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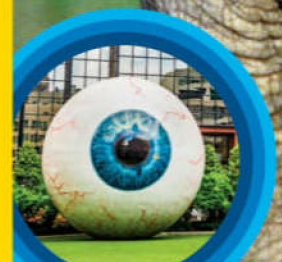

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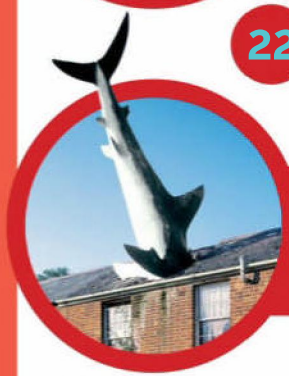

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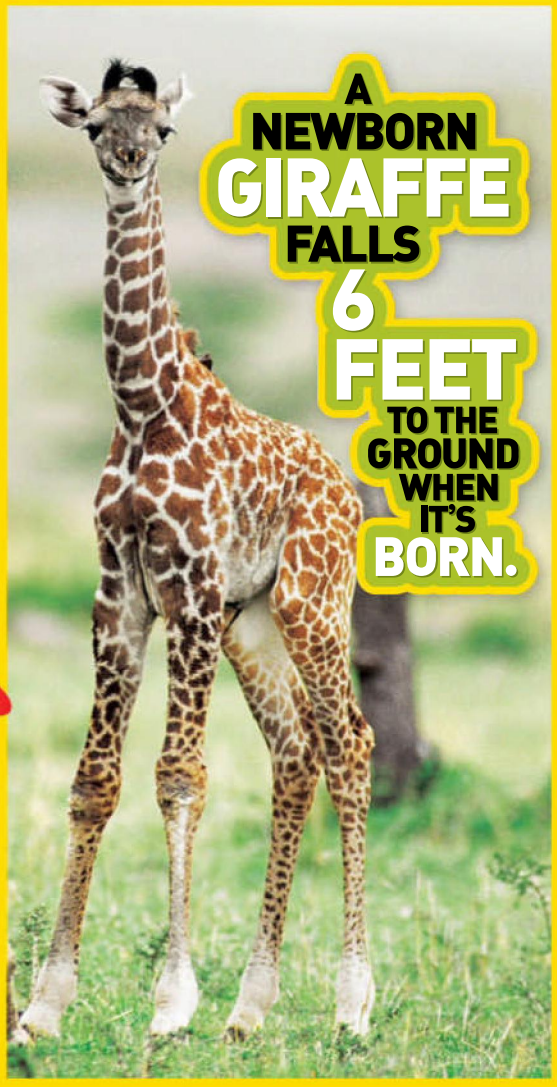
BY JEFFREY WANDEL

weird but true! Check out these outrageous facts.

IF YOU TRAVELED 1 LIGHT-YEAR, YOU WOULD GO ALMOST 6 TRILLION MILES.

A man walked on his hands from Vienna, Austria, to Paris, France. The trip took 55 days!



A NEWBORN GIRAFFE FALLS 6 FEET TO THE GROUND WHEN IT'S BORN.

THE GROOVE BETWEEN YOUR NOSE AND UPPER LIP IS CALLED THE PHILTRUM.

A porcupine can have more than 30,000 quills.

THE LARGEST KNOWN STARS ARE ABOUT 2,000 TIMES LARGER THAN THE SUN.

SOME PLANTS CONSUME INSECTS, FROGS, AND BIRDS FOR FOOD.

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Wild Vacation

BY JAMIE KIFFEL-ALCHEH

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COOL THINGS ABOUT FINLAND

In Finland, *poronkusema* is a word for the distance a reindeer can walk before needing to use the bathroom.

A 5,000-year-old piece of chewing gum was discovered in Finland.

Finns can enjoy a sauna—a hot steam bath—in office buildings, homes, and even at the airport.

Snow Hotel

KAKSLAUTTANEN

COOL BED!

WHERE Saariselkä, Finland

HOW MUCH From $400 a night

WHY IT'S COOL If you like snow, then this is the place for you! Being able to make it through the night at this chilly igloo hotel definitely ups your personal cool factor (in more ways than one). But even the most adventurous travelers will be glad the hotel provides cold-weather sleeping bags and wool socks: The inside temperature hovers around 25°F. Just hope that you don't need to use the bathroom—it's outside. The igloos are open from December through April. After that, they melt.

THINGS TO DO IN FINLAND

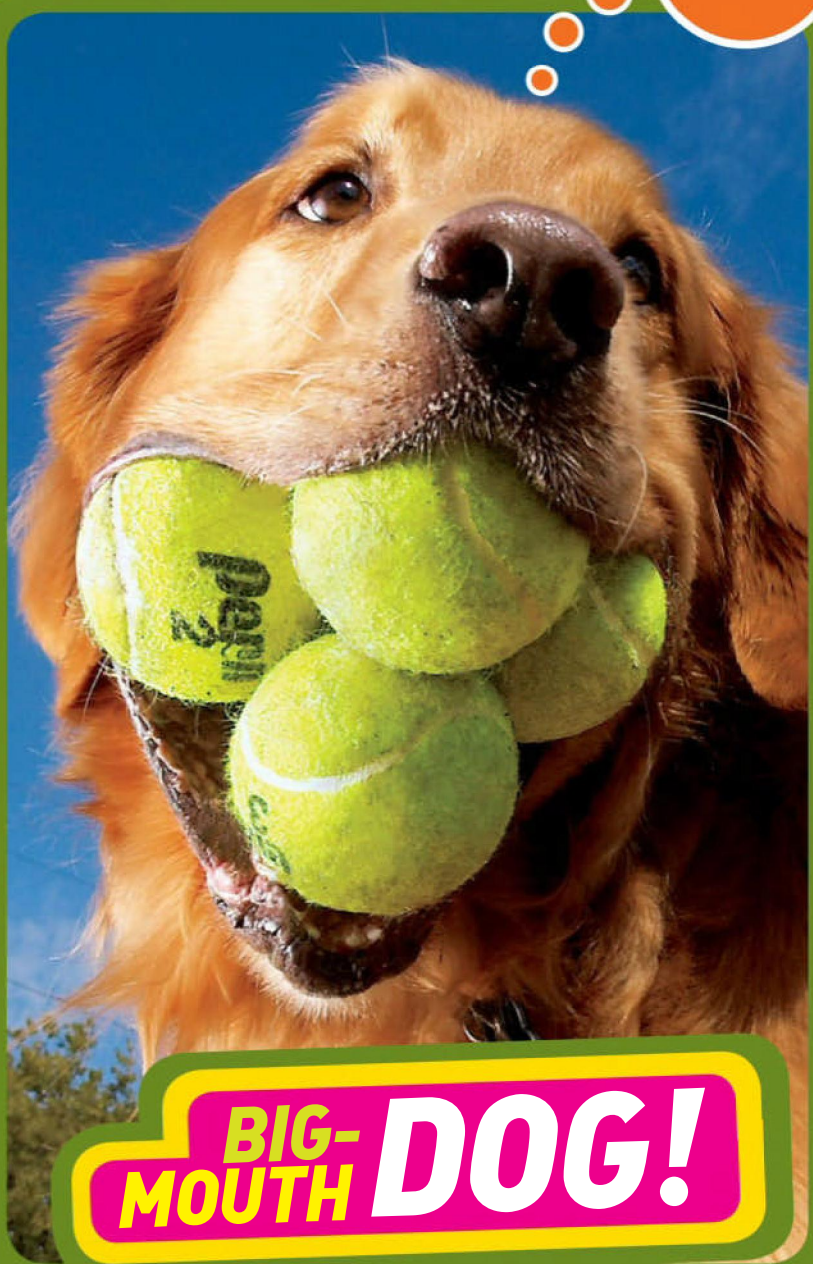
- Visit Tree Mountain in Ylöjärvi, a giant art project that includes a hill and thousands of trees planted in a pattern.
- Get mud on your cleats competing in the Swamp Soccer World Championships in Hyrynsalmi.
- Wake up first on National Sleepyhead Day—because families might throw the latest sleeper in a lake!
- Admire 500-year-old graffiti at Pike's Gut, where medieval sailors carved their names into stone.

ARCTIC-IMAGES / GETTY IMAGES (MAIN); COURTESY HOTEL KAKSLAUTTANEN (COOL BED)

ASTONISHING STORIES FROM THE FILES OF

Guinness World Records

ANYBODY UP FOR A GAME OF DOUBLES?



BIG-MOUTH DOG!

Augie the golden retriever didn't just fetch his tennis balls. He crammed five of them into his mouth, the most on record for a dog! Owner Laurel Miller says as a puppy Augie would chase tennis balls and then refuse to give them back. But soon Miller could simply place the balls on the ground and Augie would scoop them all into his mouth. At least he wasn't barking with his mouth full!

GLOBE MADE OF SOAP!

This is one way to keep Earth clean! The world's largest soap sculpture represents a globe held by two hands; it's nearly seven feet wide and about nine feet tall. Guess it's *not* such a small world after all.

WORLD'S TALLEST MAN!

WHOA!

Who needs a ladder when *this* dude is your friend? Sultan Kösen is on record as the tallest man alive, standing at nearly eight feet three inches. Kösen, whose height was caused by an overproduction of growth hormone, does have trouble finding clothes that fit. He's probably stopped growing, but Kösen is still the go-to person when a light bulb needs changing.

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Bet you didn't know

BY ELEANOR SHANNAHAN

7 wild facts about the color red!

1

Red also means "BEAUTIFUL" in Russian.

2

The word "ruby" comes from the Latin word *rubens*, meaning "red."

3

The color red doesn't really make bulls angry; they are color-blind.

4

There are at least 29 different shades of red crayons.

5

The red stripes on the United States FLAG stand for courage.

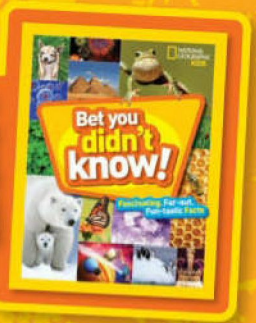
6

Chinese BRIDES TRADITIONALLY wear red wedding dresses for good luck.

7

SEEING the color red can make your heart beat faster.

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



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COSMICALLY COOL PICTURES

BY JULIE BEER AND MICHELLE HARRIS

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CHECK OUT THESE BOOKS!

1

SUPERNOVA REMNANTS

This mosaic of six images from NASA's Hubble Space Telescope shows an area of the **Veil Nebula** about two light-years across. (A light-year is the distance light travels in one year.) The whole Veil Nebula is 110 light-years across. The wispy gas trails are all that's left of an ancient star that was once 20 times more massive than our sun.

A MOUNTAIN RANGE ON PLUTO RISES AS HIGH AS 11,000 FEET.

2

DWARF PLANET

NASA's New Horizons spacecraft captured this image of **Pluto** (in the foreground) and its moon Charon. The colors here are made by combining three different images, and though the relative sizes are close to accurate, the relative distance apart is not to scale.

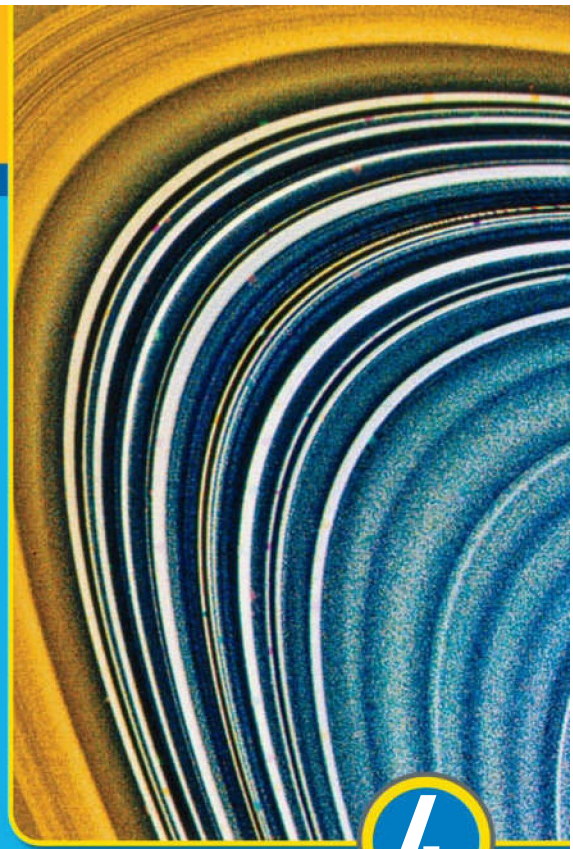
TELESCOPE POWER

Two dwarf galaxies known as the Magellanic Clouds can be seen above the **Paranal Observatory** in the Atacama Desert in Chile. The observatory is home to a very large telescope known as the Very Large Telescope.

AN EXOPLANET IS A PLANET THAT ORBITS A STAR THAT ISN'T OUR SUN.

THE FIRST IMAGE OF AN EXOPLANET WAS CAPTURED BY THE VERY LARGE TELESCOPE.

3



4

RING WORLD

A close-up of Saturn's **expansive ring system,** highlighted with different colors, shows its elaborate structures. Rings are made up of millions of fragments of ice and rock, and have gaps inside containing ringlets. Other rings have moons embedded within them. The Voyager 2 spacecraft took this image in 1981.

5

MEGA-SIZE EARTH

This "super Earth" (seen here in an artist's rendering) is more than five times as massive as our home planet and orbits a red dwarf star about 33 light-years away. Supersize aliens aren't hanging out here, though, as scientists think exoplanet **GJ 536b** is too close to its star to be habitable.

6

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HOT SPOT

An artist's rendition of **Kepler-20e** shows the rocky exoplanet with active volcanoes. The exoplanet is much too hot to support life as we know it, with surface temperatures thought to reach as high as 1400°F, or about four times hotter than an oven baking a cake.

7

EXTREME EXOPLANET

This NASA illustration shows the exoplanet **HD 189733b,** located some 63 light-years away from Earth in the constellation Vulpecula. This planet may look friendly, but don't be fooled: Winds howl here at 5,400 miles an hour—seven times the speed of sound!—and it likely rains molten glass.

8

BLACK AND WHITE

Iapetus, Saturn's third largest moon, appears as a pockmarked gum ball. This image is highlighted to make the colors more pronounced, but the moon really is two-toned. Small dust particles from another moon, Phoebe, accumulate on the dark side but not on the icy white side.

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Amazing Animals

CAT FASHION TIP: ALWAYS MATCH YOUR SCARF TO YOUR EYE COLORS.

CAT HAS COOL EYES

Budapest, Hungary

It's hard to look away from Pam Pam, a white exotic shorthair cat. The kitty's peepers aren't just, well, eye-catching—they're also pretty rare.

Pam Pam has iridis, an eye condition that means one eye is blue and the other is a different color—yellow in Pam Pam's case. Iridis occurs when a gene prevents an equal amount of melanin—a pigment that determines the color of your hair, skin, and eyes—from reaching both eyes. This leaves the blue eye with less melanin. The feline form of iridis is unusual and can happen in any breed. "Luckily, iridis doesn't cause any pain or vision problems," veterinarian Seth Cohen says. The hypnotizing look can also be found in humans and other animals, such as dogs and horses.

Even though Pam Pam doesn't look like a regular cat, she acts like one. Owner Anna Khezri says the kitty loves to hide behind furniture and jump out at Pashmak the Pomeranian when he walks by. The cool-looking cat's favorite toy? Says Khezri: "My phone charger!"

—*Sara Schwartz*

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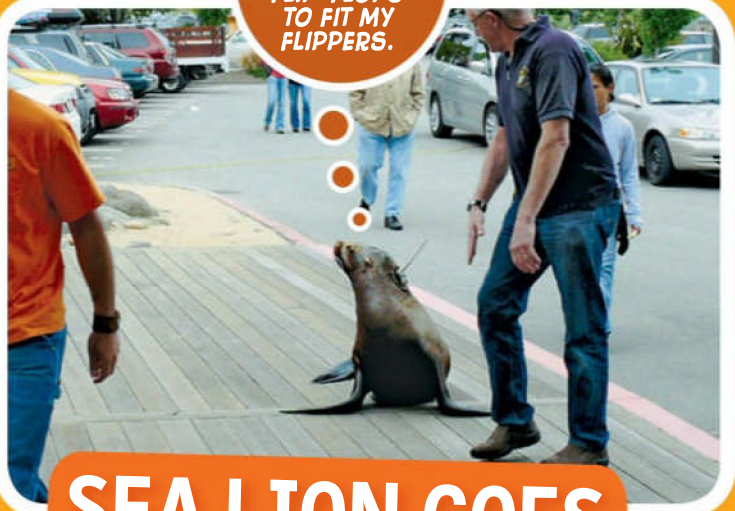


SEA LION GOES FOR A WALK

Corte Madera, California

What does a wild sea lion do when he needs some exercise? This one entered a walkathon! Emerging from the San Francisco Bay, Astro used his flippers to shuffle himself to a nearby school where students were walking for charity. He completed one lap with the kids before concerned adults called rescuers at the Marine Mammal Center.

They recognized the friendly animal right away: Astro was an abandoned pup that had been raised at the center and released into the ocean. "Our hope is to return all of our patients to the wild," says Deb Wickham of the center. "People should always keep a safe distance from wild animals to help them *stay* wild." But since Astro was too used to being around people, Wickham's team corralled the sea lion into a carrier and took him back to the center. There, Astro lived with other captive sea lions again—and got plenty of exercise! —*Sarah Wassner Flynn*

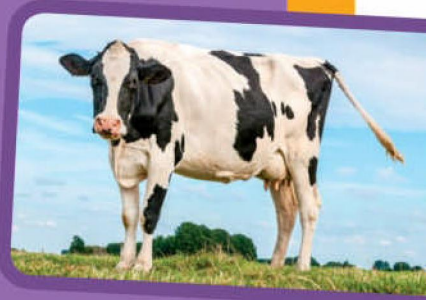
HERO HORSE

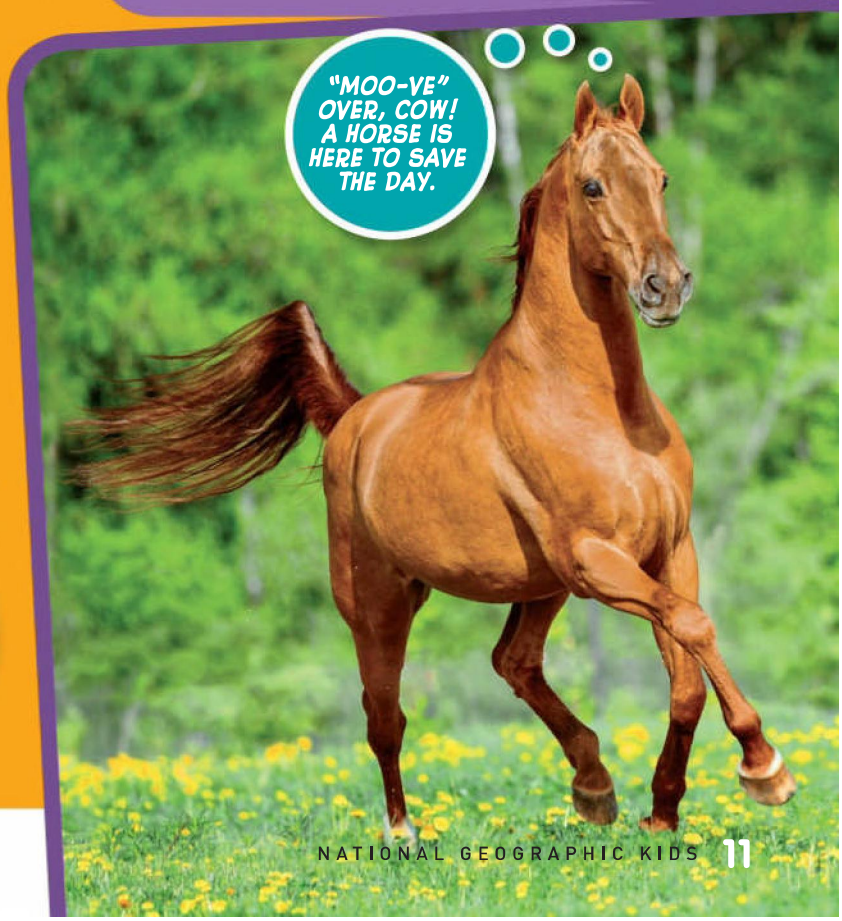
Castle Douglas, Scotland

When a cow attacked Fiona Boyd, she found herself in a scary place. "I was underneath her four legs and she collapsed on top of me," Boyd says. Luckily for the dairy farmer, her horse Kerry galloped to the rescue.

Seconds earlier, Boyd had been leading a calf away so she could milk its mom. Fearing the baby was in danger, the cow sent the farmer flying, then slammed her body on top of Boyd. "She was trying to suffocate me," Boyd says. Hearing her owner's cries, the horse raced over and began battering the cow with her back legs as her bruised owner crawled to safety. "I'm quite sure Kerry saved my life," she says.

The cow and calf were fine following the incident, and Kerry continued to look out for the family. She even followed Boyd's children when calves were near. "Kerry became our bodyguard," Boyd says. "That was her purpose in life." —*Stephen Timblin*





MISSY PAMPAM (PAM PAM); MARIN COUNTY DAY SCHOOL (ASTRO); RUUD MORIJN PHOTOGRAPHER / SHUTTERSTOCK (COW); MAKAROVA VIKTORIA / SHUTTERSTOCK (HORSE)

20 ANIMALS YOU'LL LOVE

We'd definitely send valentines to these amazing critters.

1 AFRICAN ELEPHANT

Get out of these elephants' way! African elephants can weigh some 200 pounds at birth; by adulthood, they can top the scales at more than seven tons. The world's largest land mammal also has a big appetite, eating more than 300 pounds of grass, fruit, and leaves a day.

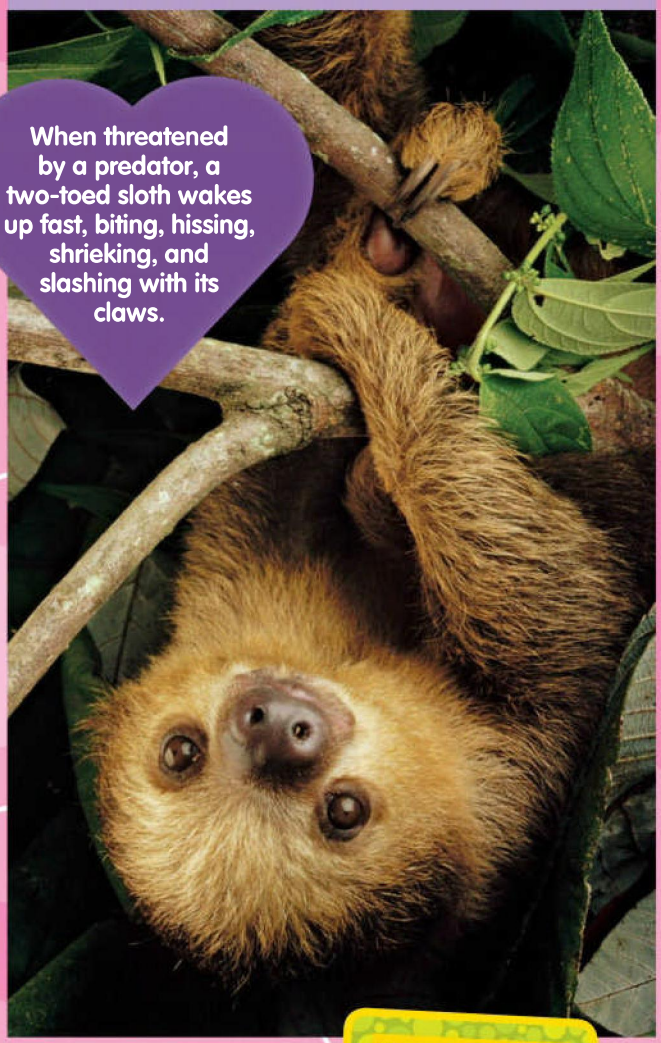
Elephants use their trunks to hug each other.

2 CLOWNFISH

Before a clownfish settles down inside the poisonous anemone where it lives, the fish softly touches the anemone's tentacles. This little dance helps the striped fish adapt to its reef home. A slimy substance on the fish protects it from the host's poison. Once the fish is settled, it helps its host keep clean. In return, the anemone protects the small fish from bigger, hungry fish.

3 TWO-TOED SLOTH

These shaggy tree dwellers sleep up to 20 hours a day and barely move at all, even when they're awake. They're so sluggish that algae grows on their fur. Some scientists think their slow-moving ways help them hide from predators. The algae helps too—the green hues blend right in with the trees the two-toed sloth hangs in.



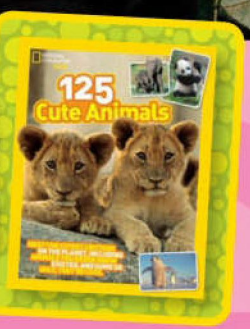
When threatened by a predator, a two-toed sloth wakes up fast, biting, hissing, shrieking, and slashing with its claws.

Sand cats have furry feet that prevent them from sinking in the sand.

4 SAND CAT

This rare feline lives wild in northern Africa and southwest and central Asia. Its sandy-colored coat provides camouflage and keeps it warm at night and cool during the day. It has a great sense of hearing that helps detect the scurrying feet of the desert delicacies it loves to eat, including gerbils, reptiles, and insects. It also eats snakes, bopping them on the head and biting them on the neck before devouring them.

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



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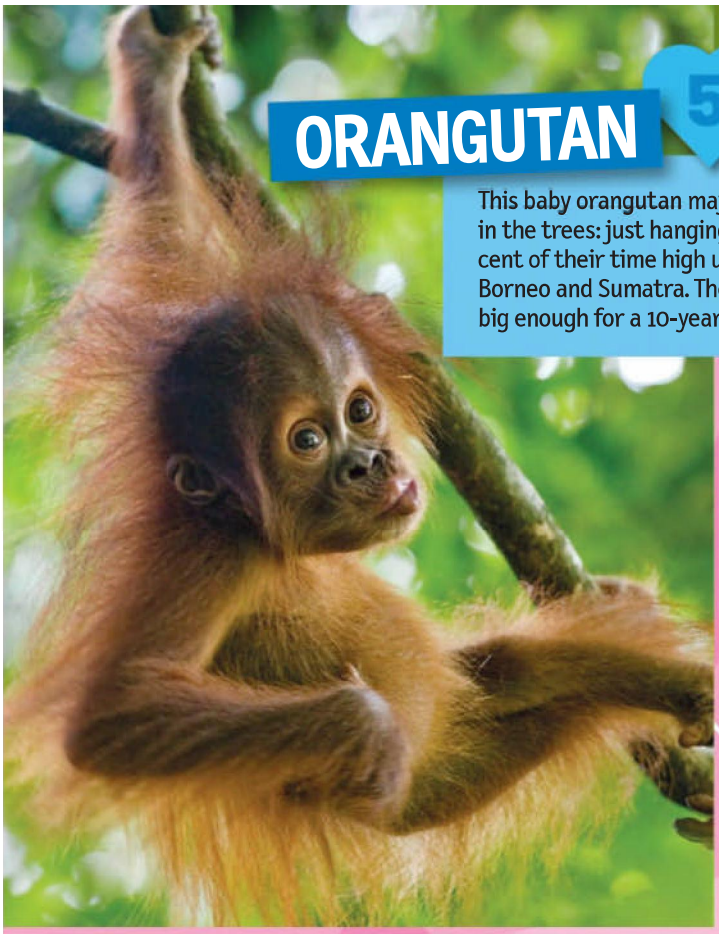

ORANGUTAN 5

This baby orangutan may have figured out the best part of life in the trees: just hanging out! Orangutans spend up to 95 percent of their time high up in trees on the Indonesian islands of Borneo and Sumatra. They sleep, eat, and play in nests that are big enough for a 10-year-old kid to stretch out in.

Little upright swimmers, seahorses live in shallow tropical and temperate waters throughout the world.

PYGMY SEAHORSE 6

Unlike most fish, loyal seahorses pair up for life. The male carries the pair's eggs in a kangaroo-like pouch. When the babies (referred to as fry) hatch, they gallop out of the pouch in a wild herd of mini seahorses. The littlest species of seahorse is only half an inch tall; the largest can grow to be up to 14 inches tall.

BABY AARDVARK 7

Nobody sports a birthday suit better than a baby aardvark. Born pink and wrinkly, this big baby slurps milk but will gobble thousands of ants a night when it's older. An African native, the aardvark's name means "earth pig" in one South African language. It has donkey ears, a kangaroo tail, and a piggy nose, but it's actually a distant relation to the elephant.

They're not related, but an aardvark eats like an anteater, using its long tongue to grab insects.

8

LEOPARD GECKO

The gentle leopard gecko is famous for its spots as well as for its urine, which comes out as tiny crystals.

9

BOBCAT

These bobcats may have some of the finest fur coats in the animal world, but they aren't for show. The spotted fur helps North America's most common wild cat blend in with many habitats, from swamps to deserts to mountains. Those ear tufts? Bobcats may twitch them to communicate with other bobcats.

Not counting its long tail feathers, this beauty is about the size of a pigeon.

10

RESPLENDENT QUETZAL

Male resplendent quetzals have extravagant twin tail feathers that can grow to be three feet long during the mating season. Once the eggs are in the nest, the male shares the work to keep the pair's light-blue eggs warm. The only problem? That terrific tail isn't easy to tuck into the small hole in the tree where they live.

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DWARF FLYING SQUIRREL 11

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a ... super-squeaky flying rodent? The Japanese dwarf flying squirrel lives in the forests of Japan. Stretched out like a cape, an elastic membrane between its forelegs and hind legs helps this tiny aviator glide from tree to tree. It's looking for seeds, fruit, and leaves to eat. With its belly full by morning, this nocturnal nugget tucks into a hole in a tree to rest for the day.

CUSCUS 12

A relative of the possum, the secretive cuscus spends its life in the trees—swinging from branch to branch with help from its prehensile tail. This Australian cuddler sleeps during the day and searches for food at night. It eats leaves and fruit and, on special occasions, small birds and tasty reptiles.

AMAZON GIANT GLASS FROG 13

Native to tropical Amazon forests, this frog's see-through skin helps it hide high in the trees. Sunlight shines right through the frog and provides camouflage. When it's time to lay its eggs, a glass frog deposits tiny white eggs onto a leaf above a stream. When the tadpoles emerge, they slip off the leaf and splash into the water below.

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14 BAT-EARED FOX

This little fox's oversize ears help it hunt by tuning in to tiny noises made by the lizards and bugs that it loves to eat. Those ears (they stretch to five inches tall) also help bat-eared foxes protect themselves from predators like cheetahs, hyenas, and pythons. When a fox hears a predator coming, it streaks off in a zigzag pattern to escape.

A ring-tailed lemur can live up to 18 years in the wild.

15 RING-TAILED LEMUR

These spunky primates live in the wild on the African island of Madagascar. Like little striped acrobats, lemurs swing from tree limb to tree limb, eating leaves, flowers, tree bark, and fruit. If it's mating time, a male lemur will try to scare off other males with a smelly warning. He uses the scent glands on his wrist and shoulders to douse his tail in stinky secretions. Then he waves it around, trying to outstink other males.

5 BUGS TO LOVE!

16 GIRAFFE-NECKED WEEVIL

Giraffe-necked weevils—found only in Madagascar—grow to be about one inch long, getting most of their length from their neck. Male giraffe-necked weevils use their superlong necks to fight other males for the right to mate with a female.

17 88 BUTTERFLY

The 88 butterfly is named for the lines and dots on its wings that form the number, well, 88. As the butterfly ages, the white part of its wings turn brown.

18 DEAD-LEAF PRAYING MANTIS

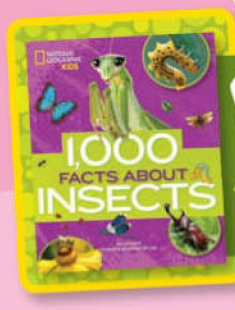
The dead-leaf praying mantis is a species of praying mantis from Southeast Asia. The females stand guard over their egg sacs, ready to attack if anything attempts to grab one.

19 TIGER BEETLE

An adult tiger beetle can run five miles an hour—so fast for its tiny size that it temporarily blinds itself in the process. To match this speed, champion racer Usain Bolt would have to run 480 miles an hour.

20 DOMINO COCKROACH

As you read this, 4,000 cockroach species are scuttling across the globe. Like other cockroaches, domino cockroaches have hairs called *setae* that help them sense a change in air pressure. This helps the insects escape approaching predators such as humans.



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Brown bear cubs weigh about one pound at birth. A brown bear claw can be the length of a human finger. Despite their

enormous size, brown bears can move fast—up to 35 miles an hour.

Male bears are called boars. Females are called sows.

30 Cool THINGS ABOUT

BY ELIZABETH HILFRANK

1

The official **mascot** of the **2018 Winter Olympics** is a white tiger named **Soohorang.**

2

More than **80 percent** of the country's population **lives in cities.**

3

A **20-mile bike path** is located in the **middle of a highway** connecting the cities of **Daejeon** and **Sejong.**

4

About 90 percent of a duck species called **Baikal teals** spend their winters in the **Geumgang estuary.**

5

The **number four** is regarded as **unlucky** in traditional South Korean culture.

6

The Siberian flying squirrel **glides**

instead of **flies.**

7

The **oldest Buddhist canon**—a book of sacred texts—is found in this country.

8

Held in Pyeongchang, South Korea, the **2018 Olympic Games** are only the third ever Winter Olympics to be held in Asia.

MICHELLE KWAN SKATES FOR THE UNITED STATES IN THE 1998 WINTER OLYMPICS IN NAGANO, JAPAN.

9

The **Asiatic black bear** is also called a **moon bear** because of the **crescent-shaped mark** on its chest.

10

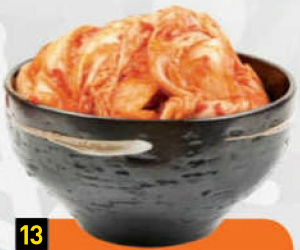
The world's **largest department store** is in the city of **Busan.**

11

Babies in this country are considered to be **one year old** at birth.

12

South Korea's **Gongnyong Ridge** is thought to resemble the spine of **a dinosaur.**



13

The national dish—called **kimchi**—is mostly made of **cabbage.**

14

A festival celebrating the country's **cherry blossom trees** attracts about **a million tourists** each spring.

15

Fishermen along the **southern coast** harvest over **90 percent** of the country's **seaweed crop.**

16

Found off the coast of South Korea, **minke whales** can **hold their breath** for up to **25 minutes.**

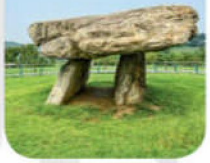
JUNG YEON-JE / AFP / GETTY IMAGES (1); SEAN PAVONE / SHUTTERSTOCK (2); DANIEL PRUDEK / SHUTTERSTOCK (4); © SATOSHI KURIBAYASHI / NATURE PRODUCTION / MINDEN PICTURES (6); SUNG-BONG / EPA / REX / SHUTTERSTOCK (7); DAVID MADISON / GETTY IMAGES (8); ANAN KAEWKHAMMUL / SHUTTERSTOCK (9); MIA STUDIO / SHUTTERSTOCK (11); MAXIM TUPIKOV / SHUTTERSTOCK (12); JIANG HONGYAN / SHUTTERSTOCK (13); GUITAR PHOTOGRAPHER / SHUTTERSTOCK (14); RICH CAREY / SHUTTERSTOCK (15)

SOUTH KOREA

THE COUNTRY HOSTS THIS YEAR'S WINTER OLYMPICS.

17 Siberian tigers represented mountain gods in South Korean folklore.

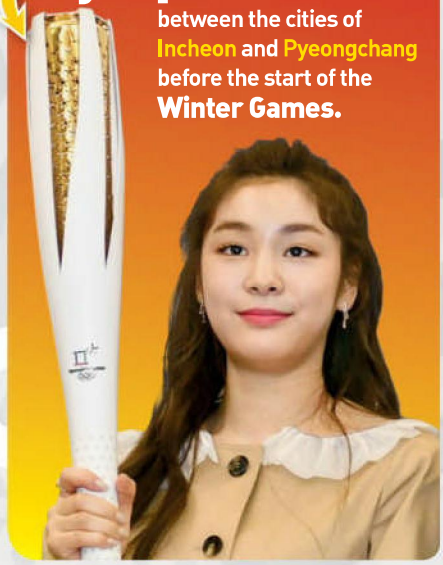
18 Located off the country's northwest coast, Ganghwado Island is home to about 80 stone tombs dating back to prehistoric times.



19 You can get pizza topped with sweet potato here.

20 Some South Korean cafés have nap stations where customers can snooze.

21 A total of 7,500 torchbearers will have taken turns carrying the Olympic torch between the cities of Incheon and Pyeongchang before the start of the Winter Games.



22 Living in South Korea's mountain forests, Siberian musk deer have tusklike canine teeth sticking out below their lower jaws.

23 To celebrate the first full moon of the new lunar year, South Koreans release kites to drive away bad luck.

24 The crane, an important symbol in Korean culture, is featured in architecture, stationery, and clothing there.

25 The least weasel doesn't dig its own den. It nests in the abandoned burrow of other animals.

26 The Korean crevice salamander doesn't have lungs—it breathes through its skin.

27 Toilet paper is a popular housewarming gift in this country.

28 Each July, people fling mud at each other in the town of Boryeong during one of the largest mud festivals in the world.

29 Traditional Korean roofs are curved at the corners and appear as if they're smiling.

30 Jeju Island's *haenyeo*, or "sea women," are fisherwomen who can hold their breath for up to two minutes while diving for shellfish underwater.

MORE OLYMPIC FACTS!
natgeokids.com/february

ONDREJ PROSICKY / SHUTTERSTOCK (17); JIPEN / SHUTTERSTOCK (18); STOCKFOOD / GETTY IMAGES (19); KYODO NEWS VIA GETTY IMAGES (21); © REDMOND O. DURRELL / ALAMY (22); CHUNG SUNG-JUN / GETTY IMAGES (23); PHOTOMASTER / SHUTTERSTOCK (24); YULIA GLAM / SHUTTERSTOCK (25); ILLYCH / SHUTTERSTOCK (27); KATVIC / SHUTTERSTOCK (29)

Lions can eat up to 60 pounds in one meal. That's about 240 hamburgers!

MAGGY MEYER / SHUTTERSTOCK (MALE LION); ANUP SHAH / GETTY IMAGES (GROUP OF LIONS); KATHY KAY / SHUTTERSTOCK (LION PAIR); CRAIG PACKER (STUFFED LIONS)

Lions are the only big cats that live in groups, called prides.

AFRICA'S NEXT top lion

HOW A LION'S MANE TURNS HIM INTO A STAR

BY SCOTT ELDER

Two male lions prowl through the savanna of Tanzania, a country in Africa. They're looking for a pride of females and a territory to call their own. Suddenly they stop. In their sight is another pair of male lions, their manes clearly visible. The intruders size up their opponents, then back off. They'll battle for turf somewhere else.

Male lions are the only cats that grow manes. But for years, scientists were uncertain why. A tiger's stripes or a leopard's spots provide camouflage, but manes don't have an obvious purpose. If anything, having a mop of hair in the warm African climate would seem like a disadvantage. Why make life harder by growing a hot scarf to wrap around your head?

One theory was that males' long locks attracted females, much like a peacock's dazzling feathers get noticed by peahens. Another idea was that manes were a kind of furry armor. But no one knew for sure. So biologists Craig Packer and Peyton West decided to tackle the hairy question. "We thought we could create some experimental tools to test how lions interacted with different kinds of manes," says Packer, director of the University of Minnesota's Lion Research Center.

Those tools were bigger versions of something you might have at home: stuffed animals that looked like lions!

A female lion leans toward the male leader of the pride.

Researchers created stuffed lions with different types of manes to see how real-life lions would interact with them in the field.

LION AROUND

Strapped to an SUV, the stuffed lions—which had a variety of mane lengths and colors—bounced along the Tanzanian grassland. The country is home to the largest population of wild lions, so Packer and West were hopeful they'd be able to introduce the decoys to real lions in a nearby pride—a group of lions that includes about six related females, their cubs, and two or three males.

Score! The scientists spot a male lion and set up two of the phony felines near him. One of the fake lions has a short

A real lion (left) approaches one of the stuffed lions, while another lion looks on.

A lion family huddles together in Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve.

mane; the other sports a longer one. The humans play a recording of cackling hyenas feeding on prey through a speaker, which the lion would hear as a chance to steal a meal. It worked. The male lion from the pride stopped in his tracks.

According to West, the only threat a male lion will face—besides a human—is another male. "So even though those big dummy lions look absurd to us, all he sees are giant male lions," she says. "He has to treat them as if they're a threat."

Cautiously the male stepped closer and closer until he finally said hello—by sniffing the stuffed animals' rear ends! "The toy lions completely fooled him," Packer says.

In test after test with different versions of the stuffed lions, the males—and in later tests, unaccompanied females—eventually figured out the two big cats were bogus and left. But not before the scientists got the information they needed to solve this mane mystery.

KING OF BEASTS

It turns out that the male lions almost always approached the decoy with a shorter mane first. Makes sense: Injuries can cause manes to shrink or fall out, so a short mane often means a weak lion.

The males also stayed away from the stuffed lions with darker manes—but most of the females approached these first. It turns out that earlier data showed that dark-maned males defended their prides better and fathered cubs that lived longer.

The reason lions grow manes became clear. According to West, it's a signal. "Lions can tell about another lion's strength by his mane," she says. A mane tells a lioness whether a male is a good protector for the pride. For male lions, the hairdo warns about any competition they shouldn't mess with.

Of course, the mane by itself doesn't give the animal "top lion" status—but having a longer, darker one doesn't hurt!

No Mane? No Problem!

In the sweltering, bone-dry region of Tsavo in Kenya, a country in Africa, some male lions don't have any manes at all. "Where there's no rain, there's no mane," says researcher Bruce Patterson of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, Illinois.

Patterson wasn't sure if the manes were missing because of the scorching heat, an unhealthy diet, or simply because the region was a tough neighborhood where lions viciously fought over food and females. How could he figure out the one cause?

A male maneless lion in the Tsavo region of Kenya searches for prey.

The scientist came up with a clever solution: zoos. Captive lions in the United States eat the same food, have all the water they need, and live in similar habitats. "The only thing that's different is where they live—meaning, the climate," Patterson says.

After traveling to 17 U.S. zoos, he found that a whopping 50 percent of the variation in manes was caused by the different climates. In hot climates, the big cats developed thin, scraggly manes; in cold-weather spots, they grew big, bushy ones.

The lions in that part of Kenya have adapted to their harsh climate by shedding most of their manes. To show dominance, they'll sport a Mohawk, thick sideburns, or a hairy bib. "In this habitat, you don't need a huge mane to be the most impressive lion," Patterson says. "You just need to look more impressive than the guy next to you."

Patterson predicts that other lions will start to do the same as the Earth's temperature climbs because of global warming. But the maneless lions in Tsavo prove that the animals can overcome great challenges. "If we can give them enough space," Patterson says, "lions are certainly tough enough to take care of themselves."

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC | BIG CATS INITIATIVE

YOU CAN HELP!

Lions, tigers, leopards, and other big cats need protection. Learn more about **National Geographic's Big Cats Initiative** online.

natgeo.org/bigcats

ROBERT CAPUTO / AURORA CREATIVE / GETTY IMAGES (LION PAIR WITH STUFFED LION); © FEDERICO VERONESI / NIS / MINDEN PICTURES (LION TRIO); HUGH MAYNARD / NATURE PICTURE LIBRARY (MANELESS LION); MARTIN WALZ (MAP); ARIADNE VAN ZANDBERGEN / LONELY PLANET IMAGES / GETTY IMAGES (1); © SUZI ESZTERHAS / MINDEN PICTURES (2); LION CUB PAIR, BOTTOM RIGHT); DESIGN PICS INC / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE (3); VERA DAVIDOVA PHOTOGRAPHY / GALLO IMAGES ROOTS COLLECTION / GETTY IMAGES (4)

A lion's roar can be heard from as far as five miles away.

A baby lion is called a cub, whelp, or lionet.

NOW SHOWING
Awesome Animals: SUPER PRIDE!
natgeokids.com/february

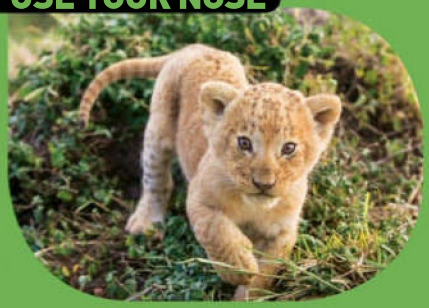
Savanna Survival

What advice would a lion cub give on living the good life? We imagine the tips a feline might give another cub in the pride.

1 WAIT YOUR TURN

Meals are a rough-and-tumble affair, so it's best to hang back until everyone else is done eating before digging in. Let Dad go first, then Mom—that means you're last.

2 USE YOUR NOSE

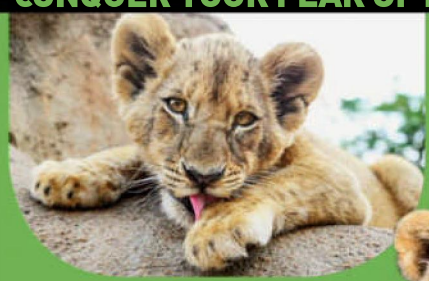


Lost? Take a whiff of the nearest shrub. Older males in your pride mark the plants around your home by leaving their scent on them. The familiar smells mean your family is close by. Don't recognize the odor? Some other lions might be trying to claim your territory. So get away—fast!

3 MAKE TIME FOR PLAYTIME

Your siblings and parents really don't mind when you jump on their backs and bite their necks. That's also good practice for when you hunt on your own. Just be sure to play early in the morning or late at night when it's cooler.

4 CONQUER YOUR FEAR OF HEIGHTS



Climb a tree! It's easier to spot prey and avoid predators from up above, and the breeze will keep you cool. Bonus: fewer flies!

MORE LIONS!
natgeokids.com/february

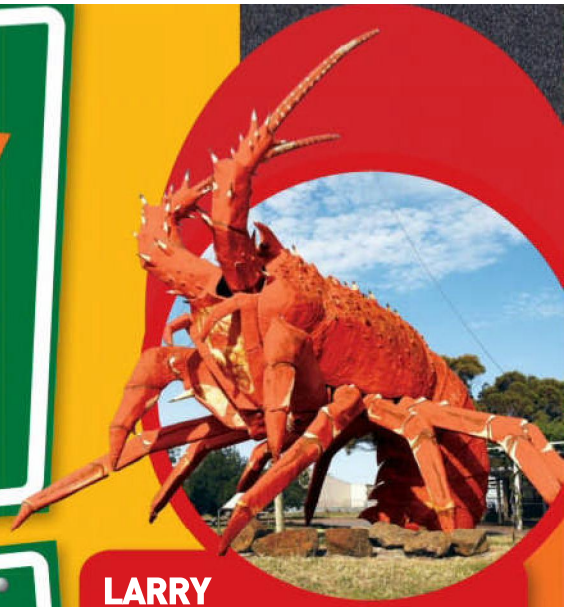
Wacky World

check out these bizarre roadside attractions from around the globe.

BY ELISABETH DEFFNER

Eiffel Tower? Great Pyramid?

Please. *These* unusual landmarks definitely would be something to write home about on your next vacation. Take a look at some postcard-worthy attractions.



LARRY THE LOBSTER

Kingston South East, Australia

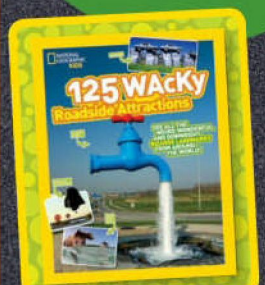
Tourists hoping to spot Larry the Lobster from their cars don't need to worry about accidentally missing him. After all, the 56-foot-tall spiny lobster towers over the passing vehicles. Larry is one of Australia's "Big Things"—a series of giant tourist attractions along the country's roads. With all the attention, Larry has really come out of his shell.

PORCELAIN DRAGON

Yangzhou, China

Some people ring in the new year with fireworks or noisemakers. But many Asian countries that celebrate the lunar new year (often called Chinese New Year) make it a tradition to build a giant sculpture out of porcelain dishware. This dragon—a symbol of good luck in Chinese culture—is made of more than 2,800 plates, bowls, spoons, and cups attached to a metal frame about as long as a blue whale.

PLATES, SPOONS, BOWLS!

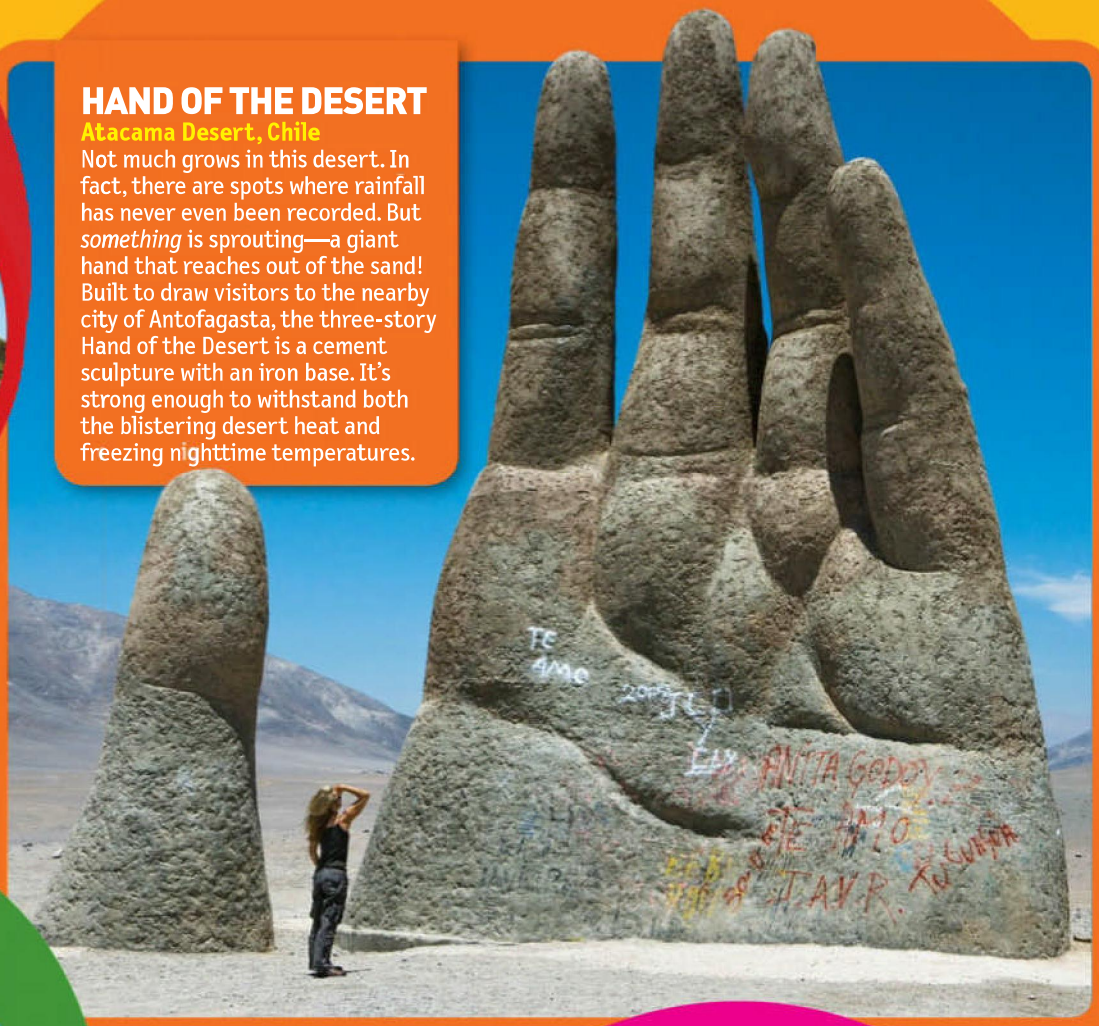


CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

HAND OF THE DESERT

Atacama Desert, Chile

Not much grows in this desert. In fact, there are spots where rainfall has never even been recorded. But *something* is sprouting—a giant hand that reaches out of the sand! Built to draw visitors to the nearby city of Antofagasta, the three-story Hand of the Desert is a cement sculpture with an iron base. It's strong enough to withstand both the blistering desert heat and freezing nighttime temperatures.



HEADINGTON SHARK

Headington, England

Just when you thought it was safe to go into the attic ... a shark plunges through the roof! Two cranes lifted the shark over the house and lowered it into a hole that fit the creature's body perfectly. The shark has survived all kinds of predators, including hurricanes and complaints from neighbors. Good thing—it's not like the fish can swim away!

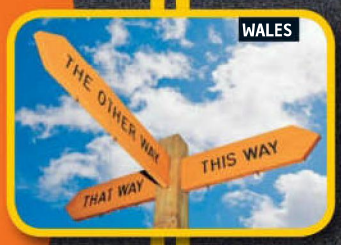
GIANT EYEBALL

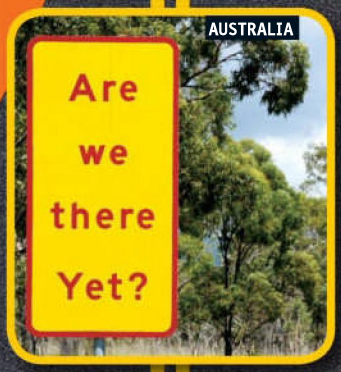
Dallas, Texas

You won't need binoculars to spot this giant eyeball on Main Street in Dallas. Made of steel and fiberglass, the art stands more than three stories tall. Artist Tony Tasset modeled the sculpture after his own blue eyes. Bet this body part has caused some epic staring contests.

FUNNY SIGNS

Check out these hilarious but real road signs from around the world.





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Fun Stuff

games, laughs, and lots to do!

Olympic Outlook

In this silly illustration, two kayakers are exploring Olympic National Park in Washington State. Join the fun by finding the 28 items listed below.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 34

1 compass
3 raccoons
1 bear
3 owls
1 slug
1 hawk
2 tents
3 deer
2 kayaks
2 bald eagles
2 frogs
4 mountain goats
1 marmot
1 puma
1 wolf

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CHECK OUT THE BOOK!

NAZARIO GRAZIANO / COLLAGEN CREATIVE CLINIC

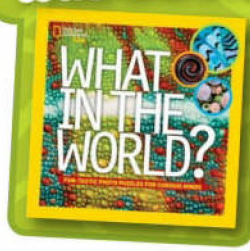
What in the World?

HEART-TO-HEART

These photos show close-up and faraway views of things that are heart-shaped. Unscramble the letters to identify what's in each picture. Feel the love?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 34

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



ANSWS

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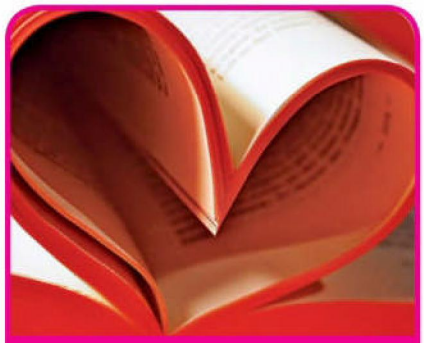

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REHTA LREOFW

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TOP ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): KEN-HOWARD / ISTOCKPHOTO / GETTY IMAGES; VISIONSOFAMERICA / JOE SOHM / GETTY IMAGES; © MARODEE PHOTOGRAPHY / ALAMY.
MIDDLE ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): MICHAEL WEBER / IMAGEBROKER RF / GETTY IMAGES; LES STOCKER / GETTY IMAGES; FRANK KRAHMER / GETTY IMAGES.
BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): © D. HURST / ALAMY; AMERICAN IMAGES INC / GETTY IMAGES; KHALANGOT SERGEY L / SHUTTERSTOCK.

Funny Fill-In

Racing Hearts

BY JEN RINI

Ask a friend to give you words to fill in the blanks in this story without showing it to him or her. Then read out loud for a laugh.

My mom brought me to the grocery store on _____ (day of the week) so I could pick out my Valentine's Day cards and help her with the _____ (verb ending in -ing). I began my search for the _____ (adjective ending in -est) pack. There was a whole aisle of _____ (adjective) cards and _____ (sport) cards, but they just weren't right. Finally, I saw a display for _____ (animal)-Man cards. Only one pack was left. I realized I wasn't the only one eyeing them—a(n) _____ (adjective) kid looked at me and said, "I'll _____ (verb) you for them." As I dodged around a(n) _____ (adjective) display of _____ (noun, plural), my cart _____ (past-tense verb) the edge, slowing me down. The other kid closed in, but our carts slipped on some _____ (liquid) on the floor and _____ (past-tense verb) toward a table of free _____ (noun, plural). "_____ (silly expression)!" I yelled as our carts _____ (past-tense verb) into the table, then the card shelf. The pack of cards _____ (past-tense verb) through the air and landed in a pot of _____ (something stinky) soup, splattering everywhere. I hope my friends like _____ (noun) Valentine's Day cards instead.

PLAY Funny Fill-In natgeokids.com/ffi

DAN SIPPLE

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

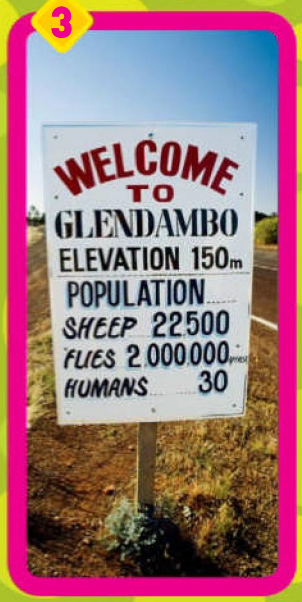
Seeing isn't always believing. Two of these funny signs are not real. Can you figure out which two are fake?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 34

1

2

3



4

5

6

7

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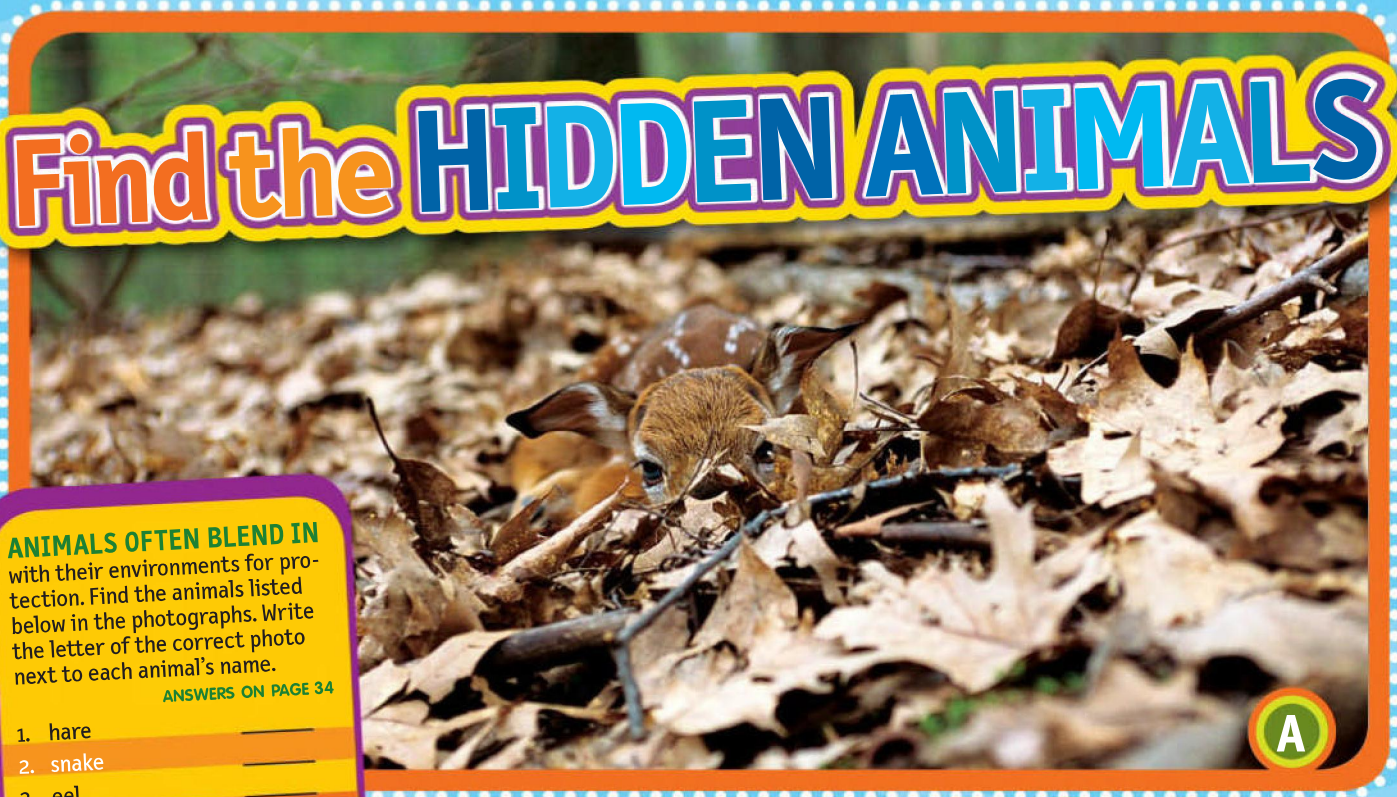
Find the HIDDEN ANIMALS

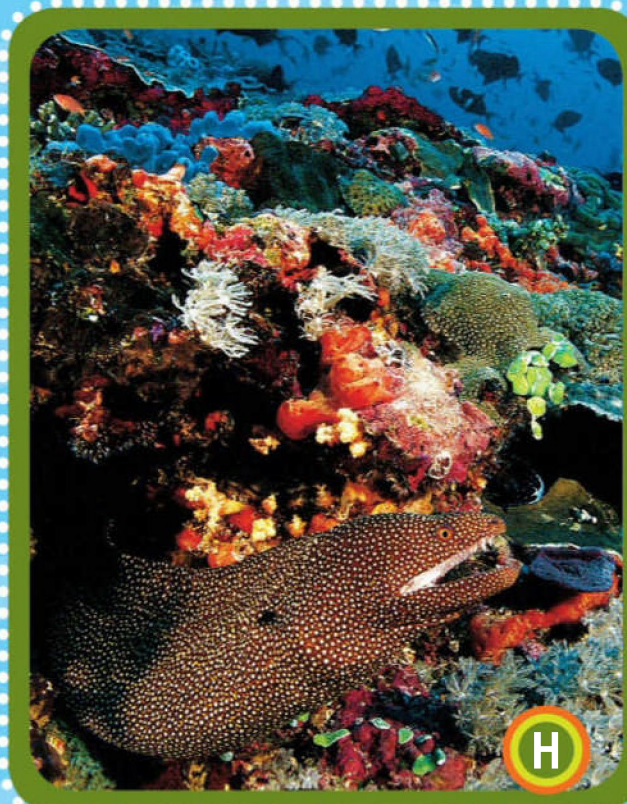


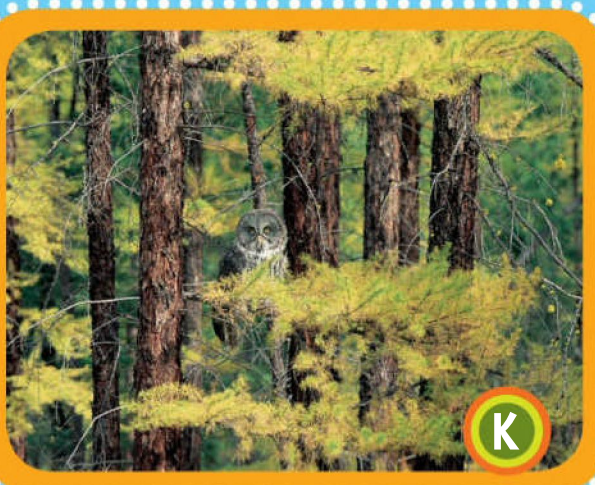
ANIMALS OFTEN BLEND IN with their environments for protection. Find the animals listed below in the photographs. Write the letter of the correct photo next to each animal's name.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 34

1. hare _____
2. snake _____
3. eel _____
4. deer _____
5. owl _____
6. shrimp _____
7. tiger _____
8. praying mantis _____
9. fish _____
10. colugo* _____
11. bat _____

**HINT: A colugo is similar to a flying squirrel.*





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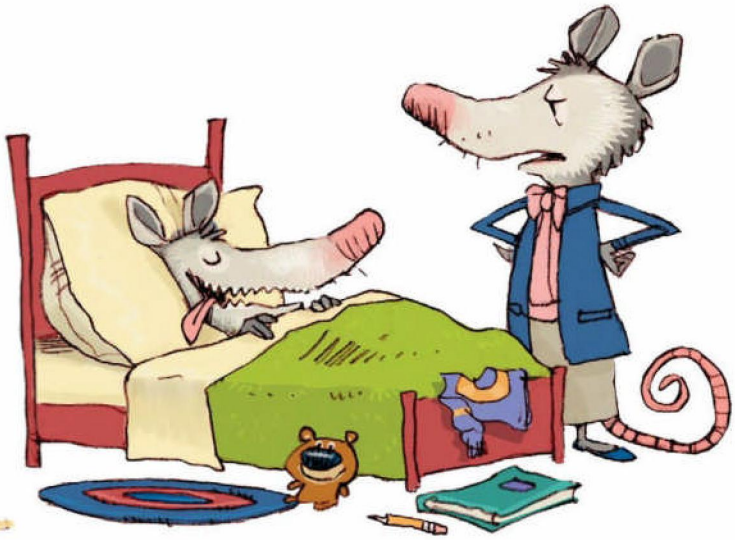
Laugh Out Loud

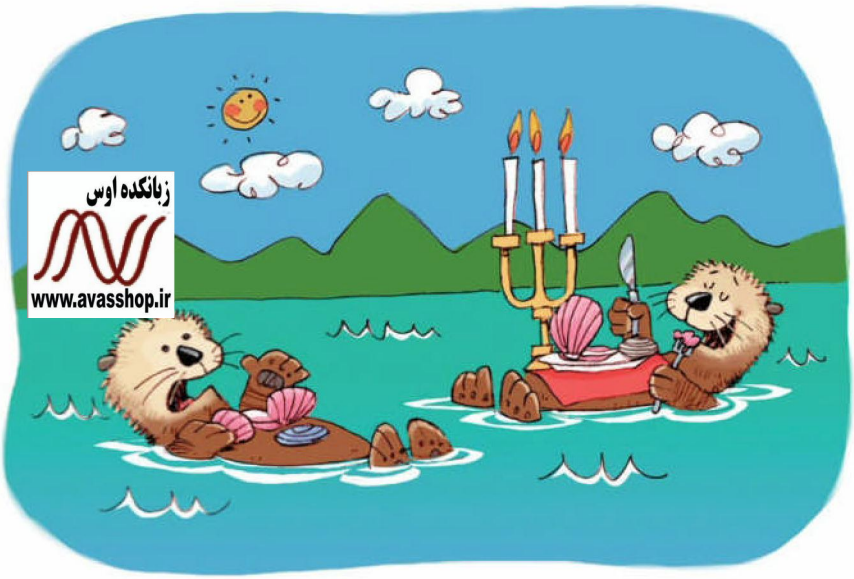
"JOEY AND TEDDY LOVE MY NEW HOODIE."

"HE CAN ONLY FIND SEVEN OF HIS SHOES."



"IF YOU DON'T STOP PLAYING POSSUM, YOU'RE GOING TO MISS THE SCHOOL BUS!"

"PULL OVER, SPEEDY."



"I WISH YOU WOULD EAT LIKE OTHER SEA OTTERS."

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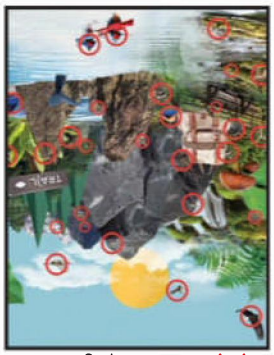
Answers

"Olympic Outlook" (page 28):



"What in the World?" (page 29):
Top row: swans, island, book. **Middle row:** cactus, barn owl, clover. **Bottom row:** cookie cutters, peacock feather, bleeding heart flower.

"Signs of the Times" (page 31):
Signs 2 and 4 are fake.

"Find the Hidden Animals" (page 32):
1. C, **2.** J, **3.** H, **4.** A, **5.** K, **6.** D, **7.** G, **8.** I, **9.** F, **10.** E, **11.** B.

CHRIS WARE (ALL)

Back Talk

This is a real nail-biter!

What do YOU think this orangutan is thinking?

1. **Fill in** the thought balloon.
2. **Cut out** the entire picture (or make a photocopy of it).
3. **Mail** it along with your name, address, phone number, and date of birth to Nat Geo Kids, Back Talk, P.O. Box 96000, Washington, DC 20090-6000. Selection for publication in a future issue will be at the discretion of *Nat Geo Kids*.

GERRY ELLIS / MINDEN PICTURES (ORANGUTANS); KATHERINE FENG / MINDEN PICTURES (GIANT PANDA)

From the November 2016 Issue

I think I found a new hiding spot!
Alexandra K., 10
Knightdale, North Carolina

Now that I'm in, how do I get out?
Joseph B., 10
Blaine, Minnesota

I hope that car doesn't need this!
Zoe K., 9
Fishers, Indiana

Like my new yoga pose? It's called the stuck panda.
Cetari W., 13
Clatskanie, Oregon

Whoever gets me out gets extra bamboo for dinner.
Ben F., 10
Needham, Massachusetts

It looked easy when the kids did it ...
Keerthana K., 11
Katy, Texas

I should have gone around!
Gavin G., 12
Knoxville, Tennessee

Oh, come on! I thought I ordered extra large!
Riley A., 9
Sherman Oaks, California

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THE ADVENTURES OF GOLDFISH® GRAHAMS

ONE DAY, DR. PROFESSOR WAS TESTING HIS TRANSPORT MACHINE...

POD 'A'

YOUR MOLECULES WILL BE DISASSEMBLED IN POD 'A' AND THEN REASSEMBLED IN POD 'B' !!!

OKEE DOKEE!

POD 'B'

WHAT THE DOCTOR DIDN'T REALIZE IS THAT HIS TEST SUBJECT HAD A **VANILLA CUPCAKE** IN THE POD, TOO!!

PLZZZZT!

BUZZ!

POD 'B'

THE **GOLDFISH** GRAHAM'S & CUPCAKE'S MOLECULES MIXED TOGETHER!!

POD 'A'

HEY! I'M BLASTED WITH FLAVOR!!!

ME NEXT! ME NEXT!

SUPER CHARGED WITH VANILLA CUPCAKE FLAVOR!!!

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