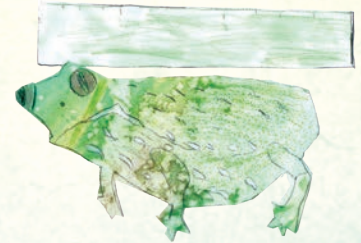
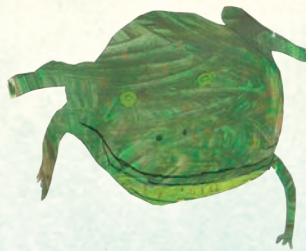
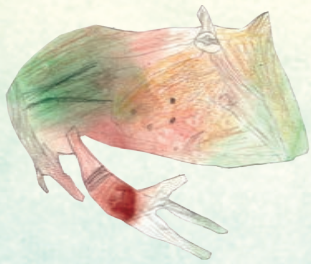




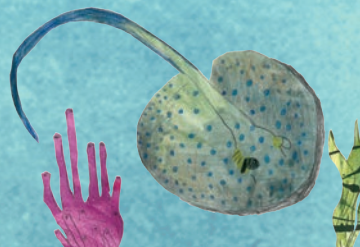
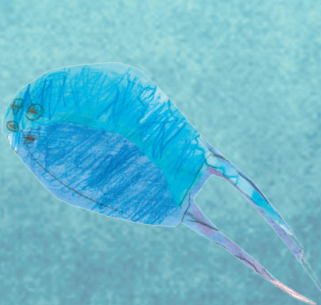
A Day in the Life of an Animal



by the Centaur Class



3rd & 4th Grade - 2016-17



A day in the Life of an Animal

By: 2016-17 Centaurs - 3rd & 4th Grade

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Preface:

The Centaurs were asked the question, “What adaptations help animals survive?” Fourth graders were tasked with learning about animal defenses. To deepen their understanding of this topic, they researched different behavioral and physical adaptations using Christina Wilson’s “Animal Behavior, Animal Defenses” as a mentor text. Next, they choose an animal to research and become an expert on that species. Third graders learned about frogs and all the amazing adaptations that help them survive with help from their mentor text, DK’s “Everything You Need to Know about Frogs and Other Slippery Creatures.” Then they became experts on the frog species that they chose to research. Finally, after exploring the question, “How do writers inform and entertain their audience?” the Centaurs created non-fiction stories about their animals. We would like to give a special thanks to the 2nd graders at the Conservatory Lab Charter School in Boston, Massachusetts for providing inspiration for our stories!

With the help and guidance of Christina González, students focused on creating colorful images of their selected animals to accompany their narrative text. They were provided with small, color photographs of their animal, which they worked to translate into a drawing. Students learned the “scaling up” technique of using a grid to enlarge their image. Emphasis was placed on accurate proportions and close observation of details. Analysis and copying of negative shape helped many students achieve a kind of “realism” in their work. After multiple drafts, students used transfer paper to transfer their final animal drawing onto painted paper. The previously colored paper was mottled and textured, giving a vitality and life to the design. The animals, now drawn on colored paper, were then cut out and glued down. Additional details and color were added to the work. Christina, thank you so much for your support!

Amazon Horned Frog

by Steck [REDACTED]



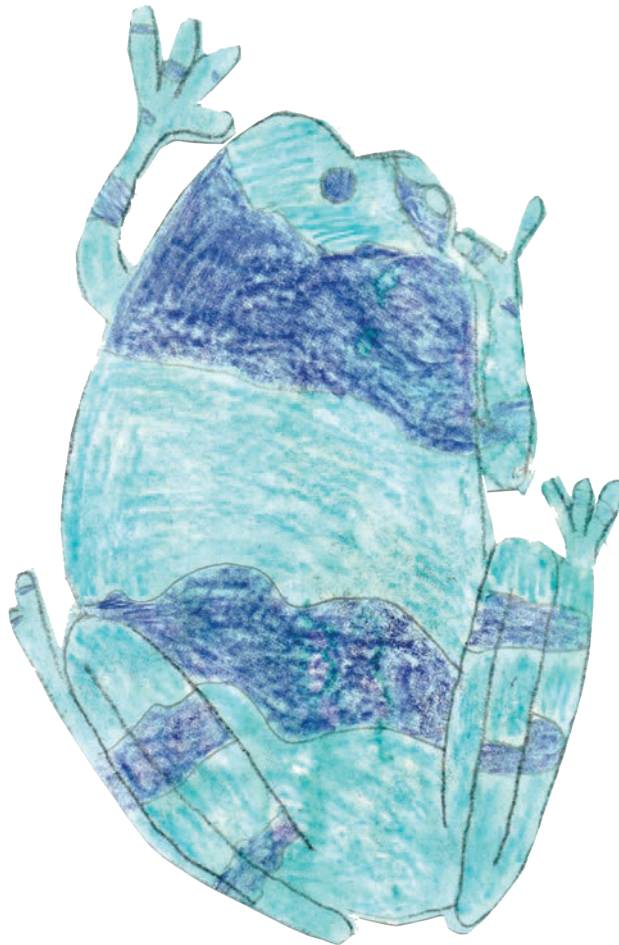
On a day in early April, the sun is setting in the Amazon basin. In the canopy a harpy eagle is scanning the forest floor for a juicy frog to eat. All he sees are brownish leaves and a few bromeliads. Little does he know there is a frog down there.

Then, the harpy eagle sees a family, but Amazon Horned Frog also sees them. As they get closer and closer he hears the splat of shoes on the wet forest floor. Suddenly the 8" Amazon Horned Frog jumps out for an evening meal. When he jumps he startles the humans because of his size.

Now, Amazon Horned Frog feels like eating a mouse. Amazon Horned Frog sees a mouse burrow. He also sees fresh tracks so he camouflages until the only thing you can see are his brown horns. Now, the mouse approaches his burrow — CHOMP, Amazon horned frog gulps up the mouse! Amazon Horned Frog is full. He finds a pile of leaf litter under a bromeliad and he sleeps for the night.

Amazon Milk Frog

by Isaac [REDACTED]



One evening in the Amazon rainforest most of the animals are going to sleep. A green anaconda just finished coiling itself around a branch and falls asleep. High above him a three-toed sloth is finishing stuffing herself with leaves and fruit.

In a nearby tree Amazon Milk Frog is looking for a meal. He hops from branch to branch looking for an insect that can be swallowed in one gulp. Finally, Amazon Milk Frog finds a cricket high up in a tree. Slowly and quietly Amazon Milk Frog crawls up the branch toward the cricket — ZAP! Amazon Milk Frog's long sticky tongue shoots out and grabs the cricket.

While Amazon Milk Frog is eating his cricket, a barn owl glides silently through the trees. Quickly and efficiently the barn owl locates Amazon Milk Frog. Silently barn owl swoops down, in the last second Amazon Milk Frog notices and secretes a foul-smelling poisonous substance and barn owl flies away. Amazon Milk Frog hops off using his sticky toe pads to hold on to branches and leaves.

Darwin's Frog

by Coriandra [REDACTED]



In the early morning a light breeze rustles the leaves of the beech trees. Mice scurry to and fro on the rough rocks. Moss hangs off the tree branches, birds skim the tops of the trees in search of food. Sun leaks through the branches of the beech trees.

Darwin Frog is looking for a mate. Darwin Frog starts to call his bell-like croak. A female Darwin frog hears Darwin Frog's call and is attracted to him. Female Darwin Frog starts to lay her eggs. Darwin Frog sees the tadpoles begin to move inside the eggs. He quickly swallows the eggs. They slide down into his vocal sack. Soon they will become little froglets.

Darwin Frog is getting hungry. He is waiting in the beech trees for a snail to ooze its way by when suddenly a mouse is leering over him. Quickly he jumps in to the nearby stream exposing his black and white belly, playing dead. Darwin Frog floats down the stream until he feels safe from the mouse. He hops out of the water and back into the safety of the beech trees.

Now Darwin Frog is very hungry. He waits for a meal to pass. A short while later a snail oozes by Darwin Frog's hiding spot. SNAP! The snail is in Darwin Frog's mouth. Darwin Frog has enjoyed his dinner and now will find a safe place to sleep among the beech trees.

Eleutherodactylus Iberia

by Lila



As the sun rises the sky is painted violet, faint yellow, glowing orange and light pink in a Cuban closed Rainforest. Hot moist summer air fills the dark Rainforest as little light flows through gaps in the palm trees. Birds chirp in the early morning. Suddenly the rain forest is alive, little spiders and bugs of all types crawl on the damp forest floor. Little frogs of all shapes and colors hop on the forest floor like popcorn popping.

Among all the frogs one tiny frog emerges out of a hole in decaying roots and onto the damp forest floor. The frog has a flowing yellow out-line and a midnight black body. Eleutherodactylus Iberia (E-loo-ther-o-dact-u-lus) sees a huge round swirly shell with a big slimy snail peeking out inching toward her. Eleutherodactylus Iberia crawls away from the snail, in the Holguin province of Cuba. Eleutherodactylus Iberia ignores the snail and starts looking for a big juicy mite full of poison, a fat spider, or a moth. She hops to the rough trunk of a tall arched palm tree and waits for a mite to crawl by. She hears a slither and hops around to investigate. A dark black and sunny yellow streak flashes by. Then turns around and moves towards her. Eleutherodactylus Iberia frog hops as fast as a rabbit on the damp forest floor. Eleutherodactylus springs off the ground with little legs, stumbles on a rock, then with a hurt leg stops. The black and yellow lizard slows down and sees Eleutherodactylus Iberia's dark black body and flowing yellow curved lines around it. The lizard knows she's poisonous and flees. Eleutherodactylus limps back to her hole in decaying roots and settles down in a pile of damp brown leaves.

Eleutherodactylus Iberia curls up and closes her eyes to the hoot of owls and slowly falls asleep. The moon shines brightly over the lush Rainforest canopy.

Mexican Burrowing Toad

by Rose [REDACTED]



It is mid-day in Mexico. The sun's rays are beating down on the cool earth creating a fire like heat. The sky is as clear as glass. There is not much happening on this beautiful spring day. But, under the earth there is so much action, just waiting to happen!

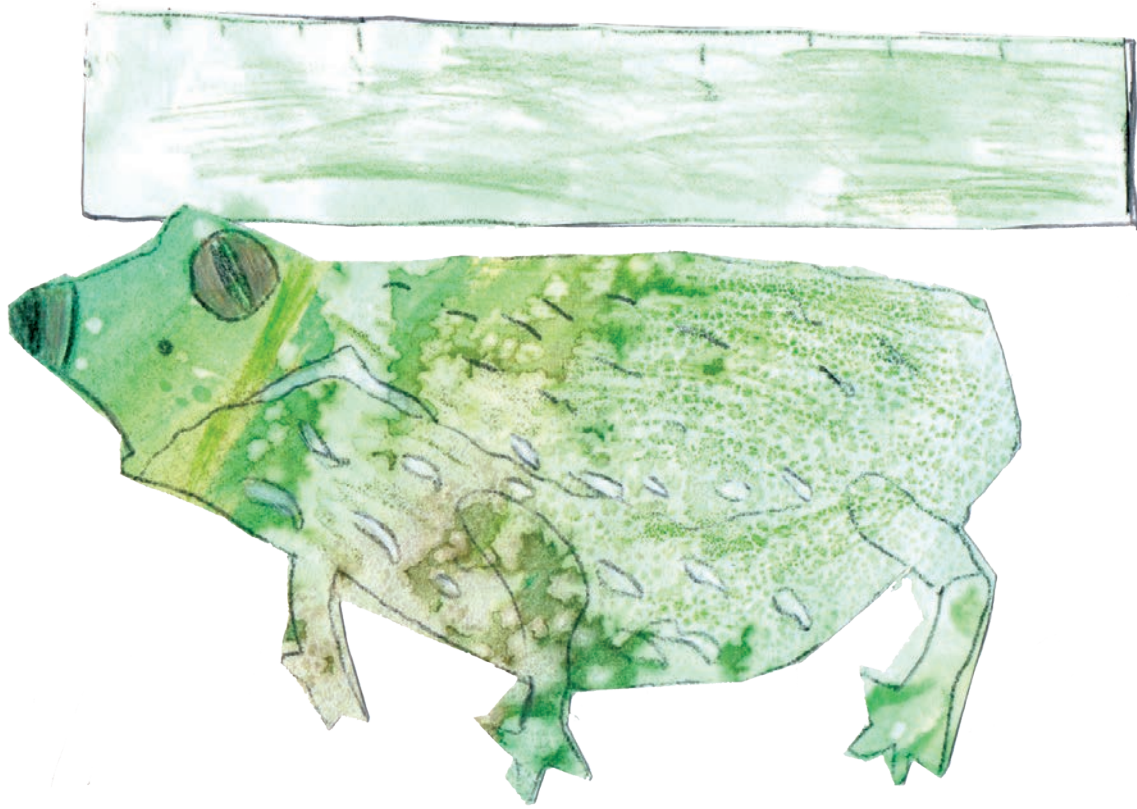
THAWAK! One down three to go. Mexican Burrowing Toad prepares his long sticky tongue and... THWAK! THWAK! THWAK! All of the termites are gone. Mexican Burrowing Toad leaves this part of his burrow feeling full, and satisfied with his catch.

Mexican Burrowing Toad is as black as midnight with red and orange spots flickering down his back like flames. His snout is as bumpy as a mountain range. Claws strong as tusks for digging a burrow.

Pit, pat, pit, pat — the sound of rain hitting the ground above. Mexican Burrowing Toad pushes up the soft dirt. Kicking and scratching against the dirt. The last of the dirt falls to the ground with a “thump.” Mexican Burrowing Toad crawls out of his burrow and begins to call “whoooooa.” Soon a mate appears. Mexican Burrowing Toad and his mate start to breed in a shimmering freshwater pond. The pond glimmers in the sunlight. Mexican Burrowing Toad's mate lays a small clump of jelly like eggs. Mexican Burrowing Toad begins to dig a burrow. As the sun sets behind the snow covered mountains, Mexican Burrowing Toad closes his shimmering black eyes and goes to sleep.

Painted Belly Leaf Frog

by Jenna [REDACTED]



It is a peaceful night in Bolivia. Crickets are making long loud chirping sounds — CHIRP! CHIRP! CHIRP! near the small peaceful lake.

Green as a leaf in the tropical Rainforest, her eyes like glimmering gold, Painted-belly Leaf Frog is hunting for bugs. She sees the crickets then, ZAP! She caught one cricket with her long sticky tongue. The others make a run for it but they are too slow. ZAP! ZAP! ZAP! All the crickets are gone.

Painted-belly Leaf Frog heads home with an almost full stomach. When she is heading back to her tree she stumbles upon a swarm of flies hovering over some cow droppings. Just for desert, ZAP! ZAP! ZAP! She eats those flies right up. YUM!

She returns to her journey home. When she gets to her tree she sees a HERON! She hops away as fast as she can, the heron nearly gets her, but she hops down from the tree and hops away in hope to find another home.

Painted-belly Leaf Frog finally finds a new home, with no herons hunting in sight. She climbs up the tree and falls asleep.

Spring Peeper

by Sofia [REDACTED]



The sun is rising above the gleaming wetland of North America. The sun hits the sparkling pond and the sound of birds chirping fills the spring morning air.

Spring Peeper is calling for a mate. His big bubble throat goes in and out to amplify his call. PEEP! PEEP! PEEP! His skin is gold-brown. His eyes are gold-orange, he has dark markings in the shape of an X on his back. He is as small as a dime and has sticky toe pads for climbing.

Suddenly, SWOOSH! A bird glides down heading right towards Spring Peeper. Spring Peeper hears the bird coming. He is fast and jumps away just in time.

Then, Spring Peeper attracts a mate. They go to a nice place to lay their eggs. They wait for their new babies to hatch.

Strawberry Poison Dart Frog

by Ethan [REDACTED]



In Central America at 5:30 a.m. the wet soggy rainforest is filled with active wildlife, snakes lurking about, and little tadpoles swimming in bromeliads.

Strawberry Poison-dart Frog searches among the leaf litter. Strawberry Poison-dart Frog finally finds a spot to call a mate. A few minutes later a mate comes. Then, they go to search for a spot to lay their eggs. Suddenly, a fire-bellied snake eats Strawberry Poison-dart Frog's mate. Strawberry Poison-dart Frog hides under a slimy green leaf. He slowly creeps out from under the leaf, the fire-bellied snake is gone.

Strawberry Poison-dart Frog returns to his territory to guard it. A hungry Spider Monkey is searching through Strawberry Poison-dart Frog's territory for yummy fruit. Strawberry Poison-dart Frog spots Spider Monkey. He slowly moves closer and closer to Spider Monkey. Spider Monkey sees Strawberry Poison-dart Frog and is scared. Spider Monkey is so scared he swings away. Spider Monkey knows from Strawberry Poison-dart Frog's colors that he is poisonous. Now that he is safe, Strawberry Poison-dart Frog decides to take a long nap.

Water Holding Frog

by Malachi [REDACTED]



It is an early damp sunrise in Australia. It's December, little fish swim in the goopy squishy mud. In some places snakes slither upon the mud. Birds swoop down from the sky and into the gumtrees.

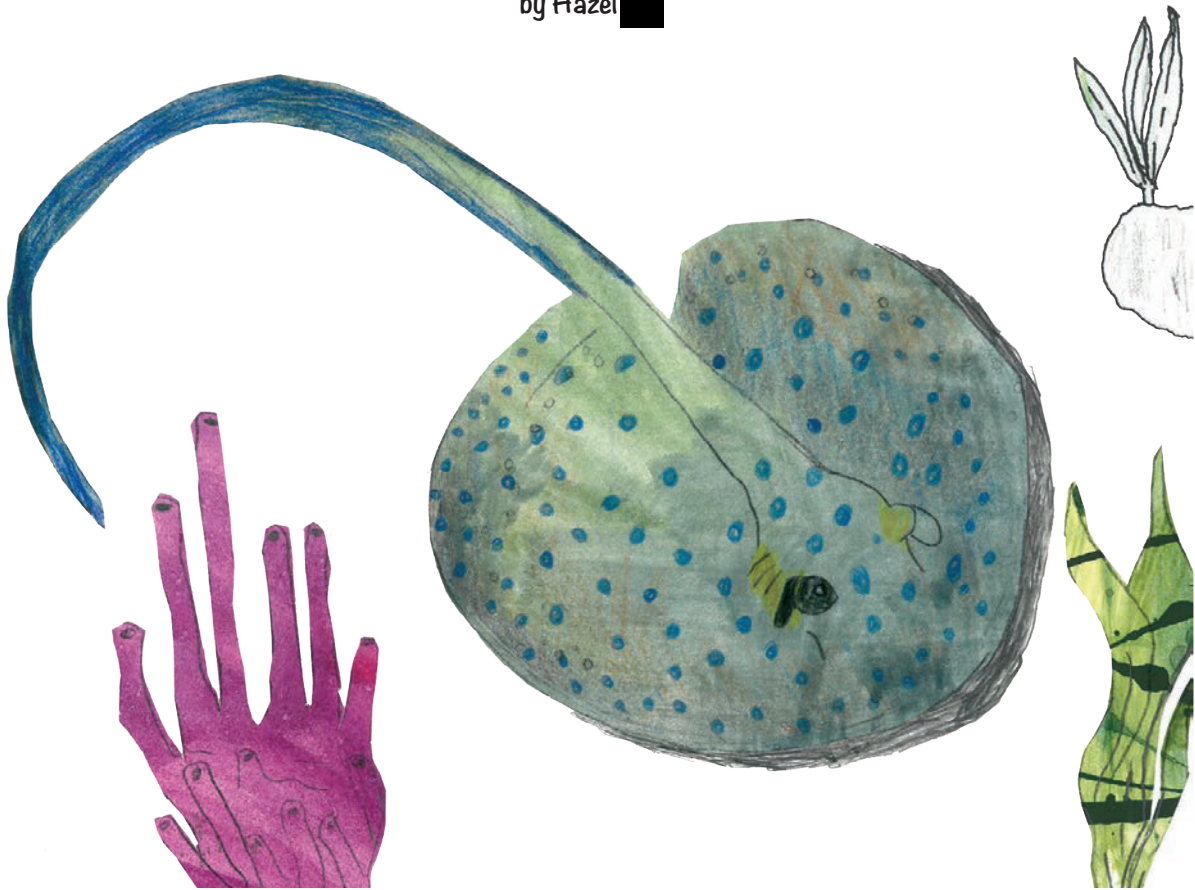
When the pink clouds turn grey and it starts to rain, Water-holding Frog wakes up! He hears thunder from aboveground. After some time Water-holding Frog remembers he has been estivating since the last rainy season! He starts to eat his skin and mucus formed cocoon.

After Water-holding Frog eats his cocoon he starts to dig out of his burrow. He digs with his hind legs up and out of his burrow, push after push. When he gets out of his burrow Water-holding Frog starts to call for a mate. When Water-holding Frog stops calling, something starts to Caw, Caw, Caw! Uh-oh, Wedge-tailed Eagle heard him! Wedge-tailed Eagle swoops down from a gumtree nearby trying to capture Water-holding Frog with his gruesome claws. Water-holding Frog tries to hop away but he's too slow. Wedge-tailed Eagle picks up Water-holding Frog and carries him to his nest to feed.

Wedge-tailed Eagle looks away from Water-holding Frog. Water-holding Frog notices this is the perfect time to escape. Water-holding Frog jumps out from the nest. Luckily, Water-holding Frog falls into a puddle safely. He gets out of the water and hops away on his strong hind legs.

Blue Spotted Ribbontail Ray

by Hazel



It is mid-day in Australia. The sun is high in the sky and its buttery light leaks through the water and shines down on the Great Barrier Reef. The reef is a bustling city of little fish swimming through the gleaming corals and sea fans.

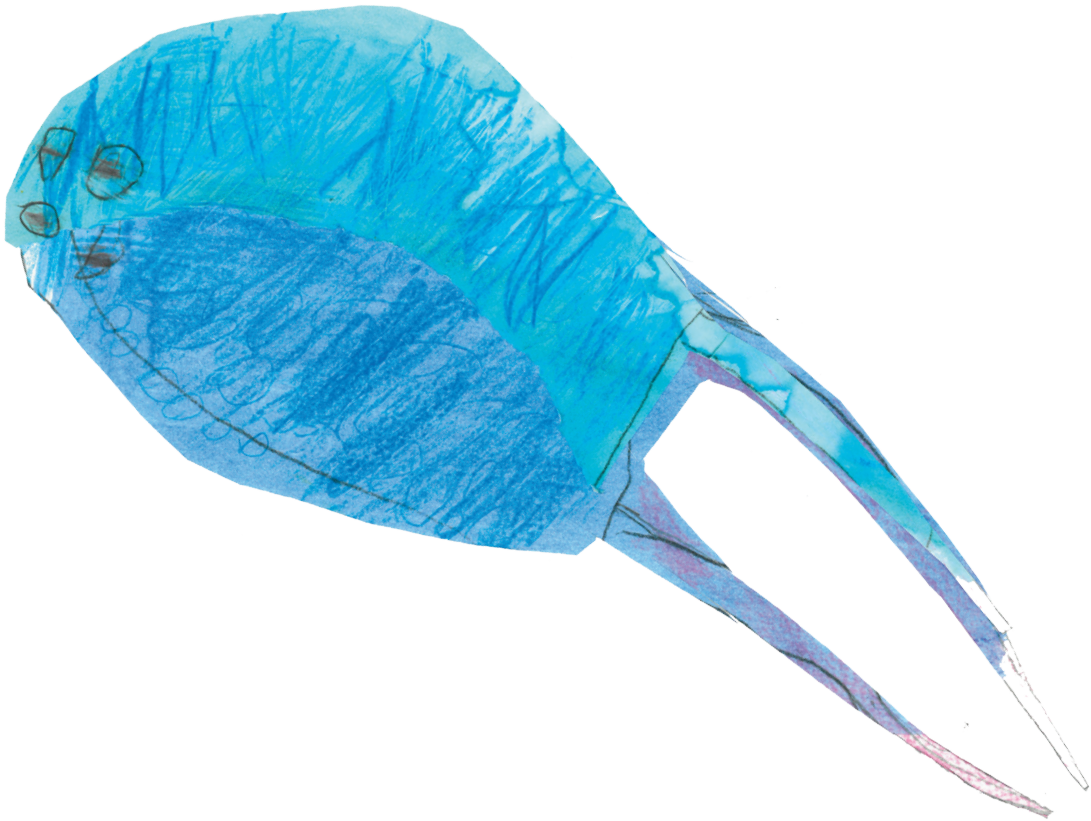
Blue Spotted Ribbontail Ray tilts her wings, gliding effortlessly through the reef. She is headed towards the mangrove forest where she will give birth. She has been pregnant for about 6 months after mating in the late spring/early summer. She nestles herself in the tangled roots and her pups are born one by one. The pups look like slimy burritos, their slimy wings curled closely to their bodies. They extend their wings and within minutes, they shoot off into the murky water. Ray untangles herself from the gnarled roots and swims back to the coral reef.

As Ray swims through an archway formed from corals, she looks around and she sees the dark outline of a hammerhead shark. Ray usually doesn't have to worry about predators because the venomous barb on her tail stings and kills hungry predators who think she will make a tasty snack. The hammerhead shark is the only exception because it can pin down Ray's barb. Ray quickly swims out of sight into a coral cave. She stays in the cave for a while until she is 100% sure that the hammerhead is gone, then she emerges.

Just as Ray is coming out of the cave, a black tipped reef shark sees her, thinks she would make an excellent dinner, and lunges. Ray uses her lightning quick reflexes and raises her barbed tail just in time! She stings the shark and the venom slowly spreads through his body, his eyes glaze over, and he sinks to the bottom and doesn't come back up. Ray swims away while the tide is high and draws closer and closer to the beach to find a dinner of her own! Her mouth, being on the underside of her head, allows her to come down on a spin of shrimp she was swimming over. Using her beautiful wings, she shovels several mouthfuls of shrimp into her mouth. She swims off into the reef, the bright bouquet of corals shining in the sunset. The ocean is turned a magnificent collage of red, orange, and gold by the setting sun.

Box Jellyfish

by Raine [REDACTED]



It is a hot morning on the coast of Australia but no one is out swimming. The sun is glistening on the water and steam floats off of the sea. The silence is broken by sea turtles, dolphins, and little fish swimming everywhere. The beautiful red and blue colored coral in the the water is home to many creatures of beauty.

There is a ripple in the water as Box Jellyfish, one of the most venomous animals known to man, is on the prowl. As Box Jellyfish floats, he is basically a god around these parts. No one messes with him except the blue leatherback turtle because of its venom. Box Jellyfish is looking for food. He spots a shrimp, the shrimp flees. Box Jellyfish soon spots a fish, strikes and in no time he is eating a meal fit for a king.

As Box Jellyfish eats, he does not notice a turtle. Box Jellyfish strikes at the turtle and flees. But, the turtle comes back for more. Box Jellyfish tries to escape, he is losing steam and needs a break. A shark swoops in, whoosh! Shark wants a meal and the blue leatherback turtle is just the distraction Box Jellyfish needs. Box Jellyfish stops and rests as it watches the shark attack the turtle. The turtle is smarter than shark and uses that to his advantage. He leads the shark towards Box Jellyfish. Box jellyfish strikes the shark with his venomous tentacles, killing it almost immediately.

As Box Jellyfish is engaged with the shark it feels a needle like pain and it realizes that it dealt with both of the turtle's problems, food and the shark, as the excruciating pain engulfs Box Jellyfish's body. Its blood tints the water with red. Box Jellyfish's life is over, he has become part of the food chain.

Common Dolphin

by Dariah Mays



It is evening, the setting sun shines on the greenish-blue Atlantic Ocean. The tiny deep sea fish emerge to the surface, breaking through the currents to see the majestic sunset of pink, purple, and orange.

Common Dolphin also emerges from under the murky water to take a breath from her blow-hole. In a few days she will be giving birth to a baby dolphin. She spots the fish and goes back under water where she lets out a series of clicks and bubble-streams, but not loud enough for the fish to hear, notice, or care.

Common Dolphin waits a few seconds, soon a pod of 57-81 more dolphins rise from the murky-depths of the greenish-blue Atlantic ocean to join her in a feast of the deep sea fish! At that very moment a great white shark appears out of nowhere. The fish swim in all directions to avoid being a very tasty meal indeed for the shark. Unfortunately the shark is not in the mood for fresh fish, but thinks a meal of fresh dolphin would be a special feast, and a substantial meal for a full grown great white shark. It heads as fast as lightning toward the frightened pod of dolphins. Luckily the pod of dolphins know just what to do. They form into a big ball and head as fast light toward the great white shark's right side, Bam! The pod of dolphins strike right on target. The frightened shark turns, and swims away.

Common Dolphin and her pod come back up to the surface to see the sunset. In a few days common dolphin will be giving birth to a baby dolphin who is destined to explore the enchanted and rather odd sea world.

Eurasian Roller

by Tien Zin



The sun's light slowly creeps across the Asian grasslands. Trees sway in the wind. The grass morphs into glistening strands of gold, as the sun rises into the sky. The explosion of light awakens a king cobra, which slithers out of his hole scouring the barren land in search of food.

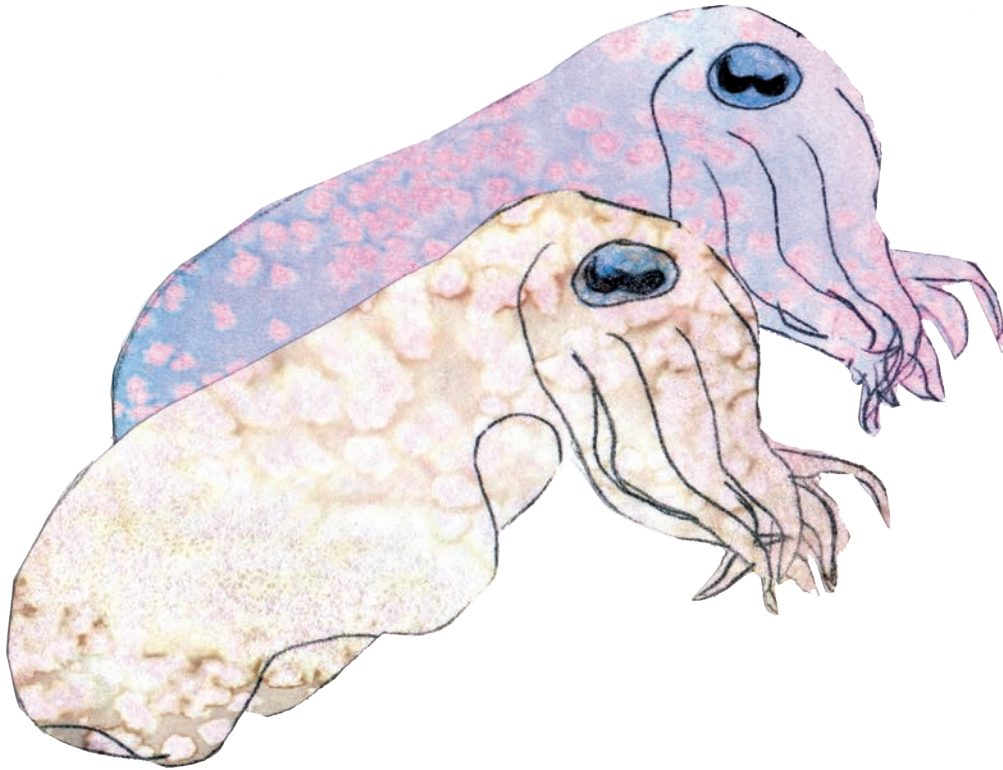
A male Eurasian roller is chasing a lizard across the grasslands. When he catches up to it, he flies down and impales it with his talon. After digesting it, he flies to a tree stump to attract a mate. He puffs out his chest, and uses his guttural voice to call and call. After hours of calling he hears wings beating like a pulsing heart, and a female roller flies down to him. After mating, they build a nest to lay their eggs.

Male Roller flies out of the nest to find food. He sees a lizard's tail and flies down. BANG! The tail was King Cobra's tail! He strikes, killing Male Eurasian Roller! King Cobra takes his meal to his hole and rests. Female Roller sees King Cobra carrying his corpse. She will have to raise the young alone.

Female Roller is sitting on the nest when an egg jumps! It jumps again and gets a crack in it! Female Roller flies out of the nest to find food, accidentally knocking a twig off the nest onto King Cobra's head, awakening him. He looks up to see where the twig came from and hears an annoying chirping sound. He slithers out and sees the young. He already ate Male Roller and was hungry again, so roller young would do nicely. Slowly he slithers up to the nest. The young see him but cannot fly. As King Cobra is an inch away they make a weird noise, BARF! The young rollers barf frothy bubbling goo all over themselves! The chunky orange liquid is bubbling and foaming as it lands on the young. Knowing the barf's poison will kill him, and because it's just revolting, King Cobra slithers away and hides in his hole. And, the young go to sleep in the bubbling puddle of barf.

Giant Cuttlefish

by Rayden [REDACTED]



The cool clear waves break on the southern shore of Africa, the sky is lit with a pale blue, it's early morning. The ocean floor is swaddled with thick twines of kelp. The coral reef has a warm glow in the pale sunlit water.

Mating season is coming up for Giant Cuttlefish. She is swimming to a special clearing on the ocean floor. She gently glides through the current in the kelp forest. A crab crawls along, a snack for Cuttlefish. In only a second her black beak lashes out and shreds the crab down her gullet.

Her journey is about to end, she has swam out of the kelp forest and into a warm colorful world of the coral reef. A dark shadow is over her head, swimming effortlessly. Squeaks and whistles come from up above, a dolphin! Cuttlefish quickly swims to a piece of coral and fantastically disperses in a snap; changing color is her defense. It is too late though, Dolphin has noticed her. It is a chase between life and death. Cuttlefish darts forward and sprays a dense cloud of ink and darts off to a hiding place. Dolphin is distracted with the ink and has lost Cuttlefish. Now Cuttlefish can go find a male to mate with and continue the lifecycle.

Mating season has just ended for Cuttlefish, she is now looking for a place to lay her eggs. She will lay up to 200 eggs! She has found a small crack in a boulder — this is where she will lay her eggs. She will not live to see her babies. She is about 2 years old, just on the verge of her lifespan.

50 days later, the eggs begin to burst with life. Like a pod of tiny alien space ships they swarm out of the crack in the boulder into the huge deep blue world of the ocean.

Ground Pangolan

by Gredel



The cool breeze blows through the African savanna as a lion roars into the air. Little ants scurry back to their hole. The sun is pale yellow, orange, and pink. The trees blow to the wind's breeze. The sunset lights the sky. It is a quiet, peaceful evening.

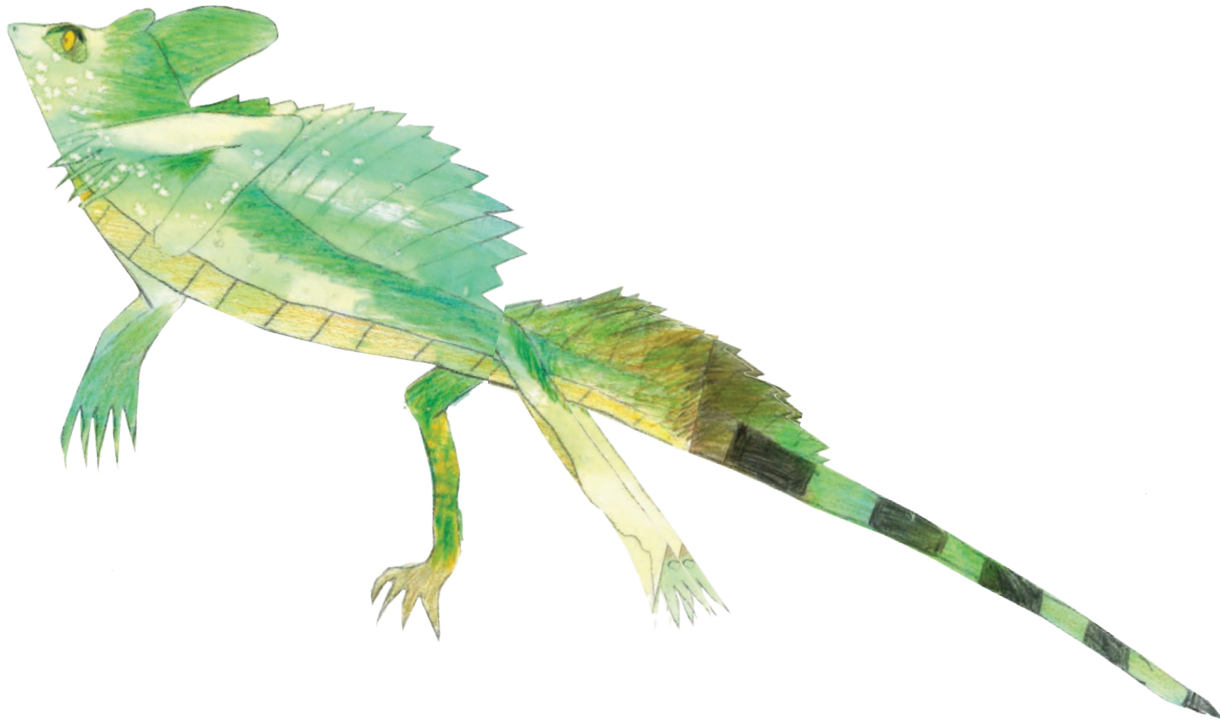
Ground Pangolin is ready to give birth. 65 to 70 days have passed since mating. She will only give birth to one baby a year. Then she will carry her baby on her back for about 3 months. First, she is hungry. Ground Pangolin wobbles on her tail and hind legs while sniffing the ground. Suddenly she stops! She has found an ant mound. Using her massive claws, she wrenches the mound apart to find the ant colony. When she finds all the ants swarming around trying to find freedom, she uses her long sticky tongue to collect them all. Ground Pangolin doesn't have teeth, but swallows rocks and pebbles to grind up her food. The ants try to bite her skin, but Pangolin's scales are like a shield. They block the ants from biting. Pangolin has a thin piece of skin to cover her ears and has thick eye lids to cover her eyes, too! Ground Pangolin has had enough of the ants. She wobbles away into the grass.

Ground Pangolin has poor eyesight, but an excellent sense of smell. She smells a predator close by. She smells him getting closer and closer. Feeling threatened, she curls up into a ball, with her tail wrapped around her body completely covering herself, so that she looks like a scaly round ball. Her senses tell her that a full grown leopard is circling around her. Her plan is to stay still until the leopard goes away. If it doesn't go as planned, her scales are so hard they are like a solid brick wall. The leopard may try to gnaw on her scales. She waits and waits. It seems like a million years. Finally, she smells the presence of the leopard growing distant. Ground Pangolin waits a few seconds then gets up. She wobbles in the direction of her burrow to give birth.

When she reaches the burrow, she lays down on the soft brown dirt. Then, she gives birth to a two and a half inch long boy pangolin. The baby's eyes are still closed. Its scales will harden as it grows up. For now though, baby pangolin and mom will sleep through the long, cold and peaceful night.

Green Basilisk Lizard

by Tiger Luc



The sun shines through the leaves of a large mahogany tree in the tropical rainforest of Central America. Strong, steady branches slowly sway in the late morning breeze. A small beetle crawls through a crack in the tough bark.

The insect stops suddenly, alarmed. Crests standing tall on his head, body, and tail, a two foot long Green basilisk lizard emerges from the leaves. At lightning speed, he runs along the branch and gulps up the beetle. Green Basilisk pauses to rest and chew.

Five seconds later, Green Basilisk is finished and he hears the wingbeats of a hawk swooping down, like paper falling and swishing to the ground. In the blink of an eye, Green Basilisk is dropping down onto the pond he lives above. Surprisingly, he lands on the water and runs away.

Green Basilisk slaps his back feet on the water's surface. On his back feet, fringes of skin unfurl as he runs, increasing surface area. Green Basilisk's front arms lift up, using only his back feet. After three seconds and fifteen feet, speed wanes. Green Basilisk plops into the water. The hawk searches for around twenty minutes. It is tiring and gives up the search. Green Basilisk is exhausted. He swims back to shore, climbs up the mahogany, and falls asleep.

Grasshopper Mouse

by Tomas [REDACTED]



It is evening in the Sonoran desert, animals lurk on the desert floor. A rattlesnake slithers on the sand avoiding other rattlesnakes and catching insects, while in the distance he hears a howl from the animal he will try to eat under the full moon.

Meanwhile a Northern grasshopper mouse emerges out of its burrow and runs to find an Arizona bark scorpion for its late night meal. Little does he know while he looks for his meal he is being followed by a diamondback rattlesnake. The snake makes a quick strike intending to kill Mouse with his curved fangs. ZAP! The fangs hit open air, Mouse escapes in the nick of time. Mouse runs as fast as he can and when Mouse is sure he is safe he stops and looks around. Finally, he spots a dark scorpion for a delicious a meal.

Mouse pounces on Scorpion and the fight begins. Mouse moves left and right trying to avoid Scorpion's stinger. Scorpion stops and waits for Mouse to be off guard. At that moment Scorpion's stinger strikes Mouse's skin. Mouse jumps away and rolls over in the sand, then he gets up and shakes himself. Scorpion is surprised because mouse was not harmed. Scorpion did not know that mouse is immune to scorpion stings.

Mouse tires Scorpion by grabbing Scorpion's tail and shaking Scorpion back and forth like a dog playing tug-a-war. After a few minutes Scorpion lays in the sand dead. Mouse is triumphant and he howls at the full moon. After all the excitement Mouse returns to his home and goes to sleep. No one knows how Northern grasshopper mice get their immunity to scorpion venom, it is a total mystery!

Secretary Bird

by Shanti [REDACTED]



Early in the morning, the sun has just risen in Africa. In the Sahara the monsoon season has come. The smell of dew is in the air. Most of the lovegrass is green now. By a watering hole there is a clump of trees. The tallest one has a nest in it. Nearby, an Egyptian cobra slithers in the lovegrass looking for a breakfast of wild swine.

As the cobra is searching, a secretary bird with legs that are skyscrapers spots it, and sprints after the cobra. Secretary Bird, one foot away, kicks. Bang! In less than 16 milliseconds, less time than it takes you to blink, Secretary Bird's foot makes contact delivering 20 kilograms of force, almost instantly killing the cobra and squishing out all the venom. Secretary Bird uses his beak to pick up the dead cobra and takes it to its mate in their nest, in the tallest of the trees, by the watering hole.

Secretary Bird's mate is incubating their two eggs and she is ready to switch duties. Secretary Bird will incubate their eggs while Secretary Bird's mate will hunt. After two hours Secretary Bird's mate is back for guard duty. Once they swap Secretary Bird spots another secretary bird approaching in the distance. After a few minutes Secretary Bird charges toward the other secretary bird and jumps over him, showing that he is more powerful and telling him to go away. Once that is done Secretary Bird picks up a few sticks with his beak out of the lovegrass and flies home to apply the twigs to his nest. He does this two more times.

Secretary Bird returns home and switches with his mate. Ten minutes later, Secretary Bird spots a hornbill approaching the nest. When the hornbill notices Secretary Bird, he knows not to mess with this nest or he is dinner! The hornbill flies away, leaving Secretary in peace. About 70 minutes later, Secretary Bird's mate is back. The stars are above head and the aardwolves are waking. Secretary Bird and his mate turn in for the night and rest, for another normal day in the interesting African Sahara.

Three Banded Armadillo

by Willow [REDACTED]

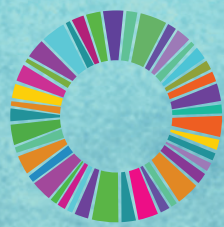


It's a warm afternoon in a dry grassland, the hot breeze is swaying the leaves of the trees. Ants are working hard to build their mound.

Armadillo is searching for some food. He spots an ant hill. He starts digging a hole into the ant hill with his giant claws to get to the ants. His long sticky tongue laps up the delicious meal.

When Armadillo is done he hears a hunter approaching. Then, he sees a domestic dog stalking him. Armadillo first starts to run, but the domestic dog is faster than Armadillo. He then rolls up into a ball to hide his soft tummy. He leaves a crack in his shell to see the domestic dog. The dog discovers the crack, and tries to pry open the shell. Armadillo quickly shuts the crack as fast as lightning! The domestic dog finally gives up and leaves. Armadillo is now safe.

Armadillo is safe, he returns to his burrow. Armadillo is exhausted. He lies down and closes his eyes.



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