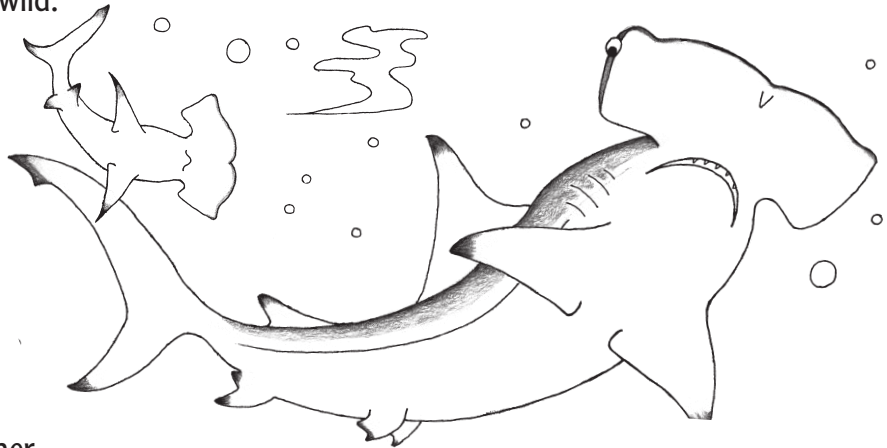
At 20 feet long and 1,000 pounds, the great hammerhead shark is the largest among a family of fish called Sphyrnidae. It is grayish-olive green on its upper side and white on its belly. The great hammerhead shark has an oddly shaped, flattened head like a croquet mallet or a flattened hammer. Its eyes are at either end of its flattened head.

Unlike most saltwater fish, the hammerhead does not lay eggs. It is viviparous, meaning that eggs hatch inside the mother. Once a year, a female shark gives birth to a litter of 30 to 50 pups. This is similar to the way a mammal gives birth. After they are born, the young swim in shallow waters along shorelines to avoid predators. The average life span of a great hammerhead shark is between 20 and 30 years in the wild.

The great hammerhead shark hunts alone and has a number of tools that help it find its own prey. First, its wide-set eyes offer it a better visual range than other sharks have. Second, the great hammerhead has special sensors across its head that help it scan for food. Its prey gives out electrical signals, which are picked up by the shark's sensors.

It enjoys dining on stingrays that hide under the sand. This shark uses its wide head to attack the stingray and pin it to the sea floor. The great hammerhead shark also feeds on crabs, squid, lobsters, and other fish.

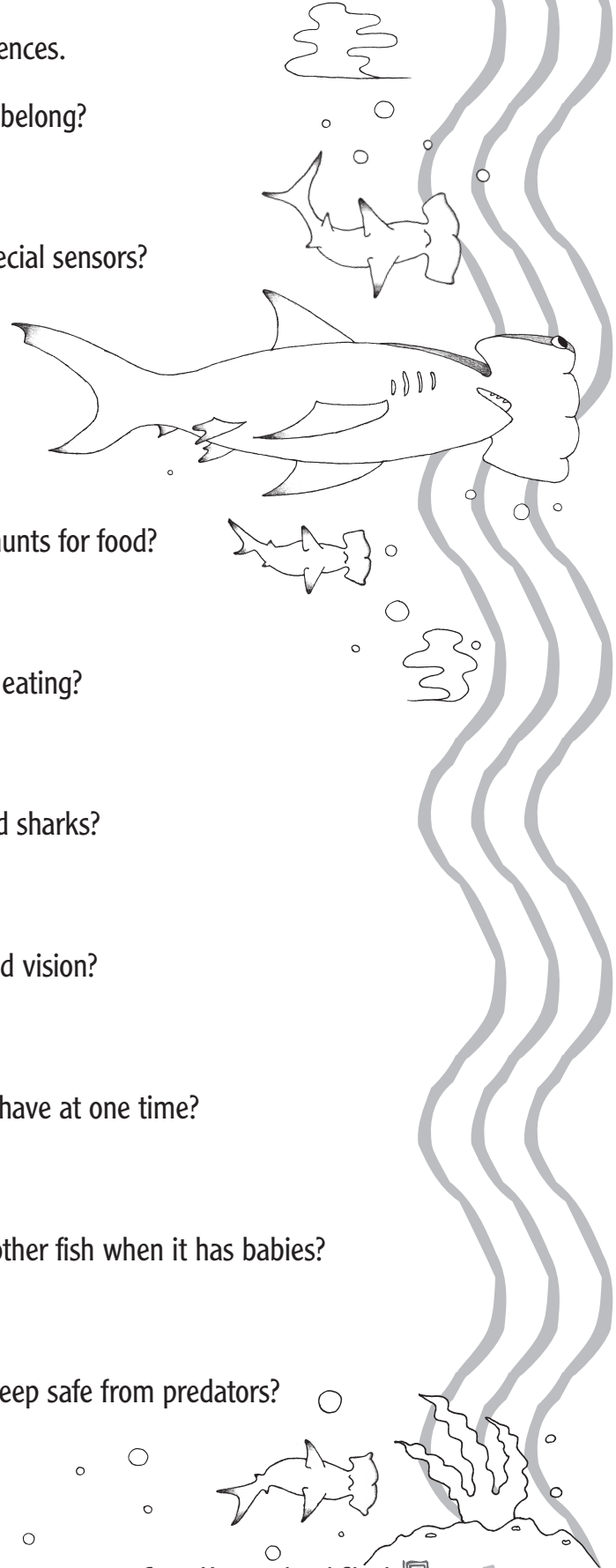
A group of great hammerhead is called a school or shoal. Better get out of the water if you see one!



# Great Hammerhead Shark

Answer the following questions using complete sentences.

1. To what family does the hammerhead shark belong?
2. Where does the hammerhead shark have special sensors?
3. When are these sensors used?
4. Where is one place the hammerhead shark hunts for food?
5. What is one animal the hammerhead enjoys eating?
6. What would you call a group of hammerhead sharks?
7. What gives the hammerhead shark such good vision?
8. How many pups can a female hammerhead have at one time?
9. What makes the hammerhead shark unlike other fish when it has babies?
10. Where do newborn hammerheads swim to keep safe from predators?



# Pangolin

On first glance, you might confuse the pangolin with the nine-banded armadillo, but these animals are not related. The pangolin, which lives in tropical Africa and Asia, is a mammal whose body is covered with scaly plates. The scales are made of keratin, the same material in human hair and fingernails; they cover the pangolin's whole body except its pointed snout, part of its ears, and its belly and under its legs. With a length of up to five feet, most of which is its tail, the pangolin looks like a giant pinecone!



A female lives alone with its newborn in a burrow, but on a few rare occasions, the male will keep them company. Most often, the female has one newborn, which is six inches long and weighs 12 ounces at birth. It is born with soft scales that begin to harden on its second day. The mom nurses the baby for three to four months, and after the first month it is also eating insects. The baby rides on the base of the mom's tail. If there is danger nearby, the baby slips under its mom and she curls into a ball to protect it.

Pangolins are solitary animals. Some live in burrows while others live in hollow trees. There are three different kinds of pangolins—the giant pangolin, the tree pangolin, and the ground pangolin. The tree pangolin is so named because it lives in trees and has a prehensile, or grasping, tail that it uses for balance and as a hook to hang from a tree limb.

The nocturnal pangolin has poor vision, but it possesses a great sense of smell and hearing. It has powerful, curved claws to tear open ant and termite nests. Because of its hard scales, tiny ears, and thick skin, the pangolin is protected from ant bites as it demolishes these nests. It has a 19-inch-long, sticky tongue that it uses to lap up the tasty bugs—hundreds of thousands at a time. Because it has no teeth, it has a gizzard-like stomach that grinds its food. It consumes small stones and sand that help break up the food.

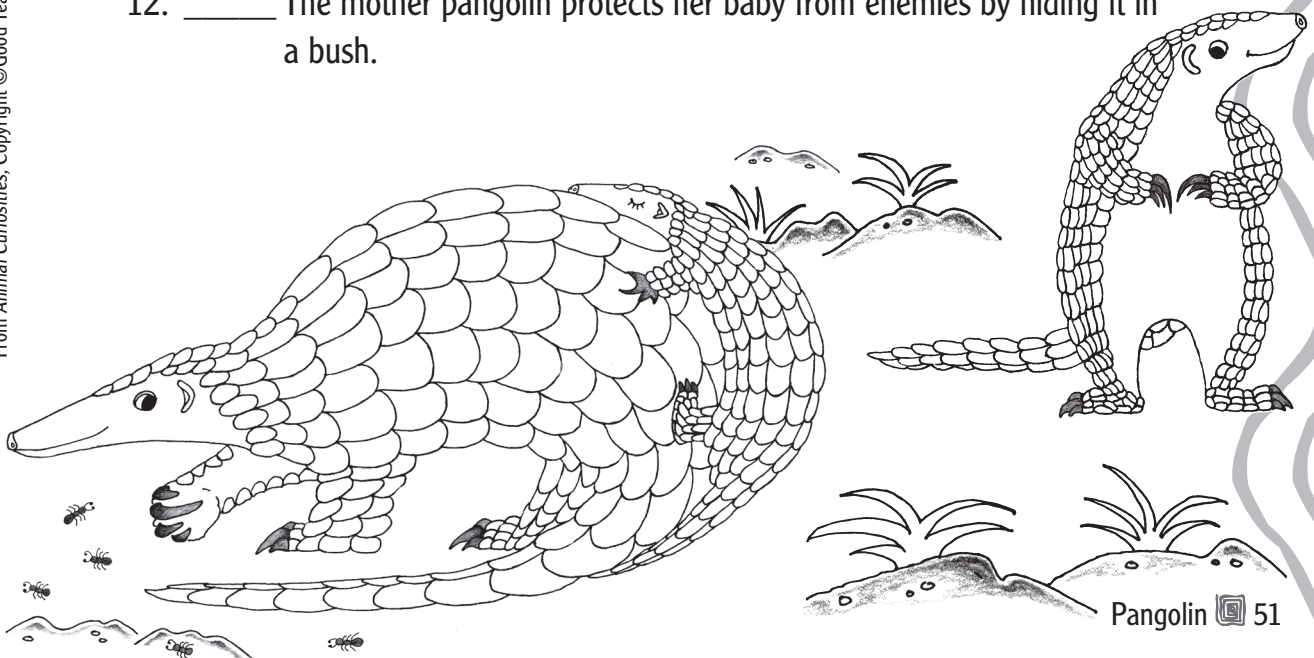
A pangolin walks on all fours, but it can stand upright on two feet using its long tail for support. It runs at a speed of about three miles per hour. When frightened, this pangolin rolls into an impenetrable ball. It also shoots either a smelly spray or urine at its enemies, such as tigers, lions, and humans. In captivity, the pangolin can live to be between 13 and 20 years old, depending on the type



# Pangolin

A. Mark the following statements **T** for true or **F** for false.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ A pangolin rolls up into a ball when it is happy.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ The pangolin sprays urine or a smelly odor at its enemies to protect itself.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Scaly plates cover the pangolin so it looks like its wearing body armor.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ A pangolin does not resemble a walking pinecone.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The pangolin is related to the American nine-banded armadillo.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ The scales of the pangolin are made up of keratin, which is the same as human hair and fingernails.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ There are five kinds of pangolin.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ The pangolin's tail is much bigger than the rest of its body.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ The whole body of the pangolin is covered with scales.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ The pangolin's sharp claws tear open ant and termite nests with ease.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ The pangolin has no teeth but it has small stones and sand in its stomach to help grind its food.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ The mother pangolin protects her baby from enemies by hiding it in a bush.





B. Read each sentence below and determine a definition for the word in parentheses. Then circle the letter next to the correct definition.

1. The wall was (*impenetrable*) to Courtney, but the ghost could walk through it. What does the word *impenetrable* mean?
  - a. something that one can pass through
  - b. something that one cannot pass through
2. The monkey has a (*prehensile*) tail because it can balance on branches. What does the word *prehensile* mean?
  - a. colorful
  - b. grasping
3. David Beckham (*possesses*) great soccer skills. What does the word *possesses* mean?
  - a. has
  - b. writes about
4. After sunset, (*nocturnal*) animals appear. What does the word *nocturnal* mean?
  - a. sunrise
  - b. nighttime
5. The workmen (*demolished*) the building. What does the word *demolished* mean?
  - a. destroyed
  - b. repaired
6. The koala (*consumes*) tasty eucalyptus leaves to survive. What does the word *consumes* mean?
  - a. eats
  - b. throws up
7. The (*solitary*) man felt lonely. What does the word *solitary* mean?
  - a. tall
  - b. by oneself
8. The circus lions were in (*captivity*) and did not live in the wild. What does the word *captivity* mean?
  - a. confined
  - b. in the outdoors



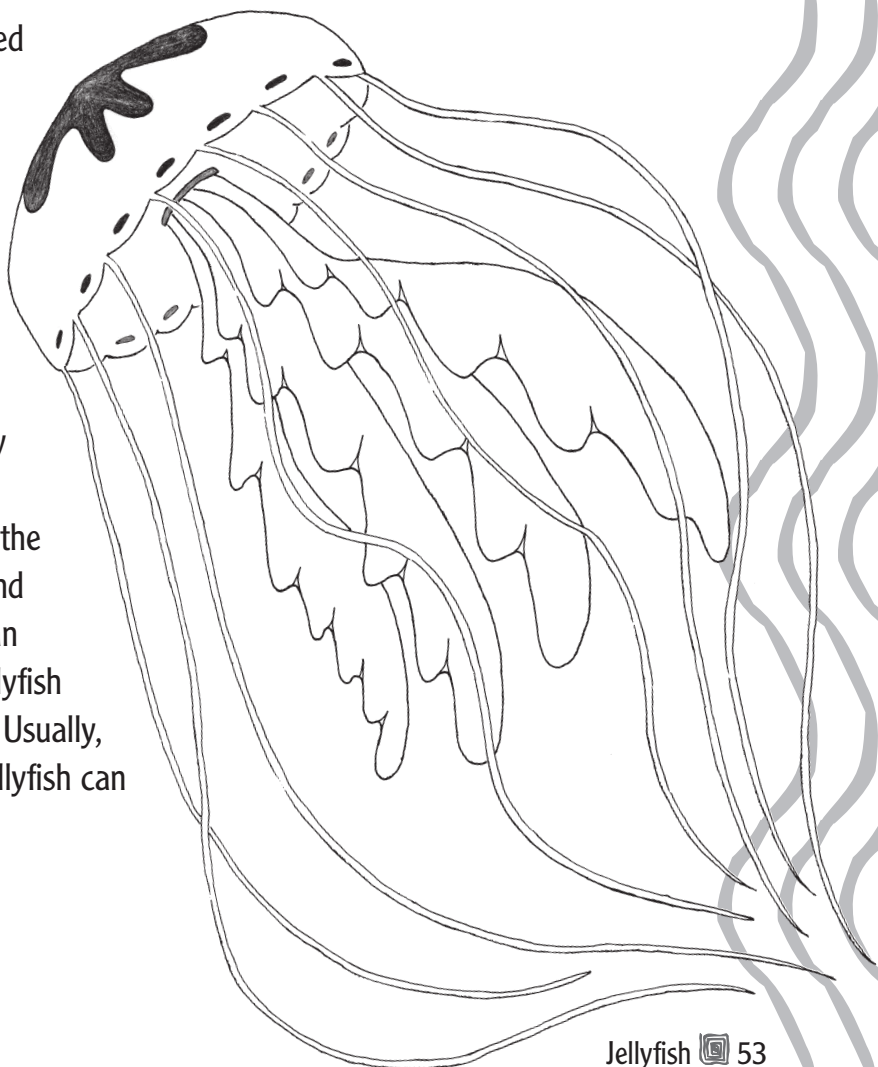
# Jellyfish

Jellyfish have been on Earth for more than 650 million years. Today there are more than 200 kinds of jellyfish in many different colors, such as blue, pink, and purple, and sizes ranging from as small as a thimble to as large as 200 feet long. A few are luminous and shine brightly. These animals, which in some places are called sea *jellies* or, simply, *jellies*, resemble bell-shaped plastic bags and live in both warm and cold parts of the ocean, in deep water, and near coastlines. Jellyfish can live as little as a few hours or months up to a few years.

This unusual creature is an invertebrate, an animal without a backbone. It has no brain, blood, nervous system, heart, or bones. It uses nerve cells to react to food and dangers. Most of a jellyfish—95 to 98 percent—is water, which is necessary to give it support and shape. It has tentacles that hang down from its body and oral arms called *flaps*, which it uses to eat its prey. Inside the jellyfish is an opening called a *mouth*; here it eats and discards waste. It also uses the mouth to move by squirting water to propel itself in all directions.

A group of jellyfish is called a bloom or swarm. Predators of jellyfish include sea turtles, sharks, tunas, and swordfish.

A jellyfish dines on fish, shrimp, plankton, and even other jellyfish. It uses its tentacles to sting its prey with stinging cells. Each cell has a tiny harpoon in it, and when the cell touches something, it shoots out the poisonous harpoon, paralyzing and killing the prey. Jellyfish stings can be painful to humans, but the jellyfish doesn't sting people on purpose. Usually, people step on it. Even a dead jellyfish can sting. So watch your step!





# Jellyfish

A. What would be a good title for this story?

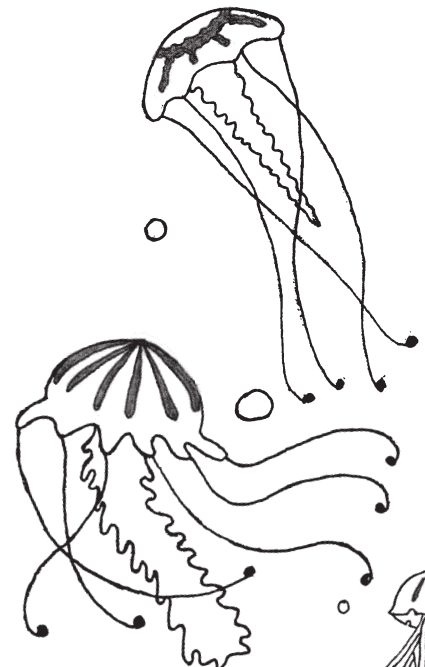
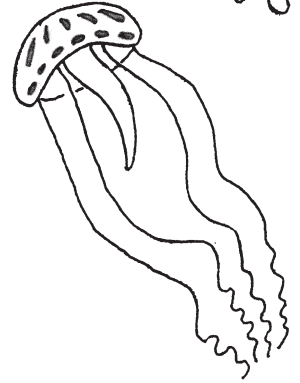
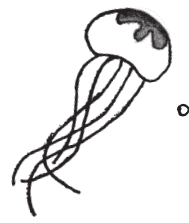
B. What are four interesting details about jellyfish?

1.

2.

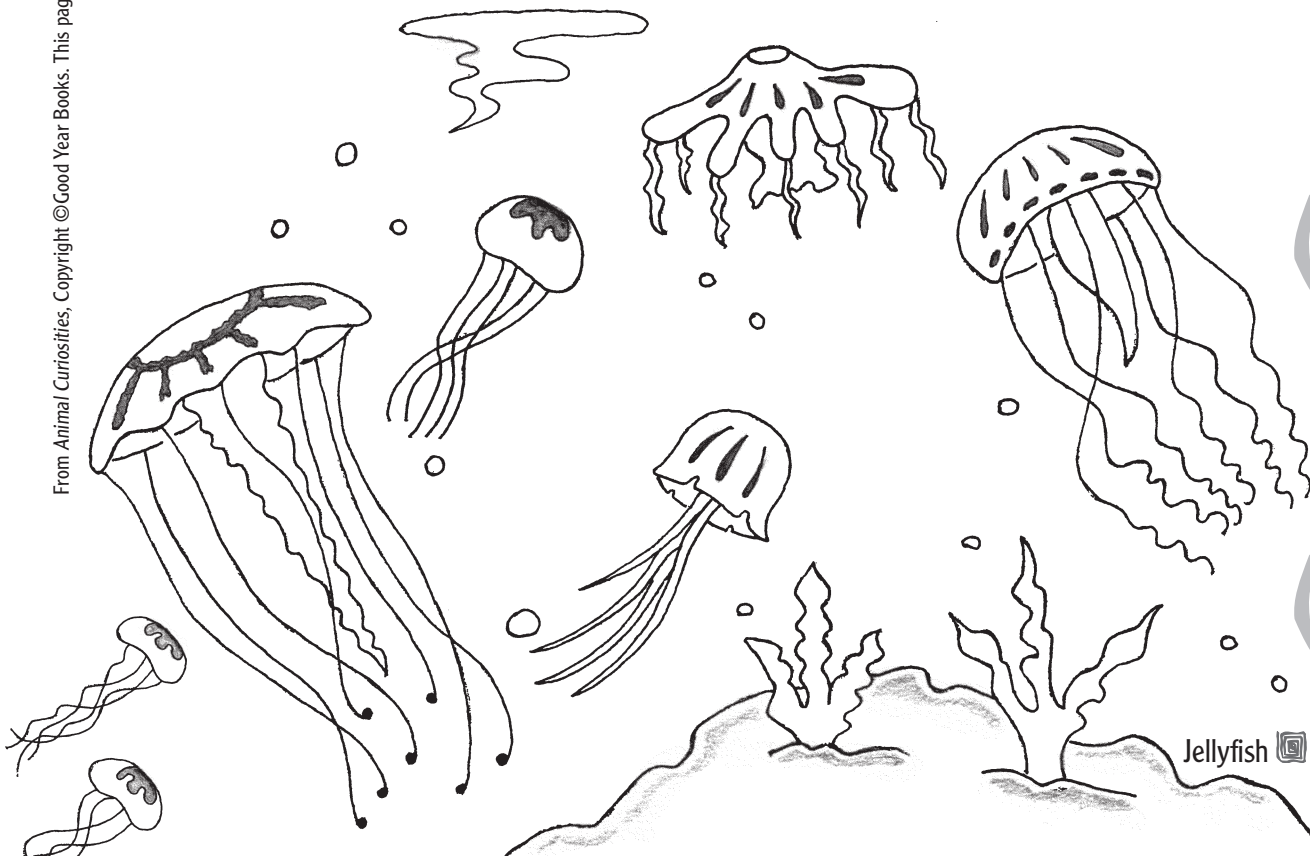
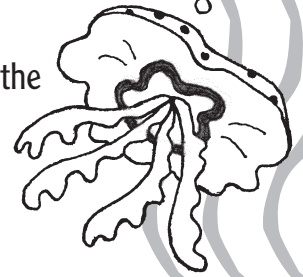
3.

4.



C. Read each sentence below and determine a definition for the word in parentheses. Then circle the letter next to the correct definition.

1. The stars were (*luminously*) beautiful in the cloudless night. What does the word *luminously* mean?
  - a. dull-looking
  - b. bright and shining
2. An octopus is an (*invertebrate*) because it is missing something that humans have. What does the word *invertebrate* mean?
  - a. without a backbone
  - b. with a backbone
3. It's illegal to (*discard*) litter on the sidewalk. What does the word *discard* mean?
  - a. put in your pocket
  - b. throw away
4. The octopus has eight (*tentacles*) that it uses to hold on to its prey. What does the word *tentacles* mean?
  - a. mouths
  - b. flexible limbs



# Walking Stick

The world's longest insect doesn't even look like an insect. The walking stick looks like a branch or a twig. When you first look at it, you have no idea it is a living creature until it moves. It can be found in woodlands and tropical forests all over the world. The walking stick of North America is short—about a half inch—but a much longer walking stick, about 13 inches, lives in Borneo. When a member of this species stretches its legs wide, they measure 21 inches from tip to tip. It breathes through holes called *spiracles*, which are located on the sides of its body. The stick has six legs and two antennae. Some species have a pair of wings as well, which they usually keep folded away.

The female is bigger than the male. When ready to lay eggs, a female scatters her brown seed-like eggs on the forest ground to hide them from predators. Each egg may take up to three years to hatch.

The walking stick is a herbivore. It searches for food at night and loves to munch on rose petals or any other type of flower petals and blackberries.

The walking stick has a number of defenses against predators. First, if a bird is nearby and poses a threat, the walking stick unfolds its wings and flies away. One species uses its wings as camouflage. When open, the wings are brightly colored. If the walking stick closes its wings and drops to the ground, it again looks like a green or brown stick, confusing nearby predators. Sometimes a walking stick will sway to look like a tree branch blowing in the wind. Or the insect will simply sit still on a branch, playing “dead.”

A walking stick can do something a starfish can do: if it loses a leg, it can grow a new one. This is called *regeneration*.

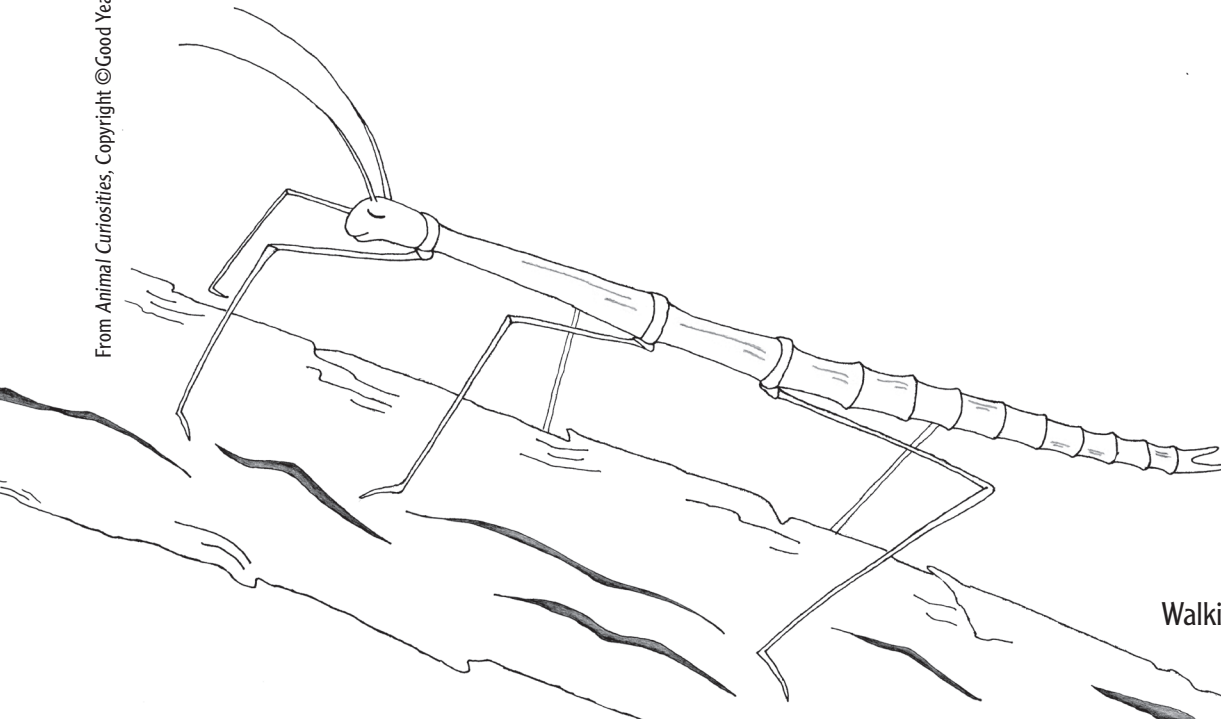
One of the walking stick's biggest predators is the bat, who hunts for food at night when the nocturnal walking stick is also looking for food. The bat listens for noises that the walking stick makes and zeroes in on its prey. In the dark, camouflage doesn't matter. With this very persistent predator to worry about, walking sticks in the wild live about two years, but in captivity a walking stick can live up to three years.



# Walking Stick

Fill in the blanks below to complete each sentence.

1. The walking stick is the world's largest \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The walking stick breathes through holes called \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In addition to wings, a walking stick has two \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A walking stick is typically these colors: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The walking stick will protect itself by dropping to \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The walking stick lives all over the world in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In the wild, the walking stick can live up to \_\_\_\_\_ years old.
8. In captivity, the walking stick can live up to \_\_\_\_\_ years old.
9. A female walking stick is \_\_\_\_\_ than the male.
10. A walking stick's eggs may take up to \_\_\_\_\_ to hatch.
11. Mainly, the walking stick eats flower petals so it is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
12. If a walking stick's leg is broken off, it can \_\_\_\_\_, which means to grow back.





# Basilisk Lizard

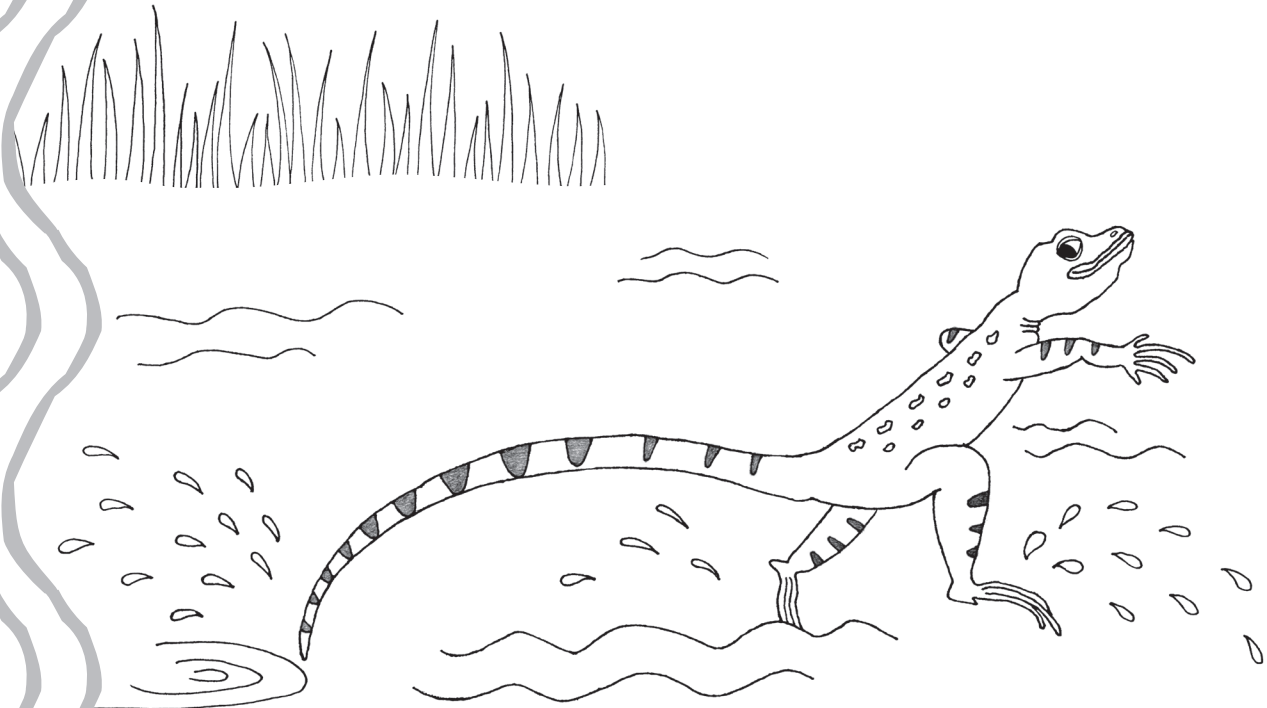
Can you imagine walking on water? The basilisk lizard runs on two legs on water's surface to get away from its enemies, such as snakes and large birds. You can find this reptile in shrubs and trees near bodies of water in the western United States and Central and South America. This two-foot-long lizard will stride like an ostrich across the water's surface for a distance of 15 feet or more.

This lizard is green with a crest on top of its head like a rooster's comb. It is lightweight and has oily skin and webbed feet, all of which help it do its water-walking trick.

The female basilisk lizard, which is smaller than the male, lays between 18 to 20 eggs. She first digs a small trench in moist soil and then deposits the eggs in it. Once she covers them, she has nothing more to do with the eggs. It takes eight to ten weeks for the babies to hatch. The young live in trees and eat insects.

This animal has other names, such as "paseo rios" and "river crosser."

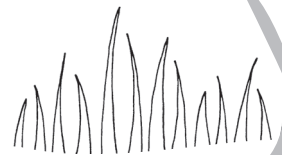
When the basilisk lizard is relaxed, it wags its tail, just like a pet dog.



# Basilisk Lizard

Fill in the bubble next to the best answer for each question.

1. What is the main idea of the story?
  - ☐ The basilisk lizard has a green crest on its head.
  - ☐ The basilisk lizard is a reptile that walks on water.
  - ☐ The basilisk lizard lays on eggs.
2. The basilisk is a
  - ☐ carnivore
  - ☐ vegetarian
  - ☐ omnivore
3. Where does the basilisk live?
  - ☐ United States
  - ☐ Central and South America
  - ☐ all of the above
4. The female lays up to how many eggs at one time?
  - ☐ 10
  - ☐ 20
  - ☐ 30
5. The basilisk lizard doesn't drown because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ it can jump in the air.
  - ☐ it has a crest on its head.
  - ☐ it has oily skin.
6. How long is a basilisk lizard?
  - ☐ as long as an alligator
  - ☐ about 12 inches
  - ☐ more than two feet long



7. What nickname/s does this lizard have?

- ☐ paseo rios
- ☐ river crosser
- ☐ fog dancer
- ☐ all of the above

8. When the basilisk stays out of the water, where does it rest?

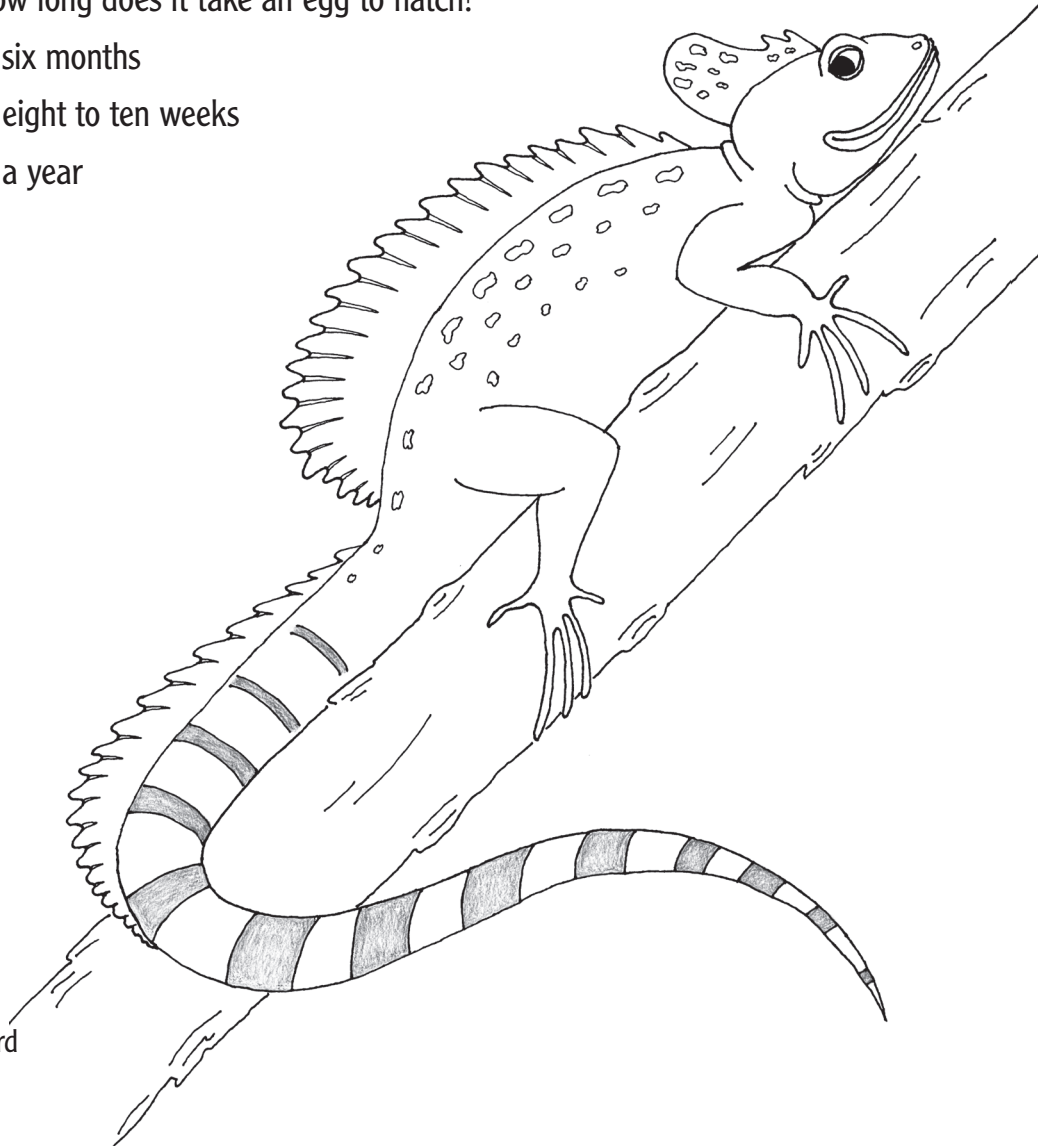
- ☐ on shrubs and tree branches
- ☐ on rocks
- ☐ on lily pads

9. Where does the basilisk dig to deposit her eggs?

- ☐ hole
- ☐ burrow
- ☐ trench

10. How long does it take an egg to hatch?

- ☐ six months
- ☐ eight to ten weeks
- ☐ a year



# African Elephant and Asian Elephant

Elephants are the largest land animals in the world. There are two different kinds of elephants: African elephants, who live in the grasslands of Africa, and Asian elephants (sometimes called Indian elephants), who live in the grasslands of Asia. At first glance, the two appear to be similar, but they are still very different animals.

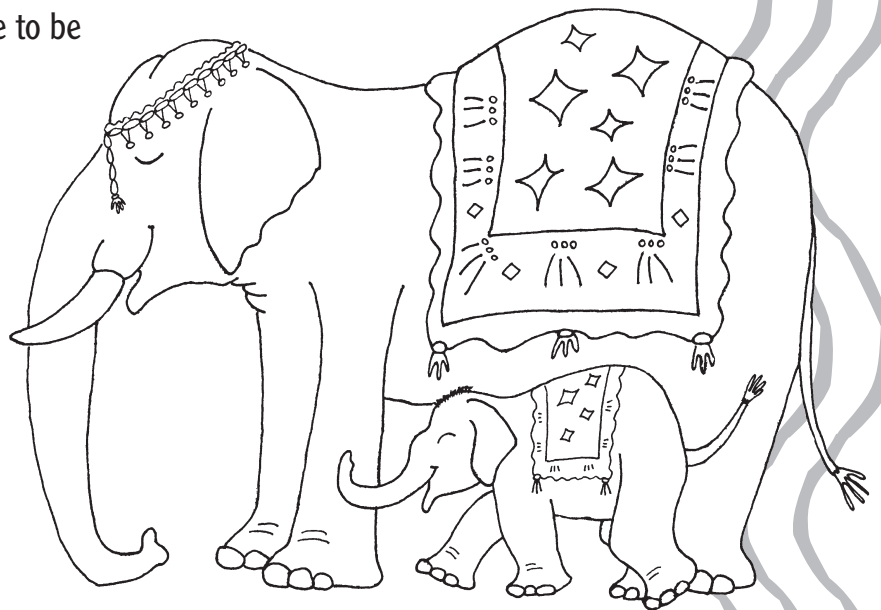
Both species are almost as tall as two humans, but the African elephant, which weighs as much as a school bus, is slightly larger than the Asian elephant. The African elephant's ears are larger as well. The African elephant's skin is wrinkled and the Asian elephant's skin is smooth. In addition, the African elephant's head is smooth and round, and all African elephants have tusks, while the Asian elephant's head is crumpled with two bumps, and only some have tusks.

Female elephants of both species live in herds of ten or more with their children. The group's leader is the eldest female, called the *matriarch*. The elephants live with their young for more than 12 years. Sometimes the young never leave their moms, except for the males.

To cool off, both elephants use their long trunks to spray their bodies or take mud baths. They also fan themselves with their ears, which cools the blood in them as it flows to the rest of the body and refreshes the elephants internally.

Both elephants stomp when walking and sleep standing up, unlike their babies. Both communicate through calls and rumbles that can be heard up to five miles away. In the wild, both live to be about 60 years of age.

One final difference involves work: The Asian elephant is used as a worker in farming and forestry, as well as for special ceremonies. The African elephant is not often used for these purposes.

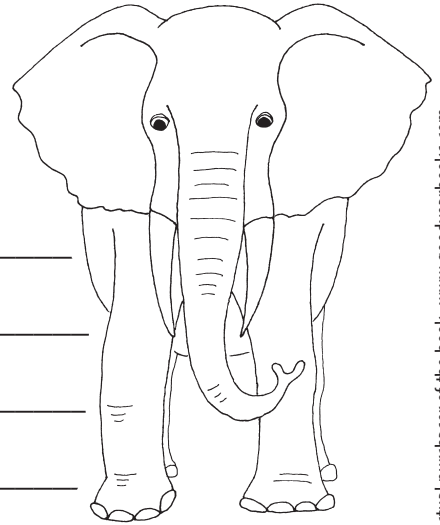


# African Elephant and Asian Elephant

Compare and contrast the African elephant and the Asian elephant. Write your answers on the lines below.

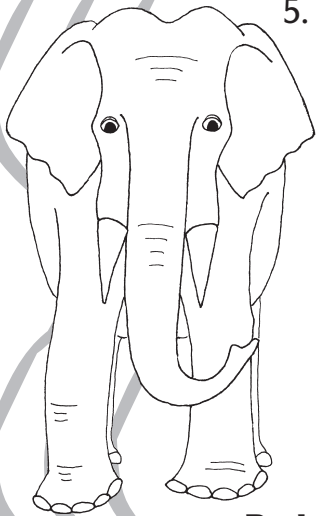
## African Elephant

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Asian Elephant

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Both

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Manatee

Scientists believe that the ancestors of the manatee, or sea cow, walked the Earth on four legs 45 to 60 million years ago. (A close relative is the elephant, which still walks on land.) Today, there are three species of manatees, differentiated mainly based upon where they live. The species live off the east coast of North America, the Amazon river, and the west coast and rivers of Africa.

The manatee has thick skin and a streamlined, almost hairless body. It has forelimbs that are flippers. Its flattened, enlarged tail is horizontal and helps it steer. A full-grown manatee can be 13 or more feet long and weigh between 1,000 and 3,000 pounds. Despite its size, the manatee has little fat.

The manatee swims underwater for 20 to 30 minutes, coming up for air only 30 seconds at a time. It prefers to swim in shallow canals or bodies of warm saltwater that are no colder than 60 degrees Fahrenheit. It swims up to 20 miles per hour in short bursts. A manatee is a migratory animal, so in the winter it swims to warm water off the coast of such places as Florida, Virginia, and Alabama. However, most of the time it swims a distance of two to six miles.

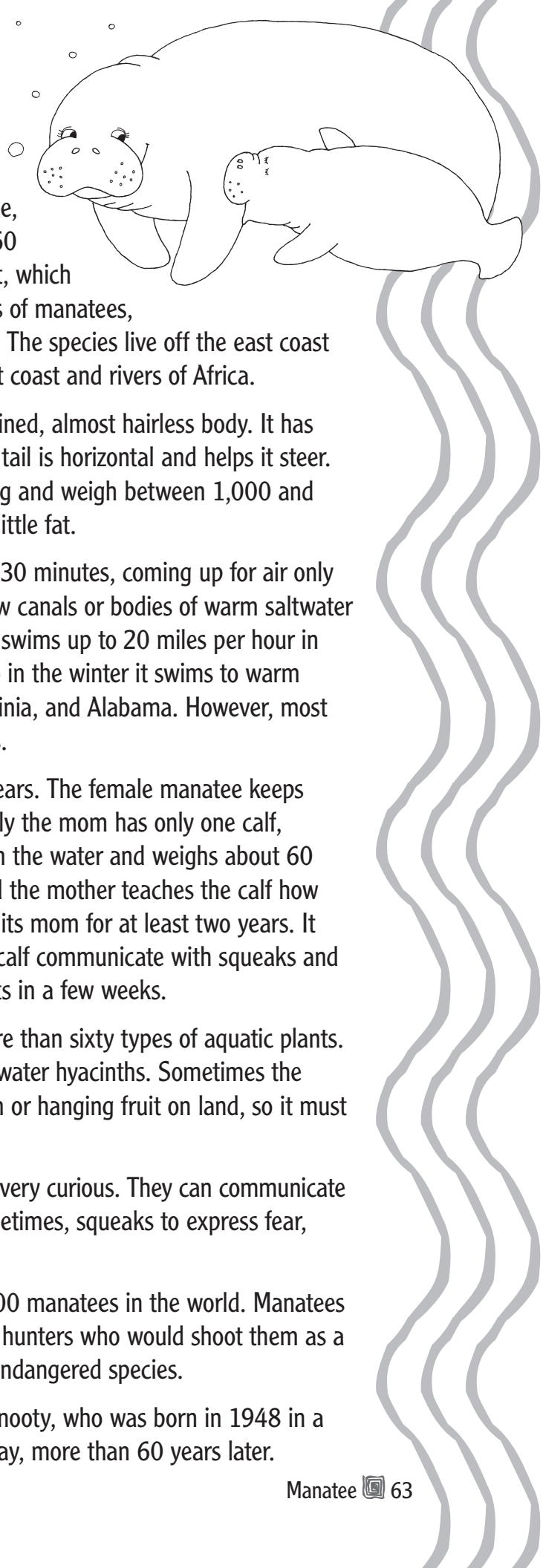
Manatees have babies every two to five years. The female manatee keeps her baby in her stomach for at least a year. Usually the mom has only one calf, which is three to four feet long. The calf is born in the water and weighs about 60 to 70 pounds. The calf swims with its mother and the mother teaches the calf how to breathe out of water. The calf is dependent on its mom for at least two years. It may hold to its mom with its tiny fins. Mom and calf communicate with squeaks and chirps. After nursing with milk, the calf eats plants in a few weeks.

An adult manatee in Florida munches more than sixty types of aquatic plants. It eats turtle grass, algae, mangrove leaves, and water hyacinths. Sometimes the manatee comes out of the water to eat vegetation or hanging fruit on land, so it must come partially out of the water.

Manatees are not aggressive and they are very curious. They can communicate with one another using chirps, whistles, and, sometimes, squeaks to express fear, anger, or pain or to attract a mate.

In the early 1990s there were almost 2,900 manatees in the world. Manatees got caught in propellers of speedboats, nets, and hunters who would shoot them as a sport. Manatees are currently categorized as an endangered species.

The oldest manatee living in captivity is Snooty, who was born in 1948 in a Miami, Florida, aquarium. Snooty is still alive today, more than 60 years later.





# manatee

A. Read each sentence below and determine a definition for the word in parentheses. Then circle the letter next to the correct definition.

1. The manatee is not an (aggressive) animal and does not bother other animals. What does the word *aggressive* mean?

- a. disruptive
- b. noisy

2. The manatee is narrow and (streamlined). What does the word *streamlined* mean?

- a. thin
- b. long

3. (Aquatic) plants form a manatee's diet. What does the word *aquatic* mean?

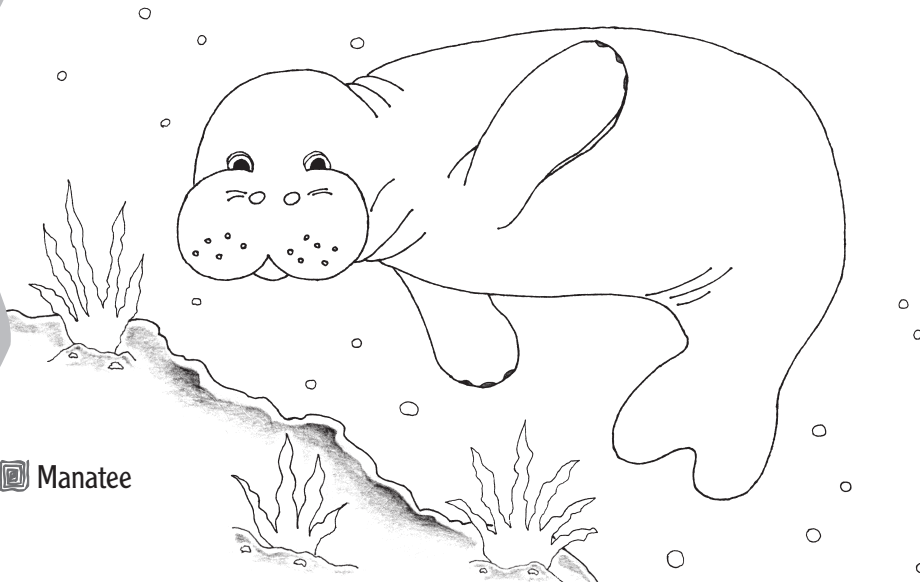
- a. from the land
- b. from the water

4. Some manatees leave their homes and (migrate) when the seasons change. What does the word *migrate* mean?

- a. have babies
- b. move from place to place

5. My friend Sheena did not (communicate) with me. What does the word *communicate* mean?

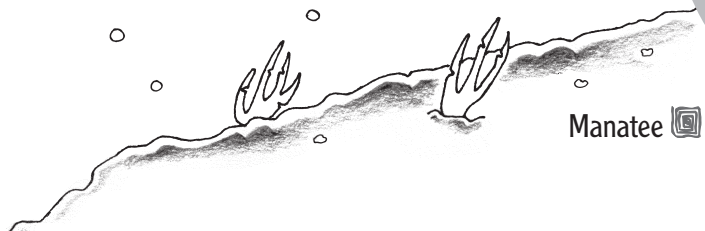
- a. have contact with
- b. ignore



6. You don't see many of some animals because they are (endangered). What does the word *endangered* mean?
- a. plentiful
  - b. dying out
7. Sometimes people can be (dependent) on one another and help them out. What does the word *dependent* mean?
- a. to look at
  - b. to need

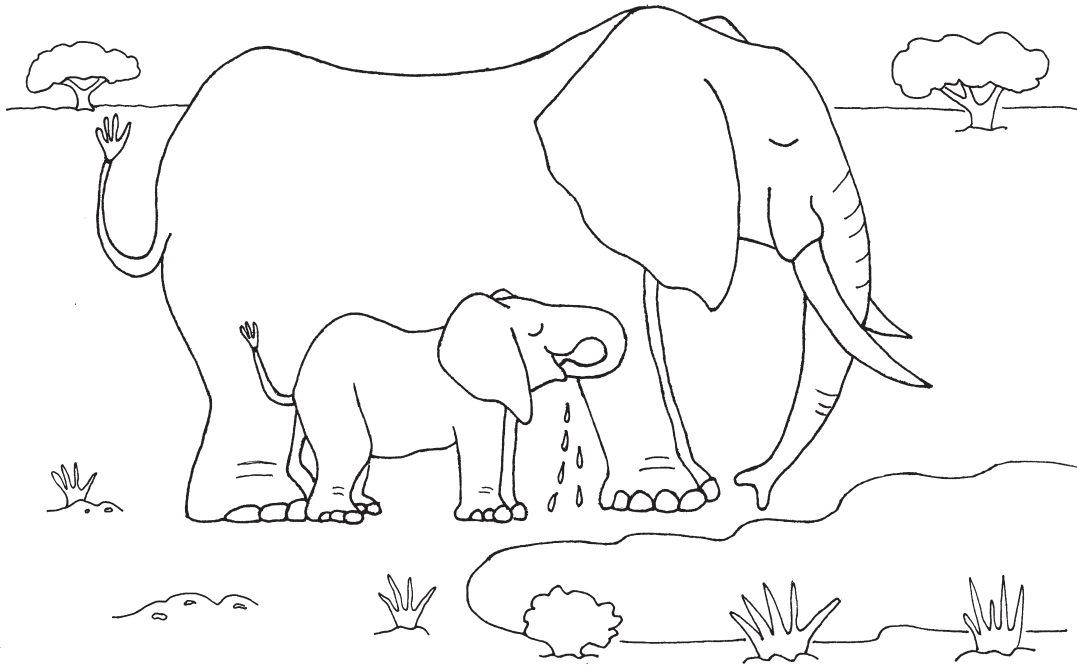
B. Mark the following statements **T** for true or **F** for false.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ A legged ancestor of the manatee lived 45 to 60 million years ago.
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ The manatee has always been a swimmer.
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Some manatees grow larger than 13 feet.
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ A manatee weighs between 1,000 to 3,000 pounds.
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ A manatee can stay underwater for longer than 30 minutes.
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ Manatee mostly swim in shallow water.
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_ A manatee eats more than sixty types of aquatic plants.
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_ A manatee can have a baby every two to five years.
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_ Usually, a manatee will have more than one calf at a time.
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ A manatee calf is dependent on its mother for at least two years.
- 11. \_\_\_\_\_ A manatee is not usually found in cold water.
- 12. \_\_\_\_\_ The oldest living manatee in captivity is in Mexico.





# Appendix





# Answer Key

## Mudskipper, p. 3

A.

1. b
2. c
3. c
4. d
5. c
6. c
7. d
8. a

B.

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. b

## Dolphin and Porpoise, p. 7

A.

Possible answers:

Dolphins

pointed beak  
long and large streamlined body  
35 types  
playful

Both

mammals  
warm-blooded  
babies born alive  
blubber  
carnivorous  
one baby a year  
emit sounds  
get water from animals they  
consume

Porpoise

round snout  
six types  
timid  
small

B.

1. fat
2. happy
3. sleek
4. shy
5. food
6. well-proportioned
7. live
8. eat
9. produce
10. journey

## Sloth, p. 10

1. O
2. F
3. F
4. O
5. F
6. F
7. O
8. F
9. O
10. F
11. F
12. O

## Platypus, p. 12

A.

E	D	I	B	L	E	S	R	P	I
U	Y	A	M	U	K	E	E	A	N
F	O	R	A	G	E	R	S	R	C
O	F	A	S	S	B	C	E	T	U
S	D	R	C	T	R	N	M	P	B
S	U	E	O	O	E	G	B	H	A
I	S	A	T	L	P	U	L	Z	T
L	K	U	N	I	Q	U	E	T	I
A	N	I	G	H	T	A	S	E	O
C	A	R	N	I	V	O	R	E	N



B.

1. It is one of three mammals in the world that lay eggs.
2. It lives in Australia and Tasmania.
3. It has grayish-brown fur and a streamlined body, with webbed feet and a long snout similar to a duck's bill.
4. It was introduced in 1939 with a picture in *National Geographic*.
4. They are used for paddling, swimming, and storing energy.
5. You notice the animal's bill. It looks like a beaver with a duck's bill.
6. A platypus digs a burrow to hide, rest, and nest.
7. A mother platypus makes a nest of wet leaves for bedding and curls around her babies until they are ready to hatch.
8. A platypus looks for food at dusk and all through the night.
9. In 1974, the parliament of New South Wales passed the National Park Wildlife Act, a law that protects the platypus and other animals and their habitats.

### Leaf Deer, p. 16

A. This story's main idea is that the leaf deer has adapted to survive its many predators in the wild.

B.

1. The leaf deer lives in heavily wooded areas.
2. The leaf deer has huge, dark eyes that allow it to see better at night.
3. The leaf deer can move so slowly, it looks as though it is standing still.
4. The leaf deer barks like a dog when it feels threatened.

C. Answers will vary.

D.

1. c
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. c
6. b
7. a
8. a

### Meerkat, p. 20

A.

- 3 weaned
- 7 complex
- 6 upright
- 5 territorial
- 9 alpha
- 1 gregarious
- 4 emerge
- 2 glimpse

B.

- meerkats
- Kalahari
- Africa
- upright
- squirrel
- burrowers
- seven
- protecting
- three
- mob
- diurnal
- sunbathe, groom, forage
- guards
- bark
- alpha
- pups
- other meerkats

### Nine-banded Armadillo, p. 23

1. little armored one
2. shell
3. South America
4. pink fairy, six inches
5. 120 pounds

6. New Mexico, South Carolina, Nebraska, Gulf of Mexico
7. predators
8. bear, coyote
9. 16
10. 40,000
11. carrion
12. four identical quadruplets
13. burrow
14. soft
15. spring, summer
16. mascot

### **Capybara, p. 26**

1. The largest rodent in the world is the capybara.
2. The capybara lives in South America.
3. The two nicknames for the capybara are the water pig and water hog.
4. A capybara can hold its breath for five minutes.
5. The parts of the capybara's body best suited for swimming are its webbed feet.
6. The capybara rushes into the water because it sunburns easily.
7. It is a warning that an enemy is nearby.
8. A herbivore is an animal that eats plants.
9. The capybara eats six to eight pounds of plants a day to keep its teeth from growing too long.
10. *Crepuscular* means that the capybara is only active and alert at twilight and early morning.

### **Kookaburra, p. 29**

1. c
2. f
3. h
4. e
5. g
6. a
7. b
8. d

### **Bald Eagle, p. 31**

#### **A.**

1. bald eagle
2. Revolutionary War
3. uses its wingspan to glide, soar
4. fly, make high-pitched squeaking noises, flip over, do cartwheels, go into free fall
5. life
6. 13, 9, 2,000
7. 75
8. eaglet
9. sitting on the nest
10. extinct

#### **B.**

1. d
2. e
3. c
4. g
5. h
6. i
7. a
8. b
9. f
10. j

#### **C.**

1. a
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. a
6. a
7. b
8. a
9. b
10. b

### **Koala, p. 36**

1. marsupial
2. pouch, baby
3. Australia and the neighboring islands
4. it can rest comfortably in the fork of a tree
5. one tree, move to another tree
6. slow, gawky gait

7. gallop, predator, fox, dingo, dog
8. solitary
9. eucalyptus leaves
10. 90, soft and juicy part of the leaves
11. joey
12. pap, digestive juice, eucalyptus leaves

### **Hummingbird, p. 39**

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. F
6. T
7. F
8. T
9. F
10. F
11. T
12. T

### **Kiwi, p. 41**

1. They have brownish grey feathers, little wings, and no tail.
2. ostrich, rhea, emu
3. five species
4. New Zealand
5. in a burrow
6. three to nine pounds
7. by smell
8. fish, amphibians, worms, seeds, grubs, and fruit
9. one to two eggs between winter and summer
10. between 63 and 92 days
11. on large reserves of yolks in their stomachs
12. up to 20 years

### **Aye-Aye, p. 43**

1. It looks like it is made up of different animal parts.
2. squirrel
3. It has opposable thumbs.
4. It taps on trees with its middle finger, looking for insects.
5. curled up in a ball, sleeping

6. none of the above
7. It has a scary appearance.
8. omen of bad luck
9. It is threatened with extinction.
10. to inform the reader about the aye-aye

### **Groundhog, p. 46**

1. The groundhog has also been called a woodchuck or land beaver.
2. The groundhog belongs to the marmot family.
3. Burrows are important because groundhogs use burrows to rest, nest, and escape from enemies.
4. A groundhog can move 700 pounds of dirt when building a burrow.
5. Groundhogs escape from harm by climbing trees, seeking shelter in a burrow, or swimming away.
6. The groundhog whistles to alert others of danger.
7. The groundhog hibernates in the winter.
8. Groundhog Day is celebrated in Canada and the United States.
9. When a groundhog does not see his shadow, it means six more weeks of winter.
10. When a groundhog does see his shadow, it means there would be an early spring.

### **Great Hammerhead Shark, p. 48**

1. The hammerhead shark belongs to the Sphyrnidae family.
2. Its sensors are across its head.
3. These sensors are used to pick up electrical symbols from its prey.
4. The hammerhead sharks seeks food beneath the sand.
5. The hammerhead sharks eats stingrays.
6. A group of hammerheads is called a school or shoal.
7. Its eyes are far apart on top of its head.

8. A female can have 30 to 50 pups at a time.
9. The hammerhead's eggs hatch internally.
10. Newborn hammerheads swim in shallow waters along shores.

### **Pangolin, p. 50**

#### **A.**

1. F
2. T
3. T
4. F
5. F
6. T
7. F
8. T
9. F
10. T
11. T
12. F

#### **B.**

1. b
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. a
6. a
7. b
8. a

### **Jellyfish, p. 53**

#### **A.**

The Life of the Jellyfish

#### **B.**

1. There are 200 kinds of jellyfish on Earth.
2. Jellyfish sometimes eat each other.
3. Jellyfish vary in size.
4. The jellyfish stings and paralyzes its prey.

#### **C.**

1. b.) bright and shiny

2. a.) without a backbone
3. b.) throw away
4. b.) flexible limbs

### **Walking Stick, p. 56**

1. insect
2. spiracles
3. antennae
4. brown—green
5. dropping to the ground
6. tropical rain forests, woodlands
7. two
8. three
9. larger
10. three years
11. herbivore
12. regenerate

### **Basilisk Lizard, p. 58**

1. The basilisk lizard is a reptile that walks on water.
2. omnivore
3. all of the above
4. 20
5. It has oily skin.
6. more than two feet long
7. all of the above
8. on shrubs and tree branches
9. trench
10. eight to ten weeks

### **African Elephant and Asian Elephant, p. 61**

#### **African**

1. slightly larger
2. larger ears
3. wrinkled skin
4. all have tusks
5. smooth round top of head

#### **Both**

1. live in herds
2. stomp when walking
3. sleep standing up, except for babies
4. reside in grasslands
5. almost as tall as two humans
6. communicate with calls and rumbles



### Asian

1. smaller ears
2. smooth skin
3. only some have tusks
4. crumpled head with two bumps
5. used as workers and in ceremonies

### Manatee, p. 63

#### A.

1. a
2. b
3. b
4. b
5. a
6. b
7. b

#### B.

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. T
5. F
6. T
7. T
8. T
9. F
10. T
11. T
12. F

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# Further Reading for Students

*Nat Geo Wild Animal Atlas: Earth's Astonishing Animals and Where They Live.* National Geographic Children's Books, 2010.

*National Geographic Little Kids First Big Books of Animals.* National Geographic Children's Books, 2010.

*Ranger Rick Magazine.* National Wildlife Federation.



