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**HELP SET A  
GUINNESS  
WORLD  
RECORD!**

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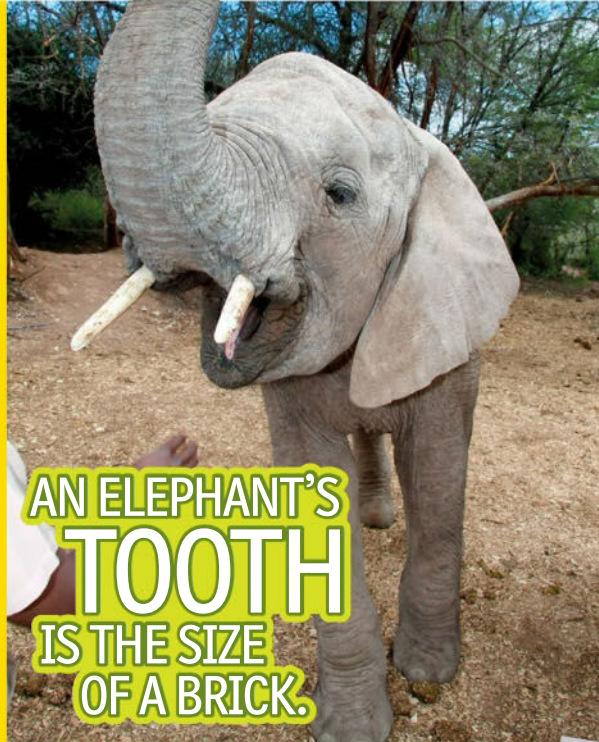
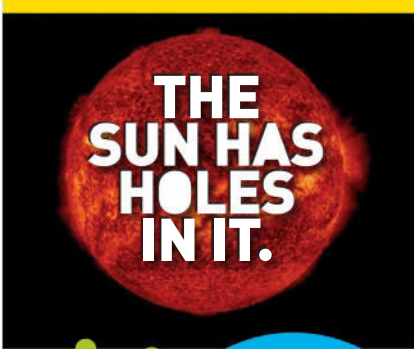


BY AVERY ELIZABETH HURT AND JEANNETTE SWAIN

# Check out these outrageous facts.



A **HONEYBEE** HAS THE SAME NUMBER OF **HAIRS** AS A **SQUIRREL**: **3 MILLION**.



A MUSEUM IN **OREGON** HAS A COLLECTION OF **300 VACUUMS**.

SCIENTISTS HAVE DISCOVERED A **PROTEIN**

THAT CAN PREVENT

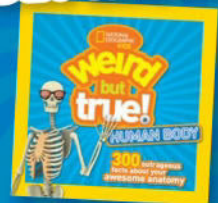
**ICE CREAM**

FROM **MELTING** QUICKLY IN **HOT WEATHER**.

THE **PHILTRUM** IS THE **GROOVE** BETWEEN THE **TOP** OF YOUR **UPPER LIP** AND THE **BOTTOM** OF YOUR **NOSE**.

There are approximately **3 trillion** (3,000,000,000,000) **trees on Earth**.

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# What Would Happen?

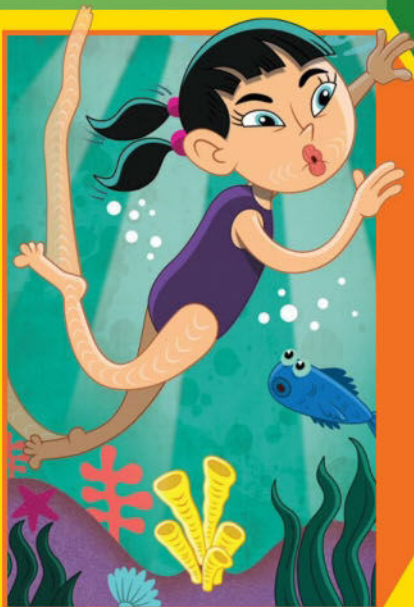
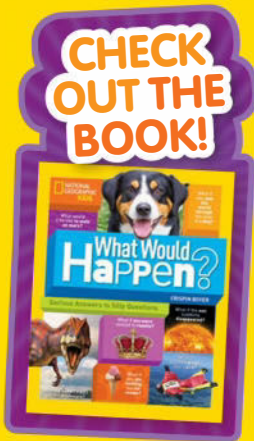
BY CRISPIN BOYER ART BY JOE ROCCO

## What would happen if an asteroid collided with Earth?

If a half-mile-wide asteroid, or space rock, crashed into Earth, it would have the same impact as a hundred billion tons of dynamite. The collision would cause earthquakes for about a hundred miles. An even bigger asteroid would send up enormous clouds of dust that would block the sun and kill off most of the world's plants. It could also generate enough heat to make the oceans boil! Luckily scientists don't think an asteroid will strike anytime soon. And they're coming up with ways to prevent one from ever hitting Earth, such as melting it with a laser or knocking it off course with a rocket. Sounds like some good rock stoppers!



CHECK  
OUT THE  
BOOK!



## What would happen if you had gills like a fish?

Gills are special organs behind a fish's mouth. As water passes over them, they filter oxygen from the water directly into the fish's bloodstream. If you had gills, you could stay submerged for as long as you wanted, "breathing" oxygen from the water. But unlike fish, humans have a high body temperature. And we need much more energy—and therefore more oxygen—to maintain this temperature. More oxygen requires bigger gills. In fact your gills would have to stretch 16 feet to take in all the oxygen you'd need! So breathe a sigh of relief that you *don't* have gills.

## What would happen if flying cars existed?

Gazing at the sky on a clear day or watching the stars at night might not be as nice. That's because "lanes" of flying cars would crisscross the sky, blocking your view. Inventors might also have to design and launch floating traffic signals to keep bustling skyways safe. The vehicles and signals could create pollution. And as a rider in one of these airborne autos, you'd probably want to buy some earplugs. To propel itself into the air, an object as heavy as a car would need a huge engine, which would make a lot of noise. It's possible inventors will figure out solutions to the problems that flying cars would cause. But right now, it looks like we're hitting the brakes.





ASTONISHING  
STORIES FROM  
THE FILES OF

# Guinness World Records

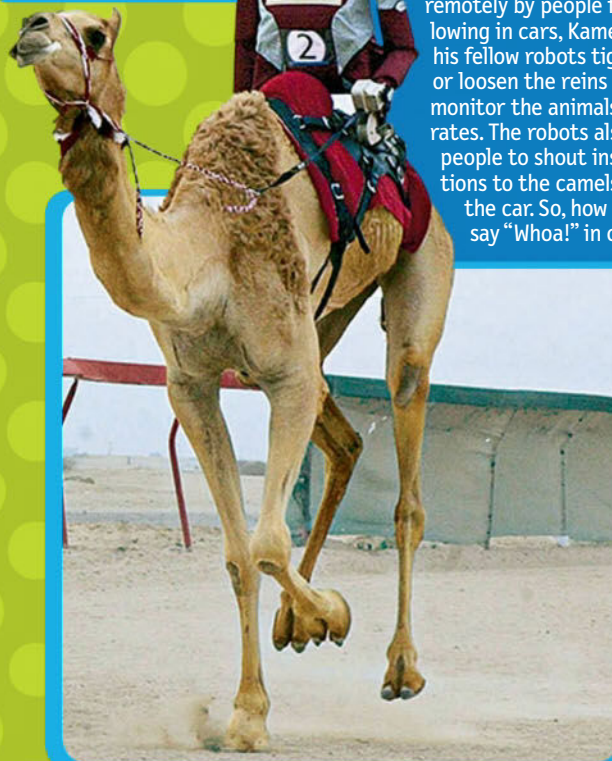
## TOWER OF

## CRATES



My, what a strong ... chin ... you have? Sun Chaoyang holds the record for the heaviest stack of bottle crates stacked on the chin. Weighing nearly a hundred pounds, the tower of crates was stacked onto Sun's chin during his live attempt of the challenge for a TV show filmed in Beijing, China. His record brings new meaning to the phrase "Keep your chin up."

## ROBOT RIDES CAMELS



Horse jockeys, beware: Kamel the robot races camels at nearly 25 miles an hour, the fastest robot on record to ride a camel. Camel racing is a sport in some Arab countries but is dangerous for human riders. So robots do the job. Controlled remotely by people following in cars, Kamel and his fellow robots tighten or loosen the reins and monitor the animals' heart rates. The robots also allow people to shout instructions to the camels from the car. So, how do you say "Whoa!" in camel?

## SO MANY SOCKS!

It's one thing to hang 69,152 socks to create the longest line of socks. But when all those foot warmers set the record at nearly four miles, well, that's impressive! Over 95 people from Halverde, Germany, were involved in creating the line as part of the celebrations commemorating Halverde's 825th birthday. All of the socks were donated by the citizens of the town. Now that's quite a "feet."



# Join the Launch Party!

Help Nat Geo Kids Set a

# GUINNESS WORLD RECORD!

We need about

## 5,000

toilet-paper-roll tubes  
to build a rocket  
sculpture big enough  
to set the record.

So send us lots!

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## Send us your toilet-paper-roll tubes!

**FOLLOW THESE RULES TO HELP US SET THE RECORD:**

- 1 Collect some **toilet-paper-roll tubes**. They should **not** have any toilet paper on them.
- 2 The tubes can be any size or brand but must have been used for toilet paper.
- 3 If you **decorate your tubes**, send in the permission form below. (You don't need to fill out the form if you're not decorating your tubes.)
- 4 Send as many tubes as you wish to

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Toyota Highlander  
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shape of a  
rocket!

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# DESTINATION SPACE

BY STEPHANIE WARREN DRIMMER

The **haze** that surrounds this planet is similar to the **smog** in the air of Earth's **most polluted cities**.

## PLASMA PLANET

Planet Gliese 1214b appears in front of the windshield of your spacecraft. The murky brownish-black world is encircled by smog so thick that scientists haven't been able to observe the surface of the planet underneath. You'll be the first person to see it.

You dip the nose of your spacecraft down and dive through the haze, squinting your eyes to peer through the mist. As the planet comes into view, you're surprised to see that Gliese 1214b is made of water. But that doesn't mean it's covered with lakes and oceans. Instead, the extreme 450°F heat here turns the water into dark steam. Your windshield fogs up in the hot and muggy conditions.

Since this planet doesn't have a solid surface, you can dive right inside it. As you go deeper, sensors on your dashboard tell you that the pressure outside is rising. Soon it's higher than the pressure at the bottom of Earth's deepest oceans.

The high pressure and searing temperatures turn the water in this part of the planet into something strange: plasma. Plasma is a superheated gas made of charged particles. On Earth, it's found in lightning bolts and neon signs. In space, stars are made up of plasma.

An alarm on your dashboard goes off—your spaceship is about to be crushed by the extreme pressure! It's time to leave this weird water world for your next destination.

### Destination

Gliese 1214b

### Location

The constellation Ophiuchus

### Distance

42 light-years away (A light-year is the distance light travels in one year.)

### Time to reach

1,136,000 years

### Weather

450°F



## STAR POWER

Gliese 1214b orbits a type of star called an M-dwarf. Smaller and cooler than our sun, these stars shine with red light. They're too faint to see with the naked eye, but they're the most common type of star in our galaxy: Some 70 percent of stars are M-dwarfs.



# EXTREME WEIRDNESS

from  
AROUND  
the WORLD

BY ALLYSON SHAW



DON'T  
MOW THIS  
GRASS.



## WEAR YOUR LAWN

**WHAT** Grass-covered  
flip-flops

**WHERE** New South  
Wales Coast, Australia

**DETAILS** Want to feel the grass between your toes? Just plant your feet in these grass-topped flip-flops, designed to give you the sensation of being outdoors anytime. Don't worry about watering the sandals—the grass is actually a layer of artificial turf. You'll have some happy feet!



IT'S  
STUCK!



## ZIPPER OPENS APARTMENT

**WHAT** Unzipped floor

**WHERE** Tokyo, Japan

**DETAILS** You won't keep your lips zipped about this display! Built into the floor of an apartment, the temporary art installation is shaped like a giant zipper that's opening up the floor. The zipper is made of wood, so it doesn't actually move. But the artist hopes you'll look twice before zipping by.



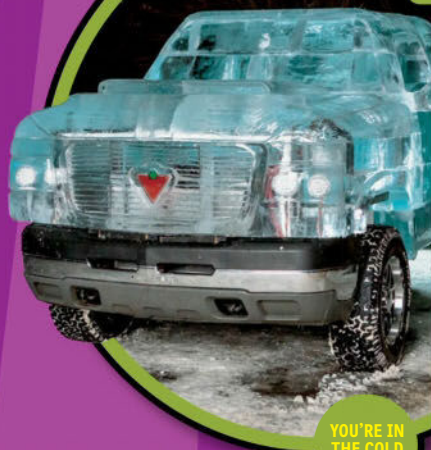
## ICE CUBE ON WHEELS

**WHAT** Truck made of ice

**WHERE** Hensall, Canada

**DETAILS** It's going to be an icy ride. This functional truck has a body made of 11,000 pounds of ice. Built over a base frame with wheels, the icy exterior covers a real engine, brakes, and steering wheel. It runs on a battery that's specially designed to start in frigid conditions that would keep most cars from revving up. The car can only go short distances—but what a great place to chill!

YOU'RE IN  
THE COLD  
SEAT.



## HUMANS TURN INTO EMOJI

**WHAT** Giant smiley face

**WHERE** Vancouver,  
Canada

**DETAILS** Talk about a wide grin. Dressed in yellow or black ponchos, about 780 people gathered in a city square to form a giant smiley face. The grinning group attempted to break a world record. Maybe next time they'll try a wink emoji.

SAY  
CHEESE!





Bet you  
**didn't  
know**

BY ERIN WHITMER

# 8 totally wild facts about animals

1 **A sea  
turtle**  
can weigh as  
much as a  
water  
buffalo.

2 **Some sea  
stars break  
off their  
own arms  
when frightened.**

3 Food passes  
through a  
**giant squid's**  
brain on the way  
to its **stomach.**

4 **An  
alligator**  
grows about  
**3,000 teeth**  
in a  
lifetime.

5 The **fastest falcon** can  
**outpace** a speeding  
race car.

6 The  
**"barking pigeon"**  
has a call that sounds like a  
**loud dog.**

7 **Warthogs**  
don't have  
**warts.**

8 **A newborn kangaroo**  
is about as **long** as a **paper clip.**



# History's Greatest Hits

BY KAY BOATNER ART BY JOE ROCCO

START

## JACKIE ROBINSON

An all-star athlete, Jackie Robinson was the first black player in Major League Baseball. Find out about the groundbreaking life of this amazing hero.

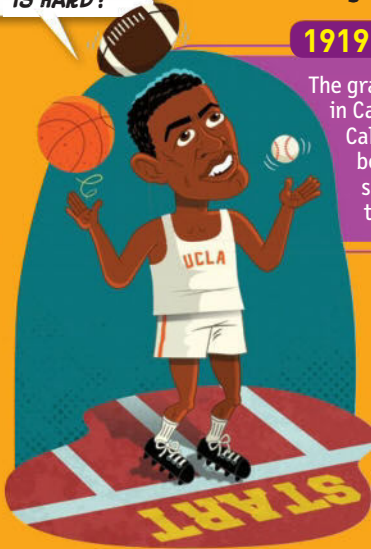
CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



WHAT, LIKE THIS IS HARD?

1919

The grandson of a slave, Jackie Robinson is born in Cairo, Georgia. He attends the University of California in Los Angeles, or UCLA, where he becomes the first athlete to letter in four sports: baseball, basketball, football, and track. He definitely wins points for that.

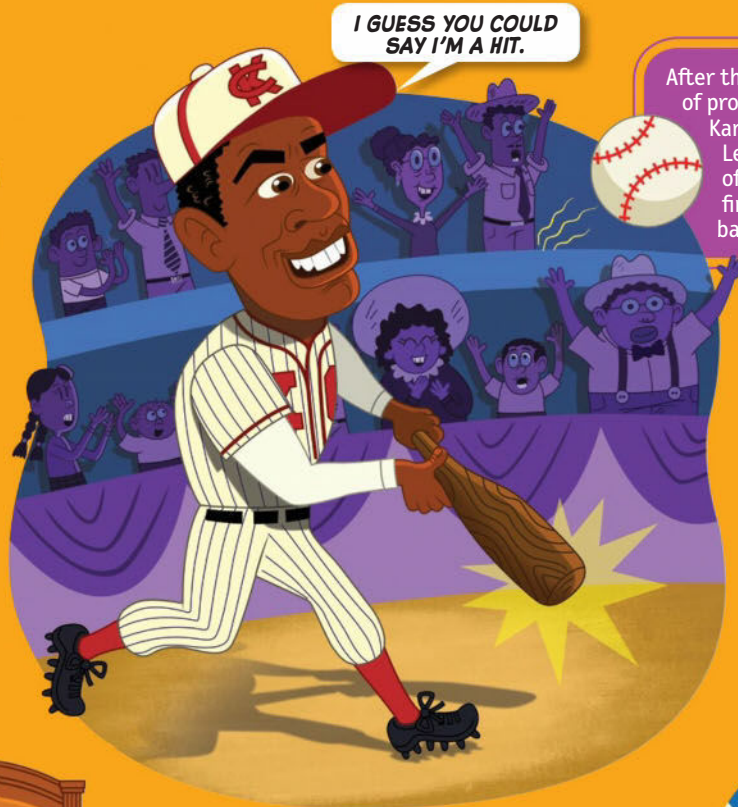


1942

At the age of 23, Robinson is hired to play semipro football in Hawaii but is soon drafted into the U.S. Army to fight in World War II.

1945

After the war, Robinson plays a season of professional baseball for the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro Leagues, an organization made up of African-American players. He finishes the year as the league's batting champion.



I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I'M A HIT.

1962

Robinson becomes the first African-American player voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Today he's remembered as one of the sport's greatest players—and a hero for all races.

HEY, THAT GUY LOOKS FAMILIAR ...



1946

Brooklyn Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey asks Robinson to play for his team. Robinson says yes, making him the first black player in Major League Baseball.

I GOT THIS.



1947

In his first year with the Dodgers, Robinson hits 12 home runs, leads the league in stolen bases, and is named the first ever Rookie of the Year, an award given to the best newcomer in the sport. Over the next decade of his career, he continues to, uh, hit it out of the park. #RobinsonRules



# Amazing Animals

WHAT'S COOKING?

## DONKEY LIVES IN HOUSE



SNACK TIME! JOPLIN WAITS PATIENTLY TO EAT AN APPLE.



JOPLIN USES HIS MOUTH TO PUSH DOWN ON THE DOOR HANDLE TO LET HIMSELF INTO HIS OWNER'S HOUSE.



### High Ridge, Missouri

When Joplin the donkey wants to visit his owner, he doesn't wait to be let into her house—he simply pushes down on the door handle and nudges it open. Then he heads to the pantry for his favorite snack: graham crackers and apples.

Owner Dawn Wegener first brought the donkey inside when he was a sick newborn. These days Joplin sleeps in the barn, but he still spends plenty of time inside drinking out of the toilet and cuddling with the Wegeners's dog, Alex.

Donkeys are herd animals, meaning they don't like to be by themselves. "Humans and dogs aren't usually part of a donkey's herd," equine expert Brad Gaver says. "But they're the only family Joplin knows."

And donkeys can be protective of their herd. "Joplin gets suspicious of my granddaughter," Wegener says. "He sneaks up behind her; tugs her hair, then runs away!"

—Kitson Jazyanka



DON'T  
WORRY,  
I'M "FELINE"  
FINE NOW.

## KITTEN ON BOARD

### Cornwall, England

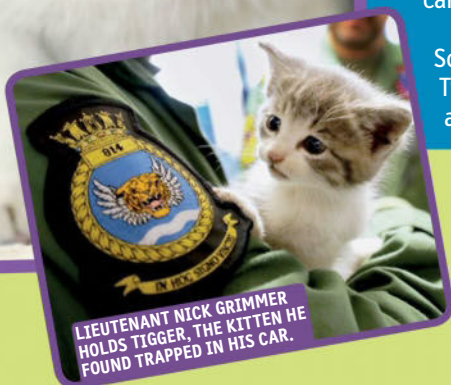
Lieutenant Nick Grimmer, a pilot for the British Royal Navy, had just finished a 300-mile road trip when he heard a strange noise coming from the back of his car. He called some friends to come help him take apart his vehicle to search for the source of the sound. He was shocked to find a kitten behind the rear bumper!

"He was holding on for dear life," Grimmer says. "I have no idea how long he had been there." Grimmer, who had driven from the airport to his office at a military base, thinks the animal crawled inside the car while it was parked at the airport.

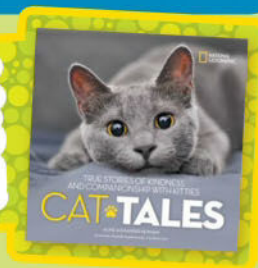
Cat behavior expert Marilyn Krieger thinks that the kitten probably climbed inside to escape another animal or shelter from bad weather. She gives kudos to Grimmer for freeing the trapped fur ball: "Not many people would take apart their car to save a cat!" she says.

Grimmer put out flyers with the kitten's picture, but no owner came forward. So Grimmer's boss, Commander Brendan Spoor, adopted the cat. Now called Tigger, the kitten spends his days playing with Spoor's two young daughters—and hopefully staying out of cars.

—Sara Schwartz



CHECK  
OUT THIS  
BOOK!



## TOADZILLA!

"HOPPY"  
TO SEE  
ME?

### Darwin, Australia

In the dark of night, a group of citizens set out to hunt down one of Australia's most menacing predators. Their prey? A giant toad nicknamed Toadzilla.

Looking like a cantaloupe with legs, Toadzilla is the largest cane toad on record in Australia, at about eight inches long and almost two pounds. Why the toad hunt? Cane toads were brought to Australia all the way from Hawaii to eat crop-destroying beetles, but instead they gobble down just about anything they can get their mouths around. "Cane toads take away food from other predators and are killing many other native animals," says Graeme Sawyer of FrogWatch, which leads expeditions such as the one that netted Toadzilla.

Luckily cane toads are slow and easy to catch. Once Sawyer's team heard Toadzilla's distinctive mating call—"like a dial tone on a telephone," he says—a tracker grabbed the creature by hand.

Now instead of being a predator, Toadzilla is a teacher, visiting schools to educate kids about invasive species like the cane toad. Better listen to *this* teacher!

—Bekah Wright



TOADZILLA, A GIANT CANE TOAD, IS HANDLED BY THE TRACKER WHO LOCATED THE CREATURE.





## APING HUMANS

Keepers at the Cologne Zoo in Cologne, Germany, were prepping breakfast for the orangutans one morning when a surprising noise emerged from the apes' enclosure. It sounded like a babbling human. Had a visitor somehow gotten into the area? The keepers went to investigate and discovered what was really making the humanlike noise—a female orangutan named Tilda! The ape had figured out how to imitate the rhythm of human speech. "Tilda really grabbed the keepers' attention," exhibit curator Alexander Sliwa says. And that's exactly what she wanted. "She makes these sounds when keepers don't provide her with goodies fast enough." No surprise, this ape is causing a lot of chatter.

# Epic Animal Fake Outs

## How these clever critters fooled everybody

BY JAMIE KIFFEL-ALCHEH

Humans aren't the only ones who play tricks. Using their stealth and smarts, some animals can fool other critters—and even people. Think we're messing with you? Read these stories of animal antics to see for yourself.



NO ...  
SUDDEN ...  
MOVEMENTS.

## GOT YOUR BACK

Face-to-face with a tasty shrimp, a larger Pacific striped octopus extended an arm over the shrimp's back. The octopus was moving so slowly the shrimp didn't even notice the move. But then the octopus tapped on the shrimp's back end. Thinking that a predator was *behind* it, the shrimp jumped forward—right into the octopus's waiting arms!

"When I first saw this happen, I couldn't believe it," says biologist Roy Caldwell, who watched the octopus prank the shrimp (then eat it) at the University of California at Berkeley. The octopus continued to display this behavior, and scientists now think other members of the species do it too.

"If the octopus just tried to grab a shrimp, the speedy crustacean would likely get away," Caldwell says. Tricking it to come closer gives the octopus a leg, or eight, up.



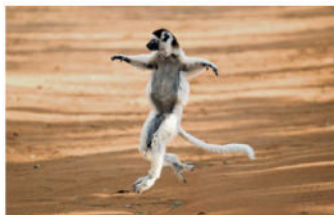


## IN THE GROOVE

Researcher Hantanirina Rasamimanana witnessed what appeared to be a wild dance party in a forest in the African country of Madagascar. She was observing sifakas (a type of lemur), when some of the animals climbed down from their perch in the trees to a clearing. Standing upright, they threw out their arms, moved their hips, jumped up, and clicked their heels midair before landing. They continued these movements, hopping sideways until they crossed the clearing. "I was mesmerized," Rasamimanana says. "It looked like they were dancing." Their moves may fool some into thinking they can boogie. But they jump and jive like this because it's the fastest way for them to move across the ground, which helps them avoid predators such as snakes. They can make these motions because of their flexibility and strong legs. Next up: *Dancing With the Stars*?

### THE SIFAKA SHIMMY

A sifaka does its signature dance-like leap across the ground.





THE  
BANANA  
HEIST IS  
SO ON!



## FAKE FOE

When a troop of tufted capuchin monkeys in Argentina's Iguazú National Park found bananas left by scientists on a man-made platform in the trees, they all wanted to chow down. In capuchin communities, the lower-ranking members are supposed to let the dominant ones eat first. But one lower-ranking monkey in this group didn't want to wait. So it made what sounded like a call used to warn others of nearby predators. Thing is, there wasn't any enemy.

When the dominant capuchins heard the call, they dropped their snacks and ran—and the lower-ranking monkey hurried over to grab the goods. "It's possible the capuchin was trying to express annoyance, and it sounded like a warning call," says behavioral ecologist Brandon Wheeler, who witnessed the event. "Or maybe it knew the call would make the others run away." That's some monkey business.

A CAPUCHIN  
NABS A BANANA  
FROM A TREE.



## TRASH TRICK

Animal behavior expert Suzanne MacDonald was taking out the garbage one night in Toronto, Canada, when she came across a trickster in her trash. Lifting the lid of her outdoor bin, she saw a young raccoon hiding inside with its arms outstretched. The raccoon remained quiet, trying to blend in with the rest of the throwaways. "He was just waiting to catch whatever food I was going to toss in," MacDonald says.

MacDonald, who studies raccoons, wasn't completely surprised by her garbage guest. "Raccoons are smart," she says. "They can get a sense of a person's routine and time their visits based on when the person is most likely to take out the garbage." Still, MacDonald has never seen another raccoon hiding out *inside* a bin. Although MacDonald noticed the animal, others who weren't paying attention might not have. And it's possible they'd set their trash right by the raccoon, giving it easy access to discarded food. This raccoon's plan definitely wasn't rubbish.





## SQUIRREL STUNT

While observing eastern gray squirrels in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, biologist Michael A. Steele and his team watched as one dug a hole, placed an acorn in it, and then covered it. Soon after, the scientists saw a different squirrel scurry to the spot and dig around in hopes of stealing the stash. But the hole was empty. The would-be robber had been faked out—the nut had never actually been buried!

Steele's research has shown that eastern gray squirrels commonly pretend to bury acorns in the presence of squirrel thieves. "We only observe the behavior when another squirrel is nearby," Steele says. "The action seems to be a tricky way for them to keep rivals distracted so they don't notice where food is really being buried." Sounds nuts, but it must work.

HIDING IN THE TRASH, THIS RACCOON WAITS FOR SOME GRUB.



## EGG IMPOSTERS

Standing in a savanna in Zambia, a country in Africa, biologist Claire Spottiswoode spied on a tawny-flanked prinia as it settled on its nest to warm its eggs. The bird looked at ease. But Spottiswoode knew something the prinia didn't: The nest held imposter eggs! Two of them had been laid by another bird called the cuckoo finch while the prinia was away. And it wasn't the first time Spottiswoode had seen this behavior. "Cuckoo finch eggs have evolved to look like those of the prinia," she says. "So it's possible to trick the prinia into thinking the cuckoo finch eggs are its own." The fooled prinias care for the eggs and even nurture the cuckoo finch chicks after they hatch—meaning the cuckoo finch parents get a free babysitter!

TAWNY-FLANKED PRINIA MOM

CUCKOO FINCH CHICK



A PRINIA FEEDS A CUCKOO FINCH CHICK THAT SHE THINKS IS HER OWN OFFSPRING.

GET MORE!  
**FLOWER  
FAKE-OUTS**

Plants can fool you too!

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# REAL OR FAKE?

BY EMILY KRIEGER ART BY TOM NICK COCOTOS

These may be some of the most bizarre stories you've ever read—but only three of them are actually true. Can you tell the difference between the real-life headlines and the phony-balonies?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 39

## COUNTRIES BATTLE OVER BIRD POOP

CHINCHA ISLANDS, PACIFIC OCEAN

Battles have been fought over many things: taxes, oil, spices ... poop? Yep. A two-year battle over islands covered in bird poop, or guano, broke out between Peru and Spain during the 1860s. Why the fuss over feces? At the time, guano was in high demand as a fertilizer. And it turns out the dry climate of the Chincha Islands in the Pacific Ocean preserves the guano left by seafaring birds. In fact some guano piles reportedly stood 150 feet tall! Spain wanted to take control of the islands from Peru, a former colony. But the Peruvian government refused, and war broke out. Peru prevailed, though, and to this day remains the owner of the precious poop.

1



2

## SEAFLOOR CITY

SOUTHEAST COAST, CHINA

In 2011, China stunned the world when it announced it had secretly set up a city of a thousand people on the seafloor off the country's southeastern coast. Encased in a giant see-through dome, Seafloor City is protected from the surrounding waters by a 1,100-foot-thick transparent material developed in a top-secret lab in the city of Shanghai. At two square miles, the city is small but packed with the nation's smartest scientists. The government has tasked them with studying things like marine life, how people might live on another planet, and if the human body can adapt to life underwater. Seafloor City has now become a major tourist destination, but only expert divers can reach it.







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## HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS!

**BY KAY BOATNER**

Can you believe everything you read? Not always. Sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between real-life headlines and made-up ones—especially on the Internet. And some people are trying to trick you on purpose. Follow these tips for sniffing out fake news.

**Does the story come from a newspaper, magazine, or website you've never heard of?**

"Well-known news sources aren't likely to try to fool you," says Eric Carvin, social media editor for the Associated Press. "If you haven't heard of a publication, do some research on how trustworthy they are before you take what they say as fact. Have they been accused of publishing fake news before? Then they may not be reliable."

**Is just one newspaper, magazine, or website reporting on the story?**

"If a story is real, then many publications will cover it," Carvin says. "Big national stories worth reporting on are usually featured in more than just one or two articles."

**Is the story missing key information?**

"If no experts or eyewitnesses are mentioned in the article, that's a warning sign," Carvin says. "Most publications try to speak with at least two sources to back up a story."

**3**

### ROBOT HITCHHIKES ACROSS CANADA

**VICTORIA, CANADA**

Would you give a ride to a talking, hitchhiking robot? Nineteen carloads of Canadians did during the summer of 2014, helping the kid-size hitchBOT travel more than 3,700 miles from Halifax to Victoria. Anyone who offered hitchBOT a ride had to lift it into and out of the car because only its hitchhiking arm moved. But hosts were rewarded with a robot that could converse with its companions and share facts about the region the car was traveling through. The bot had a ton of fun along the way, sightseeing, making new friends, riding a ferry, and even attending a wedding.

**4**

### PLANTS MAKE MUSIC

**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

It may sound crazy, but plants can be musical. A new device converts electrical currents moving across a plant's surface into sound. The device works by placing probes on the leaves and translating the currents into audio. What does this "music" tell us about the secret life of plants? Scientists aren't quite sure yet. They are, however, hoping the research will eventually help us learn more about the natural world. But one day soon *your* houseplants could sing: A fundraising campaign to make the device available worldwide has reached its goal.



**5**

### ASTRONAUT INFESTATION

**OUTER SPACE**

In what was dubbed the "out-of-this-world itch sitch," half the astronauts aboard the space shuttle *Triumph* were ordered to return to Earth after an epic outbreak of head lice struck in 1994. At first the astronauts tried to live with the lice, making jokes while scratching their scalps during video conference calls with NASA. When things got worse, some shaved off their hair. But over time the lice proved too powerful. The astronauts couldn't get rid of them and were distracted from their high-stakes duties. So they were sent home to recover. NASA says it's unsure how the lice boarded the ship, or if the extra-persistent pests were extraterrestrial.



# FAKE LAKE

## THE WORLD'S LARGEST SALT FLAT CREATES AN OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD ILLUSION.

BY SCOTT ELDER

Seeing someone who appears to be walking on a cloud might sound like a dream. But this surreal scene exists—and it isn't just in your head. It's a spot in the South American country of Bolivia called the Salar de Uyuni (Sah-LAR DAY Uh-YOO-nee). The walking-on-air effect is actually caused by something totally ordinary: a reflection in a rain puddle. What's special about the *salar*—Spanish for salt flat—is that this thin pool stretches for miles, creating a seemingly endless natural mirror. And this astounding optical illusion is just one of the things that makes the Salar de Uyuni so bizarre.

### HIGH AND DRY

The salar is more than two miles above sea level in the Andes Mountains in a region

called the Altiplano, Spanish for high plain. Some 40,000 years ago, towering mountain ranges trapped rainfall and prevented water runoff from the Altiplano, creating a huge lake loaded with the plateau's natural salt deposits. But climate change reduced the amount of rainfall in the area, and the body of water dried up about 10,000 years ago. A deep layer of salt was left behind. Today the salar sprawls about 4,000 square miles—more than twice the size of Rhode Island.

### WHITE OUT

Because of its dry climate, the salar is a hard-crusted wasteland for most of the year. "It's just white all the way to the horizon,"



FLAMINGOS SEARCH FOR FOOD IN THE SALAR DE UYUNI.

earth scientist Adrian Borsa says. "The color makes it look as if you're actually on ice." Seasonal rains occasionally submerge the salt under a superwide puddle. At most a couple of inches deep, the water layer is too thin to make any waves, which explains its endless-looking mirror surface.

### SIGNS OF LIFE

Although the region can seem empty, a few places thrive with life. The "sea" of salt is dotted with stony outcrops known as islands. These rocky refuges—technically the tip-tops of buried volcanoes—are home to the few animals that manage to live on the salar, such as Andean foxes known as culpeos.





The national animal of Bolivia is the llama.

Bolivia has 37 official languages, but Spanish is the most common.

A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT THE SALT FLAT DURING ITS DRY SEASON

AN ANDEAN FOX, ALSO CALLED A CULPEO, EXPLORES THE SALT FLAT.



Migrating flamingos also fly in to breed and chow down on algae that grow in the water.

## BURIED TREASURE

With about 10 billion tons of salt lying around, it's no surprise that salt production in the salar is a big business. After workers shovel the salt into piles to dry it out, the product is processed and sold worldwide. But the real gold mine lies beneath the surface. An element called lithium, which is used to make batteries in cell phones, is found underneath the salt. This untapped resource could be worth a whopping *trillion* dollars.

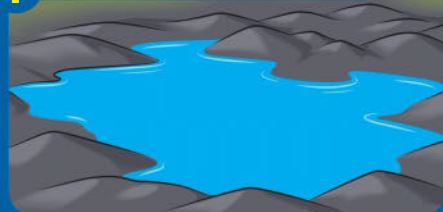
But for many visitors, this strange place's most valuable feature will always be the mind-blowing scenery. "The salar is a weird, otherworldly experience," Borsa says. "It feels like it's not Earth."



Bolivia has two capital cities: La Paz and Sucre.

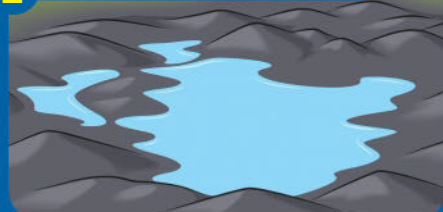
## HOW THE SALT FLAT TOOK SHAPE

### 1 ABOUT 40,000 YEARS AGO ...



Some 40,000 years ago a giant prehistoric lake called Lago Minchin covered 4,000 square miles of what is now southwest Bolivia in South America. The lake was completely surrounded by mountains on all sides.

### 2 ABOUT 25,000 YEARS AGO ...



Over time, the massive lake shrunk into smaller, separate lakes. As the lakes continued to shrink, they leached, or drew out, salt deposits from the surrounding mountains.

### 3 ABOUT 10,000 YEARS AGO ...



The lakes dried out approximately 10,000 years ago, leaving behind the salt deposits. Today Salar de Uyuni is the world's largest salt flat.





# Tricky Pics

## Secrets of Fake Photos Revealed

BY JAMIE KIFFEL-ALCHEH

OK, dogs can't really burn rubber on a motorcycle. But with computer programs, animals and humans can appear to be doing just about anything!

Digital artists use all sorts of tools and techniques to alter photos. For instance in one program, liquefying filters help stretch smiles and bodies. The blur filter makes it look as if the subjects in the image are in motion. Artists can also use a cutting and pasting tool to cut out one part of a photo and paste it onto another.

Sometimes people change pictures to mislead you. For instance, a makeup company got in trouble after it was discovered that the lashes of a model wearing the company's mascara were altered to look thicker in one ad. The company wanted customers to believe that the product worked better than it actually did.

Then again, pics can be manipulated for fun, just like the images on these pages. Discover how these tricky pics were created.







## TURTLE TIME

One turtle? Try three! "I noticed that baby turtles have the prettiest shells," photographer Nick Vedros says. "Box turtles have great legs and tails, and giant tortoises have the best faces." So Vedros took shots of all three and cut and pasted the parts together. (It's similar to how you'd make a photo collage.) He then added a blue-sky background and Frisbee.

## CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE

First photographer John Lund snapped several pictures of Roswell the cat, then used computer tools to combine various parts of the cat's body from the different pictures. But the tricky part was just getting the cat to open his mouth. "We needed a cat that meowed a lot," Lund says. "Luckily Roswell's a talker!" The artist then used a computer tool to stretch the image of the cat's mouth even more.



## BAD TO THE BONE

The goggles never touched the real dogs' faces in this image by Lund. First he took pics of a human wearing them. Then he erased the human face and placed the goggles on photos he took of two dogs. He combined these images with shots of a bike and road.





## TWISTED

What's weird about this Twister mat—besides the fact that animals are on it? “The scale is entirely wrong,” Lund says. “A real Twister mat is human-size. The animals would have to be gigantic to play.”

**GET  
MORE!**

**TRICKY  
PHOTO  
TIPS**

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## KITCHEN SINK

Remy the cat was dry when his photo was taken. “We photographed the sink, the brush, and the duck separately with suds around them,” says Lund, who then digitally combined all the elements.

## DINO DIG

No hidden fossil here! In a six-foot-long box, the dinosaur model was placed flat on the dirt and then photographed from above. The fence is a miniature model made of popsicle sticks. All that—plus the grass and the guy—were put together by Vedros on the computer.



## CREATURE FEATURE

The original photo was of an empty movie theater. It was taken by Lund, who wedged plastic film canisters between the seats to hold them down. He then added the furry audience members. A “layer mask” tool let the animals’ eyes show through the 3-D glasses that Lund pasted on later.



## SOMETHING'S FISHY

Surprise! This photo is for real. “I was sportfishing with a man who brought his pet iguana,” photographer Bill Curtsinger says. “The iguana climbed up the fishing pole to get a better view. It looked like he was fishing.” So Curtsinger grabbed a camera for this real photo that fools just about everyone.



## BIG RIG

“We sat the elephant on a stool at a studio where cars are usually photographed,” photographer Bob Elsdale says. Why? It was the only studio with a door big enough for the elephant to fit through! The car is a toy photographed at a beach.



**DANGER**  
SOFT SAND



# Xtreme Illusions

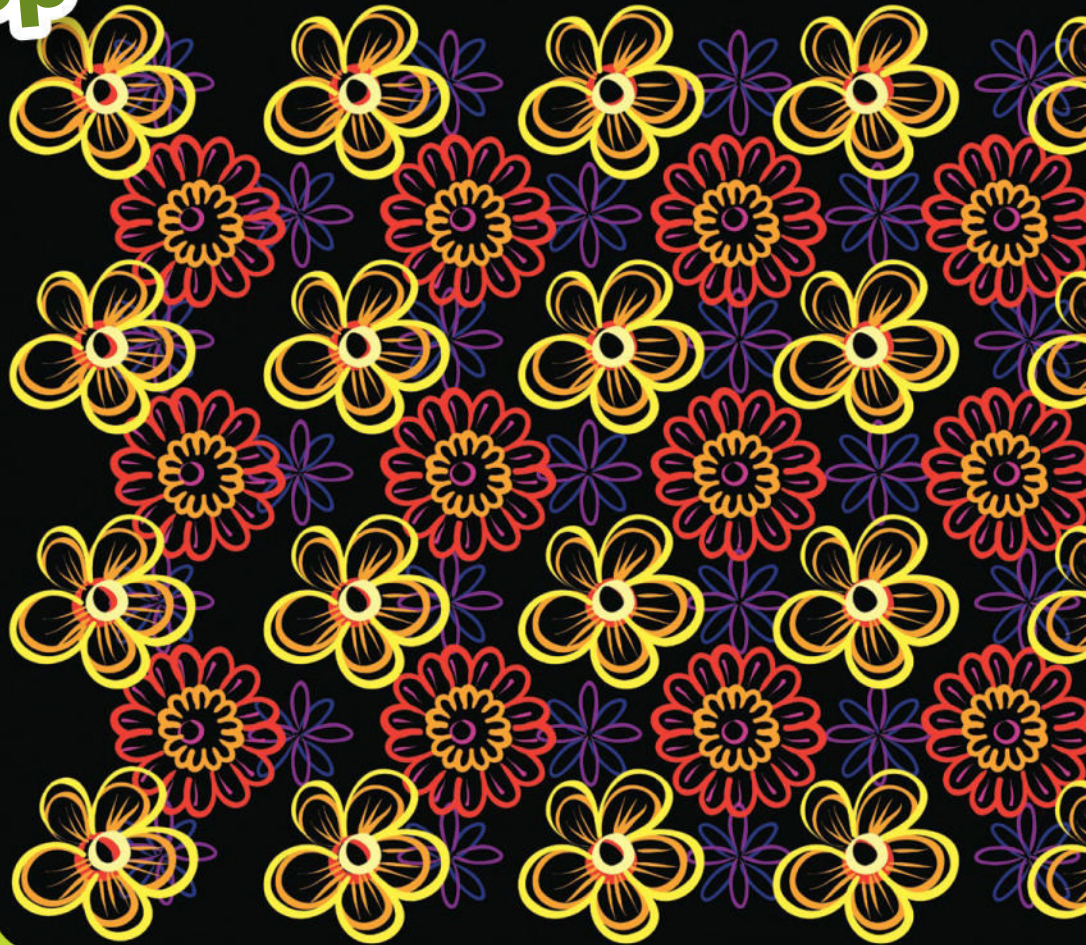
**These incredible images will boggle your brain.**

The human brain works 30 times faster than the best supercomputers, according to some experts. But even your marvelous mind can be tricked by optical illusions. These images use colors, patterns, shadows, and other things to fool your brain into seeing something that's not there. Check out the science that makes these illusions so tricky.

## Power Pop

**DO THIS** Stare at the flowers in the illusion. Do any of them look as if they're popping off the page?

**WHAT'S UP** You likely said that the yellow blooms were jumping out. These flowers have extra lines around them, giving them what look like shadows. This tricks your brain—which uses light and shadows around an object to determine its thickness—into thinking that the yellow flowers have more depth than the red blossoms. And since they appear to have more depth, they stand out more than the flat-looking flowers around them.

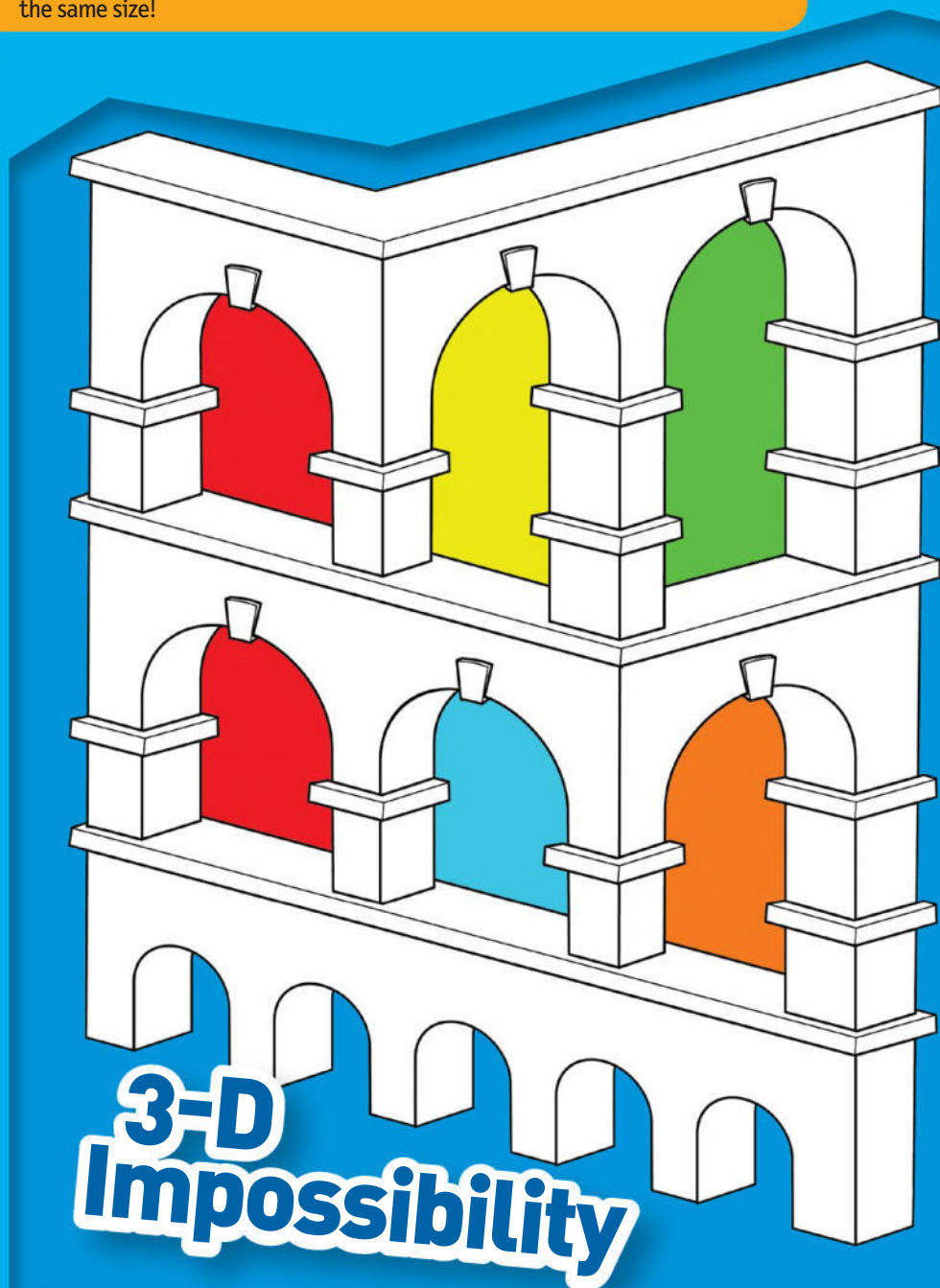




# Great Lengths

**DO THIS** Examine the two goldfish swimming in the glass. Which one is longer?

**WHAT'S UP** As you look at the image, your eyes zoom in on the space around each fish. Because less space surrounds the one on the bottom, your brain assumes that this fish is bigger than the goldfish above it. But they're exactly the same size!

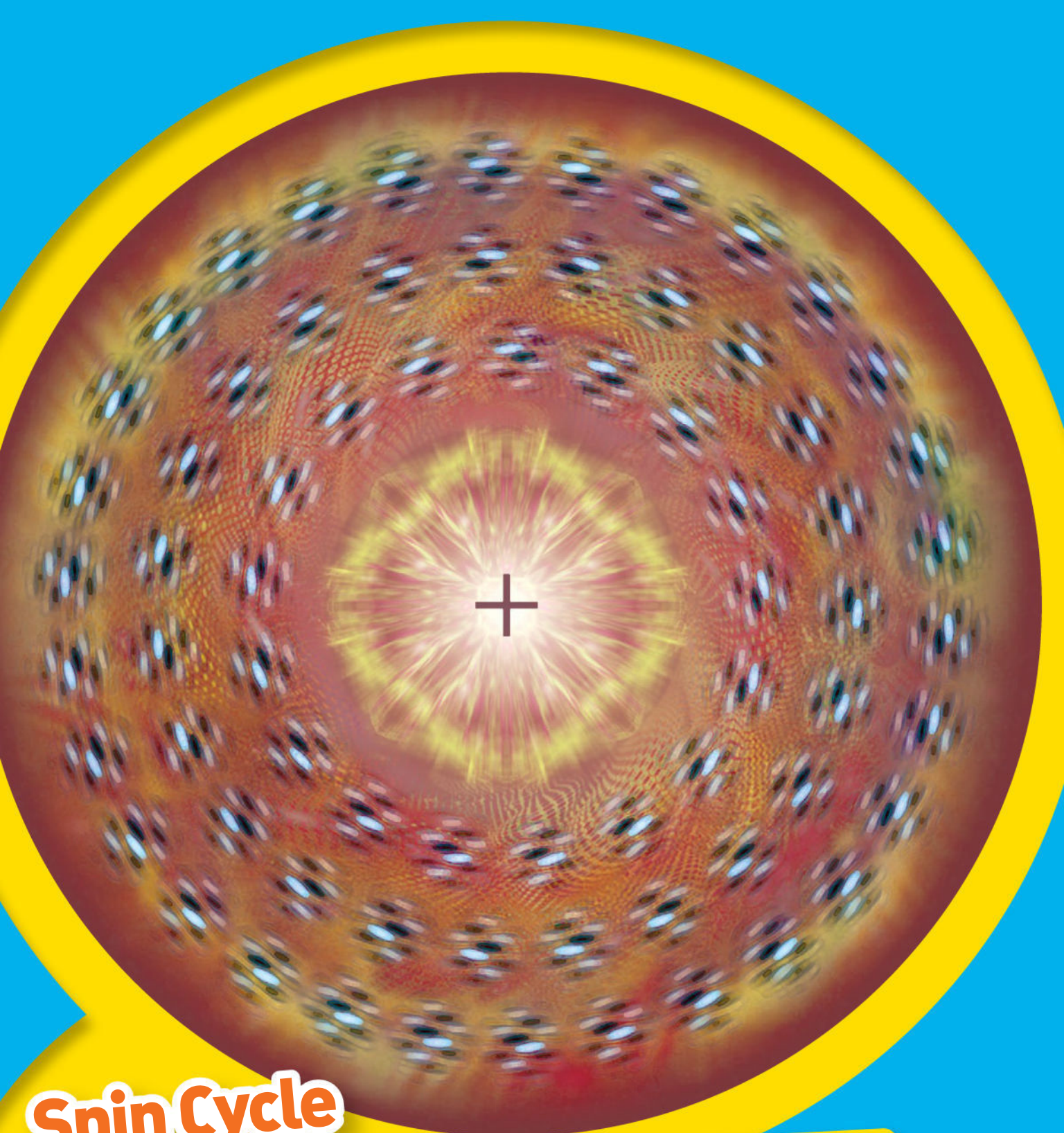


## 3-D Impossibility

**DO THIS** Glance at the structure in this picture. Does it look three-dimensional to you?

**WHAT'S UP** This illusion features what's known as an "impossible figure." It's drawn in such a way that your brain sees it as three-dimensional, the same way it sees real objects. The illustrated structure might seem realistic at first. But you'll notice that the arches over the yellow and orange backgrounds are positioned in a way that couldn't actually happen. Even though you know this figure couldn't exist, your befuddled brain keeps viewing the object in 3-D, trying to understand how it works.





# Spin Cycle

**DO THIS** Move your head backward and forward, keeping your eyes fixed on the plus sign at the image's center. The three black-and-white rings will start to turn!

**WHAT'S UP** Your brain is used to seeing objects blur when they're moving at high speeds. And the blurry pattern of the rings combined with the backward and forward movement of your head confuse your brain, causing it to see the rings in motion. The repeated pattern might enhance the effect.



**CHECK  
OUT THE  
BOOK!**



# Shade Shift

**DO THIS** Gaze at this picture. Are all the curling, U-shaped sections of the waves the same color throughout the picture?

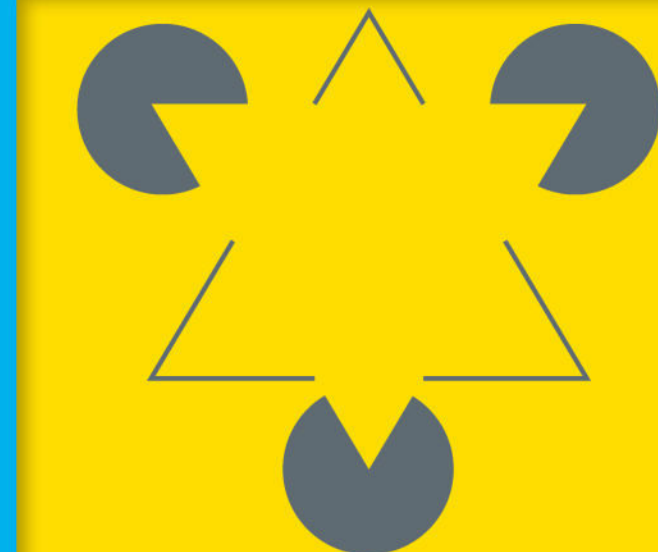
**WHAT'S UP** They are indeed the same color! The way we interpret an object's color changes based on its background. When an object is set against a more brightly colored background, it appears darker. When the same object is set against a darker background, it appears brighter. Because the waves appear on backgrounds with varying colors and levels of brightness, the waves appear to be different hues as well.



# Out of Shape

**DO THIS** Point out the shapes you see in this illusion.

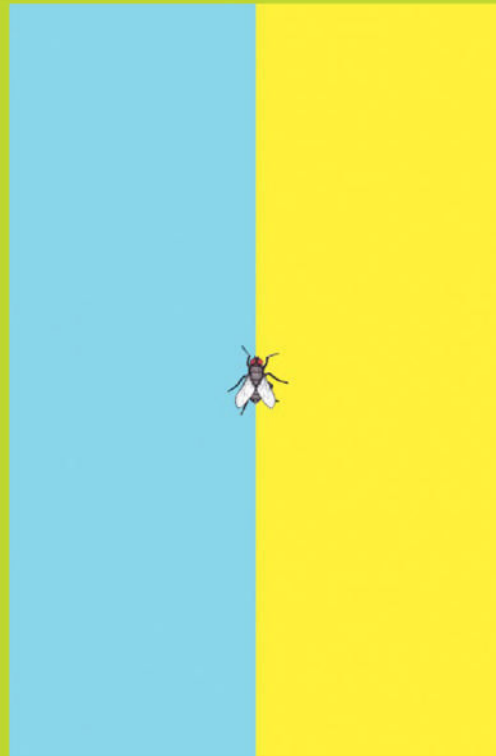
**WHAT'S UP** You may have counted two triangles—one without a border and one with lines running along its corners. But there are no *real* triangles here. When you see a new object or design, your thinker tries to make sense of it by comparing it to shapes and patterns you know. Your brain is familiar with triangles, and it forms these recognizable shapes as it analyzes the odd pattern.



# Balancing Act

**DO THIS** Check out the picture of the cow. You'll notice that the photo is tinted blue on one side and yellow on the other. Next, stare at the fly in the right-hand image for 30 seconds, then look back at the fly on the cow. The photo will appear normal.

**WHAT'S UP** Human eyes contain special cells that pick up light and color. As you stare at the solid blue and yellow picture on the right, the cells become less sensitive to these colors. This means they won't respond as strongly to the hues when you switch your gaze back to the cow. Instead of picking up the blue and yellow tints covering the mooer, your brain fills in the picture with a balance of color it's used to seeing.





# Fun Stuff

## TEST YOUR ECO IQ

Take this quiz to find out if you're winning the waste game. Then check out the Nat Geo Kids book *This Book Stinks* for more tips on how to reduce your trash and boost your sustainability score.

games, laughs, and lots to do!

1

You just ate the last of the chocolate-chip ice cream in your freezer. What do you do with the container?

- A. Toss it in the trash can.
- B. Rinse it out and throw it in the recycling bin.
- C. Clean it and stash it away for a future art project.



3

It's the end of the school year and your backpack is filled with old worksheets. What will you do with them?

- A. Dump the entire contents of your backpack into the trash.
- B. Toss the paper into the recycling bin.
- C. Go through each sheet and use whatever you can for scrap paper; recycle the rest.



2

Yuck. A couple of your bananas have gone brown. What do you do with them?

- A. Throw them away. Nothing's worse than mushy fruit.
- B. Cut out the brown parts and eat what you can.
- C. Make a smoothie with them and add the peels to your compost bin.



4

Oops! You just spilled your juice all over the kitchen floor. What do you clean it up with?

- A. A bunch of napkins
- B. A few sheets of paper towels—the kind made out of recycled materials, of course
- C. A reusable rag that you can toss in the washing machine



5

A park in your neighborhood is covered with litter. How would you help?

- A. Spend a couple hours with your family filling up trash bags.
- B. Pick up all the trash, then take the cans, newspapers, and plastic to a nearby recycling center.
- C. Organize monthly cleanups and contact your local government about what can be done to prevent litter.

MOSTLY A'S

### A WEE BIT WASTEFUL

You're tops when it comes to cleaning up, but you can always do more to reduce your waste. You have the power to do something—so look for little ways to make a difference.

MOSTLY B'S

### RECYCLING ROCK STAR

You're super-aware of what can be recycled in your world. Cheers to you for being so green-minded! You'll no doubt lead the way by example, and soon your friends and family will become just as focused on recycling as you are.

MOSTLY C'S

### LOW-WASTE WARRIOR

What others might consider trash is truly your treasure—and that's an amazing thing! You have a talent for upcycling old things and finding ways to breathe new life into stuff that some might toss away. Your commitment inspires others to help.

NOW  
TALLY UP YOUR  
ANSWERS AND  
FIND OUT HOW  
GREEN YOU  
ARE!

CHECK OUT  
THE BOOK!



UNPICK / SHUTTERSTOCK (ICE CREAM); ARTOGRAPHY / SHUTTERSTOCK (BANANAS); ARTISTEER / GETTY IMAGES (BACKPACK); TISCHENKO IRINA / SHUTTERSTOCK (JUICE); JOEL SARTORE, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTO ARK / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE (SKUNK)



# Funny Fill-In

BY ALLYSON SHAW

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.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Dear Aunt \_\_\_\_\_,  
pet's name

Thank you so much for my \_\_\_\_\_ birthday gift. When the mail carrier delivered the package,  
adjective  
it was covered in \_\_\_\_\_ and was making a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ sound. I set aside the box  
something sticky animal noise ending in -ing  
to eat my \_\_\_\_\_-flavored birthday cake. But suddenly the box started to \_\_\_\_\_.  
something gross verb  
“\_\_\_\_\_!” we all said as we ran over to it. I \_\_\_\_\_ opened the box and peeled back  
exclamation adverb ending in -ly  
some \_\_\_\_\_.  
adjective noun, plural  
It was a chemistry set—but the \_\_\_\_\_  
liquid  
and \_\_\_\_\_ had gotten mixed up, creating a brand-new creature! It was \_\_\_\_\_,  
baking ingredient, plural color  
covered in \_\_\_\_\_, and had \_\_\_\_\_.  
noun, plural large number body part, plural  
I love my new pet,  
vegetable, plural  
\_\_\_\_\_! Thank you again for the \_\_\_\_\_!

Sincerely,

your name

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!





# Just Joking

SPECIAL GROSS EDITION

Hyena



KNOCK,  
KNOCK.

Who's there?  
Police.  
Police who?  
Police brush your teeth—  
your breath is awful!



Q What kind  
of monster  
can you find  
in a tissue?

A The boogie man

Q What Spanish  
city is full of  
people with  
the flu?

A Barf-elona



TONGUE  
TWISTER!



Say this fast three times:

Freshly fried fat frogs

You've got to be joking ...

Q What do you get  
if you cross a  
**pig** and a  
**portable  
bathroom?**



A pork-a-potty

CHECK  
OUT THE  
BOOK!





# Laugh Out Loud



"GUESS WHO GOT GROUNDED AGAIN?"



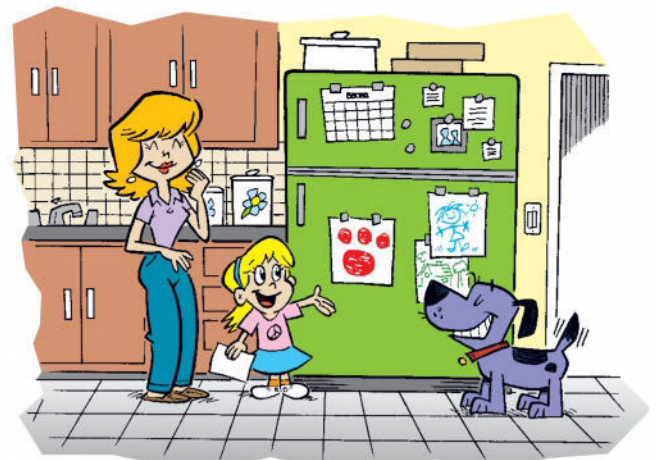
"DON'T YOU KNOW 'GO FISH' IS A CARD GAME?"



"HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TALKED TO YOU ABOUT EATING TOO MUCH JUNK FOOD?"



"DID YOU REMEMBER TO ZIP UP THE TENT, BOBBY?"



"... AND SPANKY DID THAT ONE!"



# What in the World?

## MAGIC SHOW

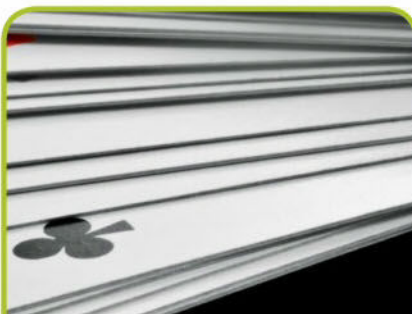
These photos show close-up views of magic trick props. Unscramble the letters to identify what's in each picture. Bonus: Use the highlighted letters to solve the puzzle below.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 39

CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!



I E D



K E D C F O D S R A C



K N T U R



V D O E



C O K L D N A Y K E



O T P A T H



E H D R I A F N C E K H



S O I N C



B I B A R T

**HINT:** What do you call an owl that can do magic tricks?

**ANSWER:** \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ I \_ \_ \_

TOP ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): PHOTODISC; SAM7Z / SHUTTERSTOCK; CHRIS BRIGNELL / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.  
MIDDLE ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): ROCCHA / DREAMSTIME; RANDY FARIS / BETTY IMAGES; GEMINACOM / SHUTTERSTOCK.  
BOTTOM ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): SHUTLU / GETTY IMAGES; VUE / SHUTTERSTOCK; RICHARD PETERSON / SHUTTERSTOCK.



# Ask Max



**Got problems?** Max the meerkat has answers—even if they apply more to animals than to you!  
ART BY GARY LOCKE

**DEAR MAX,**

I GET FREAKED OUT AT NIGHT BECAUSE I HATE NOT BEING ABLE TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON. HOW CAN I GET OVER IT AND JUST GET TO SLEEP?

**SINCERELY,  
SLEEPY**

**Dear Sleepy,**

You know what's scarier than a dark bedroom? A dark ocean. With predators. No wonder Adélie penguins often hunt for krill and fish in Antarctica during the day, even though they can see just fine in the dark. Why? The leopard seal is a penguin predator and active at night. So the birds find dinner while the seals are resting.

Luckily you're safe in your bed without one single leopard seal (or monster) hiding in the closet. But you can always crack the door with the hall light on or flick on a night-light.

Then—unlike a penguin—you can run down to the refrigerator whenever you want, without worrying about becoming a snack yourself.

**Best fishes,**



**DEAR MAX,**

MY PARENTS ARE ALWAYS ON ME ABOUT CLEANING MY ROOM. HOW CAN I GET OUT OF THIS CHORE?

**FROM,  
DIRTY ROOM DON'T CARE**

**Dear Dirty Room Don't Care,**

How dirty could your bedroom *possibly* be? Baby American robins *poop* in their nests after nearly every bite—about 350 insects a day! Luckily the chicks' waste comes out in a bag made of thick mucus. A parent just flies it away, far from the nest.

Animals keep their homes clean, possibly to avoid diseases caused by waste and prevent predators from sniffing them out. Your pile of smelly clothes and banana peels probably won't attract anything that wants to eat you, but it *will* attract annoyed parents. Who wants that? Avoid the hassle and turn the chore into a game. Just put on some tunes and race to put everything away in five songs. And you don't even have to carry anything in your beak.

**Smell you later,**



Grab a parent and go online to learn how you can send Max your questions!

**natgeokids.com/AskMax**

**YOUR QUESTION MIGHT  
BE CHOSEN NEXT!**



# Unleashed

STRIKA ENTERTAINMENT

I CAN'T WATCH! I'M TOO NERVOUS!

I THINK WE MIGHT BE WITNESSING HISTORY IN THE MAKING!

I'M NOT THAT IMPRESSED ...

2



I LOVE AMAZING PETS! IT'S THE BEST SHOW EVER!

3



I USED TO ROCK THE HALF-PIPE WHEN I WAS A PUP. WHAT'S YOUR TALENT?

4



I CAN BALANCE THINGS ON MY NOSE.

I CAN MAKE MY EYEBROWS DANCE. WHAT ABOUT YOU, PRINCESS TALLULAH?

5



FIRSTLY, IT'S JUST LULU. SECONDLY, I'M GOOD AT EVERYTHING I DO!

6



WE'LL BELIEVE IT WHEN WE SEE IT.

I'M NOT CONVINCED.

NEITHER AM I ...

7



I'LL SHOW YOU I'M MORE THAN JUST A LAP CAT!

8

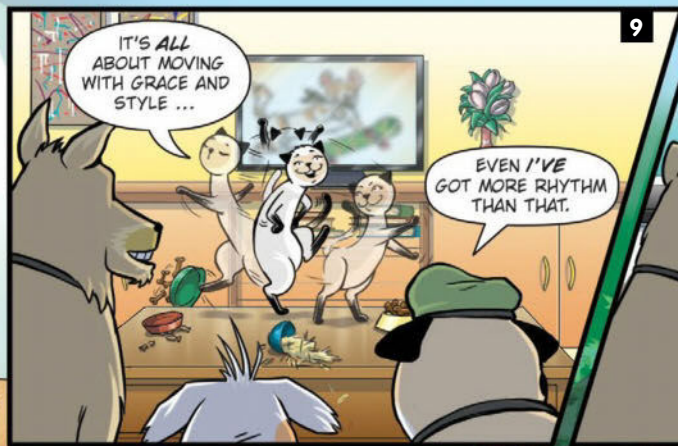


YIKES!

MAKE IT STOP!

THIS IS CAT-ASTROPHIC!







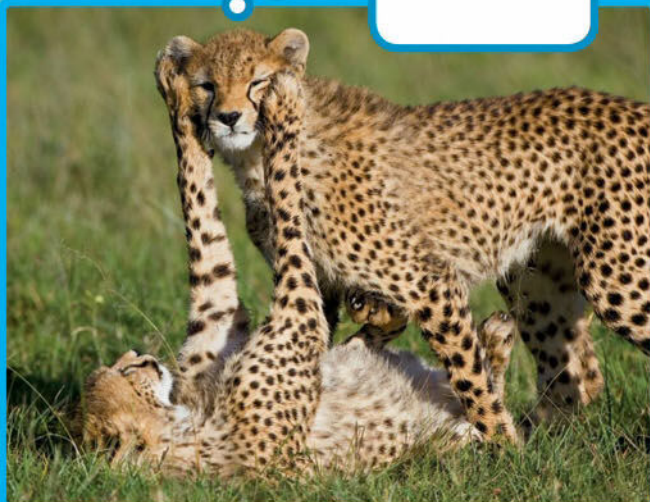
# Back Talk

How'd I get up here?

What do YOU think this praying mantis 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.



## From the September 2016 Issue

This is nice and all, but can you get behind my ears?

Amelia G., 11  
Breaux Bridge, Louisiana

I would enjoy this if your claws weren't so sharp!

Sydney E., 12  
Norwalk, Ohio

OK, I know I'm adorable, but leave the cheek pinching to Grandma.

Haley W., 13  
Cameron, Missouri

A little bit to the left, please.

Patrick L., 8  
Cheshire, Connecticut

Do little sisters always have to be like this?

Lilla V., 12  
Denver, Colorado

Paws off my earbuds! Taylor Swift's on!

Emily R., 10  
Foristell, Missouri

Can't I just use a comb?

Thomas J., 11  
Forestville, Wisconsin

Mom's looking. We better behave.

Emily W., 9  
East Lansing, Michigan



# My Shot

These photographs were taken by kids like you!

How'd you get the shot?



Water-Balloon Popping Flying Squirrel

"I popped a water balloon and took a burst of photos at 60 frames a second. It was really easy!"  
—Flying Squirrel



Rabbit ITakePhotos

## Answers

**Bonus:** Hoo-dini!  
**Bottom row:** handkerchief, coins, rabbit.  
**Middle row:** die, deck of cards, trunk.  
**Top row:** dog, lock and key, top hat.  
"What in the World?" (page 34):  
Infestation (5) are both fake.  
Seafloor City (2) and Astronaut  
"Real or Fake?" (pages 18–19):



Rebellious Puppy Itsejb1103



Setting joys



Pretty Sky Soccergirl900

## Photo Tip of the Month



Cute Chicks animalperson



Blooming Roses GraciePhotography



Honeybee lemming72

Set your camera to macro mode (the flower icon) to take up close photos of insects and flowers.





Disneynature

# BORN 在 CHINA

Narrated by John Krasinski

DISNEYNATURE PRESENTS "BORN IN CHINA" A CHUAN FILMS AND BRIAN LEITH PRODUCTION MUSIC BY BARNABY TAYLOR EDITED BY MATTHEW MEECH  
PRODUCED BY ROY CONLI BRIAN LEITH PHIL CHAPMAN WRITTEN BY DAVID FOWLER WITH BRIAN LEITH & PHIL CHAPMAN AND LU CHUAN DIRECTED BY LU CHUAN

[disney.com/BornInChina](http://disney.com/BornInChina)

Disneynature

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CELEBRATE EARTH DAY - IN THEATRES APRIL 21

OPENING WEEK BENEFITS WILD PANDAS AND SNOW LEOPARDS

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